

## TERMINAL EVALUATION (TE) OF THE

### SIXTH OPERATIONAL PHASE OF THE GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME IN SRI LANKA (SGP OP6)

**Title of UNDP supported GEF financed programme: Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Sri Lanka (SGP OP6)**

**UNDP Project ID: PIMS 5529 / GEF Project ID: 9093**

**Evaluation time frame: April – June 2022**

**Date of evaluation report: June 26 2022**

**Region and Country included in the Programme: Asia Pacific, Sri Lanka**

**GEF Focal Area Objective: SGP: Small Grants Program - Effectively support the creation of global environmental benefits and the safeguarding of the global environment through community and local solutions that complement and add value to national and global level action**

**Implementing partner: UNOPS**

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## DISCLAIMER

This document represents the analysis of the author (Maria Onestini) and does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Small Grants Programme, UN agencies, governments nor any individual or other institutions involved.

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## III. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

APR-PIR	Annual Project Report - Project Implementation Review
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BD	Biodiversity
BIOFIN	Biodiversity Financing Project of UNDP
CCM	Climate change mitigation
CCD	Department of Coast Conservation and Coastal Resource Management
CO	UNDP Country Office
COMDEKS	Community Development and Knowledge Management of the Satoyama Initiative
CP	Country Programme
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CPMU	Country Programme Management Unit
CSO	Civil service organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
EOI	Expression of Interest
EOP	End of project
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Green House gas
GoSL	Government of Sri Lanka
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contributions
ISTF	International Society of Tropical Foresters
KCF	Knuckles Conservation Forest
LD	Land Degradation
LSV	Lanka Social Ventures
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEPA	Marine Environment Protection Authority
MoMDE	Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment
MPCLG	Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government
MTR	Mid Term Review
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NIM	National implementation modality
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NSC	National Steering Committee
NTFP	Non-timber forest products
OARM	Aquatic Resources Management (NGO)

OP	Operational Programme
PC	Provincial Council
PIMS	UNDP/GEF Project Information Management System
PPG	Project Preparatory Grant (GEF)
PRF	Project Results Framework
ProDoc	Project Document for SGP6
SEPLS	Socio-ecological production of landscapes and seascapes
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SLEES	Sri Lanka Environmental Exploration Society
SLLRDC	Sri Lanka Land Reclamation and Development Corporation
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound
STAR	System of Transparent Allocation of Resources of the GEF
tCO2	Tonne of Carbon Dioxide
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biodiversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNOPS	United National Office for Project Services
WTSS	Wanasarana Thurulatha Swechcha Society

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TABLE 1: PROJECT INFORMATION TABLE

Project Title	6th Operational Phase of the GEF SGP Sri Lanka (SGP OP6)	PIF Approval Date:	23 Feb 2016 (Preparation Grant Approved/ Concept Approved) 19 April 2017 (Project Approved for Implementation)
UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):	5529	CEO Endorsement Date (FSP) / Approval date (MSP):	20 April 2017
GEF Project ID:	9093	ProDoc Signature Date:	January 2017
UNDP Atlas Business Unit, Award ID, Project ID:	00103544	Date Project Manager hired:	N/A
Country/Countries:	Sri Lanka	Inception Workshop Date:	17 December 2017
Region:	Asia and the Pacific	Mid-Term Review Completion Date:	June 2019
Focal Area:	Biodiversity Climate Change Land Degradation	Terminal Evaluation Completion date:	June 2022
GEF Operational Programme or Strategic Priorities/Objectives:	SGP	Actual Operational Closure Date:	25 July 2022
Trust Fund:	GEF Trust Fund		
Implementing Partner (GEF Executing Entity):	Implementing Agency: United Nations Development Programme Implementing Partner/ Executing Agency: UNOPS		
NGOs/CBOs involvement:	US\$ 1,100,000 (in cash) US\$ 1,000,000 (in kind)		
Private sector involvement:	0		
Geospatial coordinates of project sites:	Knuckles <a href="https://drive.google.com/open?id=1LvecnpFmF76MbA4fr7MPVf8W3wv5k2o3&amp;usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/open?id=1LvecnpFmF76MbA4fr7MPVf8W3wv5k2o3&amp;usp=sharing</a> Colombo <a href="https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=18-yvY78Y2nWUL6fmOEDfoELp0taG-Hco&amp;ll=6.861926608090542%2C79.97763525&amp;z=11">https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=18-yvY78Y2nWUL6fmOEDfoELp0taG-Hco&amp;ll=6.861926608090542%2C79.97763525&amp;z=11</a>		
<b>Financial Information</b>			
PDF/PPG	at approval (US\$M)	at PDF/PPG completion (US\$M)	
GEF PDF/PPG grants for project preparation	60,000	60,000	
Co-financing for project preparation	-	-	
Project	at CEO Endorsement (US\$M)	at TE (US\$M)	
[1] UNDP contribution:	400,000 (in-kind) 100,000 (in cash)	500,000 (in-kind) 100,000 (in cash)	
[2] Government:	700,000 (in-kind)	700,000 (Sri Lanka Land Development Corporation)	
[3] Other multi-/bi-laterals:	-	-	
[4] Private Sector:	-	-	
[5] NGOs:	2,100,000	538,138 (in cash) / 2,263,936 (in-kind)	
[6] Total co-financing [1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5]:	3,300,000	4,102,074	
[7] Total GEF funding:	2,497,078	2,497,078	
[8] Total Project Funding [6 + 7]	5,797,078	6,599,152	

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMME

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The goal of the SGP OP6 has been to support the achievement of global environmental benefits with community and local solutions that work in harmony with local, national and global action. To that end, the objective of this project has been to *enable community organizations to take collective action for adaptive landscape management for socio-ecological resilience through design, implementation, and evaluation of grant projects for global environmental benefits and sustainable development in three ecologically sensitive landscapes: the Knuckles Conservation Forest and its buffer zone, the coastal region from Mannar Island to Jaffna, and the Colombo Wetlands.*

This was intended to be carried out through participatory, multi-stakeholder, landscape management using the COMDEKS approach. This planning and management approach focuses on Sri Lanka's three ecologically sensitive landscapes that are juxtaposed to very intense social dynamics: *the Knuckles Conservation Forest and its buffer zone, the coastal region from Mannar Island to Jaffna, and the Colombo Wetlands.* The COMDEKS approach, besides impelling a geographically and ecologically focalised method, it is also meant to drive landscape management in a participatory, multi-stakeholder, manner. The landscape approach furthermore is not only for the purpose of focalising interventions but to promote and uphold the linkage between generating global environmental benefits and developmental benefits at the local level.

The proposed interventions were aimed at enhancing social and ecological resilience through community-based, community-driven projects to conserve biodiversity, optimize ecosystem services, manage land (particularly agro - ecosystems) and water sustainably, as well as mitigate climate change. It was intended that the pilots would build upon experiences and lessons learned from previous SGP operational phases in Sri Lanka, and lessons learned from other programmes worldwide that took the landscape approach. This was to be done by assisting community organizations in carrying out and coordinating projects in pursuit of outcomes they have identified in landscape plans and strategies. Coordinated community projects in the landscape were intended to generate ecological, economic and social synergies to produce greater and potentially longer-lasting global environmental benefits, as well as increased social capital and local sustainable development benefits.

The Project had a planned implementation period of four years. It had a total planned project cost of USD 5,797,078.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

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- The integrated landscape approach with conservation/sustainable use of natural resources has been important for relevance and effectiveness.
- The landscape approach is innovative in Sri Lanka, and therefore enduring a learning curve not only at the conceptual level but also at the implementation level.
- Although design had a general strategic outlook, some of the tools (such as indicators) were not specific or robust enough to capture several aspects of change.
- The most successful grants are those that effectively joined livelihood with strategies and incentives that underpin sustainable equitable management of natural resources.



- The Programme faced a number of management challenges, some associated to the introduction of the landscape approach and some associated to the civil society organisations that critiqued the SGP decision – making processes.
- Individual successful projects have strategically combined innovation with basic knowledge.
- This operational phase enhanced a number of networks and multi – stakeholder engagement, at different levels and with different types of actors and institutions.
- The extent that the expected outcomes and objectives were achieved has been met in all relevant components.

### **SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS**

The *Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme In Sri Lanka* is about to be completed in the country leaving a number of achievements but also opening the door to continued work. The integrated community – based approach that took place in this phase in three key landscapes in the country (Knuckles, Mannar, and Colombo) was innovative and pioneering, for SGP as well as for many other interventions in the country. The implementation of this method came however with a number of challenges, not only at the institutional level but also to render this approach practical and accessible to stakeholders and partners such as governments, implementers of the projects on the ground, grantees and beneficiary communities.

The communities in the landscapes where SGP OP6 worked are faced to vulnerability conditions strongly influenced by environmental degradation. In some areas they are also returning population after a long civil war conflict. The methodology to work with them linking integrated landscape approaches to improve their livelihoods is not only a question of conservation as such but also of equity. Creating the incentives for these communities to better manage natural resources while improving their livelihood conditions is key for the success of results.

An OP7 is already operational in the country. The expectations are high that this new phase can not only give continuity to the work done in the previous phase being evaluated here, but to improve, enhance and continue accruing results based on the experience of OP6.

### **SYNTHESIS OF THE KEY LESSONS LEARNED**

- When grants and projects link livelihood of communities, productivity with sustainable management of natural resources, and engender clear incentives and benefits, then they are more relevant to local actors.
- Gender strategies are effective if they are developed early on in an inception stage in order to guide gender mainstreaming throughout the implementation process.
- Indicators should be conceived not only as a guide to tallying achievements, but also as a driver to promote change.
- While it is understood that no small grants are identified a priori of the implementation of a programme’s phase, the anticipated outcomes overall need to be specified to some degree

within a results framework so that expected results / effects/ and impacts are accompanied with outcome oriented, including social pillars and social aspects of sustainable development.

- Indicators should also promote what conceptually small grants within a landscape approach need to promote in an all-encompassing manner.
- Promoted production systems must be sustainable both economically and ecologically; this requires considerable building of the capacities of community organizations to plan and manage sustainable resource use.
- Transparency of all types is beneficial for a project or programme.
- Linking with relevant government agencies and generating good working relationships of these with the grantees/beneficiaries not only leads to better results but also creates a path for uptake, upscaling, and capacity building of government – related structures and individuals.
- Involving different types of stakeholders, relevant to an area where projects take place, is beneficial not only for the projects themselves but also for their sustainability.

TABLE 2: EVALUATION RATINGS TABLE FOR THE PROJECT

<b>1. Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E)</b>	
M&E design at entry	<b>HS</b>
M&E Plan Implementation	<b>MS</b>
Overall Quality of M&E	<b>MS</b>
<b>2. Implementing Agencies (IAs) Implementation &amp; Executing Agency (EA) Execution</b>	
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	<b>S</b>
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	<b>S</b>
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	<b>S</b>
<b>3. Assessment of Outcomes</b>	
Relevance	<b>S</b>
Effectiveness	<b>MS</b>
Efficiency	<b>MU</b>
Overall Project Outcome Rating	<b>MS</b>
<b>4. Sustainability</b>	
Financial sustainability	<b>ML</b>
Socio-political sustainability	<b>ML</b>
Institutional framework and governance sustainability	<b>ML</b>
Environmental sustainability	<b>ML</b>
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	<b>ML</b>

*Note:* Accounts of these ratings are imbedded in this report's narrative in each of the pertinent sections. See Annex 3: Rating Scales for rankings definitions.

TABLE 3: RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY TABLE

*Note: These are summarized recommendations. Full recommendations are found further along this report.*

*Recommendations for the next phase of operation of the SGP in Sri Lanka*

Rec #	TE Recommendation	Entity Responsible
1	Continue to work at the landscape levels, generating improved connectivity and exchanges that consolidate a true integrated approach.	SGP
2	SGP should strengthen stakeholder engagement processes and/or conflict resolution mechanisms, as well as enhance transparency processes, to deter grievances.	SGP
3	Assistance (technical, procedural, monitoring) should accompany proposal procedures, to enhance the capacity of the organisations to present the proposals and implement based on that.	SGP
4	At the project - by - project level as well as the at the general SGP level certain features (such as indicators) need to be presented or formulated in proposals and thoroughly monitored throughout implementation, including results – oriented relevant indicators.	SGP
5	Rely on strategic projects and their institutions to engender capacity, promote transparent proposal harnessing, livelihoods enhancement and sustainability.	SGP
6	Gender mainstreaming should be incorporated early on in the project and be implemented within a rights framework.	SGP
7	With the understanding that the landscape approach might entail working with groups that are outside of the target regions due to low capacity or isolation of these areas, these should nonetheless have proven knowledge of the ecosystems and social systems of the targeted areas as well as expertise in similar areas.	SGP
8	The generation of knowledge and dissemination of information should be dynamic , widely disseminating information, and engendering a range of knowledge management and communication products.	SGP

*Recommendations for future programming, for GEF/UNDP*

Rec #	TE Recommendation	Entity Responsible
9	Ensure that there is a harmonious and consistent combination between the issues important to the GEF (e.g., global environmental benefits) and what is crucial for the country and for local communities.	GEF/UNDP
10	Environmental projects for small grants should always be accompanied by clear livelihood enhancement approaches and by the creation of incentives for communities and individuals to engage in sustainable natural resource management within their means.	GEF/UNDP
11	Gender mainstreaming should be a part of planning and not added in later stages. Activities and projects should not only promote women's participation but should promote gender equity and women's empowerment.	GEF/UNDP
12	From early stages (even from planning) SGP and CPMUs need to have proper technical and operational staffing and/or support.	GEF/UNDP
13	With the understanding that small grants are demonstrative but that change will accrue forcefully if these demonstrations and innovations achieve a higher scale and are sustained, future programming should continue and enhance work on mainstreaming into national, regional and local governance and policies.	GEF/UNDP

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### *SUMMARY PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION*

The *goal* of the *Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Sri Lanka (SGP OP6)* was to “support the achievement of global environmental benefits through community-based solutions that work in harmony with actions at local, national and global levels”. Its *objective* was to “enable community-based organizations to take collective action for adaptive landscape management for socio-ecological resilience through design, implementation, and evaluation of grant projects for global environmental benefits and local sustainable development in three ecologically sensitive landscapes: the Knuckles Conservation Forest and its buffer zone, the coastal region from Mannar Island to Jaffna, and the Colombo Wetlands”. To achieve this goal and this objective, SGP OP6 was to focus on attaining the following four outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Multi-stakeholder partnerships in three ecologically sensitive landscapes develop and execute management plans to enhance socio-ecological landscape resilience and global environmental benefits;
- Outcome 2: Community-based organizations in landscape level networks build their adaptive management capacities by implementing projects and collaborating in landscape management;
- Outcome 3: Multi-stakeholder partnerships develop and implement strategic projects that catalyse the broader adoption of successful SGP-supported technologies, practices, or systems; and
- Outcome 4: Multi-stakeholder landscape policy platforms discuss potential policy innovations based on analysis of project experience and lessons learned.

