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Mid Term Review Fifth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program in the Philippines

Basic Report Information

Title of UNDP Supported GEF financed project	5th Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in the Philippines -
GEF PIMS # and UNDP Project ID No.	00082868 4517
MTR Time Frame and date of MTR Report	Date of evaluation report: 27/11/2017 The field visit occurred between 27/03/2017 – 21/05/2017 The Draft Report was sent on 24/04/2017 and comments were received up to 31/05/2017 A comprehensive schedule of comments was received via an email from the CPMU dated the 13 th July 2017 – comments and annotations have been added to this draft This Draft dated 28/07/2017
Region Countries included in the Report	Asia Pacific Region Republic of the Philippines
GEF Operational Focal Area/ Strategic Program	Biodiversity
UNDAF Outcome(s)	Adaptive capacities of vulnerable communities and ecosystems are strengthened to be resilient to threats, shocks, disasters, and climate change
UNDAF Sub-Outcome:	By 2018, capacities of national & local government officials and communities to conserve & sustainably manage the country's environment and natural resources, including biodiversity and sustainable energy sources, are enhanced
Expected Outcome(s): CP	Increased capacities of key duty-bearers to provide an enabling environment for claimholder's improved access to an enhanced natural resources base, sustainable energy and a cleaner environment
Executing Agency/ Implementing Partner and other project partners	Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Biodiversity Management Bureau
Responsible Party	Foundation for the Philippine Environment

Other Project Partners	Organizations receiving small grants and other national organizations (Governmental, academic and civil) participating in a range of advisory and steering structures.
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Acknowledgements	<p>The Mid-Term Review Team acknowledges the numerous persons who took time to share perspectives and information that was central to the review process and expresses its gratitude and recognition to the following organisations and individuals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country Programme Management Unit (CPMU): Country Programme Manager Atty. Rodolfo Ferdinand N. Quicho, Programme Development Specialist Maria Maida Aguinaldo, Programme Associate Rochelle Villanueva, Administrative and Finance Assistant Myrna Caguioa, Project Clerk Gerald Hulleza, and Communications Assistant Anna Rita Saet. • Members of the Project Technical Review Committee and National Steering Committee. • UNDP Country Office, UNDP Programme Officer Ms Grace Tena & Program Manager Inclusive and Sustainable Development Unit Ms Floradema C Eleazar. • Advisors for the SGP 5 Upgraded Country Programmes Ms Diana Salvemini Global RTA for

	<p>the SGP 5 Philippines, and Mr. Nick Remple.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) - Under Secretary Atty. Annaliza R. Teh and officers and staff. • Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB)- Dir. Theresa Mundita Lim and the officers and staff. • National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP): Regional Directors Ruben S. Bastero (R-2); Roberto R. Almonte (R-4); Ronaldo Daquiaog (R-3). • The Foundation for the Philippine Environment staff (designated as the Responsible Party) Executive Director – Mr. Oliver O Agoncillo, Ms. Salve D Narvadez, and Ms. Norma D. Gonzaga. <p>Staff of all the Hub configurations who provided invaluable support and assistance:</p> <p>Palawan - SARAGPUNTA & Palawan NGO Network, Inc.-(PNNI)</p> <p>Samar- Center for Empowerment and Resource Development, Inc.- (CERD)</p> <p>Lower Sierra Madre - Tanggol Kalikasan, Inc.(TK) and</p> <p>Upper Sierra Madre - Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, Inc. (PRRM).</p> <p>These alliances are the central core of the SGP 5 Philippines who facilitated field trips, consultations and meetings with grantees. These included some 53 grantees covering a wide spectrum of biodiversity conservation related interventions.</p> <p>Finally, our thanks to the community groups and the organizations in the Upper & Lower Sierra Madre, Samar and Palawan, which made available their time and openly shared information and perspectives during our field visits.</p>
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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADSDPP	Ancestral Domain Sustainable and Protection Plan
APR	Annual Project Review
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BD	Biodiversity
BMB	Biodiversity Management Bureau
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBFM	Community-Based Forest Management
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CD	Capacity Development
CLUPs	Comprehensive Land Use Plans
CO	Country Office
COMPACT	Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation Programme
CP	Country Programme
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CPMU	Country Programme Management Unit
DA	Department of Agriculture
DAR	Department of Agrarian Reform
DILG	Department of Interior and Local Government
EA	Executing Agency
EDNSPAP	Expanding and Diversifying the National System of Terrestrial PA in the Philippines Project
ENRMP	Environment and Natural Resources Management Project
FPE	Foundation for the Philippine Environment
FPIC	Free and Prior Informed Consent
GEBS	Global Environmental Benefits
GEF	Global Environment Facility

IA	Implementing Agency
IP	Indigenous Peoples
IP	Implementing Partner
IPRA	Indigenous Peoples Rights Act
KBAs	Key Biodiversity Areas
LGUs	Local Government Units
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRDP	Mindanao Rural Development Program
NBSAP	Philippines National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
NEDA	National Economic Development Authority
New CAPP	New Conservation Areas in the Philippine Project,
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NIPAS	National Integrated Protected Areas System
NSC	National Steering Committee
NTFPs	Non-Timber Forest Products
PA	Protected Area
PA21	Philippine Agenda 21
PAMB	Protected Area Management Board
PBCAL	The Partnership for Biodiversity Conservation: Mainstreaming in Agricultural Landscape
PEI	Poverty-Environment Initiative
PHILCCAP	Philippine Climate Change Adaptation Project

PIMS	Project Information Management System
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PLS	Production Land and Seascapes / Protected Landscapes/Seascapes
PPR	Project Progress Report
PRODOC	Project Document
PTRC	Project Technical Review Committee
QPR	Quarterly Progress Report
RCU	Regional Coordination Unit
RP	Responsible Party
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor
SH	Site Hubs
SBAA	Standard Basic Assistance Agreement
SGP5	Small Grants Programme 5
STA	Senior Technical Advisor
STREEM	Strengthening Coordination for Effective Environmental Management
TEV	Total Economic Value
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP CO	UNDP Philippines Country Office
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

I. Executive Summary

Table 1 Project Information Table

Project Title: The Fifth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Program in the Philippines			
UNDP Project ID (PIMS #)	4517	PIF Approval Date	xxx
GEF Project ID	00066837/		
Atlas Project ID:	0008 2868	Project Document Signature Date ¹	13 June 2013
Country:	Republic of the Philippines		
Region:	Asia and Pacific	Inception Workshop Date(s)	August 2014
GEF Focal Area	Biodiversity	Midterm review completion date	07/2017
Executing Agency/Implementing Partner's	Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE) through the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB).	Planned Project Termination Date	30-Jun-2017
Responsible Party	The Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE) is designated as the Responsible Party	Revised Proposed Project Closing Date:	December 2018
Project Finance	At CEO endorsement		At Mid-term Review
1) GEF Financing	US\$ 4,583,333		1,625,606
2) UNDP contribution:	US\$ 1,000,000		1,456,917

¹ This is effectively the project start date.

3) Government of the Philippines	US\$ 3,002,907		168,689.
4) Other co-financing 1. (In-Kind)	US\$ 1,100,000		3,251,212
5) Total co-financing (2+3+4)	US\$ 5,102,907		0
PROJECT TOTAL COST (1+5)	US\$ 9,686,240		

Brief Description

The main objective of the Small Grants Program 5 in the Philippines, hereafter referred to as SGP 5 or the project, is to secure global environmental benefits through community-based biodiversity conservation initiatives and actions in selected priority sites in the Philippines. The project will pursue three components: (i) Community-based actions to improve the sustainability of protected areas (PAs); (ii) Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes, seascapes and sectors (PLS); (iii) Cross-cutting capacity development and knowledge management. To contribute to the achievement of these components and their expected results GEF-SGP 5 Philippines project will support local people's organizations, NGOs and CBOs in designing and implementing projects to contribute to global biodiversity conservation using the landscape approach and modelling and implementation of best practices.

Under the Biodiversity Focal Area, the project will support Strategic Objectives (SO) 1: Improving the sustainability of protected area systems and SO-2: Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes, seascapes, and sectors.

The project aims to generate global benefits by leveraging community-based efforts to conserve biodiversity through improving the effectiveness and sustainability of community PAs, which is an important part of Philippines NIPA system (nationwide system of PAs). To support sustainable use of biodiversity, the project will promote the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation objectives into agriculture, forest and fishery management practices in production land and seascapes (PLS), through measures such as organic certification for community-level and small-scale producers of biodiversity dependent products, improved community-based resource use of non-timber forest products, and community-level enforcement measures in near shore fisheries.

Project Progress Summary

The MTR analysis of progress towards outcomes is based on the results of consultations and field visits to an indicative range of projects that are being implemented with support from the SGP 5 Philippines project. These went some way towards demonstrating that the SGP 5 project is, after a slow start-up phase, and significant difficulties related to formalising ancestral domain ownership, selecting and mobilising a suitably qualified Responsible Party, and a

number of other normal project mobilisation delays, is proceeding satisfactorily and it can be expected that the project will achieve a high, (currently unquantifiable) proportion of the project's Objective, Outcomes and Outputs by the end of the OP5 period.

Table xxx shows progress by outcome and indicators as reported in the 2014 PIR completed at the MTR time. The Table also presents information related to progress towards project objective indicators including the relevant MTR ratings and their justification.

As noted above, the project is without doubt making commendable progress. Grant funds are almost completely committed and it is anticipated that by the July 2016 meeting of the National Steering Committee all grant funds will be committed. The 2016 Project Implementation Review (PIR) noted that "In June 2015 (reported in previous PIR), there were only 4 approved projects. During the reporting period, 28 more projects were approved, two of which are Planning Grants. By this time, however, only 27 projects are under implementation because three grantee organizations (IDEAS, TCD and SMPBTGAI) are yet to secure their Certification Precondition (the document evidencing Free and Prior Informed Consent) from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). This issue is also addressed later in this report.

The PIR also noted, and the MTR concur, that the commitments of grantees are indicative that targets of the SGP 5 will be met and, particularly with quantitative targets, exceeded. There is also reasonable evidence that, because of joint efforts of the CPMU and RP, who carryout ongoing monitoring of projects, this will contribute to the delivery of expected outcomes.

Other positive contributions include responses to address organizational and technical issues and the CPMU is working on ways to ensure that cross-cutting activities are carried out in a "consultative and participatory manner".

The MTR noted that cross-cutting capacity development is an explicit objective of the project. Stakeholder consultations, presentations, interviews and site visits and demonstrations all strongly indicate that many of the activities which support biodiversity conservation interventions also need to strengthen NGO, CBO, capability and capacity. This reality is instep with GEF UNDP long-standing support for strengthening the role of civil society in conservation².

The establishment of site-based hubs was noted by the MTR as a good example of adaptive management as the hubs are proving to be pivotal points of contact, capacity building and facilitation for "consolidating and synergizing local initiatives". The PIR noted, and the MTR again agree, "site-based hubs function as nerve-centres and quick response teams at the site level. They also assist the community of grantees in their respective sites in sharpening their analysis of environmental problems and issues for sharper policy advocacies. The hubs also bring to the grassroots the information, knowledge and skills to ensure the quality of projects"

² Since 2002, the direction of capacity development work undertaken by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) has been guided by the Strategic Approach to Enhance Capacity Building. This is based on efforts to analyse underlying capacities that cut across the 3 GEF focal areas.

**Table 2 MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table SGP 5
Philippines**

Measure	MTR Rating		Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A		
Progress Towards Results	Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)		
	Outcome 1 Effective models for community-based governance of protected areas demonstrated	S	<p>It is well recognised that formulating and successfully implementing systems that provide organisational structures and systems which reflect genuine community-based governance is a complex, time consuming, and socially intricate undertaking.</p> <p>The project, in the limited time it has been in place, is contributing to the establishment a useful foundation and creating a diversity of sustainable approaches towards potential community-based biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>The project through the active participation of its local partners, has achieved considerable advances in the establishment of partnerships with Local Government Units (LGUs) in the planning and implementation of bio-diversity projects.</p> <p>Apart from routine monitoring processes, particularly when the scale and significant numbers of grant interventions are taken into account, the mission concluded that once allocations had been made to grantees, advancing this outcome is, to a significant degree, outside the immediate influence of the CPMU and RP. However, the CPMU's and RP's mentoring of local project partners in project implementation have been a pivotal input in ensuring the effectiveness of the biodiversity conservation efforts.</p>
	Outcome 2: Community-managed landscapes and seascapes explicitly integrate biodiversity conservation objectives	S	<p>The MTR mission was consistently exposed to well thought-out projects for community development, capacity building, income generation etc. It was, however, often problematic to forge an association between the objectives for a particular intervention and a measurable biodiversity conservation outcome. The local implementing partners were more cognisant of the immediate project outcomes and could not connect these outcomes to long term biodiversity conservation goals.</p>

			<p>Successful implementation approaches to attain this complex Outcome, which includes approaches that “explicitly integrate biodiversity conservation objectives”, demands an understanding of, commitment to, and skills in participatory approaches and processes. The MTR observed the deep commitment of the grantees in ensuring that SGP 5 funded projects are efficiently implemented and attain project outcomes. The CPMU needs to continue to integrate the initial project initiatives into a coherent and rational biodiversity conservation approach.</p> <p>The MTR does not suggest that this means only “professional participation practitioners” should be used. It suggests, however, that if there is a lack of any, or all of these attributes, these gaps need to be addressed during project implementation.</p> <p>The MTR noted that a number of quantitative indicators had been established by grantees but was not aware of any qualitative standards that had been developed for the routine monitoring and evaluation of the level and effectiveness of project interventions to achieve this outcome.</p> <p>Application of Criteria and Indicator (C&I) approaches such as those formulated by the Center for International Forestry Research.³</p> <p>The project, in the limited time it has been in place, is contributing a useful foundation and concluded that a Satisfactory (S) rating is appropriate</p>
	Outcome 3 Alternative biodiversity friendly agriculture, fisheries and forestry products produced and marketed by 30 communities	S	<p>A recent analysis provided by the project reported that in quantitative terms the project has exceeded expectations and has delivered 49 functional BDFEs. The CPMU employs the “Biodiversity Partnerships Project (BPP) Tool” as a guide in evaluating and selection of projects. During the MTR the team was provided with the following information.</p> <p>A total of 17 grantee organizations are working with 63 communities to deliver biodiversity-friendly enterprises.</p>

