

## II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Project Description (brief)

#### PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE

Project Title:	Mainstreaming global environment commitments for effective national environmental management			
GEF Project ID:	5126		<i>at endorsement (Million US\$)</i>	<i>at completion (Million US\$)*</i>
UNDP Project ID:	4937	GEF financing:	0.980	0.834
Country:	Suriname	IA/EA own:	0.185	0.217
Region:	Latin America and Caribbean	Government:	0.440	1.2400
Focal Area:	Multifocal	Other:	0.1	0
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):	CCCD; CD2 & CD4	Total co-financing:	1.400	1.553
Executing Agency:	UNDP	Total Project Cost:	2.380	2.387
Other Partners involved:	Planning Office, CELOS, ABS, ROGB-SBB	ProDoc Signature (date project began):		Oct 30, 2015
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: Oct 30, 2018	Actual: June 17, 2019

\* Since the project has been approved for extension until June 2019, the date of 1 December 2018 has been used as reference date for the current evaluation.

The current project is a GEF-5 Cross Cutting Capacity Development project for Suriname, titled 'Mainstreaming global environment commitments for effective national environmental management'. It foresaw two main outcomes: 1. Increased capacity of decision makers and stakeholders to manage environmental planning and processes that lead to decisions aimed at increasing global environmental benefits through better use of information and knowledge; and 2. Improved national capacities for the effective coordinated management and implementation of the Rio Conventions, and to continued leverage of financial resources to support the Conventions' objectives. To achieve these outcomes, a project management unit was installed as part of the National Institute for Environment and Development in Suriname NIMOS and work packages were outsourced to a consortium of international and national consultants. The latter consortium was tasked to elaborate a Roadmap for the harmonization of environmental knowledge and information systems in Suriname, an Environmental Atlas and Information Catalog, a Roadmap for Change outlining the path towards environmental good governance, and a Sustainable Financing Plan. A separate group of consultants was tasked to provide Decrees for operationalization of the Environmental Framework Act, that has been in the process of elaboration since 2002. Key stakeholders were involved in providing information and opinions about the set up and operationalization of a Suriname National Environmental Information Network SMIN and inputs for the Environmental Atlas (including a Land Use/Land Cover map). Institutional capacity of a number of organisations was built (e.g. NIMOS, Planbureau, SBB, Meteo, ABS, CELOS, Herbarium) to improve digitalization, GIS application and storage of data and information. Trainings were provided as part of the roll out of the Land Use/Land Cover maps on a national and district scale. The project was supposed to be concluded in October 2018, but a no-cost extension has been granted until June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

## Evaluation Rating Table

<b>1. Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<i>rating</i>	<b>2. IA&amp; EA Execution</b>	<i>rating</i>
M&E design at entry	MU	Quality of UNDP Implementation	MS
M&E Plan Implementation	U	Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	MU
Overall quality of M&E	U-MS	Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	MS
<b>3. Assessment of Outcomes</b>	<i>rating</i>	<b>4. Sustainability</b>	<i>rating</i>
Relevance	R	Financial resources:	ML
Effectiveness	S	Socio-political:	ML
Efficiency	MS	Institutional framework and governance:	ML
Overall Project Outcome Rating	MS	Environmental:	ML
		Overall likelihood of sustainability:	ML
<b>5. Impact</b>	<i>rating</i>	<b>6. Overall Project</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Overall likelihood of impact	U/A		<b>MS</b>

### Summary of conclusions, recommendations and lessons

The project has – to date - been marginally successful in achieving its objectives in terms of key targets, developing an effective platform for harmonization of environmental knowledge and management information systems and the procedures that need to be in place to ensure liberal exchange of high quality data and information. The outputs were produced, at least in advanced draft form: SMIN, Environmental Atlas, Roadmap for Change, Catalog and Decrees for the operationalization of the Environmental Framework Act. The Kaplan reports contain the necessary tools for incorporating environmental issues into spatial planning in order to provide an enabling environment for improving planning and decision-making to achieve global environmental problems. However, these outputs have all not been validated and approved yet as official instruments for environmental governance by the GoS. Since the project has received an extension until June 2019, there still is time for this validation and approval, which will solidify the potential impact of the project.

### Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project

The project design was relevant to the national development priorities and the OP 2012 – 2016, and continues to be of relevance to the current vision in the OP 2017 – 2021 on national sustainable development. All respondents to the interviews during the Terminal Evaluation have concurred that harmonization of the environmental knowledge and information systems and digitalization of all information available will assist decision makers in taking better informed decisions about the sustainable use of natural resources and the combat of land degradation, loss of biodiversity and the negative effects of climate change.

Although the ProDoc indicated that Adaptive management measures would effectively be taken during project implementation to avoid any delay or disruptions in project implementation, and to enhance project effectiveness, the measures taken were not an undivided success. The implementation arrangements for the project have been changed drastically, from local management with a pool of national consultants, to local

supervision with implementation by a consortium of international and national consultants (Kaplan). Supervision mostly organized by a part-time Technical Coordination Expert, who has not been with the project for the full length, and a Project Manager and Senior Advisor detached from NIMOS – who however seemed to retain some of their normal NIMOS tasks. An M&E officer was recruited by NIMOS, who unfortunately resigned before project end and not replaced. This may have contributed to the apparent delay in achievement of the outcomes of the project. No formal Board of Advisors was established to direct the PMU and provide oversight. Along the way, the active participation of one of the Executing Agents, the Environmental Coordination team of the Cabinet to the President<sup>1</sup> was lost, and not regained.

Although the project produced a good number of tangible outputs, some elements foreseen in the ProDoc have not been realized; elements that would have helped the project in raising its profile and status as Cross Cutting Capacity Development project. These are:

- 1) A clear communication strategy: such a strategy would have allowed the project to bank on the achievement of its intermediary outputs (launches, validations of drafts, workshops and trainings, etc.) to further the awareness of the public, fellow institutions and decision makers about the need for stronger environmental governance, including living up to the requirements under the MEA Suriname has ratified, as well as the need for a more performant and harmonized environmental knowledge and information management system. It would have been a quick win to work together with the REDD+ project on the matter.
- 2) A stakeholder engagement plan: since the project has to deal with a great number of stakeholders, it would have benefitted from a clear plan on how and when to engage each and all of these stakeholders. This could have concluded stakeholder representation of vulnerable groups, such as the Indigenous and Tribal People, whose influence could and should have been stronger in the project, as well as gender and youth groups. Again, since the REDD+ project already has such planning inherent to its processes, it would have been a quick win to join forces on the topic.
- 3) A capacity building strategy: since capacity building is more than just training, the project could have built on the ProDoc and the experience of the CCCD project elsewhere to design a specific strategy that would involve strengthening the institutions with hardware and applications (as has happened now in the project), as well as coordination of mandates, coaching, peer-to-peer learning, training, HRM (the foreseen HR Transition Plan as outlined in the PRODOC) and educational curriculum building.

### **Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project**

The evaluator recognizes the considerable achievements of the Project and would like to make the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Hold a meeting with the project partners to discuss the current state of the Capacity Development Score Card and present the outcomes of the TE;

Recommendation 2: Set up a specific meeting with the CM of the Cabinet to discuss progress and continuation; Portfolio meeting between UNDP and NIMOS can be option to establish technical information flow between 2nd layer NIMOS and CM, mirroring info and contact between management of NIMOS and CM. Need for systematic review of optimization of information flows within and between organizations.

Recommendation 3: Finalize draft Roadmap for Change, Environment Atlas, Catalogue, Decrees for the Environment Framework Act, Sustainable Financing Plan;

Recommendation 4: Produce cover documents by NIMOS to officialize its interpretation of the Kaplan documents as official government documents with decision making implications. This can be done either

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<sup>1</sup> Environment Coordination team of the Cabinet to the President was to successor to the Environment Department, within the former Ministry of Labor, Technology and Environment.

as a cover document discussing all of the document or a cover document for each report/document produced.

Recommendation 5: Present documents to the foreseen partners in the SMIN and ask for their feedback;

Recommendation 6: Establish TOR for web-portal SMIN and hire company to design and make accessible the Portal to SMIN partners and general public;

Recommendation 7: Formalize SMIN – TOR and organize first meeting to outline the way of working together, MOUs, standardization of data/information and the use of the web-portal;

Recommendation 8: Elaborate a Capacity Development Strategy that will incorporate all capacity development achievements during the project, as well as a roadmap for further capacity development after the project closes. This should include the HR Transition Plan as outlined as an important indicator of success in the PRODOC.