The Project had a planned implementation period of four years. It had a total planned project cost of USD 5,797,078. The planned financing and co – financing was as follows:

<b>FINANCING PLAN</b>	
GEF Trust Fund	USD <b>2,497,078</b>
UNDP TRAC resources	USD 100,000
Cash co-financing to be administered by UNDP	USD 100,000
<b>(1) Total Budget administered by UNDP</b>	<b>USD 2,597,078</b>
<b>PARALLEL CO-FINANCING (all other co-financing that is not cash co-financing administered by UNDP)</b>	
UNDP	USD 400,000 (in kind)
Government	USD 700,000 (in kind)
Sri Lanka Nature Forum, Chair of SGP National Steering Committee	USD 1,100,000 (in cash)
Sri Lanka Nature Forum, Chair of SGP National Steering Committee	USD 1,000,000 (in kind)
<b>(2) Total co-financing</b>	<b>USD 3,200,000</b>
<b>(3) Grand-Total Project Financing (1)+(2)</b>	<b>USD 5,797,078</b>

## PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE OF THE EVALUATION

The varied purposes of evaluation exercises include monitoring results, the processes that went into achieving them or not, as well as assessing effects/impacts and promoting accountability. This evaluation centres, therefore, upon valuating the outcomes, outputs, products, and processes attained by the *Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Sri Lanka*. The specific objectives of the evaluation were to determine if and how project results were achieved, and to draw useful lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this programme as well as to aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP / GEF programming. Lastly, this exercise follows general objectives of these sorts of evaluations which have as an overall purpose to assemble lessons learned and best practices to aid projects and programmes' processes in the future. This is summative evaluation of the SGP OP6 in Sri Lanka as a whole.<sup>1</sup>

## EVALUATION SCOPE

This final evaluation has primarily focused on assessing the effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and relevance of the project considering the accomplished outcomes, objectives, and effects. It includes the following scope:

- Assess progress towards achieving project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document.
- Assess signs of project success or failure.
- Review the project's strategy considering its sustainability risks.

The evaluation has focused upon the outcomes, outputs, products and processes achieved or with a perspective of being achieved. The specific objectives of the evaluation were to determine if and how project results were achieved, and to draw useful lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project as well as aid in overall enhancement of future programming. That is, this assessment follows general objectives of these sorts of evaluations which have as a purpose assembling lessons learned and best practices to aid projects' processes in the future. The varied purposes of evaluation exercises include monitoring results as well as effects/impacts and promote accountability.

The approach for the evaluation of the *Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Sri Lanka* has been determined mainly by the Terms of Reference (ToR)) for this assignment and it follows methods and approaches as stated in UNDP guidelines and manuals, relevant tools, and other relevant UNDP guidance materials, including the *Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects* (of June 2020), and other UNEG directions. The analysis entails evaluating distinct project stages and aspects including design and formulation, implementation, results, and the involvement of stakeholders in the project's processes

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<sup>1</sup> Although this is a summative evaluation, the Programme is made up of individual projects and grants. In annexes information is found on the individual grants which was provided by the national evaluator (see Annex 7: Project Information Generated by national consultant with inputs from Site Visits).

and activities. It has been carried out following a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with governments' counterparts, project team, and other key stakeholders.

The time scope of the final evaluation is for the whole project as such, including its planned implementation period together with the extension period(s) granted. It is significant to point out that the findings, rankings, lessons learned and best practices respond to analysis of the project as a whole. That is, the scope of this evaluation is the project in its entirety.

## METHODOLOGY

To carry out this evaluation exercise several data collection tools for analysing information from the principles of results-based evaluation (including relevance, ownership, efficiency and effectiveness, sustainability) were used. Following UNDP/GEF guidelines, the relevant areas of the project were evaluated according to performance criteria and prospects of sustainability with ratings as summarized in the table found in annexes (Annex 3: Rating Scales)

The tools chosen for the evaluation, with a mixture of primary and secondary data as well as a combination of quantitative and qualitative material, were selected to provide a spectrum of information and to validate findings. These methods allowed for in-depth exploration and yielded information that facilitated understanding of observed changes in outcomes and outputs (both intended and unintended) and the factors that contributed to the achievements or lack of accomplishments. Stakeholders were identified at onset and at inception of the evaluation process. A typology was basically defined aligned with the role of key stakeholders and their institutional membership (such as international organizations' members, project staff, members of government, members of National Steering Committee, technical advisors, civil society members, private sector). Based on this typology as a sampling frame, key informants were identified and sampled for each of these types of stakeholders in order to include in the dialogues, interviews and questionnaires used. There was engagement with all of types of stakeholders therefore.<sup>2</sup>

Gender-sensitive methodologies and tools were used. These were applied not only in convening women's participation in the processes that resulted in this report, but also in providing an analysis of issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment as part of the Programme.

Regarding specific methodologies to gather assessment information, the following tools and methods were used:

- *Document analysis.* In depth analysis of documentation was carried out. The analysis examined documents prepared during the planning and in the implementation phases of the Programme. A list of documents consulted is found in annexes (Annex 10: List of consulted documents and online resources).
- *Key informant interviews:* Interviews were implemented through a series of open and semi-open questions raised to stakeholders directly and indirectly involved with the Programme.

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<sup>2</sup> In annexes there is a list of those stakeholders that engaged with this terminal evaluation.

Given the COVID-19 pandemic, mission travel could not take place for the International Evaluator. Therefore, all of the dialogues with national and international level stakeholders were held online, via internet. The national and international level actors (stakeholders) were defined as government actors, project staff, staff of the different international institutions which took part in the Programme in different capacities. Stakeholders to interview were chosen to be the key actors involved in the Programme. Annexes contains a list of national and international level stakeholders contacted (see Annex 8: List of national / international consulted stakeholders). When these stakeholders were not able to hold interviews, online questionnaires were implemented as a data gathering method. The criteria for choosing which local – level organizations, groups and stakeholders to interview and/or which would be included in the site visits were as follows:

- According to the level of performance of the supported intervention (high, medium, low)
- Including all three landscapes (Colombo, Knuckles and Mannar)
- Including strategic projects as well as regular grants
- Include different thematic areas (agriculture, tourism, biodiversity and land degradation aligned with GEF focal areas, etc.); and,
- Gender inclusiveness.

The national consultant carried out field site visits to Knuckles, Mannar and Colombo, and stratification was done according to the above criteria. As part of these field site visits, the national consultant engaged with 147 stakeholders (44 males / 103 females) and carried out also, besides interviews, direct observations. The listing of the stakeholders with whom the national consultant engaged with is found in annexes (see Annex 9: List of project-related stakeholders consulted by the national evaluator).

A first tool developed for this process was an evaluation matrix. This matrix guided the data collection process and, as the evaluation proceeded, the matrix was used to collect and present data obtained from various sources that relate to relevant evaluation criteria and questions. This tool was developed not only as a guide for systematizing data collection but also to make the evaluation process transparent. The matrix contains Evaluative Criteria Questions (that is, questions and sub questions related to each of the evaluation criteria enclosed in the evaluation); Indicators; Sources; and Methodology.

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### *DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS*

The approach and methods used were implemented in a manner as to promote reflection and learning through the evaluation process. Quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods (as indicated above, were used, such as: document analysis, interviews (applied online and through site visits), dialogues as well as direct observation. The variety of data sources, primary, secondary, qualitative, quantitative, etc., which were extracted from document analysis and desk review, as well as interactions with stakeholders, supported information validity. Also, through this combination of methods, feedback between the various tools and validation between different levels and types of



data was sought to triangulate the information, and thus ensuring the validity of the data that give rise to the assessment process and to this report. Quantitative analysis was carried – out by using logical framework and related indicators as benchmarks to tally Programme progress in implementation. Qualitative analysis was mainly applied to the information harnessed by using thematic analysis of interviews’ and dialogues responses. All of these analytical tools were triangulated and validated internally.

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### *ETHICS*

Rights of stakeholders were respected throughout the whole of the evaluation process. In particular the right to anonymity of responses, and other ethical considerations were also abided by, as well as the right of stakeholders to refuse to engage in interviews or dialogues. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations’. A code of conduct signed by the international evaluator, upon acceptance of the assignment, is found in annexes.

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### *LIMITATIONS TO THE EVALUATION*

As it occurs in most of these sorts of assessments, there can be a series of limitations and these were exacerbated by the situation related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the deep socio-economic and political crisis Sri Lanka is facing at the time of this evaluation. Besides the characteristic evaluability issues such as access to inputs and constraints in terms of time and resources, with the COVID-19 pandemic there have been other limitations identified. For instance, in light of the pandemic, mission travel was not feasible for the International Evaluator. Therefore, in order to mitigate whatever issues might arise in this sense, different access instruments were used (such as different tools for key interviews) in order to carry out online – based interviews and dialogues with national and international level stakeholders. Since by the time the evaluation took place stakeholders had adapted greatly to the at-a-distance modality of engagement, not only within the international agencies but also with governments, stakeholder access was not considered an issue. One of the most critical limitations to the evaluation, however, was due to the prevailing socio – economic and political crisis in Sri Lanka. The economic crisis has brought about a number of issues which hindered and / or slowed down the data gathering process. Curfews, changes in government, power outages and fuel shortages, social unrest, and safety issues were all predominant at the time of the evaluation, therefore –among other matters—delaying the evaluation process. These issues notwithstanding, the evaluation engaged a national consultant who carried out site visits and interviews/dialogues with different stakeholders at the local level in the three target landscapes. Although the situation on the ground was difficult due to the Sri Lankan crisis, the national consultant was able to engage with a robust number of stakeholders and conduct site visits in Knuckles, Mannar and Colombo. Therefore, overall, it is understood that the evaluability was not compromised given the methods and efforts placed in obtaining stakeholder access, promoting participation, and obtaining inputs at different levels and of different types.

## STRUCTURE OF THE TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

This evaluation report is structured beginning with an executive summary, an introduction and an evaluation scope and methodology section. A second section contains an overall Programme description within a developmental context, including an account of the problems the Programme sought to address, as well as its initial objectives. Furthermore, indicators and main stakeholders involved in the projects are described, as well as what were the expected results. Essentially, this segment of the report deals with the design stage and design concept of the Programme. A third core section of this report deals fundamentally with the evaluation findings, analytically observing the results framework, and linkages with other projects and interventions in the sector. Furthermore, this segment also deals with findings relating to the actual implementation of the Programme, including strategic issues such as adaptive management and partnership agreements, and monitoring. This section concludes with findings on Programme overall results and findings related to the criteria established for evaluations such as relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, ownership at the national level, mainstreaming and sustainability. A fourth core section of the present report entails overall conclusions as well as forward looking issues and recommendations. Lastly, an annex section includes Programme and evaluation support documentation.

### 3. PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

#### *PROGRAMME START AND DURATION, INCLUDING MILESTONES*

The *Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Sri Lanka (SGP OP6)* had a planned implementation period of four years. The finalization was planned for January 2021. Yet, given that the Programme was granted an extension, the actual close date is scheduled to be in July 2022. It had a total planned Programme cost of USD 5,797,078. Planned GEF financing was to be USD 2,497,078 with the rest of needed funds as co-financing from various sources (USD 3,200,000 is parallel co-financing from the following: UNDP Sri Lanka County Office, Sri Lanka Government and grantees).<sup>3</sup>

#### *INTRODUCTION TO SGP AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT: ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIO-ECONOMIC, INSTITUTIONAL, AND POLICY FACTORS RELEVANT TO THE PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE*

Before carrying out an analysis of the SGP OP6 in Sri Lanka, its context as the continuation of other operational phases and the insertion of it within a global programme is described. The Small Grants Programme of the Global Environment Facility (SGP) was established in 1992 within the framework of the United Nations Environment Conference (UNCED). This program, at a global level, takes place in more than 125 countries of the world promoting community-based innovations, through sustainable development projects by community organizations and civil society, with special consideration for indigenous peoples, women and youth. The explicit objective of the SGP at the global level has been to develop grassroots and community-based technologies and strategies to reduce threats to the global environment – especially those related to biodiversity loss, climate change, and the protection of international waters – while addressing livelihood challenges. The SGP at all levels has as one of its objectives to empower and support community initiatives and community actions. Due to this, the context of the Sixth Operational Phase of the Small Grants Programme Implemented by UNDP and executed by UNOPS in Sri Lanka is part of a trajectory at the global and national levels. This not only has had an impact on the architecture of the Programme in Sri Lanka per se, but also in its overall path and changes throughout the years.

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) has been active Sri Lanka since 1994. As of June 2021 the Programme reported 422 community-led projects. These were implemented within six operational phases of the SGP in the country. The country portfolio by area of work reports that until mid-2021 had about half of its projects in the biodiversity area, with land degradation encompassing 14 percent of the projects. Climate change was dealt with in about 12 percent of the projects, multifocal projects were developed in 14 percent of the cases. The other areas of work were capacity development, chemicals and waste, and international water.

Up until the Fifth Operational Phase the SGP in Sri Lanka dealt with projects spread – out over the whole of the country’s territory. The landscape approach begins to be implemented in the Sixth

<sup>3</sup> Actual co – financing data is presented further along this report when dealing with implementation.

Operational Phase (i.e. the phase being assessed by this evaluation). This approach is meant to use the COMDEKS<sup>4</sup> landscape planning and management approach, focusing on the three ecologically sensitive landscapes that are juxtaposed to very intense social dynamics: the Knuckles Conservation Forest and its buffer zone, the coastal region from Mannar Island to Jaffna, and the Colombo Wetlands. The COMDEKS approach, besides impelling a geographically and ecologically focalised method, it is also meant to drive landscape management in a participatory, multi-stakeholder, manner. Furthermore, reinforcing general outlooks on the objectives of SGP interventions in general, the funded projects are aimed at enhancing social and ecological resilience through community-based, community-driven projects to conserve biodiversity, optimize ecosystem services, manage land (particularly through agro - ecosystems), promote water sustainably, and mitigate climate change. The landscape approach furthermore is not only for the purpose of focalising interventions but to promote and uphold the linkage between generating global environmental benefits and developmental benefits at the local level.

Another particular characteristic to the SGP OP6 in Sri Lanka is that this is the first time that the Program operates under what GEF defines as an *upgraded* country. The term *upgrading* refers to the transition of the longest standing and most mature of SGP Country Programmes to a new funding regime that enables more budgetary control by Country Programmes and the opportunity to raise increased funding on their own. The objectives of GEF regarding upgraded countries are the following: (i) to enable the SGP to continue to expand and serve low-income nations without concomitant growth in core funding; (ii) to make better use of the capacities of mature Country Programmes to enrich the younger, less experienced ones; and (iii) to enable mature Country Programmes to access greater financial resources and exercise more programmatic freedom in light of their greater internal capacity.<sup>5</sup> GEF funds for the sixth replenishment have come from STAR funding which is managed by the Operational Focal Point representing the Ministry of Environment.

## PROBLEMS THAT THE PROGRAMME SOUGHT TO ADDRESS

Sri Lanka has significant biodiversity, yet it faces a number of developmental challenges for their conservation and sustainable use. The three landscapes chosen for the Sixth Operational Phase of the SGP were the Knuckles Conservation Forest and its buffer zone, the coastal region from Mannar Island to Jaffna, and the Colombo Wetlands. They are ecologically sensitive landscapes and while they provide important ecosystem services to the country and are essential for livelihoods (of pastoralist, agricultural, and fishing communities) they all manifest different levels of biodiversity loss and land degradation. These losses are attributable to anthropogenic impacts yet they are also exacerbated by climate change. The planning documents for the Sixth Operational Phase identified these issues as follows.

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<sup>4</sup> The Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS) project is a global programme implemented by the UNDP as a flagship of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative. COMDEKS has been designed to be community driven and support local community activities to maintain and rebuild Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes (SEPLS).