³http://www.cifor.org/publications/pdf_files/Books/cmf.pdf

			<p>The CPMU and IP report progress by projects that were approved in earlier phases of the grant making process.</p> <p>These include:</p> <p>EVPRD (Samar) has planted abaca (Manila hemp) in 40 hectares of open areas within the Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) area.</p> <p>Green Mindanao, Inc in Basey, Eastern Samar, has enhanced shingles production among project beneficiaries.</p> <p>Culion Foundation (Palawan) has started work on value chain analyses of four product lines: (i) seaweed, (ii) cashew, and (iii) Non-Timber Forest Products, (iv) and Ecotourism.</p> <p>Local Indigenous Peoples are being given marketing information and assistance. Initial contacts with seaweed buyers have been established to support marketing of 7 tonnes of seaweed already produced by seaweed farmers.</p> <p>CFI has committed to do QC (Quality Control) on products, including labelling/branding and market testing in a fair-trade store in Quezon City.</p> <p>Eight on-site workshops on biodiversity-friendly enterprises (BDFE) criteria/checklist were undertaken.</p> <p>PRRM is in a preparatory stage involving formulation of criteria for the selection of pilot barangays (villages) and for selection of farmer co-operators for the demonstration of biodiversity friendly enterprises through diversified and integrated organic farming systems; site validation; profiling of social enterprise commodities in the provinces of Quirino, Isabela and Nueva Vizcaya.</p> <p>Tanim Kalikasan has established 4 community nurseries for cacao seedlings. These will enable project partners to produce 35,000 cacao seedlings. These will be distributed to suitably skilled project partners.</p> <p>In projects being implements by the NGO DALUHAY1 fisher community is in negotiations with the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) for mangrove footbridge ecotourism linked to seagrass-mangrove conservation zone.</p> <p>In Northern Samar, the funded projects</p>
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			<p>cover areas from the buffer zone of the Samar Island Natural Park down to the farm lands and extends to the coastal areas contributing not only to the 'Ridge-to Reef' conservation efforts but has provided direct economic benefits to local communities. The diverse project interventions including micro-finance, livelihood projects, eco-tourism, technological support in product development and marketing contributes to the enhancement of sustainability in community efforts and benefits in biodiversity conservation work.</p> <p>The various BDFE livelihood projects serves as models where adjacent communities could replicate. This serves as positive reinforcements to communities to sustain conservations efforts. The project, in the limited time it has been in place, is contributing a useful foundation and concluded that a Satisfactory (S) rating is appropriate</p>
	<p>Outcome 4 Increased capacity of GEF-SGP stakeholders to diagnose and understand the complex and dynamic nature of global environmental problems and to develop local solutions</p>	<p>Achievement Rating: S</p>	<p>There has been a significant ongoing activity within this outcome. Most of these are defined in the PIR and include:</p> <p>CPMU and grantees trained a total of 1,253 individuals. This aggregate includes: 125 individuals trained as trainers for Ecosystems Valuation (EV), Community-Based Biodiversity Monitoring and Evaluation Systems (CBMES), Biodiversity-Friendly Enterprises (BDFE).</p> <p>A particularly definitive and useful advance was the establishment of 4 Site Hubs (1) Palawan NGO Network, Inc. (PNNI); (2) Samar Center for Empowerment and Resource Development (CERD) Inc.; (3) Lower Sierra Madre Tanggol Kalikasan (TK), Inc.</p> <p>These, in association with the PI CPMU and partner-grantees, target training for some 4,254 individuals.</p> <p>The CPMU and / or Project grantees have formulated Action Plans that would redeploy training opportunities to project operational sites.</p> <p>Agreement that 4 Site Hubs would facilitate the localization of the training programs.</p> <p>Handbooks on CBMES, BDFE and EV have been drafted, field tested during Training of Trainers (ToT) events. It is planned that these will be updated to address comments</p>

			<p>received.</p> <p>Handbook on Knowledge Management (KM) has been drafted and is being reviewed.</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) and Information, Education and communication (IEC) Handbooks are actively being developed.</p> <p>Other reported interventions included:</p> <p>Social media group page for the participants of the TOT on CBMES, BDFE and EV.;</p> <p>TK has rolled out the CBMES training (conducted on June 22-24, 2016);</p> <p>Environmental Law Training-Workshop for Biodiversity Conservation in Lower Sierra Madre conducted June 17-19, 2016;</p> <p>Facebook page set-up for the Lower Sierra Madre Hub;</p> <p>The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) is developing a database as a resource for partners in Upper Sierra Madre;</p> <p>Organizational Development training with inputs on financial management for partner POs of the Community Forestry Foundation of Quirino, Inc. (CFFQI) conducted in Cabarroguis, Quirino June 7-9;</p> <p>Facilitation assistance extended at a workshop held by FREEDS on the role / delineation of local stakeholders as members of the LCA Management Team and TWG in terms of formulation and implementation of the Palali-Mamparang Mountain Range LCA Management Plan;</p> <p>Write shop on Project Development for 30 POs/NGOs (10 each in Isabela, Quirino and Nueva Vizcaya) with assisting agencies/partners from NGOs, LGUs and National Line Agencies was conducted June 23- 30 2016 in the four provinces of the Upper Sierra Madre;</p> <p>Assistance to the Save Sierra Madre Network Alliance Inc. (SSMNA);</p> <p>Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) was instrumental in the creation of the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park Permaculture Movement – this is a multi-stakeholder group in Isabela that advocates sustainable development;</p> <p>GREEN Mindanao trained 250 individuals on</p>
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			<p>Ecosystem Conservation and management, Wildlife Conservation and Protection, Gender Mainstreaming and rights based development, Organizational Development and Community Mapping;</p> <p>PNNI has been assisting organizations in Palawan for developing proposals;</p> <p>CERD conducted a Project Development Work / Write shop to help develop project proposals.</p> <p>The CPMU has been (i) coordinating with the Climate Change Commission to enable LGU and their partner CSOs (particularly SGP grantees) to access the People's Survival Fund and (ii) connecting its grantees with other financing institutions for added funding.</p> <p>CRM related projects have been given to the Coastal and Marine Division (CMD) of the BMB for possible funding through the new multi-million peso Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (CMEMP).</p> <p>Wetlands-related projects have been referred to the Caves, Watersheds and other Ecosystems Division (CAWED) of BMB for additional funding.</p> <p>Talks have been held to use a New Zealand Embassy fund with UNDP for additional co-financing.</p> <p>MTR Comment</p> <p>The mission concluded that most of the grantees were explicit about the "complex and dynamic nature of global environmental problems".</p> <p>The MTR was exposed to a range of interesting themes associated with the 51 projects that make up the project portfolio.</p> <p>Almost all the projects, that the mission were briefed on or inspected, articulated that compliance and enforcement are an ongoing problem.</p>
	Outcome 5: Enhanced capacities of GEF-SGP grantees to monitor and evaluate their projects and environmental	S	<p>The mission concluded there is no question that stakeholder participation in the SGP has been strong and is a fundamental component of the project's overall rationale. This facet is especially important with the engagement that has been developed between central government agencies, CPMU, RP and national and provincial based CBO and NGO.</p>

	trends.		<p>Engagement varies from province to province but overall the mission's perspective is that stakeholder participation component of the project is S</p> <p>The project, in the limited time it has been in place, is contributing a constructive foundation and concluded that a S rating is appropriate</p>
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management		S	<p>Arguably one of the most useful interventions noted by the MTR was the engagement of the Programme Development Specialist. An important function of this appointment was, in conjunction with the support work of the M&E specialist during the design of the project's monitoring and evaluation system.</p> <p>The MTR understands that the aim for this innovation is to establish ways that will "sharpen indicators and synergize monitoring and evaluation" across the spectrum of activities the project is supporting. Integrated into this process is the concept to diagnose, through a consultative process, the monitoring and evaluation capabilities of grantees while, at the same time identifying elements that will help the present indicators (as identified by the grantees in their project documents and inception workshops) to become more meaningful. For example, what is the value of biodiversity-friendly enterprises in the social, cultural and political empowerment of the people, particularly of women.</p> <p>It is planned to develop a training program that will be based around the "pursuit of the land/seascape approach of SGP-5 Philippines".</p> <p>CPMU held consultations in each of the identified land/seascapes with grantees and other stakeholders (local governments, local offices of relevant national government agencies, academia, other CSOs) and is finalizing the land/seascape indicators.</p> <p>Data gathering was jumpstarted through workshops conducted between April and June 2016. Data was consolidated and analysed in August-October 2016. This provides project stakeholders with a useful and pragmatic platform for articulating their objectives, indicators and designing their management and evaluation programs at a</p>

			<p>land/seascape level.</p> <p>The MTR understands that these will be progressively integrated into a programme-level monitoring and evaluation design. This should assist the CPMU to position individual projects into perspective, and provide a sharper analysis mechanism.</p> <p>The aim, as articulated in the PIR is "we want to see how SGP - through its small community-based projects - has been changing the biodiversity, social and governance landscapes in its priority sites; and, how it is contributing to national development goals".</p>
Sustainability	MS		<p>The MTR submits that the Moderately Satisfactory Rank for SGP5 Philippines, despite several significant start-up complications, is appropriate. The project is making noteworthy progress and this is recognised by the rankings in Table 3 Synopsis Project Progress Summary</p> <p>A particular area, in which the MTR noted that progress has / is being made, includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a sharper focus that clearly defines goals, which emphasise land / seascape management approaches, as a way to guide the NSC and TAC towards sustainable project funding decisions, planning processes, approving proposals, and b) significant improvements to the monitoring and evaluation systems. <p>The MTR, based around several developing trends and achievements, suggest that the project has a reasonable chance to contribute to ambitious global environmental objectives.</p> <p>Areas that the MTR suggest would contribute to sustainability include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) co-financing and the need to explore opportunities to increase co-financing; b) agreements with local governments to ensure sustainability of on-the-ground initiatives; c) increased focus on the COMDEKS process; d) intensified emphasis on ways that development, using conservation as an incentive, can be up-scaled to include larger geographic areas and, by definition, include more

		communities.
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Concise Summary of Conclusions⁴

The mission determined that the CPMU, IP, Hubs and the UNDP CO are managing SGP5 in a well-organized collaborative and professional manner.

Positive community commitment and engagement are a constructive and positive feature of the project.

These are grounds for optimism and the project should achieve significant outcomes.

The project's global aspirations and the small interventions that grantees are putting in place are difficult to measure.

The complexity of biodiversity conservation interventions associated with Landscape and Seascapes concepts are problematical and time-consuming and, in many places, are underestimated.

"Connectivity Conservation" is a term used to describe the consensus among conservation researchers and practitioners that land and sea scapes need to be integrated.

The provinces SGP5 is working in were selected for their potential contribution to global biodiversity priorities.

The mission concluded that project sites were determined by grantees during the application phase, and these are not necessarily representative of priority biodiversity conservation areas.

The relationship between project sites and Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) and Critical Habitats (CH) are an important consideration.

The MTR mission suggests that the project should, as a far as possible, have a direct geographic relationship with KBAs and CH.

Some grantees expressed interest in tourism activities. The MTR recognises these aspirations but it records reservations about community expectations that tourism will provide a panacea for economic development.

Management tools that will help to minimize the potential negative impacts of tourism are available and these should be investigated.

The delays and impediments the project experienced since its inception have, to a significant degree, been addressed and overcome and the project is progressively implementing a wide range of activities across a wide geographic spectrum.

The MTR considers that at this stage it is premature to assess sustainability.

The relationship between the SGP 5 main objective, which sets a global aspiration, and the relatively small interventions that grantees are putting in place, are difficult to reconcile.

⁴ Also Refer Section V Conclusions and Recommendations

A major cause of delays that was brought to the attention of the MTR was the process for the issuance of Certificates of Precondition (CP) from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP).

The mission suggests that the CPMU and RP should have recognized this problem and instigated high-level remedial measures directly with NCIP officials.

SGP5-supported interventions would benefit from a coherent overall land and marine planning approach.

A concept under-pinning SGP5 is that interventions are designed to support and jump-start larger interventions.

The mission noted that in most locations larger interventions are not in place and SGP5 is the foremost source of funding and support.

The mission gained an impression that some grantees regard Locally Managed Conservation Areas (LMCA) as an easy / low-cost option.

The MTR gained an impression that the project should strengthen ecological, biodiversity and natural resource management skills. The project's social sciences skills are well covered

There are examples where project-funded interventions are making noteworthy progress because they have a person or persons with vision, commitment and passion. However, most of the project's CSO partners have been working on biodiversity conservation even before the inception of the project. They have gained local communities trust and cooperation making them "Champions" for biodiversity conservation.

Hubs need to exert more influence and could play a leading role in ensuring that best practice and other appropriate methodologies are shared and replicated.

Several contemporary resource management and protected area planning tools are available and the MTR concluded that these could be applied.

Hubs and academic institutions such as CLSU could play an effective role by developing training programs using some of these tools. Possibilities include: Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool [SMART], and Open Standards for Conservation Practise [OS] Global Footprint.

Opportunities for up skilling CPMU staff to be involved in training courses that will allow application of the Open Standards for Conservation Practice are available and these should be investigated.

The MTR concluded that some grantees were not explicit about the root causes of the actual problem a particular intervention they are implementing was trying to address.

The MTR made the point during most consultations that biodiversity degradation was primarily caused by anthropogenic overexploitation of resources, including illegal extraction, and that projects were playing "catch up".

Almost all interventions the mission was briefed on, or inspected, articulated that compliance and enforcement are an ongoing and significant issue.

The CPMU, DEC, RP and grantees would benefit from researching and application of the SMART patrolling and monitoring system. SMART would need some adaptation to work with NGOs and CO but the MTR is confident that this is a realistic and achievable aspiration.