Recommendation 9: Adapt the REDD+ Communication Strategy and the Stakeholder Engagement Plan to suit the needs of continuity of the CCCD project;

Recommendation 10: Outline how the CCCD project will put special attention on the gender aspects of the project, as well as the specificities of vulnerable groups, such as youth, children, elderly, IDPs, refugees. Also put particular attention to the involvement of Indigenous and Tribal People and how to ensure their FPIC with regards to use of Indigenous Knowledge (Nagoya Protocol).

### **Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives**

The consortium of consultants is currently finalizing several of the tangible outputs of the project, one of which is the Sustainable Financing Plan. As noted earlier, the project stakeholders would benefit from a Capacity Development Strategy that provides the SMIN partners with a possibility to continue strengthening their capacities for the years to come – it would be the main purpose of the Sustainable Financing Plan to ensure that the financial means for such capacity building and the operational costs of the SMIN and the web-portal would remain available and a continuous hardware strengthening of various SMIN partners would be possible. SMIN would have to become the hub of all Environmental Knowledge and Information Management activities underway and planned in Suriname, where initiatives like the reporting to the conventions (TNC & NDC, 6<sup>th</sup> CBD report & GBIF, LDN reporting, etc.), EIA and SEA, etc. would join hands to feed in to the harmonized SMIN web-portal. The latter should not mean that SMIN-secretariat at NIMOS would centralize all the data, but that interfaces would have to be created to ensure that there is liberal information sharing between the data and information custodians in a practically instantaneous fashion (to be agreed upon via MOUs). Hence, reporting to the conventions could be strengthened in speed and quality, and spatial development planning on the national and local level could be done while taking into account potential environmental services, global environmental benefits and impacts. In such a way, decision making about natural resources management and conservation could be done in an informed manner.

### **Best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success**

The project demonstrated several good practices which resulted in the successful implementation of the project that may be adopted for the formulation of other projects. It also provided some points that future projects and projects elsewhere should try to avoid.

Some of the best practices are:

- i. Training of local stakeholders on the use of the Land Use/Land Cover map for local development planning. This has been indicated by several respondents as being very useful as an anchor for overall capacity building. The national and district maps are now already being used for planning purposes.
- ii. Digitalization efforts for data and information that is available in written or printed format. In this, SuriCorp has been important, providing young volunteers to do the actual digitization (and herewith making

these volunteers more employable), but the CCCD project has provided several organizations with the necessary hardware to make the transfer. This will help in gaining more insight in time lapses of environmental phenomena.

iii. Clearly linking the project to an institution with a mandate to continue the path set out by the project. NIMOS' Environmental Planning and Information Management bureau (EPI) was at the heart of the project, offering opportunity to explore its mandate in the matter. This ensures sustainability of the project results.

iv. Tendering packages of project implementation to a consortium of national and international consultants. To create more efficiency of use of funding and time, project outcomes and outputs were combined into packages for which tenders were elaborated. The time lost on the tendering procedure can be gained by providing clear TORs to the consortia of consultants that are recruited for the different packages and with appropriate oversight, these can produce more in-depth and detailed products during a required participatory process. Training and communication can be part of their portfolio.

Some of the worst practices:

i. Confusion about the role and responsibilities of the two executing agencies, NIMOS and EC Cabinet. After the dismantling of the ATM, the execution befell NIMOS and the EC Cabinet, but no clear division of tasks was outlined. NIMOS was supposed to do the execution and EC Cabinet the oversight, but this did not materialize. So, clarity of roles and responsibilities should have been formally agreed upon in a type of MoU before the project execution.

ii. Detailed planning of certain crucial aspects in project coordination: stakeholder involvement, communication, capacity development and M&E. A number of necessary elements of project execution were not formalized, but executed haphazardly without a clear action plan and without clear capitalization of results. That makes evaluating these elements very difficult and provides lack of transparency.

iii. Allotting all packages of work to only one consortium. Initially, all project activities were meant to be tendered to one consortium of consultants only. This is only a good idea if oversight is stringent and adjustments can be made with authority. Both were not the case in this project. Fortunately, one of the elements – the elaboration of judicial instruments for the Environmental Framework Act – was drawn out of the tender on strong advice from UNDP.