<sup>5</sup> Source: GEF.C.46.13\_GEF\_Small\_Grants\_Programme\_-\_Implementation\_Arrangements\_for\_GEF-6\_April\_30\_2014\_1.pdf (thegef.org)

The *Knuckles Conservation Forest* (located in the Knuckles Massif) has what is considered exceptionally high biodiversity in relation to other Sri Lankan forests. Besides its biodiversity value, the mountain range provides watershed services to lowland populations, especially farming communities living on the plains. The threats are varied, such as by habitat loss (mainly due to forest encroachment), seasonal fires, illegal logging, gem mining, and cardamom plantations. Plantation and tourism projects close to the forest have also resulted in habitat destruction. Forest fires in the dry seasons are, furthermore, a threatening circumstance to habitat which have lately been exacerbated by climate change. The rapid disorganized expansion of tourism is another major threat to the Knuckles Conservation Forest. Other threats are related to illegal activities like bush meat trade, disposal of chemical effluents from hotels, and dumping waste material into water ways continue to damage the forest ecosystem. Additional crop productivity in the area is experiencing diminishing returns due to continued soil erosion and land degradation.

The forest was declared the Knuckles Conservation Forest in 2000 while in 2011 the Knuckles Mountain Range was declared the Central Highland UNESCO World Heritage Site. Under Sri Lanka law, a Conservation Forest designation offers the highest level of protection and allows only biodiversity conservation activities. It means humans cannot enter the forest unless they have special permissions. Without access to public forests, which they once had, the villagers are left without any other option but to enter the forest and extract resources illegally for subsistence. The most common source of income in the villages' buffer zone areas is agriculture, but the earnings it generates are insufficient to sustain the population. Cardamom cultivation expanded over forty years ago resulting in the Knuckles forest becoming the country's highest cardamom producing area. Other sources of income come from non-timber forest products such as fuelwood, honey, medicinal plants, edible plants, rope material and bamboo. In this region, 55 percent of the households live below the national poverty line. Furthermore, due to the remoteness and inaccessibility of this area of Sri Lanka, villages are isolated without access to health care and other basic services such as education.

The second targeted landscape in this SGP Sixth Phase, the *coastal region from Mannar Island up to Jaffna*, is located in the north west of Sri Lanka. These areas are dry climatic zones characterized by a diversity of habitats such as estuaries, lagoons, mudflats, beaches, forests, coral reefs, seaweed communities, sea grasses, salt marshes, tidal habitats, coral reefs, algal communities, sea grass meadows and mangroves. The ecosystems of the Gulf of Mannar/Palk Bay area are known to harbour over 3,600 species of flora and fauna including endangered species. Aside from floral and faunal diversity, this region provides valuable ecosystem services such as food, water, fuel wood, nutrient cycling, prevention of soil erosion, flood control, and cultural services such as recreation and its supporting provisions. These ecosystem services maintain the livelihoods and sustainability of communities yet they are also faced with anthropogenic threats. Due to the conflict that spanned nearly three decades, economic and livelihood activities in these districts were badly disrupted, and a large number of families were displaced. This displacement resulted in adverse impacts to fauna and flora, while the use of land mines resulted in considerable damage to terrestrial ecosystems. This problem has been further compounded by the resettling of displaced groups once conflict ended.

Growth of agricultural practices in this area is compounded by limited water availability which is also driving environmental damage. Climate change impact is furthermore a contributing factor to coastal areas' threats, resulting in or exacerbating problems such as salinization, storm surges, and salt water intrusion. Changes in salinity of lagoons and estuaries could further affect ecosystem services and the species they contain. The most critical problems threatening this landscape are:

- fragmented wet zone forests where loss of forest connectivity has led to restricted natural dispersal of species and increased vulnerability to erosion, edge effects, local extinction and climate change;
- ad hoc reclamation of wetlands and landfills in urban wetlands, which also make adjoining areas more prone to flooding; and
- loss of coastal lands due to unplanned development.

The third SGP 6 targeted zones are the *Urban Wetlands of Colombo*, which are located in the Colombo administrative district. The wetlands consist of seven major vegetation types including marshes, lentic flora, shrub lands, reed swamps, grasslands, streambanks and mangrove forests. Wetlands provide important ecosystem services for Sri Lanka such as assisting in delivering food security. In addition to rice, wetlands provide for cultivation of other vegetables, products from poultry, cow milk, and native plants that are foraged. Fishermen are also active in the wetlands across the region. Here also many threats are identified, with loss of wetlands, degradation from pollution and siltation from unsustainable land use practices including deforestation, waste disposal, agricultural run-off, over-extraction of water for irrigation, illegal sand mining, the spread of monocultures, salinity intrusion into coastal areas, unsustainable fishing practices, unauthorized encroachment, land reclamation, and coral mining. Climate change is also a threatening factor here.

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#### *PROBLEMS THAT THE PROGRAMME SOUGHT TO ADDRESS: THREATS AND BARRIERS TARGETED*

Based on the environmental information indicated above, as well as other analysis regarding the three landscapes, the planning documents identified threats and barriers as follows:

- weak capacity of communities and their organizations to collectively build resilience of these communities to threats of environmental degradation and climate change;
- lack of available resources to affect necessary changes within these communities to improve their resilience; and
- the absence of effective inputs into these communities to develop strategic community visions, community capacity to implement systematic innovations, and strengthened linkages with other organizations for collective action across the landscape.

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## IMMEDIATE AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

The immediate and long term development objectives of the Programme in this Sixth Operational Phase were to ensure that community-led initiatives are suitable vis-à-vis GEF criteria for generating global environmental benefits while sustaining local level development benefits, especially enhanced incomes, food security and disaster risk reduction.

Therefore, the overarching object was to *enable community-based organizations to take collective action for adaptive landscape management for socio-ecological resilience through design, implementation, and evaluation of grant projects for global environmental benefits and local sustainable development*. This would be carried out in the identified three ecologically sensitive landscapes: the Knuckles Conservation Forest and its buffer zone, the coastal region from Mannar Island to Jaffna, and the Colombo Wetlands.

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## THEORY OF CHANGE

Upon planning a Theory of Change analysis took place. In the Project Document it was indicated that the Programme had a theory of change whereby the projects would contribute to higher level change through the programme outcome's. However, this was backed by relatively limited evidence. Overall, regarding the Sixth Operational Phase Theory of Change, the Project Document indicates some interesting concepts by stating that: *The project document outlines how the project strategy, e.g., the extensive learning-by-doing, projects, adaptive collaborative management approach to implementation, and demonstrating innovative methods, will facilitate larger scale and long-term changes. . . . In the GEF theory of change framework, broader adoption of the outcomes achieved by GEF projects is critical for the GEF to achieve long-term global environmental benefits. However, the SGP by design focuses on local scale operations. Thus, the SGP cannot be held accountable for achieving global environmental benefits through broader adoption of grant-level results. Nonetheless, outcomes achieved under the SGP can extend beyond the individual grant level by scaling up and using successful projects as demonstrations sites to extend lessons learned to other communities and inform policy dialogue.*

This analysis goes beyond the Theory of Change approach and it links conceptually very much on how an SGP programme, such as the one that has been implemented in Sri Lanka, associates intermediate states, and intended long-term environmental impacts. That is the Theory of Change and this conceptual description in planning documents for SGP OP6 links the causal pathway between the local level interventions and the long-term impacts.

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## EXPECTED RESULTS

The expected results were articulated as four outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Multi-stakeholder partnerships in three ecologically sensitive landscapes develop and execute management plans to enhance socio-ecological landscape resilience and global environmental benefits;



- Outcome 2: Community-based organizations in landscape level networks build their adaptive management capacities by implementing projects and collaborating in landscape management;
- Outcome 3: Multi-stakeholder partnerships develop and implement strategic projects that catalyse the broader adoption of successful SGP-supported technologies, practices, or systems;
- Outcome 4: Multi-stakeholder landscape policy platforms discuss potential policy innovations based on analysis of project experience and lessons learned.

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### *MAIN STAKEHOLDERS*

Programme planning developed an extensive typology of stakeholders to engage with. This is summarized as follows (in their sections as relevant other matters regarding stakeholder engagement is expanded upon):

- community-based organizations (CBOs) and local communities in the three landscapes who will receive grants to produce;
- NGOs that have led and facilitated participatory baseline assessments and landscape planning processes, serve as partners in multi-stakeholder partnerships for each landscape, provide technical assistance to CBOs to implement their projects and participate on policy platforms;
- the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment (MoMDE) with the mandate to formulate policies that promote sustainable environmental management of natural resources’
- the Department of Agriculture (in particular, the Natural Resource Management Centre, the Registrar of Pesticides, the Department of Agrarian Services, and Department of Irrigation);
- the Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government (MPCLG) who have the responsibility for policy and legislation and oversight of Provincial Councils and Provincial MoMDE;
- private sector who serves as partners in multi-stakeholder partnerships for each landscape; and,
- academic institutions who can also provide assistance in participatory baseline assessments and landscape planning processes (similar to NGOs).

Planning documents also highlight that are a number of stakeholders that important to benefit from the grants, such as:

- indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities;
- women at project sites; and



- community youth.

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*KEY PARTNERS INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAMME*

Key partners involved in the Programme included UNDP, GEF, UNOPS, the national Government of Sri Lanka. Key stakeholders also comprised sub – national government structures in Sri Lanka, civil society organisations, non – governmental organisations and communities in the three landscapes.

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1 PROGRAMME DESIGN/FORMULATION

#### *ANALYSIS OF RESULTS FRAMEWORK: PROGRAMME LOGIC AND STRATEGY, INDICATORS*

As all projects and programmes of this sort, a key aspect of its design is the inception log frame/results framework which includes the Programme strategy and the intervention's logic as well as baseline and target indicators, among other factors. The Programme's logic and strategy at the design and formulation level was fitting. The formulation documents effectively identify key issues, threats, root causes and barriers.

A first point of analysis in the logic and strategy of intervention has been the identification of the three target landscapes. As seen in previous sections of this report, the three landscapes in the chosen zones (Knuckles, Mannar, Colombo) were ecologically sensitive. These were chosen by stakeholders in order to address the joint issues of environmental degradation and development and to propel the country's commitments vis-à-vis international conventions (UNCBD, UNFCCC, etc.)

Besides each of the three landscapes particular characteristics, there are some common features to all of them. These are:

- biodiversity degradation which is worsened by anthropogenic issues such as encroachments that lead to fragmentation of habitats, unplanned development, as well as increasing poverty;
- vulnerability to climate change effects, which are cumulative over time;
- land degradation with its relation to increasing poverty as well as decreasing livelihood opportunities (for women for instance) associated also to a lack marketing facilities for the sale of local products, and –due to this—no clear incentives for integrated natural resource and biodiversity management.

The Results Framework reflects a proper strategic progression from outputs, activities to expected outcomes. These are properly stated in their depictions with the log frame. Regarding indicators, a SMART analysis indicates that –generally— they fulfilled a number of these guidelines. When doing a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attributable, Relevant, Time-bound/Timely/Trackable/Targeted) analysis of end of Programme target indicators, it can be said that they fulfil several of these parameters for most indicators. For instance, most are specific (S) since they use a clear language and describe a future condition at the end of Programme target level). Some are not, however. For instance, in the objective section there is an indicator stated as *“Number of stakeholders actively engaged in and benefiting from local project activities”* and defined as *“At least 250 individuals in each of the three landscapes actively participating and benefiting from local field-based project activities”*. The same sort of indicator is repeated in Outcome 2 (*“At least 200 individuals in communities have benefited from new sustainable alternative livelihood options”*). Yet these indicators are not specific since it does not indicate *how* or *what* this

benefit would entail. It would have been more positive to designate specifically what are the benefit to communities and individuals for taking part in the projects, for instance by pointing towards expected particulars such as increased income, more productivity, etc.

The above is an overall issue since, also as indicated by many key stakeholders, the outlook of the projects do not thoroughly specify livelihoods and incentives for the individuals and communities. They are more based on global environmental benefits or even conservation of habitats with a weak link to livelihood enhancement as an incentive to integrated sustainable development. That is, although livelihood enhancement occurring by juxtaposing with sustainable management with sustainable equitable management of biodiversity and with improved landscape management is general aim and expectation of the grants' result, this is not specified clearly as part of the log frame.

Most indicators have measurable (M) aspects making it possible to assess whether they were achieved or not. Many of the indicators are deemed as achievable (A) since they are within the capacity of the partners to achieve. However, and even as it became clear during the mid-term review, some were beyond the viability of being achievable due to several factors. These were at the time deemed as unrealistic (i.e. unachievable) or even not relevant since they dealt with some issues such as grazing which were not applicable within the ecosystems nor with communities' proposals working with the grants.<sup>6</sup> Some key stakeholders have indicated also that the baseline information needed to design and eventually achieve these indicators, particularly grass root level information, was not present nor available at the time of design.

Indicators are relevant ( R ) since they are aligned as to make a contribution to selected priorities of the national development framework. This relevance not only is reflective of alignment of policies, it is reflected in the importance to Sri Lanka that the targeted areas be sustainably managed and benefit individuals and communities that are vulnerable and have been deferred in their development processes. All indicators are time-bound (T) since they are not open-ended given that they are expected to be achieved at the end of the Programme.

One of the issues that has been noted is that although indicators are intended to capture outcomes in many areas (such as for example when the number of hectares that are sustainably managed are set as an end of Programme target), some of them capture outputs and not outcomes/effects. For instance, as indicated above, when indicators are set to guide the achievement of socio-ecological baseline assessments for each landscape. This is a positive aspect of indicators since it guides potential achievement, but the studies or processes that are measured are outputs and not outcomes or effects.

A conceptual critique of the indicator set has also been done related to what these capture. Very key stakeholders have pointed out that the indicators are set to apprehend global environmental benefits or strictly ecological concepts since this is mainly the inclination of GEF-funded SGP processes in recent phases. There is no critique for this in the sense that it is understood that these processes need to capture conservation results (such as those expressed in hectares

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<sup>6</sup> This will be also analysed in the section regarding monitoring further ahead in this report.

under protection). Yet, the account arises when it is assessed that this the main or sole focus of the indicators and that other just as valuable metrics (such as increased income, improved productive, and other similar incentives for conservation) are either not part of a programme's framework or are expressed in weak manner. While it is understood that the grants these programmes supports are not identified a priori (i.e. they are identified once calls for this type of support are made) the expected outcomes overall need to be specified to some degree so that expected results are accompanied with outcome oriented metrics for all expected results, including social pillars of sustainable development.

Given the above, it is considered that the overall conceptual strategy of the Programme, identifying the problem, causes as well as barriers and then strategizing on solutions based on this analysis was fairly proper at planning stage. Therefore, in terms of overall logic and strategy the design responded to an adequate rationale and it was designed as a strategic intervention. Yet, the design could have been more robust not only in metrics as indicated above but also strategically to fully promote livelihoods as incentives for the sustainable use of biodiversity and with incentives for improved sustainable land management.

It is also assessed that cross-cutting issues were included to a degree within programme strategy. For instance, gender and poverty eradication, peaceful post conflict resolutions, and other similar concepts were introduced as concepts at design.

The design process and the transition from a country – wide approach to a landscapes approach followed an intensive consultation process in Sri Lanka. Although there might have been a scarcity of information for the local level issues at the time, this was compensated by the acknowledgement and acceptance of the focalised yet integrated approach that OP6 anticipated.