Other aspects that the CPMU and IP ought to consider include:

- Limited endeavours are being made to source co-funding.
- No local governments have launched a community-based partnership undertaking to date.
- Capacity building requirements for SGP5 are formidable and both the hubs and academic institutions could contribute and play a more active role in this area.
- There have been 100 site-based trainers that have been trained in Community-based Biodiversity M&E Systems, Ecosystem Valuation, and Biodiversity-Friendly Enterprises. The complex topics such as these cannot be covered in short workshop sessions, and the CPMU must ensure that these skills of grantees are adequate.

Recommendations Summary

1. That in recognition of the significant delays and impediments during SGP5 start-up, the MTR strongly recommends a 1.5-year, no-cost extension.
2. That the CPMU, RP, and Hubs consider formulating and developing a management design that maximises the attributes of each organisation which could be replicated to enhance future SGP projects
3. That the CPMU, RP and Hubs discuss possible negative project impacts with grantees, and formulate measures to minimize the negative impacts.
4. That the CPMU should strengthen its M & E and IEC interventions to ensure that the grantees understood the relationship between SGP5 main objective, which sets a global aspiration, and the small-scale interventions that grantees are putting in place.
5. That the ground-breaking work⁵ being developed by the CPMU related to Landscape and Seascapes concepts is incorporated into projects especially, i the principles that under-pin "Connectivity Conservation".
6. That the CPMU, RP and Hubs be asked to evaluate and report on the adequacy and operational capacity of the ecological, biodiversity and natural resource management skills that are available to support project interventions.
7. That the relationship between Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) and Critical Habitats (CH), which are important in terms of conservation at scale, should, as a far as possible, strive to establish direct geographic relationships with KBA and CH.
8. The CPMU clarifies institutional working relationship with the NCIP to limit project implementation impediments and take steps to address NCIPs capacity in responding to the needs of SGP5.
9. That the CPMU advance its efforts to support a coherent overall land and marine planning approach, including advocacy at the highest levels of government.
10. That CPMU give emphasis to capacity development, and management systems for Locally Managed Conservation Areas (LMCA).

⁵An Analysis of the Contributions to SGP -5 Indicators of Approved and Prospective Projects and Commitment of Grant Funds, with Recommendations on Moving Forward

- 11.CPMU IP and Hubs consider the formulation of a Management Systems and Capacity Building programme⁶.
- 12.That the CPMU, RP, PSC and PTRC give attention on providing support to the person or persons with vision, commitment and passion and, where possible, provide additional support to “champions”.
- 13.That the CPMU support Hubs to exert more influence and play a leading role in ensuring that best practice and other appropriate methodologies are shared amongst grantees, and replicated.
- 14.That the CPMU and RP investigate and apply contemporary resource management and protected area planning tools including: Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool [SMART], Open Standards for Conservation Practise [OS], and Global Footprint.
- 15.That, where and when it is considered appropriate, grantees be requested to revisit funding applications to ensure there is clarity amongst all partners about the biodiversity conservation problems interventions are addressing.
- 16.That project proposals are reviewed to ensure adequate provision is made for compliance and enforcement, and that application of the SMART patrolling and monitoring system be investigated and, if necessary, adapted to work with NGO, CBO, etc.
- 17.That the CPMU give priority during the remaining period of the SGP5 to:
 - Mobilise endeavours to source co-funding;
 - encourage provincial governors to become more active and, where appropriate, launch community-based partnerships;
 - give priority to the formulation of community-level regulations or enactments for biodiversity-friendly production.
- 18.Opportunities for up-skilling CPMU staff to be involved in training courses using the Open Standards for Conservation Practice are available and ought to be investigated and supported.
- 19.Consideration be given to a multi-focal approach in future SGP interventions that more accurately reflect the land/seascape approach and IUCN Category V Protected Landscape Management principles – this would involve application of other GEF focal areas such as sustainable agriculture, and climate change.

⁶ The mission gained an impression that a limited number of SGP5 stakeholders have had specific protected area management training. A priority aim of SGP5 is for PAs to be collaboratively managed with local communities. Many of these stakeholders also lack skills in PA management. The mission suggests, therefore, that the processes for formulating a Management Systems and Human Capacity Action Plan is an imperative if SGP5 is serious about its objectives, including the need to increase the knowledge, skills, ability and competence of staff and community members to collaborate and carry out their respective roles and functions.

Barriers generated by inadequate capacity also have a physical component and include poor communication systems and infrastructure such as roads. These inhibit communication between PA staff and contribute to the ineffectiveness of enforcement and management.

II. Introduction.

Purpose of the MTR and Objectives

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policy at the specific project level for UNDP/GEF projects incorporate four objectives. These are:

- i monitor and evaluate results and impacts;
- ii provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvements;
- iii promote accountability for resource use;
- iv document, provide feedback on, and disseminate lessons learned.

In accordance with UNDP/GEF M&E policies and procedures, all regular and medium-sized projects supported by the GEF are mandated to undergo a Mid Term Review (MTR) at the halfway point of the implementation cycle. The MTR is required before a proposal for additional funding (or an extension or subsequent phase of the same project) can be considered.

The MTR process is intended to assess the relevance, performance and success of projects and look for early signs of potential impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global environmental goals. They are also an opportunity to identify/document lessons learned and make recommendations that might improve design and implementation of other SGP UNDP/GEF projects.

Objective

The overall objective of the SGP MTR was to review progress towards the project's objectives and outcomes, assess the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of how the project has moved towards its objectives and outcomes, identify strengths and weaknesses in project design and implementation, and provide recommendations on design modifications that might have increased the likelihood of success, and on specific actions that might be taken into consideration in designing future SGP that are focussing on biodiversity and / or its allied characteristics.

Scope and Methodology

Bruce Jefferies (International Consultant/Team Leader) and Felix L Tanedo (National Consultant) made up the MTR team. The CPMU facilitated logistical arrangements. A combination of information collection methods was developed and applied. These, as far as possible, responded to the anticipated wide range of stakeholder perspectives and expectations and enabled a methodology that validated results which would strengthen the mission's conclusions and recommendations.

The MTE commenced on the 27th Feb 2017 and a 3-phase methodology was applied:

Phase 1: Work plan development, information gathering, document preparation and logistical arrangements.

This phase included acquisition of UNDP and GEF project documentation, annual and midyear reports, midterm evaluation, budgets, work plans and other associated project documentation. This documentation was assessed and

analysed to develop an understanding of the key aspects of the project, including its scope, intended purpose, intended and unintended operational limitations, implementation modalities, and project outputs and outcomes.

Skype meetings with Ms Diana Salvemini and Mr. Nick Remple Global RTA for the SGP, and CPMU staff and UNDP CO were undertaken. These discussions provided insights and perspectives on the project that are not recorded in project reports as well as perceptions on project management.

Phase 2 In country visits, project implementation / activity assessments and interviews. In country mission included a good cross section of site visits.

A schedule of the field itinerary is attached in **Error! Reference source not found..**

The ability of the CPMU to organise stakeholder meetings and interviews as well as the logistics for the mission were critical elements of the mission.

Phase 3 MTR Draft Report

Feedback from in-country presentations and a mission daily log has been incorporated into the MTR. The interview checklist/questionnaire developed to guide this approach is included as **Error! Reference source not found.** A schedule of Hubs, Grantees and other Organisations that the MTR interacted with makes up **Error! Reference source not found..**

The PowerPoint used by the mission as a general introduction is large but can be made available on request: Contact Bruce Jefferies at brucejefferies@xtra.co.nz.

Structure of the evaluation report

The content for this report is structured around the Table of Contents included in the MTR Terms of Reference. These are consistent with the guidelines established in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Mid Term Evaluations of UNDPGEF SGP Projects.

III Project Description and Background Context

Development context

The Philippines is host to over 52,000 species of flora and fauna, with 13,500 plant species comprising 5% of the world's total flora. It is in fact one of 17 mega diverse countries, which together host 70-80% of the world's life forms. The Philippines is believed to harbour more diversity of life than any other country on earth on a per hectare basis. However, its species are considered to be among the most threatened in the world with the whole country being a hotspot or one of the most severely threatened of the megadiverse countries.

Despite the general recognition of the importance of biodiversity, however, threats to biodiversity continue to exist. The Philippine MediumTerm Development Plan 2004 – 2010 profiles the destruction of forest, freshwater and marine ecosystems and the resulting biodiversity crisis. With the loss of biodiversity comes a reduction in the natural capital (total economic value of ecosystem services) that local communities depend upon in the Philippines. The latest environmental indicators show that the various aspects of environmental sustainability are rated poor or low. Overall, the ability of the major ecosystems to provide and maintain a regular stream of economic goods and ecological services has been significantly affected due to declining stocks and reduced

coverage and quality, partly due to the following threats: (1) Habitat destruction/ land use change; (2) Overexploitation of biodiversity; and, (3) pollution.

Problems that the project sought to address: threats and barriers targeted

The destruction of the Philippines' original forest, freshwater and marine ecosystems have led to an unprecedented biodiversity crisis – a direct threat to the wellbeing of rural communities, and indigenous peoples. Biodiversity is a source of environmental services from shelter to food, fuel, water and even protection from disasters or extreme weather events. To protect themselves from this unfortunate development, local communities – working on their own, or through their local organizations, or with help from NGOs – have taken up the cudgels of protecting and managing the natural resources on which they depend. Through years of conservation work, and armed with pieces of legislation and other policy instruments that recognize their indispensable role in the development process and natural resource management (among them, NIPAS Act, IPRA, Fisheries Code, Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act, Local Government Code), local communities, their organizations and NGOs have attained varying levels of success in ensuring their wellbeing in relation to the conservation of their natural resources, be they in protected areas (where biodiversity enhancement and protection are emphasized) or in protected landscapes/seascapes (where biodiversity conservation is considered along with several management objectives, including cultural traditions or sustainable economic activities).

Community efforts are however affected by three major barriers:

- Local communities and indigenous communities are hampered in their ability to form and manage community-based PA by inadequate organizational capacity owing to limited community organizing experience and communication skills, lack of knowledge of legal processes, and lack of experience and “proof of concept” to guide them in restoring critical natural habitats successfully.
- Organizational knowledge, experience and market barriers constrain the adoption of sustainable landuse plans and practices across landscapes.
- Peer to peer training mechanisms and networks, and partnership platforms for capacity building, are not well developed and there are few capacity building opportunities available to local rural and small urban communities.

Project Description, Strategy and Project Implementation Arrangements

Project Description

The general focus of SGP5 is to support and facilitate Local People's Organizations, NGOs and CBOs to design and implement projects to contribute to global biodiversity conservation by applying the landscape approach. Individual projects will contribute concrete outputs to the achievement of three interrelated components and their respective outcomes: (1) Community-based actions improve the sustainability of protected areas (PAs); (2) Mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes,

seascapes and sectors (PLS); and; (3) Cross Cutting Capacity Development and Knowledge Management.

Project Strategy

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP) provides non-governmental and community-based organizations (NGOs/CBOs) in developing countries with grants to enable them to tackle global environmental challenges while addressing local sustainable development needs. The total fund available for the project is US\$ 4,583,333.00 in the original PRODOC – this was revised to US\$ 4,683,333.00 to include a grant from the NZ government

A distinct focus for SGP5 is to contribute to overcoming threats and barriers to biodiversity, support local people's organizations, NGOs and CBOs in designing and implementing projects to contribute to global biodiversity conservation using the landscape approach and modelling and implementation of best practices

Project Implementation Arrangements

SGP5 management arrangements are distinctive and, during the initial stages of the project, were to some degree controversial. The preferred modality is that projects are managed by a Civil Society Organisation.

The Philippines SGP5 assessed four options on the basis of (i) cost efficiency, (ii) effectiveness, and flexibility. These included:

Option 1: Improved UNOPS execution;

Option 2: Execution through an international NGO or NGO consortium;

Option 3: Country specific execution modalities, and:

Option 4: Combinations that mix Option 1 or Option 2 with Option 3.

Implementing Partner is the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB). Other elements of the modality include a National Steering Committee (NSC), Project Technical Review Committee (PTRC), Country Program Management Unit (CPMU), Project Hubs and the Responsible Party (RP).

Roles of each of these parties are described below:

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB).

Project timing and milestones

Project Duration: 4 years (June 2013 – July 2017)

Project Budget : \$ 9,686,240

GEF: \$ 4,583,333

National Gov't: \$ 3,002,907

UNDP : \$ 1,000,000

Others (in-kind): \$ 1,100,000

Expected Milestones (Outcomes)

At least 10 community managed protected or conservation areas established or enhanced encompassing at least 100,000 hectares.

40% increase in relevant dimensions of management effectiveness in target protected areas, as measured by the METT.

1,000 hectares of mangrove and/or seagrass areas within the 100,000-ha community managed protected or conserved areas are rehabilitated or protected.

400,000 hectares of production landscapes and/or seascapes are under community management or co-management arrangements, mainstreaming biodiversity conservation objectives, thereby reducing threats to biodiversity.

At least 30 community-based land use plans or ancestral domain plans incorporate biodiversity and ecosystem services valuations.

30 communities produce and market biodiversity friendly agriculture, fisheries, forestry and ecotourism products.

At least 4,000 community-level resource users and managers are trained to use the GEFSGP knowledge networking and partnership platforms, and are actively using these tools.

Conservation and sustainable use approaches of the projects are replicated in at least 20 new grants by year 4.

50% increase in amount of co-funding for Philippines GEFSGP by year 3.

Community-based partnership initiatives for GEFSGP launched by at least 4 LGUs by end of Year 4.

SGP Philippines M&E framework is established.

All project grantees, except Planning Grant recipients, are trained on GEFSGP M&E framework and protocols, improving 30% in level of knowledge on fundamentals of M&E.

At least 80% of projects, except Planning Grants, adopt/adapt and implement GEFSGP M&E framework and protocols, and improve on the quality and accuracy of project monitoring reports, as assessed by progress reports.