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### *ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS*

Design identifies several assumptions and corresponding risks that could, conceivably, have an impact upon the Programme. Some of the key assumptions and corresponding risks are as follows:

#### ***Assumptions***

- NGOs and government agencies support community-based organizations and civil society for the adaptive collaborative management and long-term sustainability of the positive outcomes of the individual small grants' projects
- The low capacities of civil society organizations to implement grant projects can be overcome, improved and sustained
- Much of the project documentation and workshops must be conducted in local languages to ensure comprehension
- Local stakeholders actively engage in the work of the multi-stakeholder platforms

- A critical mass of local community-based organizations in the three landscapes will propose eligible projects
- There is sufficient interest and engagement from local stakeholders to implement eligible small grant projects
- There is at least one NGO that has the capacity to provide technical backstopping to grantees of small grant projects in each landscape
- NGOs and government agencies will support community-based organizations in the design and implementation of strategic initiatives to stimulate broader adoption of successful small grants projects
- New partnerships develop between government institutions and local stakeholders
- Local, regional and national level government officials will participate in discussions and analyses of lessons learned and potential policy applications

### **Risks**

- The impacts of climate change undermine efforts to make incremental and sustained conservation of biodiverse ecosystems and rehabilitation of degraded lands
- Political and stakeholder support to establish and institutionally sustain multi-stakeholder groups wanes (low risk)
- Insufficient technical expertise to ensure high quality performance of grant projects (low risk)
- Community based organizations maintain a low level of technical and management capacity to implement grant projects
- Market conditions may decline and de-incentivize producers from participating in projects.

These risks and assumptions were defined at the time of design/planning and several of them were visible during implementation as will be seen further ahead in the section that does deal with execution. Given that the landscape approach was new to these processes, some of the assumptions and risks were not as observable at the time due also to the feeble knowledge of these landscapes. Some, however, evolved as expected (such as engagement with government officials for potential upscaling and policy applications). Regrettably some of the risks did evolve at the level expected and even decidedly beyond that, such as those that indicate that market conditions worsen which is currently taking place due to the deep economic crisis the country is facing. Of course, one of the greatest risks to the Programme has been the COVID-19 pandemic. Undeniably, neither the Programme nor the partners could have foreseen the latter two issues mentioned here, but they are nevertheless risks that should be taken into account when analysing Sri Lanka's SGP OP6.

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### *LESSONS FROM OTHER RELEVANT PROJECTS (SAME FOCAL AREA) INCORPORATED INTO PROGRAMME DESIGN*

Several lessons from other relevant projects or actions were raised at design, either specifically or generally. Clearly the most salient incorporated lessons have been from previous operational phases of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Sri Lanka and, in this particular OP, from the COMDEKS projects. The main lessons were based on the assessments of the landscapes for this phase (which was innovative in the country) and for the landscape approach that emphasizes community-based and community-driven projects. Relevant country programme strategies also provided lessons learned that were effectively incorporated into design.<sup>7</sup>

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### *PLANNED STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION*

A stakeholder analysis was drawn up at the design stage. Furthermore, potential interests and probable roles of different stakeholders in the implementation of SGP OP6 were also determined.

The planned stakeholder participation was ample and for different sorts of actors. The roles were also multi layered, fitting to interventions such as this one that aim to engage from local actors, to community organizations, to CBOS/CSOs and NGOs, as well as different levels of government. For civil society and non-governmental actors, planned stakeholder participation outlines included the reception of grants for different beneficiary organisations. Second – tier or NGO/CSO type of organisations as well as academic institutions were to provide assessments and aid in implementing projects. For governmental actors, different line ministries that deal with issues related to environmental and natural resource management as well as climate change were included in planned engagement, as were the different agricultural departments in national government. Local and regional governments, either via ministries which deal with the articulation of provincial councils and local government with national government or directly, were also planned to be involved. Lastly, the private sector was to be engaged.

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### *LINKAGES BETWEEN PROGRAMME AND OTHER INTERVENTIONS WITHIN THE SECTOR*

Design specified that the initiative would build upon from other relevant projects (current and previous) in the same focal area. At that point it was specifically pointed out that the Sri Lanka SGP Country Programme will analyse and confirm potential or continued cooperation with the initiatives in the field that could possibly link with SGP OP6. These were, for example, the following projects within the UNDP portfolio which were financed by GEF: the Enhancing Biodiversity Conservation and Sustenance of Ecosystem Services in Environmentally Sensitive Areas; the Resilient and Integrated Urban Development for Greater Colombo Rehabilitation of Degraded Agricultural Lands in Kandy, Badulla and Nuwara Eliya Districts in the Central Highlands; Rehabilitation of Degraded Agricultural Lands in Kandy, Badulla and Nuwara Eliya Districts in the Central Highlands;

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<sup>7</sup> In the section on linkages with other interventions which of these projects provided lessons and other background are specified.

## Promoting Sustainable Biomass Energy Production and Modern Bio-Energy Technologies, and the Strengthening the Resilience of Post Conflict Recovery and Development to Climate Change Risks in Sri Lanka projects

Linkages were also sought with other non-GEF financed projects within the UNDP portfolio such as the Sri Lanka Community Forestry Programme; the United Nations Readiness Programme for Reducing Emissions through Deforestation and Forest Degradation; and the Strengthening the Resilience of Smallholder Farmers in the Dry Zone to Climate Variability and Extreme Events through an Integrated Approach to Water Management projects. Furthermore, the project also engaged with other projects which were not within UNDP portfolio yet were linked conceptually with the SGP (such as projects endorsed and supported by multilateral development banks).

Therefore, it is clear that many initiatives with which linkages were sought were relevant vis-à-vis SGP OP6 objectives and coherent within the UNDP portfolio and shows potential compatibility of the intervention with other interventions (within and outside UNDP).

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### *GENDER RESPONSIVENESS OF PROGRAMME DESIGN*

Planned stakeholder participation in programme included cross-cutting issues also regarding involvement of marginalised and/or vulnerable groups. It is indicated that these groups (such as indigenous peoples, women or youth) are to participate in the Programme due to inequity issues.

The Programme had an Atlas Gender Marker Rating of GEN2: gender equality as significant objective. SGP OP6 has several areas in which it aimed to contribute to gender equality, such as: (a) contributing to closing gender gaps in access to and control over resources; (b) improving the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance; and (c) targeting socio-economic benefits and services for women. No formal overarching gender equality strategy had been identified at the planning stages, however.<sup>8</sup>

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### *SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAFEGUARDS*

Design included social and environmental risks and safeguards analysis following UNDP's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy methodologies and Social and Environmental Screening Procedure guidance current at the time of design. Concerning this, the risk categorization was stated as Low Risk although it was deemed that the Programme included activities with potential social and environmental risks. These risks were considered to be limited in scale and that could be mitigated through best practices, other mitigation measures incorporated into the project design, and stakeholder engagement. Based on the identified risks and risk categorization, certain SESP requirements were categorised as relevant, such as human rights; climate change mitigation and adaptation; indigenous peoples; as well as pollution prevention and resource efficiency.

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<sup>8</sup> These issues are further taken up in the sections on implementation.

## 4.2 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

### *ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT (CHANGES TO THE PROGRAMME DESIGN AND PROGRAMME OUTPUTS DURING IMPLEMENTATION<sup>9</sup>)*

Adaptive management is defined as the project's ability to adapt to changes to design (objective, outcomes, or outputs) during implementation resulting from: (a) original objectives that were not sufficiently articulated; (b) exogenous conditions that changed, due to which change was needed; (c) the project's restructuring because the original expectations were overambitious; or (d) the project's restructuring because of a lack of progress.

The Programme has had several positive adaptive management processes. The main ones arose after (and mostly out of) the midterm review recommendations, signalling that monitoring processes' results were incorporated by the Programme in adaptation to assessments. The main restructuring strictly related to the above mentioned adaptive management called to correct design of target indicators in biodiversity and land management so that they would be more realistic in achievements (not only because original expectations were overambitious but also because some of these indicators were not pertinent to the landscapes SGP OP6 operated in). It was recommended that targeted indicators in agriculture, in reforestation, and regarding grazing were to be adjusted and SGP in Sri Lanka accommodated this suggestion of proposed new targets, which were formally accepted by the NSC, cleared by the UNDP RTA, and reported in the PIR as minor modifications. Furthermore, regarding adaptations employed by the Programme in general, the intervention was granted a no-cost extension (following the Mid-Term Review's recommendations) to make-up for time lost at start up.

Although not strictly following the definition above of adaptive management<sup>10</sup>, there have some adaptations that the Programme in Sri Lanka has implemented or is in the process of implementing that are worth pointing out. As will be seen in sections further ahead, SGP together with UNOPS and UNDP have worked in some adaptations to streamline and create templates and mechanisms that provide further transparency to the grant selection process and implementation procedures.

Furthermore, as all activities carried-out in the last two years, the SGP had to adapt to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic upon the country as well as upon the institutions. An extension was also granted in order to accommodate to delays in implementation related to the pandemic.

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<sup>10</sup> I.e. adaptive management as defined within terminal evaluations is basically changes to the programme design and programme outputs during implementation.



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*ACTUAL STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS*

The general actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements has followed to a great degree what was planned. This involved stakeholder participation at the different institutional levels as well as at the community, non-governmental and civil society levels in the three landscapes.

Stakeholder participation and engagement with the different government areas dealing with agriculture, environment and natural resource management has been suitable, not only at the institutional level but also drawing in expertise from government officials to the different processes (through the NSC, through grantees' support, etc.). And at the same time endeavouring to upgrade capacity of government institutions in the many issues that the Programme has worked on.

The Sixth Phase of the SGP engaged with a number of civil society stakeholders, repeating engagement for many non – governmental organisations from the previous five phases that were implemented in the country. However, this does not mean that the Programme had no challenges in stakeholders and partners participation. Some of these challenges were highlighted as potential risks upon planning and some surfaced at implementation. Drawing in the private sector also proved challenging and not achieved to the degree expected upon planning.

Shifting from a country – wide implementation modality to a focalised modality in three selected landscapes although positive in many aspects, it also proved a challenge in stakeholder engagement. The three landscapes are quite different and two of the three (Knuckles and Mannar) are quite isolated, with little engrained capacity to deal with the intricacies of this sort of interventions. Therefore, civil society groups and non – governmental organisations from other regions of the country had to be engaged to apply and support the community – level and ultimate beneficiaries. However, the challenge arose from the fact that these organisations although perhaps technically viable to provide support did not have knowledge of nor thorough linkage with the communities in those areas.

At the project level, some grants were identified to be carried out successfully (i.e. achieving conservation goals) but with little dedicated community participation/ownership. This analysis is based not only on interviews/site visits observation at the local level but also through input by national level stakeholders, allowing for a validation of this scrutiny. This can be associated to what is mentioned above in some cases (i.e. in some cases because some individual projects were designed and carried out by second tier organisations with little linkage to the communities) and because some of the strictly conservation projects did not have livelihoods components or clear objectives to create incentives for communities to take part in them or to engender ownership at the community level.

Furthermore, analysis of the successes of the projects also follows this argument. For instance, when crops or processes were attempted to be introduced without community engagement nor consultation, these grants mostly failed (in part due to the lack of ownership, but also because they were not fit for the settings and ecosystems where they were implemented).

The main and perhaps more visible challenge faced regarding stakeholders arose in the latter part of implementation when UNDP and the Ministry of Environment of Sri Lanka received a complaint raised by some civil society groups against the SGP OP6. These groups alleged a number of issues taking place, which were defined by them as wrongdoing, irregularities, discrimination, fraud and injustice.

UNOPS, as executing agency of the GEF-funded UNDP-implemented SGP OP6 in Sri Lanka, carried out a forensic audit in consultation with UNDP through an outside independent audit firm regarding these allegations. This audit did not find any wrongdoings and found that the allegations were unfounded. Yet in the wake of this process, there were a number of issues identified that could be improved in order to better engage with stakeholders throughout the whole of the Programme's cycle from dissemination of calls for grants, to application processes, to implementation and monitoring on the ground, as well as overall management response regarding these issues.

The COVID-19 pandemic did also have an impact on stakeholder participation in activities that entailed travel, personal interactions, and others similar ones which were curtailed due to the emergency situation. Although the Project did shift to online modalities of engagement, there is also the awareness that many matters that involve participation cannot be carried out properly virtually. Furthermore, the remoteness of the grants in two of the three landscapes (Knuckles and Mannar) and the isolated conditions of grantees in these regions hindered in many respects online participation within the target communities as well as monitoring and technical support that the SGP could have provided in more normal situations. Lastly, the continuing social, economic, and civil crisis that the country is enduring has had an impact upon the SGP OP6 as a whole, and stakeholder issues are not external to these problems.

#### PROJECT FINANCE AND CO-FINANCE

The Project had a total planned project cost of USD 5,797,078. The planned financing and co – financing was as follows:

TABLE 4: FINANCING PLAN

<b>FINANCING PLAN</b>	
GEF Trust Fund	USD <b>2,497,078</b>
UNDP TRAC resources	USD 100,000
Cash co-financing to be administered by UNDP	USD 100,000
<b>(1) Total Budget administered by UNDP</b>	<b>USD 2,597,078</b>
<b>PARALLEL CO-FINANCING</b> (all other co-financing that is not cash co-financing administered by UNDP)	
UNDP	USD 400,000 (in kind)
Government	USD 700,000 (in kind)
Sri Lanka Nature Forum, Chair of SGP National Steering Committee	USD 1,100,000 (in cash)
Sri Lanka Nature Forum, Chair of SGP National Steering Committee	USD 1,000,000 (in kind)
<b>(2) Total co-financing</b>	<b>USD 3,200,000</b>
<b>(3) Grand-Total Project Financing (1)+(2)</b>	<b>USD 5,797,078</b>

SGP reports, as of May 2022, co – financing as indicated below. The following two tables indicate co – financing globally and confirmed sources of co-financing at the terminal evaluation stage.

TABLE 5: CO-FINANCING TABLE

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP financing (US\$)		Government (US\$)		Partner Agency (US\$)		Total (US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Loans/Concessions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
In-kind support	400,000	500,000	700,000	700,000	1,000,000	2,263,936	2,100,000	3,463,936
Other (in Cash)	100,000	100,000	-	-	1,100,000	538,138	1,200,000	638,138
<b>Totals</b>	<b>500,000</b>	<b>600,000</b>	<b>700,000</b>	<b>700,000</b>	<b>2,100,000</b>	<b>2,802,074</b>	<b>3,300,000</b>	<b>4,102,074</b>

TABLE 6: CONFIRMED SOURCES OF CO-FINANCING AT TE STAGE

Sources of Co-Financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (US\$)
CSO	NGOs/CBOs (38 grantee organizations)	In-kind Cash	Recurrent Investment mobilized	2,802,074
GEF Agency	UNDP	In-kind Cash	Recurrent Investment Mobilized	600,000
Government	SLLDC	In-kind	Public investment. Investment mobilized	700,000
<b>Total Co-Financing</b>				<b>4,102,074</b>

At closure the Programme reports that actual co – financing (4,102,074 USD) was well above the planned level of USD 3,200,000. That is, actual reported leveraged co – financing was 28 percent above than what was planned at design. Considering the financial crisis in the country as well as the deep impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had upon Sri Lanka, the leveraging of co – financing to the level achieved beyond what was planned is highly valuable. It is also noteworthy that –as the SGP reports—a high level of co-financing was done by grantees and communities, signalling ownership of a number of the interventions that did present value added for the communities and potentially sustainability.

It adds value to the implementation in line with the incremental cost argument within since the mobilisation of funds not only matched GEF country grant allocation but it exceeded and – again—in a very critical socio – economic context within Sri Lanka.

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*MONITORING & EVALUATION: DESIGN AT ENTRY (\*), IMPLEMENTATION (\*), AND OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF M&E (\*)*

Imbedded in design there was a Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) plan. This included a series of standard activities. The monitoring framework indicated that there would be an inception workshop/report, mid-term review, quarterly reporting, project implementation reports—PIRs--, audits, a final evaluation process (i.e., the process that gives rise to this report), etc. Furthermore, the plan also included monitoring processes for individual grants which entailed field monitoring site visits, progress reports, final reports<sup>11</sup>. Therefore, for M&E design at entry, the ranking is *Highly Satisfactory (HS)* since there were no shortcomings in the quality of M&E design.

The overall implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation plan was followed in general. PIRs were drafted and produced in a timely manner with adequate inputs, except for the first PIR which was not developed due to the lack of adequate staffing to do so and due to delays in start-up. SGP commissioned an independent external mid-term review in a timely manner. It also used its findings and recommendations for adaptive management (as seen in previous sections). Therefore, feedback between this monitoring tool as well as others (PIRs, MTR, etc.) provided information that was used to improve and adapt project performance. For instance, by restructuring after the MTR the indicator set established at design and by establishing enhanced monitoring data since it was found by the midpoint review that it needed improvement.

The field monitoring processes found some further challenges, however. First due to the level of capacity that the communities and institutions had with regard to monitoring, particularly with the specific global environmental benefits indicators. These indicators proved to be too difficult for the local stakeholders to monitor or measure (indicators such as those that include metrics regarding reforested areas or land degradation mitigation). During COVID-19 related travel restrictions, this also proved difficult since the monitoring was at times done with persons/institutions outside of the particular landscape they were monitoring and the persons belonging to these institutions could not travel to those areas at that time. The SGP database for this sort of reporting (acknowledging these challenges) was improved after mid-point and technical support was harnessed for this. Recruiting of field coordinators for each landscape and technical support enlisting improved monitoring, as well as other local implementation processes. Yet, this also took place at implementation mid-point. The COVID-19 pandemic and the conflicts with some of the non – governmental organisations (as mentioned above) hindered to some degree field – level monitoring in the last few years of implementation. However, a number of these problems

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<sup>11</sup> For SGP processes there are basically two tiers or levels of monitoring and evaluation: a global programme – wide monitoring/evaluation process and a grant-by-grant monitoring process. They are evidently linked and build upon each other, yet they are different processes.

originated before the pandemic impacted on M&E, as it has been well pointed out in the mid-term review.

Therefore, the achievement of the monitoring plan at implementation is considered to have been *Moderately Satisfactory (MS)* since there were shortcomings as stated above regarding timing of instruments and the quality of M&E implementation. A composite ranking that considers monitoring and evaluation design at entry together with the M&E plan's implementation for the overall quality of M&E is *Moderately Satisfactory (MS)*.

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*UNDP IMPLEMENTATION / OVERSIGHT (\*) AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNER EXECUTION (\*), OVERALL PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION/EXECUTION (\*), COORDINATION, AND OPERATIONAL ISSUES*

The Project Document sets up coordination and operational structures as well as proposed management arrangements. Design, management/implementation/execution and oversight for this Programme has been multi – layered and it involved a number of different agencies, institutions and civil society partners. This is graphed in the figure below as indicated in the Project Document.

FIGURE 1: MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS SGP OP6 SRI LANKA<sup>12</sup>



The setup followed standard SGP operations at the country level. Given that the SGP is supposed to operate in a country – driven manner, the management and steering arrangements followed this format. As will be seen further along this chapter, although the format was followed, as implementation progressed some changes were introduced to fulfil the roles and address the complexities introduced with the landscape approach of OP6.

<sup>12</sup> Source: Project Document.

UNDP is involved at various levels, not only as a member of the NSC but also in oversight at the international and national levels through the Sri Lanka Country Office. The overall management of the SGP Global Programme, including operational guidance and support to national programmes, as well as the identification and establishment of SGP national programmes in upgraded countries, is assumed by the SGP Central Programme Management Team (CPMT). It is also managed by an international UNDP/GEF upgraded country programme coordinator, who provides technical assistance, strategic advice and support for resource mobilization, and promotes substantive and strategic harmonization and coordination, following GEF implementation arrangements and GEF council mandates. There was oversight from the Country Office (even participation from the Country Office in the NSC) and through integration of the SGP in country – wide UNDP programming. There was oversight as well from UCP global coordinator. Furthermore, as seen in the section on monitoring, UNDP CO and UCP global coordinator/RTA participated role entailed participation in guiding and oversight through the reporting processes (annual Project Implementation Reports – PIRS), in monitoring and evaluation, as well as in technical guidance as planned.

The Country Program Management Unit included a National Coordinator, which changed at the start-up of OP6 but was staff that had participated in different capacities in previous operational phases. The National Country Team was charged not only with matters of grant and country programme administration but also served as secretariat to the National Steering Committee and liaised with national and local government, UNDP, UNOPS, and key stakeholders. The CPMU was strengthened in capacity and staffing after implementation begun in order to address the complexities of implementing this SGP phase in Sri Lanka. National technical advisors, consultants and field coordinators for the three target landscapes were recruited throughout the implementation process. Since some of this recruitment took place at about mid-point of implementation, some of the challenges could have been avoided if this capacity would have been instated earlier in the implementation process of OP6.

Given that SGP OP6 is a country – driven intervention, the OP6 Project Document is considered the country programme strategy, since it is the programme developed at the start of project implementation landscape strategies for the target landscapes. The country – driven aspects of this strategy were also key for the selection of the three landscapes (Knuckles, Mannar, Colombo) to be attuned to national development and environment related policies, poverty eradication plans –as other countries within the global SGP endeavours. Furthermore, in the case of Sri Lanka, post conflict issues were also key in some of the landscapes chosen, and this was properly addressed by in implementation.

The National Steering Committee (NSC) is a key element of SGP implementation, not only to incorporate national issues into the country programme but also to provide substantive contributions; approval, monitoring, and oversight of grants, as well as acting as a catalyst for uptake and replication of achievements and lessons learned arising out of the small grants. The NSC is, therefore, the main governing body responsible for decision making regarding the grants and for overall strategic guidance. NSC members and other key stakeholders have indicated that internally the NSC has worked well and arrived at consensus decision – making process and that it harnessed proper technical inputs from the members with a proper level of participation by all members

UNOPS provides implementation services to the country programme. UNOPS role as executing agency is that of financial management and administration, as well as operation of different service lines such as human resources, procurement, travel, as well as human resource management, budgeting, accounting, disbursements, auditing and procurement. UNOPS is responsible for the financial management of the SGP and provides regular quarterly financial reports to UNDP. The UNOPS Standard Operating Procedures for the SGP steer the financial and administrative management of the project. By all accounts and as evidenced in reporting documents, UNOPS global level execution has been proactive. At the more general level, there was a positive and strong coordination between UNDP and UNOPS in their different capacities and roles.

UNOPS, as the executing agency for Small Grants Programme (SGP), conducted the forensic audit of the SGP in Sri Lanka that originated out of allegations of wrong doing. And following the audit findings and recommendations, UNOPS, UNDP and the SGP team agreed on an implementation plan to work closely and collaboratively to follow up on the findings and recommendations from the audit and ensure that lessons learned were further reflected across the SGP programme worldwide.

The audit recommended to review functioning and composition of the National Steering Committee (NSC). It was found in this review that the composition and appointment processes of the NSC members followed SGP Operational Guidelines, and they did not have any conflict of interests vis-à-vis the Programme in Sri Lanka. Yet it was found that a number of NSC members had served beyond the limits specified in the Operational Guidelines. The audit also noted a lack of guidance regarding the involvement of civil servants and government officials within grantee organizations and the NSC which is related to the greater Small Grants Programme Global Operational Guidelines. While the SGP Operational Guidelines can provide guidance on eligible CBOs/NGOs, they cannot provide prescriptive guidance on who should sit and/or should not sit in the board of a specific NGO/CBO.

The incorporation of new members has not been without challenges, however. There have been some divergences between the SGP CPMU and the NSC since their roles and responsibilities were not fully understood by all members and the guidance material related to key operating documents. This has also arisen out of the audit and it is agreed by all parties that there should be clearer and more open guidance on the different processes that the SGP has and that the NSC guides, and a better connexion between CPMU and the NSC. For instance, it has been agreed that dissemination of information on grant proposals should be more open, and that open calls for proposals should be carried out with better communications up front. Also it is agreed that more specific issues such as templates, criteria for selection, and similar tools should be implemented. An implementation plan has been drawn and is periodically updated.

Based on the above, it is deemed that UNDP implementation/oversight has been *Satisfactory (S)*, at the country level although with a number of challenges in implementation, execution and operational issues as indicated in the above narrative and therefore some shortcomings. At the global level oversight has also been *Satisfactory (S)*, also as indicated in the above narrative. The implementing partner execution (i.e. UNOPS) has been *Satisfactory (S)* at the global level. An



amalgamated review of the global quality of implementation and execution as well as oversight is *Satisfactory (S)* given that it met expectations yet it had some shortcomings.<sup>13</sup>

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### *RISK MANAGEMENT, INCLUDING SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS*

The SGP OP6 had a series of risks identified as seen earlier in this report in the section on design and SESP. The monitoring tools (Project Implementation Reports and Mid-Term Review) identified these risks as still valid and occurring during implementation, however –as implementation progressed—risk identification changed.

UNDP’s Social and Environmental Standards (SES) screening was carried out at design so that project programming would maximize social and environmental opportunities and benefits as well as to ensure that adverse social and environmental risks and impacts are avoided, minimized, mitigated and managed. The Project was rated as a ‘Category Low’. With regards to the Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards) Risks, overall risk rating and categorization of the project SESP was revised from Low to Moderate, also in light of a more thorough review of the SESP conducted as part of the design of the Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Sri Lanka.

New risks were identified as part of these processes. In particular the COVID-19 pandemic, the risk specifically association to hindered verification of how partners were utilizing resources provided by SGP due to travel bans and lockdowns. This was mitigated by using virtual verification methods and by engaging in this process with the three field coordinators in the three landscapes to ground truth the verification methods.

## 4.3 PROGRAMME RESULTS AND IMPACTS

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### *PROGRESS TOWARDS OBJECTIVE AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES (\*)*

The Programme mostly achieved anticipated outputs and expected outcomes by programme closing, except for an indicator which was deemed unachievable at midpoint and it was abandoned for this reason. Key expected outputs were actually delivered to the degree planned, and in some cases even beyond, except for the above mentioned Output 2.6 and another is in the process of implementation at the time of this evaluation (Output 4.2). This monitoring is done following the metrics and the analysis is basically whether indicator targets were met or not (after the indicator review and changes that took place at implementation mid-point and using these metrics as sole benchmark). Following is a breakdown for each of the expected outcomes as reported by the SGP at the time of this evaluation. Further along this narrative is an expanded assessment of achievements that goes beyond the indicator metrics being marked as achieved or not.

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<sup>13</sup> See Annex 3 Rating Scales for the definitions of all the rankings.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Outcome 1:</b> Multi-stakeholder partnerships in three ecologically sensitive landscapes develop and execute management plans to enhance socio-ecological landscape resilience and global environmental benefits</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1.1 A multi-stakeholder group on landscape planning and management organized for each of the selected landscapes: One multi-stakeholder working group per landscape is operational with agreed TORs / One comprehensive socio-ecological baseline assessment for each landscape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target achieved. Multi-stakeholder groups in each landscape have been operationalized with agreed TORs. Comprehensive socio-ecological baseline assessments were developed for each landscape.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1.2 A strategy to achieve greater social and ecological resilience for each landscape: Three landscape management strategies and plans prepared and then approved by the National Steering Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target achieved. Three landscape management strategies and plans prepared and approved by the National Steering Committee in 2017.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1.3 A typology of community level initiatives in each landscape needed to achieve landscape outcomes: Landscape specific typologies (3) of community level projects and eligibility criteria formulated by multi-stakeholder groups in each landscape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target achieved. Typologies of community level projects and eligibility criteria were developed in the three landscapes by multi-stakeholder groups.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1.4 Formal cooperative agreements between community organizations and other partners in each landscape to pursue the outcomes of each strategy through community and landscape level projects: At least ten signed formal agreements between community organizations and other partners in each landscape to pursue the outcomes of each strategy through community and landscape level projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target exceeded. Twelve formal agreements have been signed between community organizations and other partners in each landscape to pursue the outcomes of each strategy through community and landscape level projects</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Outcome 2:</b> Community-based organizations in landscape level networks build their adaptive management capacities by implementing projects and collaborating in landscape management</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2.1 Area (hectares) under protection or sustainable use for biodiversity conservation or improved ecosystem function: At least 10,000 hectares under protection or sustainable use for biodiversity conservation or improved ecosystem function – community conservation areas, ecotourism development, NTFPs, human-animal conflicts, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target exceeded. Aggregate of 26,146 hectares brought under protection or sustainable use for biodiversity conservation or improved ecosystem function (149% of the target).</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2.2 Area (hectares) of reforested and/or afforested lands: At least 10,000 hectares under reforestation or farmer managed natural regeneration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target exceeded. Aggregate of 2,849 hectares reached under reforestation or farmer managed natural regeneration (114% of the target).</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2.3 Area (hectares) of degraded wetlands rehabilitated: At least 3,000 hectares of degraded wetlands rehabilitated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target exceeded. Aggregate of 9,104 hectares of wetlands being rehabilitated which accounts for 101% of the target.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2.4 Area (hectares) of forest cover lands set aside for carbon sequestration: At least 650 hectares of forest cover lands set aside for carbon sequestration leading to mitigation of at least 25,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target achieved. 650 hectares of forest cover lands were set aside for carbon sequestration.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2.5 Area (hectares) of land rehabilitated through best practice soil conservation measures: At least 2,000 hectares of land rehabilitated through best practice soil conservation measures and agroforestry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target exceeded. Aggregate of 3,637 hectares of land rehabilitated through best practice soil conservation measures and agroforestry (121% of target).</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2.6 Area of land under improved grazing regimes: At least 2,000 hectares under improved grazing regimes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Not applicable. Target adjusted to 0 at midpoint of implementation since there are no lands categorized for grazing by the government in Mannar and to an extent in the Knuckles landscape. Furthermore, no proposals for grazing were received resulting in this target being revised to 0 at midpoint and basically done away with.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2.7 Area of agricultural land under agro - ecological practices and systems that increase sustainability and productivity and/or conserve crop genetic resources: At least 8,000 hectares of agricultural land under agro-ecological practices and systems that increase sustainability and productivity and/or conserve crop genetic resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target exceeded.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2.8 Number of individuals in the communities that have benefited from new sustainable alternative livelihood options: At least 200 individuals in the communities have benefited from new sustainable alternative livelihood option. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target exceeded. 1,162 individuals benefited from new sustainable alternative livelihood options (581% of target).</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Outcome 3:</b> Multi-stakeholder partnerships develop and implement strategic projects that catalyse the broader adoption of successful SGP-supported technologies, practices, or systems</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 3.1 Number of strategic projects supporting broader adoption of successful small grant project lessons Three strategic projects to enable and facilitate upscaling of successful SGP-supported initiatives: potential lines of work include bio digestors; production, marketing and sale of underutilized crops or crop varieties; and value addition to products harvested sustainably from wetlands or forests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target achieved. The three strategic projects have completed all their activities.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 3.2 Number of community members in each of the three landscapes who have participated in the design and implementation of their respective scaling-up strategic project: At least 250 local community representatives in each of the three landscapes have participated in the design and implementation of the scaling-up strategic project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target achieved.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Outcome 4:</b> Multi-stakeholder landscape policy platforms discuss potential policy innovations based on analysis of project experience and lessons learned.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 4.1 Existence of operational multi-stakeholder governance platforms in the three landscapes, including local and higher levels of government, NGOs, academics, second level organizations, and others: Three (3) multi-stakeholder governance platforms have convened at least twice per year and are institutionalized through formal agreements at the District and Division levels to ensure post-project continuance of their services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target achieved. SGP established three multi-stakeholder governance platforms which convened were institutionalized through formal agreements</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 4.2 Number of case studies summarizing lessons learned and best practices, based on evaluation of implementation results at the landscape level: At least one case study per target landscape summarizing lessons learned and best practices, based on evaluation of implementation results. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>On track to be achieved. One case site study published, the other two on track to be achieved by Programme end. Generation and distribution of communication products.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 4.3 Awareness and knowledge of best practices promoted through knowledge sharing events and capacity building activities. At least 500 project stakeholder participants have actively engaged in analysis of project experience and landscape management and have participated in platform workshops and dialogues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Target achieved. Communication strategy developed and operationalised.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