Stakeholders

The Project Document clearly identifies the priority project stakeholder/interest groups. These include:

Stakeholders	Roles and Responsibilities
Central Government Institutions and Agencies	
Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-PAWB)	The DENR-PAWB is the designated GEF Operational Focal Point for Philippines. The GEF Operational Focal Point is the Chair of the GEF Philippines National Steering Committee (NSC) and the project's national steering committee. The DENR-PAWB is the national agency mandated to protect, conserve and manage the environment and natural resources of the country. The DENR-PAWB and its concerned bureaus will be involved in the formulation of appropriate policy, guidelines and tools to improve and further enhance the implementation of its plans and programs including policies on biodiversity. The DENR-PAWB field offices will be strengthened to support and assist the LGUs to develop their capacities in applying these tools in order to promote mainstreaming of biodiversity in the production landscape plan of the LGUs.

National Economic Development Authority (NEDA)	NEDA is the agency overseeing the planning and monitoring of the UNDP Country Programme. NEDA will sit as member of the National Steering Committee. It will monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Project, as part of its inherent role in the management of the ODA portfolio.
Department of Agriculture (DA) / Dep't Agrarian Reform (DAR)	This is the agency in charge of agricultural development of the country. The DA/DAR will be a key partner in the implementation of the Project specifically in terms of policy support to the development of alternative biodiversity products from agriculture and fisheries.
Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG)	This agency provides administrative supervision over all LGUs in the country. DILG will be a member of the NSC and it will have a key role in the facilitating resolutions relevant to LGU participation in PA management.
National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP)	NCIP is the government agency responsible for the protection of IP's welfare. It will be a primary partner and will be a member of the NSC since most of the sites of the Project are ancestral domains. NCIP can help facilitate linkages with IP groups in the sites, support to policy development concerning IP management of PAs.
II Local Government	
Local Government Units (LGUs)	The LGUs have political jurisdictions in areas where the PAs/KBAs are located. They are mandated by law to spearhead the passing of local ordinances, develop and enforce regulations in their political jurisdictions. The LGUs can also provide logistical support to the projects in terms of technical expertise, facilities, or even vehicles when and if needed. They are responsible for comprehensive land use planning and in the formulation and implementation of local development plans. While the communities are the main target of capacity building activities in the Project, venues for discussions, collaborations and consensus building shall be included in the project. Mutual support and understanding between the LGUs and the local communities will increase the projects chances of succeeding in protecting biodiversity corridors, and promoting sustainable management within and around PAs/KBAs.
Leagues of Cities, Municipalities	The Leagues ensure there is national level representation in the discussion of policies and programs that affect LGUs. They will be an important partner in disseminating lessons, and advocacy in strengthening the capacities of LGUs in biodiversity mainstreaming. It will support lessons sharing through its existing mechanisms.
III. Civil Society Organizations and Private Sector	
Private sector	The private sector is definitely included in the value chain of biodiversity conservation and its involvement includes translating environmental benefits into monetary terms. The sectors' practices affect utilization of natural resources. Fortunately, more and more private sector organizations are espousing corporate social responsibilities that can be potentially harnessed to support conservation efforts directly. The Project will engage actively with the private sector to influence their actions, and explore potential investment opportunities on biodiversity business and other production systems. Their resources will be harnessed to promote investments in sustainable use, and

	provide alternative income generating opportunities to communities to steer them away from destructive practices.
IP groups within the selected sites	IP groups are primary stakeholders in the Project. They stand to benefit from the Project, and suffer the consequences of inaction on biodiversity conservation. They have strong historical and cultural ties to their domains, which coincide with the boundaries of existing PAs. Their indigenous practices and knowledge systems are mainly consistent with conservation objectives. They will take an active role in the implementation of local actions to support integrated local development plans, in partnership with LGUs, local communities, DENR-PAWB field offices, and other local stakeholders, as appropriate. They will also be responsible for issuing the Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) for the Project in selected areas. ⁷
Local NGOs and CBOs	Local NGOs and CBOs are primary project beneficiaries. As the GEF-SGP grantees the GEF-SGP will work with them to finalize eligible proposals for funding under the project's three main components and seven outcomes.
Academic Research Institutions and	The academic and research institutions help provide scientific foundations for project initiatives through their research and other academic work in the regions/provinces where the Project sites are located. They will be involved in the conducting of research and other studies, and in sharing of scientific information on the sites, especially so if the communities have contributed to the researches made. They will provide their expertise such as advisory support to selected Project activities.
Women and Youth	Women and youth will be given particular attention in the project so that their potential can be harnessed to contribute to improving sustainable management in the production landscapes.

In addition to these organisations, the project relies significantly on the innovation that was introduced during project implementation. These are referred to as Hubs. There are 4 Hubs:

Samar Island Center for Empowerment and Resource Development, Inc. (CERD),
Lower Sierra Madre:

Tanggol Kalikasan, Upper Sierra Madre:

The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, Inc. (PRRM),
Palawan NGO Network, Inc. (PNNI)

The MTR was impressed with the work of the Hub network and concluded that these provide the "glue" that keeps the project on track at an operations level. The role of these groups should not be underestimated and, in the view of the mission, the scope and responsibilities of the Hubs could be expanded.

SGP5 is currently comprised of 52 projects. The CPMU advised that these are working with 120 communities.

⁷The Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) requires that all development projects undertaken in areas with IP communities should have the FPIC

The Hubs have conducted site-based conferences as part of their effort to recognize and apply best practice. These addressed project implementation challenges, common policy hurdles, etc., The mission was informed that a national SGP5 conference is planned for April or May 2017 to identify best practices at the national level.

National Steering Committee (NSC)

The National Steering Committee

(NSC) is the highest policymaking body of the Programme. It provides overall guidance and direction to the country programme. It contributes to establishing mechanisms for country programme sustainability. The NSC is responsible for selecting and approving projects and for ensuring and monitoring their technical and substantive quality.

The NSC is composed of voluntary members from the NGO sector, academic and scientific institutions, other civil society organizations, the host government and UNDP.

Project Technical Review Committee

The primary role of the PTRC is to appraise project proposals and comment on their technical aptness and assess their alignment with the project's expected outcomes and outputs. The committee is composed of individuals with expertise in biodiversity conservation, protected area (PA) management, community development, enterprise development, economics and other appropriate areas.

Country Programme Management Unit (CPMU)

The CPMU is headed by the Country Programme Manager (Atty. Rodolfo Ferdinand N. Quicho, Jr) and is responsible for the day-to-day management of SGP-5.

The CPMU Manager is supported by the Programme Development Specialist;2 Administration and Finance staff, communications specialists and a professional grants programme management staff member.

Project Hubs

Four site-based hubs have been established. The primary role for hubs is to advise the CPMU of appropriate and strategic crosscutting capacity building interventions.

The hubs were awarded strategic grants to establish themselves in the following locations:(1) Palawan NGO Network, Inc. (PNNI) for Palawan (2) Center for Empowerment and Resource Development (CERD), Inc. for Samar; (3) Tanggol Kalikasan (TK), Inc. for Lower Sierra Madre, (includes the provinces of Laguna, Rizal, Quezon, Aurora, Bulacan and Nueva Ecija) and, (4) Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM), Inc. for Upper Sierra Madre, which includes the provinces of Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, Aurora and Cagayan.

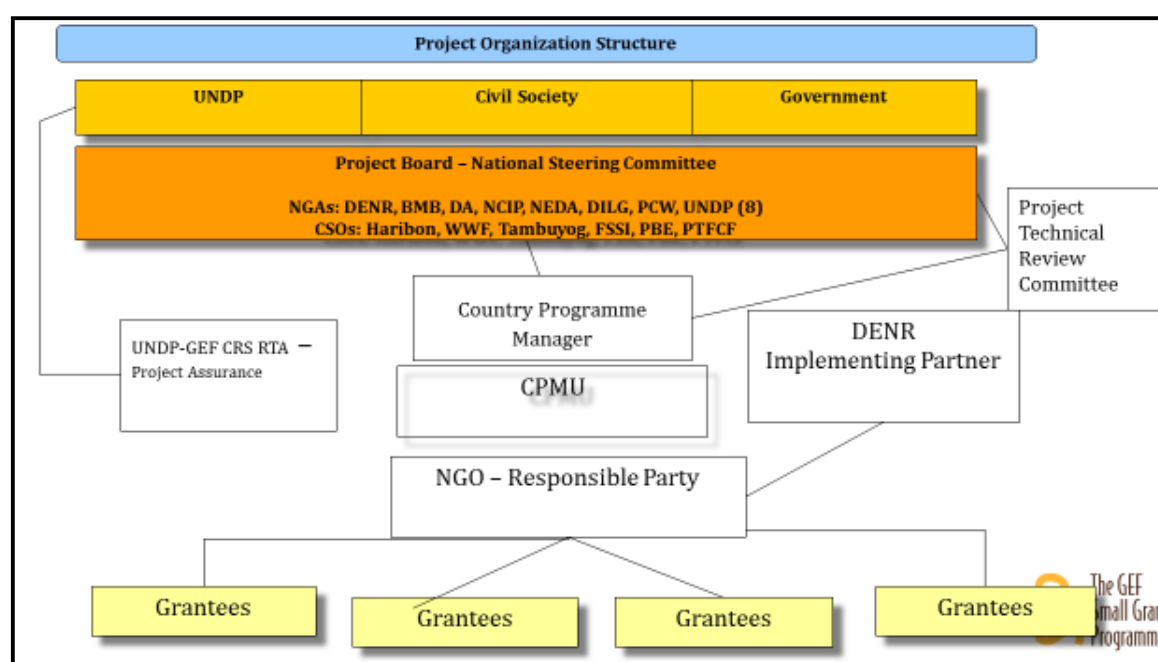
Responsible Party

Following a competitive bidding and selection process the Responsible Party (RP) was allocated to the Foundation for the Philippine Environment.

The primary role of the RP is, in close collaboration with the CPMU, to undertake the management of grants. The selection of the FPE emphasises the primary and

critical role of civil society organizations (CSOs) during implementation of SGP-5. The RP was chosen because of its well-established track record in grant making and administration in the area of biodiversity conservation.

Figure 1 SGP5 Management Structure⁸



National Commission for Indigenous People (NCIP)

An important point to note is that the NSC made a policy decision that the SGP5 should not enter into grant agreement with the grantees without a CP and it is a responsibility of the grantees to apply for their CPs. The CPMU did, however, broker an MOA between BMB and the NCIP Commission. This helped to ensure that grantees would only have to undergo Community Validation instead of the complete FPIC process. It was also pointed out that the CPMU intervened in the process when it was realized that regional and field offices of the NCIP were not moving forward fast enough with the FPIC processes of the grantees.

Mandate

- The NCIP shall protect and promote the interest and well-being of the ICCs/IPs with due regard to their beliefs, customs and institutions.

Powers and Functions of the Commission

- To serve as the primary government agency through which ICCs/IPs can seek government assistance and as the medium through which such assistance be extended;
- To review and assess the conditions of ICCs/IPs including existing laws and ideas pertinent thereto and to propose relevant laws and policies to address role in national development;
- To formulate and implement policies, plans, programs and projects for the economic, social and cultural development of the ICCs/IPs and to monitor the implementation thereof;
- To request and engage the services and support of experts from other agencies of government or employ private experts and consultants as may be required in the pursuit of its objectives;

⁸ Matrix source MTR briefing from CPMU

- To issue certificate of ancestral land/domain title;
- Subject to existing laws, to enter into contracts, agreements, arrangement, with government or private agencies or entities as may be necessary to attain objectives of this Act, and subject to the approval of the President, to obtain loans from government lending institutions and other lending institutions to finance its programs;
- To negotiate for funds and to accept grants, donations, gifts and/or properties in whatever form and from whatever source, local and international, subject to the approval of the President of the Philippines, for the benefit of ICCs/IPs and administer the same in accordance with the terms thereof or in the absence of any condition, in such manner consistent with the interest of ICCs/IPs as well as existing laws;
- To coordinate development programs and projects for the advancement of ICCs/IPs and to oversee the proper implementation thereof;
- To convene periodic conventions or assemblies of IPs to review, assess as well as propose policies or plans;
- To advise the President of the Philippines on all matters relating to the ICCs/IPs and to submit within sixty (60) days after the close of each calendar year, a report of its operations and achievements;
- To submit to Congress appropriate legislative proposals intended to carry out the policies under this Act;
- To prepare and submit the appropriate budget to the Office of the President;
- To issue appropriate certification as a pre-condition to the grant of permit, lease, grant, or any other similar authority for the disposition, utilization, management and appropriation by any private individual, corporate entity or any government agency, corporation or subdivision thereof or any part or portion the ancestral domain taking into consideration the consensus approval of the ICCS/IPs concerned;
- To decide all appeals from the decisions and acts of all the various offices within the Commission;
- To promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the implementation of this Act;
- To exercise such other powers and functions as may be directed by the President of the Republic of the Philippines; and
- To represent the Philippine ICCs/IPs in all international conferences and conventions dealing with indigenous peoples and other related concerns.

Based on the outcomes of a meeting with NCIP Regional Directors from Regions 2, 3 and 4, the major reason for the delays in granting Certificates of Pre-conditions (CPs) in the various project areas was a lack of appropriate coordination with NCIP officials. There was, however, a recognition from senior officials that they had failed to recognize the importance of the NCIP's active participation in the activities of the project. This was particularly the case with NCIP's designated representative's regular attendance to meetings of the National Steering Committee (NSC).

Regional Directors also identified other major causes of delays as follows:

1. Applications for CP and submission of the project proposals of SGP 5 Partners did not comply with the legal requirements of NCIP. Proposed projects should be within the scope of the approved Ancestral Domain

Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP) of the IP community;

2. Late submission of the Work and Financial Plan of Project Proponents;
3. Confusion on whom to grant the CPs, whether to the IP Organization or to the CSO partner of SGP 5;
4. UNDP SGP 5 documentary requirements contribute to time and people conflict among the NCIP's limited personnel in the performance of regular functions at the Provincial and Regional Offices;
5. Lack of human and logistical resources to conduct community validation process by NCIP personnel;
6. Conflict among IP leaders in certain communities that necessitated longer processing of CPs;
7. Weak organizational state of IP community organizations that often leads to financial mismanagement and conflict among the IP members;
8. Institutional gaps between government institutions operating in IP areas/communities i.e. NCIP-DENR-BMB;
9. Some DENR projects lead to the displacement of IPs, e.g. the Indigenous Communities Conservation Areas (ICCA) project;
10. Unclear delineation of roles and responsibilities among government institutions, especially in NIPAS and Ancestral Domains;

The directors suggested the following to expedite the issuance of CPs:

1. UNDP-SGP 5 should provide the list of project areas and approved projects, as well as accredited project partners, to NCIP National and Regional Offices for proper coordination of projects;
2. A certification process should be installed within the NCIP to shorten the issuance of the necessary permits;
3. UNDP should provide funds for capacity building of NCIP Personnel and for the conduct of community consultations.