As seen above, either at the output or at the outcome levels, there has been good progress towards achieving target objectives as defined by the indicator set. In most cases target indicators were either achieved or overachieved, except for one case where target was cancelled (2.6) since it was deemed at mid-point not to be relevant within the targeted landscapes' contexts and one case (4.2) which is expected to be achieved by the end of the Sixth Operational Phase. For information on progress towards results for a sample of projects, there is a chart in annexes that also feeds criteria analysis of this evaluation.<sup>14</sup>

Regarding the overall Programme objective (i.e. *To enable community-based organizations to take collective action for adaptive landscape management for socio-ecological resilience through design, implementation, and evaluation of grant projects for global environmental benefits and local sustainable development in three ecologically sensitive landscapes: the Knuckles Conservation Forest and its buffer zone, the coastal region from Mannar Island to Jaffna, and the Colombo Wetlands*), SGP Sri Lanka also reports similar achievements in relation to the objective – level indicators set. This is reported as below in three subsets (A, B, C).

<sup>14</sup> See Annex 7. PROJECT INFORMATION GENERATED BY NATIONAL CONSULTANT WITH INPUTS FROM SITE VISITS.

- **A.** Area, across three landscapes, of sustainably managed production landscapes that conserve biodiversity and enhance ecosystem services: At least 20,000 hectares, across three production landscapes, of sustainably managed production landscapes that conserve biodiversity and enhance ecosystem services, including 650 hectares of forest for carbon storage.
  - *Target exceeded. Aggregate of 28,995 hectares (145% target).*
- **B.** Area of degraded lands in three project landscapes that are benefiting from land rehabilitation activities: At least 15,000 hectares of degraded lands in three project landscapes under sustainable land management benefiting from land rehabilitation activities.
  - *Target achieved.*
- **C.** Number of stakeholders actively engaged in and benefiting from local project activities: At least 250 individuals in each of the three landscapes actively participating and benefiting from local field-based project activities
  - *Target overachieved. Projects engaged a total of 3,320 community members (1631 women and 1689 men).*

As seen above, either within the sphere of indicators set for the objective, there has been good progress towards achieving target objectives. Here however –as before-- the achievements of results are clearer for points A and B where hectares of land are the metric for effect, than for point C where the number of stakeholders to be engaged is clearly defined by the indicator (i.e. how many people take part in the supported activities but *how* they would potentially benefit is not. Some key stakeholders, however, also question the harnessing of data regarding area that is protected (expected outcomes A and B). Although it is clear in land management practices and projects such as those that deal with farming that a result/impact has been achieved, there are questions as to whether the harnessed indicators truly reflect areas under protection. For instance because there is no ground truthing as to whether reforestation practices gave long lasting sustained results nor the impact upon entire already protected areas that are part of the outcome indicators without strong technical support and follow through.

Regarding expected outcome C, the Programme has made an effort to harness some of the information on value for beneficiaries originating from their involvement in the supported projects. This is worthy and proactive on behalf of the SGP but if this would have been imbedded in a results – oriented format as part of the indicator set it would have been a better process to monitor and impel true progress, results per se, and impact.

In summary, the progress towards results analysis was monitored through the twenty – eight started grants. These projects, were mainly granted for the promotion of sustainable use of biodiversity yet linked to other focus areas such as land management and climate change mitigation. The promotion of conservation is mainly captured through the data on hectares under conservation and sustainable use regimes (exceeding expectations in this regard) as promoted by twenty - five of the total set of grants. Reforestation was implemented by eighteen grantees, also, with land

rehabilitation as an additional process promoted by thirteen projects within this set of grants. Sixteen projects contributed towards conservation through innovative or strengthened agro-ecological practices defined as systems that increase sustainability and productivity in an integrated manner. Livelihood-oriented projects aimed at increasing productivity in order to engender incentives for sustainable use and conservation of natural resources.

Regarding outputs and progress toward outcomes, therefore, there has been a good extent to which key expected outputs were actually delivered that have led to outcomes following the examination of indicator metrics. In the following sections (especially those dealing with effectiveness and efficiency) this analysis is honed further along evaluation criteria.

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### RELEVANCE (\*)

Relevance is the extent to which a project's objectives are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies. That is, relevance is analysed as to how does the intervention relate to the main objectives of the GEF Focal area, UNDP programmatic approaches, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national level.

At the national level, the Programme is consistent with national policies, from the national constitution to more specific legal frameworks such as those expressed in the National Environmental Act No. 47 of 1980. Other specific alignments are those expressed in the Programme's relevance with regard to Sri Lanka's policies, current at the time of programme planning, such as: National Red List, 2012 of Sri Lanka: Conserving Fauna and Flora; National Climate Change Policy of Sri Lanka; National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for Sri Lanka: 2011 to 2016; the National Action Programme for Combating Land Degradation in Sri Lanka; the National Physical Plan (2011-2030); the National Land Use Policy, the Forestry Sector Master Plan, and the National Agricultural Policy, *inter alia*.

Relevance, therefore, relates to explicit and implicit national objectives to achieve sustainable management of the environment and natural resources with equity through community – level and community led endeavours. The multi layered approach and the high relevance that this has for the country is evident through the analysis of the landscapes and their human productivity issues presented at design.

This inherent relevance has also been demonstrated at the implementation stage of many projects/grants. In particular with those projects that were able to successfully unite livelihood issues with sustainable use and management of natural resources. This internal relevance when projects/grants had a solid focus on generating incentives and improvements for communities' livelihoods' necessities indicate a strong link with the needs of relevant stakeholders and providing incentives for these communities to participate and sustainably engage with the projects. The most relevant projects within this sphere are those that have dealt with broad areas of sustainable development, such as sustainable agriculture, eco - tourism, fisheries, non-timber forest products, and related services such as water management, organic fertilizer manufacturing and technology for better harvesting/processing. At the project level, i.e. grants, it was found that several of them were

not seen as highly relevant within the overall scope of the projects that, as clearly indicated in planning documents, which was: *“the vast majority, if not all, of small grant projects financed by the project proposed here will help achieve global environmental benefits as a result of activities that also produce local economic benefits”*. These were grants, for instance, that dealt with topics without a clear link between sustainable use of resources / environmental issues vis-a-vis community development (such as grants focusing on entrepreneurship in batik making, lace making, sweetmeats, handicrafts, technology development).

Relevance is also analysed in relation to IA’s and GEF’s strategic priorities. This is exemplified by alignment of the Project with the following spheres. This project is consistent with Sri Lanka’s United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2013-2017 (current at the time of design). Specifically vis-à-vis UNDAF/Country Programme Outcome: 4.1: *Policies, programmes and capacities to ensure environmental sustainability, address climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to reduce disaster risks in place at national, sub-national and community levels.*

Relevance is likewise applicable with regards to GEF’s Focal Area objectives and priorities as evidenced incorporation of these areas of work in programme design. Specifically, the relevance is related to Applicable GEF Strategic Objective and Program SGP: To implement sustainable collaborative management of ecosystems of universal value at the landscape/seascape-wide level in participating countries: Strategic Initiative 1: Community Landscape and Seascape Conservation. Furthermore, design indicates that the Programme is aligned with specific GEF Expected Outcomes in Biodiversity Conservation (Outcome 9.1: Increased area of production landscapes and seascapes that integrate conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into management, and Outcome 9.2: Sector policies and regulatory frameworks incorporate biodiversity considerations) as well as in Climate Change Mitigation and Land Degradation (Outcome A: Accelerated adoption of innovative technologies and management practices for greenhouse gas emission reduction and carbon sequestration; Outcome C: Financial mechanisms to support greenhouse gas emission reductions are demonstrated and operationalized Land Degradation; Outcome 3.1: Support mechanisms for sustainable land management in wider landscapes established; Outcome 3.2: Integrated landscape management practices adopted by local communities based on gender sensitive needs Outcome 3.3: Increased investments in integrated landscape management.

Therefore, relevance is assessed on a six-point scale as *Satisfactory (S)* since there were only minor shortcomings regarding the significance of this intervention. This is also based on the analysis that although there were some shortcomings, no major relevance issues were identified besides those pointed out above.

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### *EFFECTIVENESS (\*)*

The effectiveness of an project or programme is defined as the degree to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved or are expected to be achieved. The valorisation of effectiveness is used as an aggregate for judgment of the merit or worth of an activity, (i.e., the extent to which an intervention has attained, or is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives proficiently, in a sustainable fashion and with a positive institutional development impact).



As seen in preceding sections, when the metric of effectiveness vis-à-vis achieving outcomes is defined in a more specific format (for instance as hectares of forest cover lands set aside for carbon sequestration or area brought under protection or sustainable use for biodiversity conservation or improved ecosystem) it is clearer to see the effect or outcome since the expected results is better defined. Summative effectiveness, however, when dealing with effects of other types (benefits to communities and stakeholders, etc.) are not well defined within the results framework. Therefore, it is not a simple task to capture for instance how and to what extent beneficiaries are gaining from local project activities since the metrics only determine participation in activities but not what effect these have.<sup>15</sup> This does not mean that they did not benefit, just that in summative manner it cannot be exhaustively defined what was a benefit since there is no overall quantitative indicator-originated data to support this type of analysis in a composite manner.

However, at the project level some breakdowns arise out of this evaluation that can lead to conclusions as to effectiveness. Grants generally achieved what they set forth to achieve, signalling an overall fair level of effectiveness as measured by the indicator metrics. As briefly seen in the sections on relevance above, those interventions that successfully joined livelihoods needs with sustainable use of natural resources were the most effective.

Agriculture and agriculture-related projects are highlighted as the most effective thus far based on these terms. They are perceived by all sorts of stakeholders as the most appropriate. This is also due to the food security crisis the country is fronting as well as the general socio – economic issues that Sri Lanka is currently facing. The most successful and effective ones are those that deal with high value products (e.g. spices) and/or adding value to products (fish, grains, etc.) while at the same time implementing sustainable use practices. The communities and beneficiaries have furthered their knowledge through training and capacity building in several of these processes.

Sri Lanka had a ban on fertilisers during the course of OP6 implementation. Although many farmers in the areas of intervention are not intensive fertiliser users, some of the projects success can have a demonstrative use in the reduction of fertiliser use while still maintaining yield. Sri Lanka abandoned, a few months before this phase of the Programme ended, its goal to become the first country to fully adopt organic farming by removing the ban on the use and importation of chemical fertilisers. Yet, the demonstration capacity is there for future policies and uptake as needed from the grants that embraced the reduction of fertiliser use as an intermediate goal and as a sustainability practice. Several grants dealt with improved land management techniques for soil conservation (reducing the need for soil fertilisers); others have dealt with organic fertiliser production. A key example has been the grant that effectively and successfully converted 500 hectares of abandoned paddy lands to non - chemical farming in the Colombo Wetlands.

There were also some unplanned results that have aided to effectiveness. Some of them also do have a potential to aid in sustainability of integrated land management. A key unplanned result

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<sup>15</sup> The Programme has carried out a few exercises to find out how or to what extent some beneficiaries have benefited from the grants, for instance regarding increased income. Yet the results framework had no specific indicators regarding this issue nor others that could define impact upon community members (such as increased farming yields, increased income, etc.) to adequately and holistically capture this and generate an ample analysis in this regard and drive projects towards obtaining these sorts of benefits.



has been the creation of ties and working relations between grantees/beneficiaries/communities and different areas of government (national, regional, local). Although this was not the case in all circumstances, and in some projects –particularly when permissions needed to be granted—there were a number of frictions or misunderstandings between the governmental and the non – governmental spheres, when the positive relations occurred they opened a space for future integrated work.

A number of grants were strictly ecological and research oriented. In the more formal results, seven new reptile species were found in the Knuckles World Heritage Site as part of one of the grants dealing with research in ecology; of these species two have already been scientifically documented. Although the research-oriented grants can be positive in the generation of scientific knowledge for environmental preservation projects, these did not fully incorporate all the principles that GEF's / UNDP's small grants of community involvement and community driven approaches that generate benefits and incentives to the local stakeholders for sustainable equitable development practices. Therefore, the community involvement and ownership was either weak or non-existent in these cases.

The CPMU asserts that this sort of research level projects shared their research documents with stakeholders in the landscape and that capacity workshops were done on disseminating their contents. However, this assertion does not fulfil the definition of full participation of communities since this is information dissemination. Nor does it embrace the concepts behind a landscape approach which, besides impelling a geographically and ecologically focalised method, it is also meant to drive landscape management in an equitable participatory, multi-stakeholder, manner. The landscape approach furthermore is not only for the purpose of focalising interventions but to promote and uphold the linkage between generating global environmental benefits and developmental benefits at the local level. Also, the CPMU asserts that the reason that these projects were approved and implemented were to fulfil achieving the indicators of hectareage protected (as expressed in the results framework) since –according to the CPMU—these projects help in achieving the extensive indicator targets set at design. It also indicates that this is so since typical small livelihood projects cannot work on extensive hectareage areas and because SGP in Sri Lanka understands that small livelihood projects alone will not be able to achieve policy level directions. This assertions, as understood by this evaluation, however are not congruent with overall expectations and thinking regarding the landscape approach.

The projects also faced a number of challenges. For instance, they had to adjust some variables, such as location of pilots, other interventions were not able to or were delayed (even to date) to achieve some aspects of implementation. Four grants were discontinued due to issues related to financial mismanagement, non – performance, or even due to internal problems within the organisation that did receive a grant.

There were two externalities that greatly affected the projects and that can also have an impact upon sustainability of achievements: the COVID-19 pandemic and the socio – economic and political crisis Sri Lanka has been facing in the last years. These two external factors not only have affected implementation processes that can redound in effectiveness issues, they also have deeper consequences regarding sustainability or even the capacity of beneficiaries to see benefits when

motivations for sustainable managements (such as increased income, etc.) do not materialise. This is particularly the case of eco-tourism projects. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions and due to fundamental socio – economic problems facing the country, the tourism industry has been negatively affected. This means that the tourism projects have not been able to harness or robustly sustain income generation due to the above mentioned externalities.

Also the issue with tourism – related interventions is a matter that needs to take into account the characteristics of natural resource management in Sri Lank vis-à-vis protected areas. Since a number of strictly ecological or conservation interventions with a tourism perspective were to be carried out within or near protected areas, this has proven difficult or impossible given that protected areas are basically preserves that cannot be –legally–used by communities. That is, humans cannot enter the forest unless they have special permissions. Therefore, not even the possibility of co – management is there, and therefore the open incentives for communities to conserve natural resources and aid in management were not fully present.

Although undeniably a substantial number of projects were effective at the project-by-project level, and there was a certain degree of cross fertilisation or exchanges between and among some of the projects, a true landscape wide approach at an aggregate level was not achieved. Some landscape synergies were indeed identified, and the potential aggregate impact of the individual grants have been studied for some landscapes. Multi - stakeholder governance processes were shaped and platforms were established, yet coordination for a common goal has not been achieved as of yet. This could be due to many factors such as the isolation of most communities in most of the landscapes, the weak capacity to implement integrated approaches, as well the innovation of working in this manner not only for the CSOs and communities but also for government. Some stakeholders have doubts as to whether it is or was realistic to expect such changes to occur within the timeframe of one operational phase. The lack of achievement of a true landscape wide approach is, consequently, not negative in and of itself since the foundations for a landscape approach have been set by the OP6, yet it must be acknowledged that further work based on in – depth analysis is needed to foster a factual landscape approach in the future. This is to be done while acknowledging that this paradigm shift does not occur mechanically when such an approach is first presented and that it needs a great deal of continue support. Since as indicated elsewhere, an OP7 stage has already been approved and is now operational in the country, follow up of initial activities is a possibility to strengthen and/or achieve a true integrated landscape approach.

The effectiveness of this project can be rated as *MS (Moderately Satisfactory)* since it approximately has met expectations yet had some shortcomings. The Project level of outputs was commensurate to metrics (i.e. indicators, especially after an indicator thought to be unachievable was cancelled at midpoint). The analysis of effectiveness is not only done, however, regarding analysing if indicators were achieved or not. The analysis, as per UNDP/GEF guidance, effectiveness is also used as an aggregate measure of (or judgment about) the merit or worth of an activity, i.e. the extent to which an intervention has attained, or is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives efficiently in a sustainable fashion and with a positive institutional development impact. Therefore, the analysis indicates that the achievements were made at the output level to a full degree, and to a moderate stage at the broad outcome level.

## EFFICIENCY (\*)

Efficiency is defined as the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible. Efficiency is a measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted into results. This relates also as to the funding flow, time consumed to amend inefficient practices, as well as the extent to which a project extension could have been avoided.

Several internal and external factors have aided or hindered efficiency of the SGP in its OP6. At the individual project level, although a substantial number of local – level projects did indeed achieve the expected outcomes, some did not and several were cancelled for a variety of reasons. Analysing those that did achieve expected results, some did have to adjust or change localities; several were not able to achieve all outputs; and a number suffered delays because of needs for permits, misunderstandings with communities, lack of clear connections with governments or political resistance to the interventions as well as other set up issues.

At a composite level, although there have been achievements, these also faced efficiency challenges. Transitioning toward a landscape approach proved to be difficult in some ways that affected efficiency. Not only there was a need to lay the ground work and fulfil analysis requirements for this integrated approach, it also implied that engaging with relevant partners was difficult due to the capacity gaps in the regions as well as the lack of efficient networks between the potential grantees (i.e. CSOs, NGOs, etc.) and the communities in the three landscapes for the most part. Also, the call for proposals was responded by over one hundred and forty organisations. However, the selection process was not perceived to have clear criteria nor did it have agile templates to transparently demonstrate the selection processes. A number of processes had to be filled by the CPMU that hindered efficient approval procedures, furthermore. For instance, this occurred when the CPMU had to analyse stakeholder’s organizations formal registration, authenticity and others factor of the organisations’ legitimacy components.

While it cannot be determined by the evaluation at this point and it is not this processes mandate to do so, many partners believe that the above factors in some way were triggers for the complaints raised by some civil society groups against the SGP. The forensic audit and its costs are also understood to have impacted upon efficiency since its cost went beyond what was budgeted and it also used other sorts of resources (such as time to engage the audit, mobilisation of personnel, and time consumed to amend inefficient practices) to attend to it.

SGP throughout its six phases of operation in Sri Lanka has tended to support the same organisations throughout the different cycles. There has been a sort of dependency created in these groups and an understanding of entitlement by them that translates --in their considerations-- that support will be ongoing no matter what changes in the SGP approach are taken. With the changes to geographically integrated community – based landscape approaches in OP6, and given that some of these organisations were not approved for grants in the last call, this created several conditions (in addition to those mentioned in the paragraph above) that led the path to these civil organisations’ complaints. These in turn led to agency – wide audits that hindered efficient implementation. Although not everything is negative in this regard since the audits have –in turn—led to self-

examination and lessons learnt to improve the mechanisms used for calling for proposal as well as decision – making regarding grants, this has come at a cost in efficiency in the current SGP cycle.

Project management was not fully operational at the beginning of implementation. Staff was appointed as the Programme unfolded, with several technical support and management hiring such as local coordinators and technical advisor hired after implementation midpoint. This is also associated to the delays in early implementation due to the need to incorporate appropriate capacity and robust management structures to implement the phase of SGP being evaluated here. A partial result of this was the need to request a project extension<sup>16</sup>. As indicated in the PIR, the extension was granted to compensate for delays in the start of the OP6 project, delays in the implementation a number of community level projects, and to allow the necessary time for consolidation of the results achieved to midpoint stage and disseminate these in the three landscapes. The extension could have been avoided if the delays in management and implementation would have been avoided.

Of course, efficiency was also affected by external factors. For instance, three out of the four stalled grants were within the Mannar landscape<sup>17</sup>. This is an area specially affected after the thirty year war period, with as –indicated elsewhere— after the thirty year war period it is a very vulnerable region and where NGOs/CBOs capacity regarding environmental conservation was very low and their promotion of community-based equitable sustainable development practices was also weak because of these factors. Particularly in the last two years of implementation, the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing socio-economic and political crisis that Sri Lanka is facing are externalities that influenced efficiency in a negative manner.

The efficiency of implementation had a number of shortcomings. Therefore, the overall ranking of efficiency is *Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)* since this criteria was achieved somewhat below expectations.

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#### OVERALL OUTCOME (\*)

Given the satisfactory degree of relevance and the moderately satisfactory degree of effectiveness the moderately unsatisfactory degree of efficiency, the overall project outcome is ranked as *Moderately Satisfactory (MS)*.

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<sup>16</sup> Here the reference is related to the project extension requested due to start-up delays and therefore granted for this reason, not the second one which was related to COVID-19.

<sup>17</sup> The SGP showed adaptive management, as indicated elsewhere, by using the funds of the cancelled grants and –as the Programme in Sri Lanka indicates—these moneys were bestowed to other four organisations.

*SUSTAINABILITY: FINANCIAL (\*), SOCIO-ECONOMIC (\*), INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND GOVERNANCE (\*), ENVIRONMENTAL (\*), OVERALL LIKELIHOOD OF SUSTAINABILITY (\*)*

Sustainability of an intervention and its results are examined to determine the likelihood of whether benefits would continue to be accrued after the completion of a project. Sustainability is examined from various perspectives: financial, social, environmental and institutional. Sustainability is built on the analysis of these four factors. Unfortunately, sustainability in this case is also tied to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the socio-economic / political crisis in Sri Lanka. Although sustainability can be assessed in general, the impact and uncertainties related to the pandemic and the crisis that has been ongoing for some time and is being faced at the time of this terminal evaluation must also be factored as variables. Key stakeholders have repeatedly indicated that sustainability needs to be a part of planning of the SGP projects in Sri Lanka from very early in the processes of implementation, even from design. They have indicated that, in their view, in many ways this was not robustly imbedded in the design of OP6 at many levels. On the other hand, an overall assessment by direct stakeholders and direct beneficiaries of SGP OP6, is that they wish to continue working with the SGP in Sri Lanka and to continue to accrue expertise, knowledge and financial gains from the activities and processes promoted by this Programme. This signals a willingness to sustain and even upscale or replicate in the near future. Each of the factors for the possibility of sustainability are expanded below.

*Financial sustainability:* Financial risks to sustainability relate to the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the assistance ends. The main risk, therefore, would entail lack of appropriate funding for continued implementation of results, effects, etc. At the project level, the risk of sustainability from a financial perspective can be directly correlated to the inherent processes of the communities and recipients of grants as well as to external factors. Mainly, internally, if the communities and direct grantees have been able to transition as a result of the SGP towards a social or commercial enterprise, than this indicates stronger possibilities of financial sustainability of results. Many grantees and communities have, as a result of the Programme, created links or were exposed to several government agencies and private sector institutions (even through the NSC) that deal with financing and with social enterprises, which also create the conditions for continued financing of results. The high degree of co – financing in SGP OP6, in many ways as a result of those communities and direct beneficiaries efforts when they were clearly benefitted by the interventions, also signals positive aspects in future financial sustainability of results in these cases. The effectiveness of some of the grants, when these have indeed resulted in financial incentives as part of the increased productivity or valued added of sustainably managed natural resources, is also a factor that can signal continued financing for results. Some of the projects unlocked the possibilities of micro credit and many projects included business plans, thus potentially creating financial sustainability conditions for a number of endeavours. Further financing for anchoring results at the broader level can also be leveraged through international cooperation efforts. Directly related is the recent approval of the Seventh Operational Phase (OP7) of the Small Grants Programme in Sri Lanka which has as an explicit goal to learn from and continue accruing results based on OP6. Within the UNDP portfolio there are several initiatives (GEF-funded and GCF-funded) that intend to link to the results and to landscape approach piloted in this phase. Therefore, the assessment of the possibility of financial sustainability is *Moderately Likely (ML)*.

*Socio-economic sustainability.* A number of stakeholders are likely to have or achieve an appropriate level of ownership of results, and – when this occurred– there is a commitment and interest in ensuring that the benefits of the project are maintained in relation to socio-economic aspects. This is consolidated when there is demonstration that the activities supported generate lasting benefits and incentives for the communities and where there was ownership of the processes and products the SGP leveraged. Although the current economic situation in Sri Lanka is highly unfortunate overall, it can provide opportunities for greater ownership and sustainability when the projects have addressed issues to overcome problems faced by vulnerable groups and their communities. These are, *inter alia*, matters such organic fertiliser that reduces input costs in production, food security, value adding. The grants that have these matters imbedded in them show greater ownership and therefore greater social sustainability possibilities. While the grants that do not demonstrate a good level of socio – economic factors and did not engender a great deal of ownership from the communities do have greater socio – economic risks to their sustainability. Therefore, socio-economic sustainability is considered to be *Moderately Likely (ML)*, particularly in those cases where demonstration of socio – economic value of the projects took place.

*Institutional framework and governance.* Sustainability as related to institutional frameworks and of governance is where the Sixth Operational Phase of the SGP shows a good deal of promise and a great number of challenges. Positive aspects include the strong engagement of government structures in the different SGP OP6 processes, going from active participation in the NSC, STAR allocations, and in supporting a number of the grants, either financially through co – financing or through technical support. Another point that underlines the possibility of institutional framework and governance strengthening is related to informed policy dialogues based on the findings that arise out of the grants. Although evidently the uptake is up to government, the CPMU has been commissioning studies and carrying out processes and events for the promotion of scaling up good practices leading to policy implications in three targeted landscapes. These open up possibilities for uptake and assimilation in governance internal systems and procedures of the diverse successful pilots thus far implemented. Some challenges to this sort of sustainability has, nevertheless, also been identified. Some resistance and opposition by officials and by governments were identified regarding some of the projects. Several government stakeholders have also expressed their doubts and their institutional disagreement to some of the processes promoted by SGP OP6. Uptake of a landscape approach is understood to be difficult at the institutional level, also, not only due to the need of interagency coordination but also due to the many factors that are inherent to this approach, such as capacity building at all levels (communities, non-governmental organisations, and --very importantly-- for decision makers and governments). The continuous support of governmental focal points such as the Operational Focal Point/Ministry of Environment in Sri Lanka, to the next approved SGP phase (i.e. OP7) in Sri Lanka is a positive signal of potential institutional sustainability. Therefore, as a composite analysis, the ranking for institutional/governance sustainability is *Moderately Likely (ML)*.

*Environmental sustainability:* Environmental risks to sustainability are identified even from design, basically through externalities outside of the horizon of SGP. For instance, climate change impacts are still very much risks that the results of the Programme face, but there is truly not a great deal that the projects can do besides acknowledging these and attempting to adapt. Some individual projects did already face environmental risks. For instance, those agriculture – related projects that



dealt with fruit trees endured a series of environmentally – related risks, such as fires and floods, and the majority of these trees were destroyed which brought about questions as to whether it was environmentally risky to place these in the ecosystems and areas where they were implanted. Given that the SGP promotes an integrated approach that takes into account environmental variables and addresses directly issues such reduction of environmental threats, there are no other identifiable risks per se that can jeopardize sustaining results in this sustainability category, if these issues were properly factored in the individual projects. Therefore, the ranking for environmental sustainability is *Moderately Likely (ML)* since there are several risks to sustainability in this regard.

Taking a composite view of the rankings for financial, socio – economic, institutional as well as environmental sustainability probabilities, the overall likelihood of sustainability is ranked as *Moderately Likely (ML)*. Therefore, the moderately likely amalgamated ranking is given since, although there are moderate risks, there are also expectations that at least some of the outcomes and results will be sustained in time.

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### *COUNTRY OWNERSHIP*

Country ownership and local ownership are crucial factors in the obtaining achievements and engendering sustainability of the SGP. At the national level overall country ownership is manifested in several ways, such as through STAR allocations as well as government involvement in the NSC and in individual projects. The ongoing support for the SGP also manifests ownership through governmental commitment of STAR funds for the already approved Seventh Operational Phase of SGP in Sri Lanka (OP7).

Local and community ownership is similarly a key factor for these sort of projects. At the local/community level a high degree of ownership has been manifested and validated by this evaluation when the projects' included the community and when they concerned issues that are highly relevant to their individual and collective sustainable and equitable development.

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### *GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT*

Gender equality matters were imbedded within Programme design (as seen in the design section). These were, furthermore, articulated throughout implementation in the different products and processes the SGP generated.

The Programme had an Atlas Gender Marker Rating of GEN2, defined as *gender equality as significant objective*. SGP OP6 had several areas in which it aimed to contribute to gender equality, such as: (a) contributing to closing gender gaps in access to and control over resources; (b) improving the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance; and (c) targeting socio-economic benefits and services for women.<sup>18</sup>

Although no formal overarching gender equality strategy had been identified at the planning stages, the OP6 has included gender mainstreaming as an overarching goal as implementation

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<sup>18</sup> Source: 2021 Project Implementation Report (PIR).

evolved. At implementation mid-point a landscape-wide gender analysis for the programme was completed and action plans were developed in each of the three targeted areas based on the integration of gender issues in landscape baseline assessments.