IV Findings

4.1 Project Strategy

Stakeholder perceptions of the general project strategy that the MTR gathered from interviews and consultations, in relation to the project formulation process were generally positive. The mission was, however, not able to consult with persons who were directly involved in the development of the project proposal. There was a general acceptance that genuine attempts were made to incorporate the views of government, CBO, and NGO implementers. This was reflected in the PRODOC by the emphasis the GEF SGP National Steering Committee placed on establishing sites that reflected global biodiversity significance.

The presence of a strong network of CBO and NGO that were active in conservation issues was another positive indication. Stakeholders generally responded positively to the question of relevance with a number confirming that the project linked well with work their organisations were already undertaking.

However, while generally finding that project formulation was planned relatively well, particularly using the Logical Framework which tied outcomes, outputs and activities together, the MTE also comments that project formulation could possibly have been better had the SGP framework been more closely linked to national and provincial strategies such as Comprehensive Land Use Planning.

The other area that could have been given greater consideration was to ensure there was a better balance between the natural and social sciences. This point has also been covered in this report.

The mission noted that the development of the Hubs concept was not part of the project design and was not provided for in the PRODOC. It is understood that the idea for developing Hubs was progressed by the CPMU and approved by the National Steering Committee (NSC). This was an excellent innovation and the mission concluded that it would be difficult to see the SGP being implemented without the Hubs providing the necessary “glue” to keep the SGP a cohesive effort.

Project Design

The MTR concluded that the design followed the well-established UNDP / GEF project development process. This successfully generated the overall Vision which, in turn considered and documented the following.

Issues and problem identification, Resource identification, Project Goal(s) (development and justification), Formulate Project Strategies, Consider contingency planning and flexibility, Monitoring and evaluation, Budget / resource allocations.

All these fundamental factors were given robust and thorough consideration and seem to be well integrated into the project document.

4.2 Progress Towards Results

The Project Document (PRODOC) records the start date as 1 June 2013 and scheduled closing date as 30 July 2017. The mission noted that the PRODOC was signed on 13 June and it is understood that the actual start date of a project is the date of the PRODOC signature (13 June 2013). The end date for the project is calculated through to the 14 August 2017.

Following signing of the PRODOC (June 2013) reports indicate that dialogue between the UNDP SGP 5 in New York and the Government of the Philippines, in relation to the most appropriate modality for project implementation, took some time to resolve.

In a subsequent comment on the early draft of the MTR the CPMU clarified this sequence as follows: “Significant dialogue/negotiation on the implementation modality preceded the signing of the PRODOC. It was noted that the PRODOC had already contained an implementation modality. The impasse on the implementation modality was in fact the reason why SGP5 in the Philippines was delayed by around two years”.

Milestones are described below

Table 3 Synopsis Project Progress Summary

Year	Month and Key Events
2013	<p>October (just under a 1 year after the PRODOC was signed) Country Programme Manager was appointed.</p> <p>December Review of SGP 54 undertaken</p> <p>National Steering Committee Appointments confirmed</p>

	Initial meeting of the NSC was convened.
2014	<p>January 2014 CPMU Staff Appointed</p> <p>February to May Inception Workshops at target provincial sites.</p> <p>August 2014 Engagement of Responsible Party – note this appointment, which is of fundamental importance to the project, took place 20 months after the official start-up date of the project.</p> <p>August Contract between FPE and UNDP signed</p> <p>September Project Development Workshop (Samar)</p> <p>Oct - Nov. CPMU and RP Development of PTRC TOR, Rules of Procedures and Invitations for Membership.</p> <p>Nov. 27 SGP 5 National Steering Committee (NSC) Meeting</p> <p>December 1st Batch of Proposals CPMU – RP PTRC for review</p>
2015	<p>January 1st PTRC Meeting</p> <p>January 27 Gender/Women Committee Meeting</p> <p>February 12 eligible proposals from CPMU for PTRC review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalization of the Proposal Review Form (Integrated the Women/Gender Indicators) 1st Batch of Proposals to PTRC subcommittees for review <p>March – April Review of Proposals by Sub-Committee</p> <p>March-Resignation of PR Project Coordinator</p> <p>April PTRC Meeting</p> <p>May 1st Core PTRC Meeting</p> <p>May, Selection and Hiring of CPMU Project Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and Admin. and Finance Officer</p> <p>June 2nd Core PTRC Meeting</p> <p>June 10 NSC Meeting</p> <p>June 1213 Project Development Workshop (Baler, Aurora)</p> <p>June 30 3rd Core PTRC Meeting</p> <p>July 13 4th Core PTRC Meeting</p> <p>July 30 NSC Meeting</p> <p>July and August RP / UNDP Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Drafting and Project Inception Meetings</p> <p>Sept. 03 5th Core PTRC Meeting</p> <p>Proposal Development</p> <p>Site Monitoring Visits</p> <p>CPMU Acceptance of Inception Reports</p> <p>RP / CPMU Planning Workshop</p>

2016	<p>January 12 & 21 (Core PTRC Meeting)</p> <p>January 27 NSC Meeting</p> <p>Feb. 16 & 17 PTRC Meetings</p> <p>March 7 PTRC Meeting</p> <p>March 10 NSC Meeting</p> <p>April 27-28 PTRC Meeting</p> <p>April Landscape/Seascape Symposium CPMU, UNDP, RPFPE</p> <p>June 17 PTRC Meeting</p> <p>June 28 & 29 PTRC Meeting (Clark)</p> <p>July 13 & 14 PTRC Meeting Proposal Review</p> <p>July 27 NSC Meeting</p> <p>August - Dec. MoA Preparation Inception Meetings</p> <p>Project Sites Monitoring</p> <p>Dec. 6 NSC Meeting</p>
2017	<p>January Puerto Princesa Underground River Grantees Training, Sabang Mangrove Paddle Boat Tour Guide Association, 14 sub grantees</p> <p>COMDEKS Global Workshop (participation by CPMU Manager)</p> <p>Simple Report Writing and Financial Systems and Management Installation</p> <p>Monitoring Visit in Upper Sierra Madre</p> <p>Jan.- Feb. CPMU Financial & Systems Audit</p> <p>March SGP 5Mid-term Review</p>

Progress towards outcomes

An analysis of progress towards outcomes is based on the results of consultations and field visits to several grant projects. These demonstrated that the SGP 5 project is, after a slow start-up phase and significant difficulties including formalising ancestral domain ownership, is proceeding satisfactorily and that it can be expected the project will achieve a high (currently unknown) percentage of project Objectives, Outcomes and Outputs by the end of the OP5 period.

Table 4 presents information related to progress towards the project objective and indicators including relevant MTR ratings and justification.

Table 4 shows progress by outcome and indicators as reported in the PIR

	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 st PIR (self-reported) ⁹	Mid term Target	End-of-project Target	Mid-term Level Assessment &	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
Project Objective Global environmental benefits secured through community-based biodiversity conservation initiatives and actions in selected priority sites in the Philippines	1. Increase in area under sustained protection in community-managed or community-supported protected areas 2. Increase in area under certified or verified sustainable use	1. None supported by the project 2. None supported by the project	None yet. The Programme is still awaiting the first batch of project proposals. Applies to 1, and 2)		1. At least 100,000ha of protected areas under community management/co-management by recipients of grants under this project. 2. At least 400,000ha of community agricultural, fishing or	The missions consensus was that with a little more than 1 year of effective project implementation behind them it was difficult to objectively evaluate progress with interventions	On target to be achieved Active Work in Progress	The MTR found that this ranking was, by definition, a subjective assessment. The subjectivity is related to the difficulty measuring relatively small and local based CBO and NGO interventions against "global environmental

⁹ Level at 30 June 2014

	by communities				<p>forestry area. under certified or verified sustainable use by communities that are recipients of grants under this project.</p> <p>The mission noted that most SGP 5 Philippines interventions are being applied in small geographic areas.</p> <p>The science that underpins biodiversity conservation puts forward that large areas – 100,000ha + - are needed to maintain the viability of a full range of species.</p> <p>The retention and protection of unfragmented, large natural landscapes are an important</p>	<p>benefits” .</p> <p>The other consideration is based on the reality that SGP 5 is addressing significant resource management and contemporary conservation problems.</p> <p>The mission concluded that the complexity of these was probably underestimated.</p> <p>The term “connectivity conservation” has been widely used to describe the emerging scientific consensus among conservation researchers and practitioners (Crooks and Sanjayan 2006).</p> <p>The relationship between Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) and Critical Habitats (CH) are an important part</p>
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					<p>objective of biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>This notion includes the idea that protected areas that are interconnected (not islands) with corridors and includes the active management of corridors and other forms of conservation and protected areas are a prerequisite to deal with threats.</p> <p>Networking that endeavors to link biodiversity conservation, capacity building, community</p>		<p>of the matrix.</p> <p>Projects such as the SGP 5 should, as far as possible, have a direct geographic relationship with KBA and CH.</p> <p>Although the provinces that the SGP 5 is working in were selected for their potential contribution to "global biodiversity priorities" the MTR formed an opinion that the actual project sites, were decided by potential grantees and were not necessarily priority biodiversity conservation areas.</p> <p>The MTE are also noted the fact that sites were scrutinised by the PTRC, CPMU), and RP.</p>
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						<p>development and sustainable livelihoods present levels of complexity that, the mission concluded, are generally underestimated.</p> <p>A basic SGP 5 concept is based around interventions that would "kick-start" and provide a "catalytic role" for NGO and CO projects.</p> <p>The mission believes the short timeframe for interventions and limited ceiling of funding will possibly compromise</p>		
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						these expectations.		
Outcome Effective models for community-based	1 Indicator: Number of community managed or co-	No specific community co-management models identified	None yet. The Programme is still awaiting the first batch of		At least 10 community management or co-management	Networking that endeavors to link	On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress ¹⁰	Biodiversity Conservation Interventions associated with

¹⁰ The CPMU support the idea of complexity and provided comments as follows:

There were several initiatives in the past that started out as fairly successful but eventually lost steam because of lack of funding support. That is why the grantees, at least most of them, are partnering with their LGUs and academic institutions to help ensure sustainability. Some examples are:

1. The two projects within and the environs of the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park are enjoying the support of the PPSRNP PAMB and the City Government of Puerto Princesa. Had it not been for the political controversy prevailing in the area, a more clearly defined and MOA-covered mechanism would have been established. Nevertheless, the Office of the PASu is extending technical support to the grantees and their 12 PO beneficiaries.
2. The eight grantees of the Northern Samar, led by CERD (site hub), is working closely with the Provincial Government and is in the process of getting a formal agreement. Additionally, they are working with the PAMBs of the Samar Island National Park and the Biri LaRoSa Protected Landscape and Seascape to ensure that their initiatives can support the management of these two NIPAS sites.
3. DALUHAY, which has 9 PO beneficiaries, is working with the Provincial Government of Aurora and various municipal governments with a view of continuously supporting the seminal projects there.
4. FRENDs has entered into agreements with municipal and the Provincial Government of Nueva Vizcaya for support to and continuity of work in the various LCAs in the Palali-Mampalang Mountain Range.

governance of protected areas are demonstrated.	managed PA models operational in project areas	in target areas.	project proposals.		models established and operational	biodiversity conservation, capacity building, community development and sustainable livelihoods present levels of complexity that, the mission concluded, are generally underestimated. A basic SGP 5 concept is based around interventions that would "kick-start" and provide a "catalytic role" for NGO and CO		Landscape and Seascapes concepts have proven to be complex, and time consuming. A prerequisite is that interventions require, or at least benefit from, coherent overall land and marine planning approaches. Comprehensive Land-Use Planning processes have not commenced in many / most provinces Consequently, it is difficult to comprehend how the SGP 5 can achieve its objectives for land and sea
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The perspective offered by the CPMU is (i) SGP provide small grants which support small, catalytic projects with a maximum of three objectives or output areas. (ii) grantees can only do so much but with vision their initiatives can call attention to an area (geographically and thematically) for greater support and action from other stakeholders, especially LGUs.

						<p>projects.</p> <p>The mission believes the short timeframe for interventions and limited ceiling of funding will possibly compromise these expectations.</p>		<p>scapeconservation until this process has been advanced.</p> <p>This assumes that the planning framework fully integrates and considers biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem values and imperatives.</p>
	<p>Indicator: Number of hectares protected through community-PA</p>	<p>Individual small community protection initiatives in existence in some local communities, but no comprehensive data available</p>	<p>None yet. The Programme is still awaiting the first batch of project proposals.</p>		<p>(1) At least 20 community PA established or enhanced;</p> <p>(2) encompassing 100,000 ha.</p>	<p>Work in progress in Community Managed Protected Area could apply IUCN Category V designation</p> <p>This is a useful tool that provides for most of the components that the SGP 5</p>	<p>On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress</p>	<p>One of the basic ideas that underpins SGP 5 is that the wide range of small grant interventions are designed to support larger interventions v</p> <p>The mission noted that in most locations the larger interventions are not in place.</p>

					<p>are addressing.</p> <p>The MTR gained an impression that the project at all levels (CPMU, RP and within the Hub structure) lacks ecological, biodiversity and natural resource management skills.</p> <p>Almost all the grantees seem to have adequate community development, and other social science attributes.</p> <p>As the SGP 5 has a focus on biodiversity conservation</p>		<p>The SGP 5 is, consequently, the major source of support.</p> <p>Locally Managed Conservation Areas (LMCA) are not a low-cost option.</p> <p>The mission suggests that, in fact, these areas are at the “cutting edge of biodiversity conservation” as they need to engage a range of conservation, social, political, economic and management interventions.</p> <p>These are at the “sharp end”.</p>
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						it is suggested that the social sciences are over emphasized.		
	Indicator Number of ha of mangroves rehabilitated or protected.	None identified	None yet. The Programme is still awaiting the first batch of project proposals.				On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress	
Outcome 2: Community-managed landscapes and seascapes explicitly integrate biodiversity conservation objectives	Indicator Number of ha under improved community "mainstreamed" management within PLS, reducing threats to BD from slash and burn farming, over-harvesting of timber, and destructive fishing.	Zero – no hectareage is under improved community-mainstreamed management	None yet. The Programme is still awaiting the first batch of project proposals.			MTR mission was consistently exposed to well thought out projects for community development, capacity building, income generation etc. it was, however, more often difficult to forge a link	On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress	The mission was exposed to examples where projects are making excellent progress simply because they have person or persons with a vision commitment and passion. The MTR noted that these attributes vary in intensity and scale from project to project but as a general characteristic this is a particularly

						between the objectives for a particular intervention and a measurable biodiversity outcome		<p>noteworthy trait and aspect.</p> <p>This suggested that supporting “champions” could perhaps be given more attention during the design and implementation process.</p>
<p>Outcome</p> <p>Alternative biodiversity friendly agriculture, fisheries and forestry products produced and marketed by 30 communities</p>	<p>3. Indicator</p> <p>Number of community-based land use plans or Ancestral Domain plans that incorporate biodiversity and ecosystem services valuations.</p>	None identified				<p>Community-based land use plans or Ancestral Domain plans that incorporate biodiversity and ecosystem services valuations are an important consideration .</p>	<p>On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress</p>	<p>There are several contemporary resource management and protected area planning tools available.</p> <p>The mission concluded that these could be applied.</p> <p>The Hubs and academic institutions such as CLSU could play an effective role developing training programs using some of these tools include:</p> <p>the mission did, however, note that</p>

								<p>several of the “biodiversity friendly intervention” at fantastic community related to economic development opportunities associated with them but the mission noted that on several occasions the linkages to biodiversity were rather obscure.</p> <p>Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool [SMART]</p> <p>Open Standards for Conservation Practise Framework. [OS]</p> <p>Global Footprint</p>
	Indicator	No community				The mission	On target to	

	Number of communities adopting TEV reports or similar ecosystem valuation approaches in development of ADSPs or other community land-use plans.	level TEV reports				was not exposed to any specific Total Economic Value (TEV) reports all analysis	be achieved - Active Work in Progress	
Outcome 4: Increased capacity of GEF-SGP stakeholders to diagnose and understand the complex and dynamic nature of global environmental problems and to develop local solutions.	Indicator 4: # of community-level resource users and managers who are trained to use the GEF-SGP knowledge networking and partnership platforms, and are actively using these tools.	None amongst grantees to be selected (grants are generally awarded to grantees who have not previously benefitted from GEF-SGP capacity support)	None yet. The Programme has established its website and a social networking account in Facebook. However, the plan is to set up site-based hubs that will advise the Country programme Management Unit (CPMU) of appropriate and strategic cross-cutting capacity-building interventions. We are awaiting proposals from			Minimal or little progress was evident. It may well be necessary to provide additional resources, including specific professional expertise, to Hubs to advance this outcome.	On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress	The mission concluded that some grantees were not explicit about the actual problem projects they are implementing were trying to address. These need to focus on threats and sources of threat to biodiversity conservation values and this emphasis was not always clear during presentations. The mission repeatedly made

			NGOs that can serve as site-based hubs.					<p>the point during consultations that the biodiversity degradation, that projects were formulated to address, were primarily caused by the overexploitation of resources including illegal extraction and that projects were playing "catch up".</p> <p>The MTR was exposed to a range of interesting themes that some of the 50 odd projects were working on.</p> <p>Almost all the projects the mission were briefed on or inspected articulated that compliance and enforcement are an ongoing problem.</p>
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								<p>In a country like the Philippines this is understandable as the demand for access to natural resources, within a growing population, is ongoing and intense.</p> <p>The mission suggests that it would be useful for the CPMU to consider applying the SMART patrolling and monitoring system.</p> <p>SMART would need adaptation to work with NGOs and CO</p> <p>The mission was confident that this is a realistic and achievable aspiration.</p>
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	# of new grants that replicate approaches	None	None yet. This will have to wait until Year 4.		Replication of conservation and sustainable use approaches in at least 30 new grants by year 4	Nearly all the grantees are applying community/rural development support approaches.	On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress Work in Progress 4-6 /10	Hubs need to exert more influence and play a leading role to ensure that best practice and other appropriate methodologies are shared and replicated.
	% increase in amount of co-funding for the GEF-SGP 5 by year 3	Minimum of 1:1 co-funding for grants	None yet. This will have to wait until Year 4.		50% increase in amount of co-funding for the Philippines GEF-SGP 5 by year 3	The MTR suggest that the CPMU and RP could be more active in this area and follow-up opportunities such as: Peoples Survival Fund	On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress Moderately Satisfactory (MS) Work in Progress	The mission was not exposed to any specific endeavours that are being undertaken to source co-funding.

						<p>GIZ Project</p> <p>Bilateral Donors</p> <p>Nature Trust Fund</p> <p>National Greening Program</p> <p>The mission suggests that the SGP 5 should focus on Biodiversity Funding opportunities while livelihood support should be sought by other organisations .</p>	4-6 /10	
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	Number of governors who launch community-based partnerships by year 4	Zero			Community-based partnership initiatives launched by at least 4 LGUs by end of year 4	A consistent thread throughout the MTR was that LGUs were generally aware of and appreciated the work grantees were doing.	On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress Moderately Satisfactory (MS) Work in Progress 4-6 /10	The mission was not made aware of any occasions when provincial governors launched a community-based partnership undertaking.
Outcome Enhanced capacities of GEF-SGP grantees to monitor and evaluate their projects and environmental trends.	5: # of GEF-SGP 5 grantees participating in monitoring and evaluation training; % increase in knowledge before/after training	Grantees not yet trained	None yet. The plan is to do this with advice from the site-based hubs.		At least 80 community groups grantees participate in training; Improvement of 30% in level of knowledge on fundamentals of M&E	Almost without exception grantees emphasise that the SGP had increased their knowledge and had also provided a platform for them to work constructively together. Another	On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress Moderately Satisfactory (MS) Work in Progress 4-6 /10	

						positive thread was that the CBO genuinely cared about their environment and were making significant efforts, at a local level to, rehabilitate or maintain environmental values.		
	Indicator Number of community level regulations or enactments for biodiversity-friendly production in key sectors.	There are none so far enacted or promulgated.				No specific progress noted		The mission was not made aware of any community level regulations or enactments for biodiversity-friendly production in key sectors.

	Indicator # of community-level resource users and managers who are trained to use the GEF-SGP knowledge networking and partnership platforms, and are actively using these tools.	None amongst grantees to be selected (grants are generally awarded to grantees who have not previously benefitted from GEF-SGP 5 capacity support)				100 site-based trainers have participated in training on: Community-based Biodiversity M&E Systems, Ecosystem Valuation, Biodiversity-Friendly Enterprises	On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress Moderately Satisfactory (MS) Work in Progress 4-6 /10	The capacity building requirements for this project are formidable. Both the hubs and academic institutions can play a significant role in this area.
	Indicator # of new grants that replicate approaches	None					On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress Moderately Satisfactory (MS) Work in Progress 4-6 /10	

	Indicator 10 % increase in amount of co-funding for the Philippines GEF-SGP 5 by year 3		None yet. This will have to wait until Year 3, with the projects to be granted as platform.			Under the terms of the GRANT Agreements all grantees committed to match the amount of funds provided by SGP 5. It is understood that the total that the total funds from SGP 5 stands at \$2,869,023.95. The total co-financing raised to date is \$521,289.74	On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress Moderately Satisfactory (MS) Work in Progress 4-6 /10	Calculate %
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	Indicator # of GEF-SGP 5 grantees participating in monitoring and evaluation training; % increase in knowledge before/after training						On target to be achieved - Active Work in Progress	It was reported that 100 site-based trainers have been trained in Community-based Biodiversity M&E Systems, Ecosystem Valuation, Biodiversity-Friendly Enterprises. No estimate of the % increase in knowledge after training was available.
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4.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

4.3.1 Management Arrangements

In 2008, the GEF approved an “upgrading” policy that stipulated that SGP Country Programs with more than 15 years of operations and over USD 6.0 million in grant disbursements would receive their funding through country-led STAR allocation i.e. as a Full-Size Project. These countries represent some of the most mature, experienced, and successful SGP Country Programmes, with the most developed civil society networks and multi-stakeholder partnerships. The SGP5 Philippines Country Programme was, consequently, up-graded during the GEF Fifth Operational Phase and Philippines is among the 10 pilot upgraded countries.

In a multi-level, complex project such as SGP5 Philippines, regular and proactive monitoring and evaluation schedules are an essential management tool for ensuring transparency, supporting adaptive management and for strengthening a sense of collective ownership of the project and its outcomes. During the MTR, project management arrangements received less comment from stakeholders than the team initially anticipated. It was, however, reported that some delays occurred during the technical evaluation of the proposals and release of funds. In spite of these difficulties, the mission concluded that this was not contentious and most stakeholders agreed that the multi layered management structure was working reasonably well.

As noted in other parts of this report issues were experienced during project start-up. Difficulties were also experienced by delays caused by complicated financial disbursement and reporting procedures. For example, the MTR was informed of several instances where grantees were contributing personal funds and seeking reimbursements when replenishment processes had been completed. Occasionally a sentiment was expressed that directing funds through the CPMU, IP and onto UNDP was unnecessarily complicated, and sometimes inflexible, and should, if possible, be simplified. This view was not shared by the MTR as it is difficult to formulate a system that would fit the transparency requirements of both the Government and UNDP/GEF.

It was noted that regular (at least twice yearly) meetings with more frequent teleconference calls between the, IP and SH (Site Hubs) might help to overcome a perceived lack of budget transparency and uncertainty of funding allocations which are persistently raised. This approach would also strengthen a sense of collegial management needed to help build capacity and understanding of the project.

In this regard, use of the Project Log frame to structure meetings and identify and help reconcile implementation issues and track budget and expenditure, while providing for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of progress, might be a useful consideration.

The MTR noted that the management structure of the project includes oversight by a National Steering Committee and Project Technical Review Committee. The MTR recognises the value of these two committees but also concluded that these two committees contribute to significant overheads that could perhaps be better utilised by grantees implementing on the ground activities. It was noted that

modifications would, however, be problematic as funding for the NSC and the PTRC are separate from grant funding.

The MTE drew the conclusion that although the current arrangements were working – in most cases, very well – there was room for some innovation and improvement. The CPMU and RP should be requested to analyse existing arrangements and make suggestions for establishing alternatives that would improve management effectiveness.

4.3.2 Work Planning

The MTR concluded that, at an overall project level, work planning carried out by the CPMU is being carried out in a satisfactory manner and does not present any problems. The CPMU and the IP developed the Annual Workplan and this forms the basis for monthly workplans. This is formulated around the approved Project Document and logframe results and indicators.

Primarily because of time limitations, an important question that the MTR was unable to evaluate was the synergy between the work plans prepared at a project level and the plans prepared by 51 individual grantees and local partners or beneficiaries.

4.3.2 Finance and Co-finance

The GEF approved the Fifth Operational Phase the Small Grants Programme in the Philippines (SGP-5 project) amounting to USD 4.5 million in June 2012. The Project Document was signed by NEDA, UNDP and DENR in June 2013. SGP-5 supports community-based biodiversity conservation initiatives in three priority sites: Palawan, Samar Island (Samar, Northern Samar and Eastern Samar), and Sierra Madre Mountain Range (Laguna, Rizal, Quezon, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Nueva Vizcaya, Aurora, Quirino, Isabela and Cagayan).

Apart from a relatively small transfer from the New Zealand Aid Programme, the MTR was not made aware of any other co-financing (apart of course from mandatory funding from grantees).

Table 5 Financial Performance Analysis

Year	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Budget Variance	Expenses (CDR)		TOTAL	Utilization
				Government	UNDP	Expenses	Rate (%)
2014	708,735.24	300,150.50	408,584.74	118,480.64	147,758.99	266,239.63	88.70
2015	994,924.53	507,853.56	487,070.97	140,838.48	281,156.12	421,994.60	83.09
2016		1,522,001.78		168,689.06	1,456,917.04	1,625,606.10	106.81
TOTAL	1,703,659.77	2,330,005.84	895,655.71	428,008.18	1,885,832.15	2,313,840.33	92.87

4.3.4 Project- level Monitoring and Evaluation

During the initial MTR briefing the Programme Development Specialist provided a useful introduction to a process being developed for advancing and monitoring project progress and evolution. This is based around the following notions:

- Utility and importance of connecting projects to a bigger management framework
- Utility and importance of broadening reach, not only helping specific sites but also the Local Government Units (LGU)
- Setting a management framework for the projects
- Importance of creating venues for partnership, inclusion and direction-setting
- Creating venues to incorporate biodiversity conservation in government agenda
- Partnerships optimize resources / Sharing costs by LGUs and partners
- SGP partners coming together
- Need to consolidate information, programmes, plans
- Link and build relationships with LGU, government agencies and other partners: present, update, inform, engage
- Need to set track record for the projects/NGOS/CSOs
- Building on current initiatives for future projects/ information as basis for proposal development

Although this work is in its formative stages, in the opinion of the MTR it is a groundbreaking and innovative intervention. Unfortunately, the MS Power Point presentation is too large to include in the MTR report. Copies could, however, be obtained from the CPMU (attention maidaaquinaldo@yahoo.com).

4.3.5 Stakeholder Engagement

There is no question that this aspect of the project deserves special mention. Almost without exception observations made during the MTR field assessment indicate that the CPMU, RP, and Site Hubs, have harnessed an extraordinary range of stakeholder commitment and participation.

4.3.6 Reporting

The MTR concluded that reporting systems are being applied well. CPMU reports including *inter-alia* Annual Work Plans, Project Implementation Review (PIR), National Steering Committee, Project Technical Review Committee are of a consistently high and informative standard. In addition, it was determined that an adequate flow of information exists within stakeholder networks through email and other digital means.

National Steering Committee, and Project Technical Review Committee are well briefed and periodically updated about project progress and are well consulted by the CPMU. Participation of NSC and PTRC members in grant monitoring and follow-up activities in the field is a good practice adopted by SGP5 Philippines.

4.3.7 Communications

As noted in previous sections, SGP5 Philippines communications with stakeholders and partners are effective, and public communications with the wider civil society community communication systems, although adequate, are less developed, although the project is using a dedicated website and has a presence on Facebook.

4.4 Sustainability

4.4.1 Financial risks to sustainability

The financial risks to the sustainability of the interventions funded by SGP 5 Philippines are, in the view of the MTR, not a priority consideration. This is based on the reality that almost all grantee investments are in the hands of CBO and NGO. Another observation was that grantees are, in many instances but not exclusively, integrating their SGP5 funding supported projects into well-established community-based projects.

In addition, most interventions are aimed to basic aspects of community support and well-being. As a result, recipients and beneficiaries of various interventions are the ones with the highest interest in keeping them active at an individual and / or community level.

MTR Ranking

4.4.2 Socio-economic risks to sustainability

The Socio-economic risks to the sustainability of the interventions funded by SGP 5 Philippines are not a priority consideration. This is because interventions are identified, designed, justified and implemented by CBO, NGO and local community groups who, prior to receiving project support, have committed resources to proposed activities. Consequently, as was perceived during field visits and interviews, local stakeholders created a strong impression of commitment to the success and continuity of their efforts.

Another consideration is the engagement of national and provincial organizations, NGOs, local governments and other stakeholders in the field projects. This contributes to the establishment of an enabling environment which helps to safeguard interventions from socio-economic problems.

4.4.3 Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability

Both the national and provincial institutional framework in the Philippines articulates a clear commitment to biodiversity conservation, environment and participatory mechanisms. The Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines promulgated in Section 3 includes matters related to the conservation and natural resources management.

The other legal “linchpin” is the mandate of the National Commission for Indigenous People which states “The NCIP shall protect and promote the interest and well-being of the ICCs/IPs with due regard to their beliefs, customs and institutions”.

The Republic Act No. 7586 Providing for the Establishment and Management of National Integrated Protected Areas System, defining its Scope and Coverage, and for Other Purposes refer to footnote ¹¹.

¹¹ Cognizant of the profound impact of man’s activities on all components of the natural environment particularly the effect of increasing population, resource exploitation and industrial advancement and recognizing the critical importance of protecting and maintaining the natural biological and physical diversities of

4.4.4 Environmental risks to sustainability

The most pervasive and evident risk to the environmental sustainability of SGP5 Philippines is the long-term and incremental impacts of climate change. The MTR suggests that because of its scale and potential to significantly impact on the objective of the project that this issue be given more emphases.¹²

A body of citizens, arguably the majority, expects that projects which involve biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity carried out by the GEF projects (such as SGP5 Philippines) will reduce the risks that climate change poses for biodiversity conservation. The reality is, however, that no-one knows for sure.

Other risks including deforestation, forest fires, overgrazing, overfishing, environmental degradation (soil, water, etc.) can be significant in specific areas. These impacts will create some sustainability difficulties for specific grantee projects. These, however, do not point toward a generalized risk for the complete set of project activities. Notwithstanding significant uncertainty, it makes sense to understand and implement best practice and apply an approach based on precautionary principles.

4.4.5 Overall sustainability ranking

Based on the assessment of the categories above the MTR assign an overall Sustainability rating of **Moderately Likely (ML)**

the environment notably on areas with biologically unique features to sustain human life and development, as well as plant and animal life, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to secure for the Filipino people of present and future generations the perpetual existence of all native plants and animals through the establishment of a comprehensive system of integrated protected areas within the classification of national park as provided for in the Constitution.

It is hereby recognized that these areas, although distinct in features, possess common ecological values that may be incorporated into a holistic plan representative of our natural heritage; that effective administration of this area is possible only through cooperation among national government, local government and concerned private organizations; that the use and enjoyment of these protected areas must be consistent with the principles of biological diversity and sustainable development.

To this end, there is hereby established a National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS), which shall encompass outstandingly remarkable areas and biologically important public lands that are habitats of rare and endangered species of plants and animals, bio-geographic zones and related ecosystems, whether terrestrial, wetland or marine, all of which shall be designated as "protected areas".

¹²to secure global environmental benefits through community-based biodiversity conservation initiatives and actions in selected priority sites in the Philippines".

V Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The mission determined that the CPMU, IP, Hubs and the UNDP CO are managing SGP5 in a well-organized collaborative and professional manner. Another impressive characteristic was the prominent level of community commitment and engagement. This is particularly the case considering the reality, that implementation of activities and the achievement of results depends, to a significant degree, on the capacity, commitment, interest and willingness of NGOs and CBOs. These characteristics are, arguably, the most constructive and positive feature of SGP5.

The mission found that the relationship between the SGP5 main objective, which sets a global aspiration, and the small interventions that grantees are putting in place are, for several reasons, difficult to reconcile.

These include the complexity of biodiversity conservation interventions associated with Landscape and Seascapes concepts, which have proven to be problematical and time-consuming aspects. In many places, these have been underestimated. "Connectivity Conservation" is a widely used approach which describes the emerging scientific consensus among conservation researchers and practitioners that land and sea scapes need to be integrated. This form of biodiversity conservation takes much more time than the 2-year period that has been allocated to deliver outcomes.

Although the mission recognises that the provinces SGP5 is working in were selected for their potential contribution to global biodiversity priorities, it appeared that project sites were determined by grantees during the application phase, and are not necessarily representative of priority biodiversity conservation areas.

In this regard, the relationship between SGP5 project sites and Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) and Critical Habitats (CH) are an important consideration. The MTR mission suggests, therefore, that SGP5 should, as far as possible, have a direct geographic relationship with KBA and CH.

Almost invariably grantees expressed an interest in, or were already well committed to, tourism related activities. The mission supports and understands these aspirations but records some reservations about community expectations that tourism will provide a panacea for economic development. Experiences in other places suggest that these expectations are possibly ill-founded. There are few management tools that will minimize the potential negative impacts of tourism. These include ecologically based site planning, demand management, zoning, and intensive site-based management. The theory behind these approaches is not difficult to comprehend, but implementation invariably presents significant challenges.

Considering the significant delays and impediments the project experienced in its initial stages, the mission resolved that SGP5 designed and implemented several initiatives and concluded that, as a general statement, it is successfully and progressively implementing a wide range of activities across a wide geographic spectrum.

With a little over 1 year of project implementation achieved, the mission suggests that it is premature to assess an appropriate level of sustainability. This

reality influenced the rankings that are contained in Table 3 Synopsis Project Progress Summary. These rankings also consider the reality that the SGP is addressing significant resource management and contemporary conservation problems.

A major cause of delays in project implementation, which was consistently brought to the attention of the mission, was the process for the issuance of Certificates of Precondition (CP) from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). The mission suggests that the CPMU and RP should have recognized this problem and instigated high-level remedial measures directly with NCIP officials to expedite the issuance of necessary documentation and permits. The mission was also informed that, in some instances, personnel and resource inadequacies within NCIP impeded the timely conduct of processes to complete the FPIC process.

A pre-requisite is that SGP5-supported interventions require, or at least would benefit from, a coherent overall land and marine planning approach. The Comprehensive Land-Use Planning process has not commenced in many provinces. Consequently, it is difficult to comprehend how SGP5 can achieve land and sea-scape conservation objectives until LGU has progressed this planning framework. This assumes that the CLUP framework and other national, provincial and sub-provincial planning approaches integrates biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem values and imperatives.

A basic concept underpinning SGP5 is that small grant interventions are, in the main, designed to support and jump-start larger interventions. The mission noted that in most locations larger interventions are not in place and SGP5 is the foremost source of funding and support.

The mission gained an impression that Locally Managed Conservation Areas (LMCA) are an easy and low-cost option. The mission advises that this model is at the "cutting edge of biodiversity conservation" as it needs to engage a complex network of conservation, social, political, economic and management interventions.

The mission also gained the impression that the project, at an operational level, lacks adequate ecological, biodiversity and natural resource management skills. It was noted that ecological and biodiversity skills are integrated into the PTRC, NSC, RP and BMB. This apprehension is based around a deficiency of ecological/biodiversity input and expertise at an operational level. Social sciences are well covered and possibly over emphasized.

The mission was exposed to several examples where project-funded interventions are making noteworthy progress simply because they have a person or persons with vision, commitment and passion. This suggests that supporting "champions" could be given more attention during the remaining period of implementation.

Hubs need to exert more influence and play a leading role in ensuring that best practice and other appropriate methodologies are shared and replicated. There are several contemporary resource management and protected area planning tools available. The mission concluded that these could be applied and that the Hubs and academic institutions such as CLSU could play an effective role by developing training programs using some of these tools. Possibilities include:

Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool [SMART], and Open Standards for Conservation Practise [OS] Global Footprint.

Opportunities for up skilling CPMU staff to be involved in training courses that will allow application of the Open Standards for Conservation Practice are available and these should be investigated.

The mission concluded that some grantees were not explicit about the actual problem the interventions they are implementing were trying to address. In many cases interventions provided a good outline of outcomes and objectives but failed to clearly articulate an overall mission or vision. These include an understanding of the threats and sources of threat to biodiversity conservation values. This emphasis was not always clear during presentations.

The mission made the point during most consultations that biodiversity degradation was primarily caused by the over exploitation of resources, including illegal extraction, and that projects were playing "catch up". Almost all interventions the mission was briefed on, or inspected, articulated that compliance and enforcement are an ongoing and significant issue.

The mission suggests that the CPMU could research application of the SMART patrolling and monitoring system. SMART would need some adaptation to work with NGOs and CO but the mission was confident that this is a realistic and achievable aspiration.

Aspects that the CPMU and IP ought to consider include:

- Limited endeavours are being made to source co-funding.
- No provincial governors have launched a community-based partnership undertaking to date.
- No community-level regulations or enactments for biodiversity-friendly production have been formulated.
- Capacity building requirements for SGP5 are formidable and both the hubs and academic institutions need to play a more active role in this area.
- Although it was reported that 100 site-based trainers have been trained in Community-based Biodiversity M&E Systems, Ecosystem Valuation, and Biodiversity-Friendly Enterprises, the mission expresses some doubt that topics as complex as these can be covered in relatively short workshop sessions.

5.2 Recommendations

20. That the CPMU, IP, and Hubs consider developing a management design that maximises the attributes of each organisation while, simultaneously, formulating an integrated and collaborative management style. The notion is that teams working with synergy will achieve more as a group than is possible on their own.
21. That grantees with aspirations for tourism-focused interventions be made aware of potential pitfalls and that these expectations can be ill founded. Also, that Grantees are made aware of the various tools that will help minimize the potential negative impacts of tourism.
22. That the CPMU gives more emphasis to the relationship between SGP5 main objective, which sets out a global aspiration, and the small-scale interventions that grantees are putting in place.

23. That the ground-breaking work¹³ being developed by the CPMU to recognise the complexity of biodiversity conservation interventions related to Landscape and Seascapes concepts are given in-depth consideration, including principles which under-pin "Connectivity Conservation".
24. That the CPMU and RP be asked to evaluate and report on the adequacy and operational capacity of the ecological, biodiversity and natural resource management skills that is available to support project interventions.
25. That the relationship between Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) and Critical Habitats (CH) are important in terms of conservation at scale. SGP5 interventions should, as far as possible, strive to establish direct geographic relationships with KBA and CH.
26. That in recognition of the significant delays and impediments during SGP5 start-up, the mission recommends a 1.5-year, no-cost extension.
27. The CPMU note the institutional impediments faced within the NCIP and take steps to address the limited human and material resources as well as the technical capacity of NCIP in terms of responding to the needs of SGP5.
28. That the CPMU advance its efforts to support a coherent overall land and marine planning approach, including advocacy at the highest levels of government.
29. That the CPMU actively advocate to ensure that the CLUP frame-work and planning approach integrates biodiversity conservation, ecosystem values, and sustainability imperatives.
30. That DENR PTRC, and PSC be made aware that the concepts, which under-pin SGP5, are that small grant interventions are designed to support larger interventions. In most locations, larger interventions are not in place and SGP5 is the foremost source of funding and support.
31. That CPMU gives additional emphasis on capacity development, and management systems for Locally Managed Conservation Areas (LMCA), and that the CPMU consider formulation of a Management Systems and Capacity Building programme¹⁴.

¹³An Analysis of the Contributions to SGP -5 Indicators of Approved and Prospective Projects and Commitment of Grant Funds, with Recommendations on Moving Forward

¹⁴ The mission gained an impression that a limited number of SGP5 stakeholders have had specific protected area management training. A priority aim of SGP5 is for PAs to be collaboratively managed with local communities. Many of these stakeholders also lack skills in PA management. The mission suggests, therefore, that the processes for formulating a Management Systems and Human Capacity Action Plan is an imperative if SGP5 is serious about its objectives, including the need to increase the knowledge, skills, ability and competence of staff and community members to collaborate and carry out their respective roles and functions.

Barriers generated by inadequate capacity also have a physical component and include poor communication systems and infrastructure such as roads. These inhibit communication between PA staff and contribute to the ineffectiveness of enforcement and management.

32. That the CPMU, RP, PSC and PTRC give attention to providing support to the person or persons with vision, commitment and passion and, where possible, provide additional support to "champions".
33. That the CPMU encourage and support Hubs to exert more influence and play a leading role in ensuring that best practice and other appropriate methodologies is shared amongst grantees and replicated.
34. That the CPMU and RP investigate and consider applying contemporary resource management and protected area planning tools including: Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool [SMART], Open Standards for Conservation Practise [OS], and Global Footprint.
35. That, where considered appropriate, grantees be asked to revisit their funding applications to ensure there is clarity amongst all partners about the actual problem interventions are addressing.
36. That all project proposals are reviewed to ensure adequate provision is made for compliance and enforcement, and that application of the SMART patrolling and monitoring system be investigated and, if necessary, adapted to work with NGO, CBO, etc.
37. That the CPMU give priority during the remaining period of the SGP5 to:
 - endeavours to source co-funding;
 - encourage provincial governors to become more active and, where appropriate, launch community-based partnerships;
 - give priority to the formulation of community-level regulations or enactments for biodiversity-friendly production.
38. Opportunities for up-skilling CPMU staff to be involved in training courses using the Open Standards for Conservation Practice are available and ought to be investigated and supported.
39. Consideration be given to a multi-focal approach in future SGP interventions that more accurately reflect the land/seascape approach and IUCN Category V Protected Landscape Management principles.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSES TO THE MTR RECOMMENDATIONS

MTR RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
<p>That the CPMU, IP, and Hubs consider developing a management design that maximises the attributes of each organisation while, simultaneously, formulating an integrated and collaborative management style. The notion is that teams working with synergy will achieve more as a group than is possible on their own.</p>	<p>This is actually what hubs are doing. However, the CPMU will see to it that this matter is again emphasized in the site conferences this September to November 2017. The conferences will serve as a good venue for reaching agreements/consensus among the grantees for doing synergistic work.</p>
<p>That grantees with aspirations for tourism-focused interventions be made aware of potential pitfalls and that these expectations can be ill founded. Also, that Grantees are made aware of the various tools that will help minimize the potential negative impacts of tourism.</p>	<p>The CPMU had earlier pointed out that this recommendation lacks basis, save for the comment of the evaluator that the concerned communities are treating their eco-tourism projects as panacea, without presenting evidence for it. The CPMU had in fact pointed out that all tourism-related projects are located in areas where there are already existing tourism activities (Palawan, Aurora, Isabela). The intent of these projects is to enable the SGP-5 beneficiaries to partake of the benefits of the ongoing tourism in their areas.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the CPMU shall ask the site hubs to include a discussion on this in their forthcoming site-based conferences, which shall be held in September to November 2017. Speakers from local tourism offices/groups shall be invited as resource person/s.</p>
<p>That the CPMU gives more emphasis to the relationship between SGP5 main objective, which sets out a global aspiration, and the small-scale interventions that grantees are putting in place.</p>	<p>As already pointed out by the CPMU earlier in this process, the projects were already aligned with SGP objectives at the proposal stage. Each proponent was required to point out in the proposal the biodiversity</p>

MTR RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
	nexus of its project, and also their contributions to fulfilling SGP-5 targets.
That the ground-breaking work being developed by the CPMU to recognise the complexity of biodiversity conservation interventions related to Landscape and Seascapes concepts are given in-depth consideration, including principles which under-pin "Connectivity Conservation".	This will be done, first, through the publication of the proceedings of the First National Biodiversity Conference, which includes sessions on Land/Seascapes. The documentation is being reviewed now. Also, during the second quarter of 2018, the best practices of SGP-5 shall be documented and analyzed by the CPMU and the RP (with help from experts in various aspects of biodiversity conservation) and shall be published towards the end of this Operational Phase. This matter shall be included in the documentation.
That the CPMU and RP be asked to evaluate and report on the adequacy and operational capacity of the ecological, biodiversity and natural resource management skills that is available to support project interventions.	<p>First, it must be pointed out that the approval process of project proposals considered the eligibility of the proponents to perform the management aspects that they committed in their proposals. Second, given the small amount of the projects, the grantees are not expected to perform the whole gamut of management activities pertaining to a site, but only the aspects that they committed to. Third, SGP is in fact interested in the innovations that the grantees can introduce given their limited funds, time, capabilities and access to technology.</p> <p>Having said that, this matter shall be tackled in the documentation of best practices, where areas where projects could have done better shall be included in the discussion.</p>
That the relationship between Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) and Critical Habitats (CH) are important in terms of conservation at scale. SGP5 interventions should, as a far as possible, strive to establish direct	The CPMU shall prepare an overlay of the map of the projects and the Key Biodiversity Areas and Critical Habitats. This will be done by October 2017.

MTR RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
geographic relationships with KBA and CH.	
That in recognition of the significant delays and impediments during SGP5 start-up, the mission recommends a 1.5-year, no-cost extension.	The CPMU, with support from the UNDP CO and the CPMT, has already obtained an 18-month extension of SGP-5 in the Philippines.
The CPMU note the institutional impediments faced within the NCIP and take steps to address the limited human and material resources as well as the technical capacity of NCIP in terms of responding to the needs of SGP5.	This has already been addressed. In addition to the Memorandum of Agreement, which the CPMU brokered between the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples and the Biodiversity Management Bureau (Implementing Partner), the CPMU also urged the NCIP regional offices to form special Free and Prior Informed Consent Teams to conduct the FPIC processes. Having gotten the agreement of the NCIP regional offices to facilitate the FPIC processes, the FPIC requirement has already been hurdled by SGP-5 grantees.
That the CPMU advance its efforts to support a coherent overall land and marine planning approach, including advocacy at the highest levels of government.	<p>The Philippine Government's Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) had earlier adopted HLURB Resolution No. 908, s. 2013, the enhanced Comprehensive Land Use Planning System (eCLUP), pointing out that local planning is a systematic and organized presentation of the local government's vision "from the forests-to-lowland-to-coastal ecosystems of the watershed/sub-watershed system". Along this line, the HLURB has issued a 3-volume manual that integrates biodiversity conservation into the planning process.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the National Land Use Bill, which proposes the inclusion of biodiversity conservation objectives in land use planning is also pending in the National Legislature and is supported by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.</p>

MTR RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
	The CPMU shall closely monitor the progress of the Bill.
That the CPMU actively advocate to ensure that the CLUP framework and planning approach integrates biodiversity conservation, ecosystem values, and sustainability imperatives.	This is precisely a target under Outcome II of SGP-5, and is thus being pursued by several grantees in partnership with their local governments. Nevertheless, the CPMU shall remind the concerned grantees of this matter by calling their attention to the "Procedural Guidelines for Mainstreaming Biodiversity in the CLUP of Local Government Units", a publication of the GEF-funded and UNDP-BMB-implemented Biodiversity Partnerships Project (BPP). Soft copies of the manual shall be sent to the grantees and posted in the SGP-5 Philippines website.
That DENR, PTRC, and NSC be made aware that the concepts, which under-pin SGP5, are that small grant interventions are designed to support larger interventions. In most locations, larger interventions are not in place and SGP5 is the foremost source of funding and support.	This matter is known to all even at the proposal stage. In fact, SGP-5 is known for its catalytic projects that call the attention of local governments and other stakeholders to the biodiversity importance of the areas where they work.
That CPMU gives additional emphasis on capacity development, and management systems for Locally Managed Conservation Areas (LMCA), and that the CPMU consider formulation of a Management Systems and Capacity Building programme.	<p>The CPMU shall use the site conferences as platform for formulating a Management Systems and Capacity Building Program, by considering best practices and lessons learned by the grantees. This should guide the grantees in further developing their projects (for the remainder of the time) or in formulating their sustainability plans (e.g., include it in project proposals).</p> <p>It should be noted, too, that many of the grantees have already identified their training needs at the proposal stage, thus, their respective work and financial plans already provide for these training activities. However, we see the value of this</p>

MTR RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
	recommendation in expanding the menu of training needs of the grantees and their partners as they go through the process of managing their protected and production areas.
That the CPMU, RP, PSC and PTRC give attention to providing support to the person or persons with vision, commitment and passion and, where possible, provide additional support to "champions".	This contrasts with the view of the CPMU that all grantee organizations are biodiversity conservation champions in their respective communities. The work of SGP-5 is to provide them with opportunities so they can have a voice. Everybody deserves whatever support the CPMU can give in whatever way it may be useful to them. In the first place, SGP-5 supports organizations. In the second place, there was no one pointed out in the MTR as being a champion, save for the general parameters of "person or persons with vision, commitment and passion".
That the CPMU encourage and support Hubs to exert more influence and play a leading role in ensuring that best practice and other appropriate methodologies is shared amongst grantees and replicated.	Sharing of best practices and other appropriate technologies is the prime purpose of the site conferences, which are conducted by the site hubs. This is actually being done.
That the CPMU and RP investigate and consider applying contemporary resource management and protected area planning tools including: Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool [SMART], Open Standards for Conservation Practise [OS], and Global Footprint.	Two of SGP-5 grantees (Katala Foundation, Inc. in Palawan, and Friends of the Environment for Development and Sustainability, Inc. in the Sierra Madre Mountain Range) are demonstrating how local communities can adopt/adapt LAWIN, a phone-based application, which operationalizes SMART in the Philippines. We shall ask these grantees to make presentations on their experience with LAWIN during the site conferences (Palawan and Upper Sierra Madre) and their recommendations on how this can be adopted/adapted by local communities.

MTR RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
	<p>The Country Programme Manager and the Programme Development Specialist are currently studying how to integrate the COMDEKS and Open Standards tools in land/seascape work. This is in consideration of the fact that the CPMU and its grantees are already using a mapped information database, which was developed based on a checklist agreed upon by the CPMU and the grantees on a land/seascape basis. It is expected that by January 2018, a simple instructional manual for integration of these tools shall have been developed and distributed to grantees. An orientation shall be conducted between January and February 2018 to help grantees and their partners adopt this as part of their continuing planning process with their local governments and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Global Footprint tools, however, are too complex to apply at this time of the project. Besides, it is respectfully submitted that the tools are best applied in a multi-focal project, particularly one that includes climate change and land degradation. It is hoped that the next Operational Phase of SGP in the Philippines will be a multi-focal one. This recommendation shall be passed on to the Executing Agency, the Implementing Partner and the GEF-Country Focal Point for their consideration as they develop the design of the next OP.</p>
<p>That, where considered appropriate, grantees be asked to revisit their funding applications to ensure there is clarity amongst all partners about the actual problem interventions are addressing.</p>	<p>This is part of their regular reporting plan. However, the CPMU shall include this matter in the discussions during the site conferences this September to November 2017. In addition, the CPMU and the RP recently re-designed the Terminal Report template to ensure that the</p>

MTR RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
	<p>reports can clearly articulate their achievements vis-à-vis the problems their interventions are addressing. The RP has sent out the aforementioned revised template to each grantee, with instruction to take a closer look at the items there and revisit their project proposals to ensure that they can respond to the queries in the revised template.</p>
<p>That all project proposals are reviewed to ensure adequate provision is made for compliance and enforcement, and that application of the SMART patrolling and monitoring system be investigated and, if necessary, adapted to work with NGO, CBO, etc.</p>	<p>The CPMU generally disagrees with this. The proponents/grantees must be free to design their projects based on how they appreciate the problems they intend to address. However, the CPMU, the Project Technical Review Committee and the National Steering Committee may make suggestions as they see fit. Having said that, it is best that the proponents themselves capitalize on their strengths to ensure project success. Focus is important, especially given the small amount of these projects. It also behooves to note that compliance and enforcement is suited for specific project themes. Mostly, it forms part of projects that are geared towards protected area management, as it is an important aspect of protected area management work. In fact, an examination of the protected area management projects supported by SGP-5 would reveal that most, if not all, of these projects have law enforcement components.</p> <p>Nevertheless, as SGP-5-supported projects are now in place, this recommendation will be referred to the Executing Agency and the Implementing Partner for their consideration in designing the next operational phase of SGP.</p>
<p>That the CPMU give priority during the remaining period of the SGP5 to:</p>	<p>We highly appreciate the first two items. The CPMU is currently working with the People's Survival</p>

MTR RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> endeavours to source co-funding; encourage provincial governors to become more active and, where appropriate, launch community-based partnerships; give priority to the formulation of community-level regulations or enactments for biodiversity-friendly production. 	<p>Fund (of the Philippine Government's Climate Change Commission) and the Agricultural Credit Policy Council (of the Department of Agriculture) to explore co-funding schemes. Co-funding is also among the agenda in talking to local governments.</p> <p>Three partnerships with local governments are already covered by agreements that pursue community-based partnerships. The CPMU is working with the grantees of Northern Samar towards a similar agreement. The grantees there are finalizing their agenda with the Provincial Government and are already scheduling a meeting in October 2017 with the Governor to present their agenda. It is hoped that the agreement can be signed by November 2017.</p> <p>We understand that the third item relates to the indicator under Outcome 3, which targets community-level regulations or enactments for biodiversity-friendly production. As we had earlier reported to the consultants, such item has already been removed from the indicators. Instead, the CPMU is now advocating the adoption of the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS), a participatory, community-based methodology of certification, as a means of certifying the products of our beneficiary communities as biodiversity-friendly, based on a checklist prepared by the Biodiversity Partnerships Project (GEF-funded, implemented through UNDP and the Biodiversity Management Bureau).</p>
<p>Opportunities for up-skilling CPMU staff to be involved in training courses using the Open Standards for Conservation Practice are available</p>	<p>The Country Programme Manager attended the capability-building workshop on COMDEKS in January 2017. The Programme Development</p>

MTR RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
and ought to be investigated and supported.	Specialist also attended the Open Standards for Conservation Practice course given by The Protected Areas Learning & Research Collaboration in July 2017.
Consideration be given to a multi-focal approach in future SGP interventions that more accurately reflect the land/seascape approach and IUCN Category V Protected Landscape Management principles.	We greatly appreciate this comment. Land/seascape work in fact requires multi-focal work to enable grantees/projects to confront complex environmental problems. The CPMU is already making representation to the GEF-Country Focal Point for a multi-focal SGP-6 that should at least include chemicals, land degradation and climate change, in addition to biodiversity conservation. Several SGP-5 grantees now participate in the discussions for GEF-7. Two members of the National Steering Committee also sit in the GEF NSC. They carry this advocacy.