For instance, there were several grants oriented towards women's groups. These entailed providing support linking environmental conservation work with capacity building and providing skills to improve the economic aspects and living conditions attached to productivity. The issues that these dealt with, within a gender perspective, entailed many aspects such as: micro credits, technical advice, and promoting behavioural change to improve the sustainable use of natural resources for example in agriculture. Although this is very well taken, there is room for harnessing and improving more gender considerations given that for instance it has been noted that training and support of entrepreneurial matters as well as marketing support of women was not as robust as necessary. An emphasis of the work with women in this area was carried out for subsistence and home garden approaches, leaving behind the role of women as economic agents in several instances.

The women groups and the women - targeted organisational support has been positive in the sense that they have been active and have strategized their inputs. In particular in the gender targeted strategic projects, which knowledge banks with strategic information.

There were some key examples of positive inclusion of women's participation in addition to gender mainstreaming as indicated above. For instance, the number of women taking part and/or leading the individual interventions, as well as other gender – specific approaches being implemented. And although this is worthy of pointing out, given that women have participated in par numbers to men, there has been an emphasis on this as the only means of gender mainstreaming. That is, there has been a misconception by several stakeholders that gender equality and women's empowerment is achieved mechanically solely through the participation of women. Yet, there has been resistance to acknowledging that gender mainstreaming is more complex than that. Namely, there is a resistance to the fact that the SGP should acknowledge how unsustainable processes affect women and men differently and how women are included in the projects within a rights framework making up for these vulnerability factors. Several key stakeholders, in the target areas as well as nationally, are either not versant with these principles or resist them.

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### *CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES*

Given that GEF -- financed projects are key elements in UN country programming, project objectives and outcomes should align with UN country programme strategies as well as to GEF-required global environmental benefits. The SGP OP6 converged environment-related and other development programming, as well as its alignment with UNDAF and other such programming relevant to UNDP (as seen in the section on relevance above). This was evident as far as cross cutting and mainstreaming issues are concerned and it conformed to agreed priorities in the UNDP country programme documents. In addition to gender mainstreaming, as expanded upon above, the SGP OP6 dealt either explicitly or broadly with the following specific cross-cutting issues.



*Poverty Alleviation/Development.* There are several positive effects sought which are aligned with poverty alleviation and sustainable development cross – cutting issues. For instance, promotion of sustainable agricultural practices (training of farmers on conservation agriculture) as well as for providing opportunities for livelihood improvement.

*Improved Governance.* When dealing with mainstreaming and cross-cutting issues, evaluations also explore whether project outcomes are being incorporated into national policies. Although this has not occurred as of yet in full force, the CPMU has been carrying out a number of processes and commissioning products (such as case studies) regarding improved governance by showcasing best practices with potential policy implications.

*Capacity Development.* Capacity development has been a central issue. Although this evaluation cannot capture the level of capacity development per se since there are no baseline nor effect information regarding this aspect, it has been brought up over and over again by different analysis that capacity development is key in the innovation that SGP OP6 wants to achieve (not only of grantees, and beneficiaries but also at different government levels).

*Knowledge Management.* Knowledge management and accompanying information dissemination products have been generated by or through the SGP.<sup>19</sup>

*Human rights.* Although at times this has not been highlighted, a very important cross-cutting aspect of SGP in its Sixth Operational Phase has been an implicit human rights approach by working in post conflict resolution (particularly in the Mannar landscape). The zone was largely degraded due to the three decade civil war in the country causing a number of adverse impacts upon the communities in this area associated not only to the conflict per se but also to the environmental damage that this has caused. Displaced peoples upon return to their areas of origin before the war are one of the target groups of this intervention. These persons –in turn—are beneficiaries of projects that attempt to reverse the unsustainable practices that these communities carry out due to war damages. By working with and in communities that were affected by Sri Lanka’s civil war, the Programme also enhances cross – cutting issues such as trust-building and conflict resolution processes.

#### OTHER: COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH, KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

The SGP OP6 in Sri Lanka has had a number of communication and outreach processes. The Programme had no communication strategy set at design. Yet, it developed one for application as implementation took place. This was done in close coordination with CPMT knowledge management and communication focal point and UNDP communication staff. It entailed internet-based communication (such as using GEF SGP and UNDP websites), social media and media outreach in order to enhance visibility, as well as the development of knowledge management products. This plan applied to both internal and external project stakeholder’ engagement.

One of the main vehicles for outreach and communication was a newsletter named “Whats Up – GEF-SGP Sri Lanka” which provided information on the grants, featured stories of the projects and their related events. SGP captured and disseminates best practices and lessons learned also

<sup>19</sup> See the specific section on this subject for further information on KM and information.

through the participation in different events and exchange (evidently more forcefully before the COVID-19 pandemic began for those events that had physical attendance but also shifting to online modalities after travel restrictions started).

A number of knowledge management products have also been commissioned by SGP or generated through the strategic projects. Several of these knowledge management products have started out of grants' implementation, such as an atlas through GIS mapping that generated new information for the country. Others have dealt with broader learning processes, several with the intention of learning and providing policy inputs for uptake at the landscape and at the national levels. At the landscape levels field reports have also been generated.

While the above efforts are well appreciated by a number of different sorts of stakeholders, there have been assessments that the outreach of communications can be improved, reaching out to a broader base, and that more user – friendly knowledge management products need to be drawn. The latter keeping in mind that they should support the community organisations for furthering capacity, not only disseminating what has been achieved but also promoting further capacity and uptake. This also includes the need for translation into local dialects and languages as appropriate.

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### *GEF ADDITIONALITY*

SGPs outcomes (results, effects, impact) are closely related to incremental reasoning for all components, and basing this on the GEF-funded intervention as a catalyst for incremental benefits of GEF support. Specifically, if analysing via a scenario without GEF support, it is understood that Sri Lanka has benefited from this. GEF additionality has helped –as planned– in the development of knowledge and in piloting cases that could lead to different tools for sustainable and equitable development in the three landscapes where this programme was implemented.

Following definitions in GEF guidelines<sup>20</sup>, the SGP OP6 in Sri Lanka falls under all six areas of GEF additionality:

- *Specific Environmental Additionality.* The SGP generated global environmental benefits and local environmental additionality that would not occur without GEF intervention
- *Financial Additionality.* GEF involvement has resulted in greater funding flows than would otherwise not have been the case from public or private sector sources.
- *Socio-Economic Additionality.* To some degree, SGP has contributed to improvements in living standards among a few population groups affected by environmental conditions due to the contribution of GEF.

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<sup>20</sup> As stated in 'An Evaluative Approach to Assessing GEF's Additionality', <https://www.thegef.org/council-meeting-documents/evaluative-approach-assessing-gef-s-additionality>

- *Innovation Additionality*. GEF involvement has resulted in the adoption of new technologies or the demonstration of market readiness for technologies.

Although institutional / governance additionality is a potential process due to the work of SGP on policy uptake based on the pilots and grants, this has not materialised as of yet.

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### CATALYTIC ROLE / REPLICATION EFFECT

The potential catalytic role and replication effect of the Program was established early on in project design. As stated in the project document “*outcomes achieved under the SGP can extend beyond the individual grant level by scaling up and using successful projects as demonstration sites to extend lessons learned to other communities and inform policy dialogue.*” Two of the four expected outcomes also explicitly indicate that the SGP has expected catalytic roles and replication effects, and even upscaling.<sup>21</sup>

The replication/ catalytic role of the Project is found in several different features thus far, such as:

- *Innovation / production of public good*. SGP OP6 has introduced new tools to build adaptive management processes. This is mainly under expected Outcome 1, which as seen in the sections on progress towards expected results has been achieved.
- *Demonstration*. Demonstration in the case of this Programme is strongly based on knowledge transfer of successful pilots. The SGP has developed a number of these within its implementation processes. There have been some horizontal exchanges between and among different groups within landscapes that can enhance the demonstration value of the achievements. However, these have developed out of the individuals or communities’ own initiatives not in a programmatic manner for the most part. Therefore, there is a need for articulated exchanges to aid demonstration and other similar factors, not only intra – landscape but across and among the three different landscapes.
- *Upscaling and replication*. The potential catalytic role of SGP OP6 is also imbedded in design. Furthermore, the CPMU together with partners have been carrying out in the last period of implementation a number of processes (such as dialogues) and commissioning studies that amalgamate lessons learned at the landscape level(s) on how projects can contribute to better policies and upscaling for improved sustainable development practices through policies.

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<sup>21</sup> See italics (own) in the expected outcomes that point to potential catalytic, replication and even upscaling:

- Outcome 3: Multi-stakeholder partnerships develop and implement strategic projects that *catalyse* the broader adoption of successful SGP-supported technologies, practices, or systems;
- Outcome 4: Multi-stakeholder landscape policy platforms discuss *potential policy innovations* based on analysis of project experience and lessons learned.

As seen above, the conditions and processes for upscaling and replication are there in programme structures and in the demonstration of successful projects. However, the uptake of policy is evidently not a process that the Programme or the international agencies involved are responsible for. These fall and lie within governments' domains. However, with the amalgamated studies and the dialogues, SGP and UNDP's CO in Sri Lanka have been engendering processes that can aid in uptake and catalyse upscaling and replication by the relevant stakeholders.

### PROGRESS TO IMPACT

There has been some progress towards potential long – term impact attributable to the SGP. For environmental stress reduction and environmental status change, the Programme tallied impact at the intervention's end following GEF's Core Indicators set (i.e. GEB) as follows.

TABLE 7: PROGRESS TO IMPACT AREA OF LAND RESTORED

Core Indicator 3	Area of land restored				(Hectares)	
	Hectares (3.1+3.2+3.3+3.4)					
	Expected			Achieved		
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE		
		14,500	10,000	15,174		
Indicator 3.1	Area of degraded agricultural land restored					
	Hectares					
	Expected			Achieved		
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE		
		3,000	2,000	3,221		
Indicator 3.2	Area of forest and forest land restored					
	Hectares					
	Expected			Achieved		
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE		
		2,500	2,000	2,849		
Indicator 3.4	Area of wetlands (including estuaries, mangroves) restored					
	Hectares					
	Expected			Achieved		
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE		
		9,000	6,000	9,104		

TABLE 8: PROGRESS TO IMPACT AREA OF LANDSCAPES UNDER IMPROVED PRACTICES

Core Indicator 4	Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)				(Hectares)	
	Hectares (4.1+4.2+4.3+4.4)					
	Expected			Achieved		
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE		
		20,500	28,000	29,783		
Indicator 4.1	Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity					
	Hectares					
	Expected			Achieved		
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE		
		17,500	26,000	26,146		
Indicator 4.3	Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems					
	Hectares					
	Expected			Achieved		
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE		
		3,000	2,000	3,637		

TABLE 9: PROGRESS TO IMPACT GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS MITIGATED

Core Indicator 6	Greenhouse gas emission mitigated				(Metric tons of CO <sub>2</sub> e )
	Expected metric tons of CO <sub>2</sub> (6.1+6.2)				
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE	
	Expected CO <sub>2</sub> e (direct)	25,000	0	25,000	
	Expected CO <sub>2</sub> e (indirect)				
Indicator 6.1	Carbon sequestered or emissions avoided in the AFOLU sector				
	Expected metric tons of CO <sub>2</sub>				
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE	
	Expected CO <sub>2</sub> e (direct)	25,000	0	25,000	

An analysis of contributions to changes in policy/legal/regulatory frameworks, including observed changes in capacities (awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, monitoring systems, etc.) and governance architecture, including access to and use of information (laws, administrative bodies, trust-building and conflict resolution processes, information-sharing systems, etc.) does not have an indicator set to support a quantitative analysis. However a qualitative analysis can be drawn. Regarding to changes in policy/legal/regulatory frameworks, there has been no discernible impact thus far, although the Programme has been involved in providing inputs for policy dialogues to foster uptake of SGP's best practices and demonstrative pilots with the aim to engender uptake. With regards to trust-building and conflict resolution processes, this has been a keen goal of the SGP, particularly in those areas most affected by the civil war (such as the Mannar landscape) where the projects in their majority aimed at generating trust and promote practices that are equitable and sustainable in a post – conflict context.

Although contributions to changes in socio-economic status (income, health, well-being, etc.) were an aim, the indicator set for the Programme<sup>22</sup> (including GEF's Core Indicator 11 defined as *Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment*) does not fully capture the extent of (positive) changes in socio – economic status. The indicator only captures the number of persons taking part in the projects defined for that purpose as beneficiaries (total 3320, 1631 female and 1689 male) but it does not define how they benefitted. Therefore, the indicators in this area deal with participation in the SGP but not with progress to impact. Direct beneficiaries and grantees indicate that in some cases productivity or value added has been imbedded in results, signalling a potential progress to impact in this issue but one that cannot be captured fully with the metrics at hand, and the CPMU has harnessed some data to this effect.

<sup>22</sup> As seen in the section on design in this report.

## 5. MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS

### *MAIN FINDINGS*

- The integrated landscape approach with conservation/sustainable use of natural resources has been important for relevance as well as effectiveness in this operational phase.
- The landscape approach is innovative in Sri Lanka, and therefore enduring a learning curve not only at the conceptual level but also at the implementation level.
- Although design had a general strategic outlook, some of the tools (such as indicators) were not specific or robust enough to capture several aspects of change, for example of how the projects did or pretend to support beneficiaries and what incentives were there for the direct beneficiaries.
- The most successful (and sustainable or sustained) grants are those that effectively joined livelihood (including alternative livelihoods) with strategies and incentives that underpin sustainable equitable management of natural resources.
- The Programme faced a number of management challenges, some associated to the introduction of the landscape approach and some associated to the civil society organisations that critiqued the SGP decision – making processes.
- Individual successful projects have strategically combined innovation with basic knowledge.
- This operational phase enhanced a number of networks and multi – stakeholder engagement, at different levels and with different types of actors and institutions.
- The extent that the expected outcomes and objectives were achieved has been met in all relevant components.

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## CONCLUSIONS

The *Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme In Sri Lanka* is about to be completed in the country leaving a number of achievements but also opening the door to continued work. The SGP OP6 has opened the door to the next phase of implementation (OP7) which has been approved and is already operational, and where many of the lessons learned need to be applied in order to make for effective, equitable and sustainable projects and grants in the near future.

The integrated community – based approach that took place in this phase in three key landscapes in the country (Knuckles, Mannar, and Colombo) was innovative and pioneering, for SGP as well as for many other interventions in the country. The implementation of this method came however with a number of challenges, not only at the institutional level but also to render this approach practical and accessible to stakeholders and partners such as governments, implementers of the projects on the ground, grantees and beneficiary communities. This is why the landscape approach and the OP6 is seen as a learning curve in Sri Lanka.

The relevance of this operational phase has been quite high since it is aligned with policies of the institutions involved. Nevertheless, relevance could be enhanced if the needs and relevance of different institutions could be better linked in the future to enhance and promote win – win situations of conserving natural resources yet at the same time promote enhanced well beings of the community and sustainable use in a stringent sense.

The communities in the landscapes where SGP OP6 worked are faced to vulnerability conditions strongly influenced by environmental degradation. In some areas they are also returning population after a long civil war conflict. The methodology to work with them linking integrated landscape approaches to improve their livelihoods is not only a question of conservation as such but also of equity. Creating the incentives for these communities to better manage natural resources while improving their livelihood conditions is key for the success of results.

As indicated previously, an OP7 is already operational in the country. The expectations are high that this new phase can not only give continuity to the work done in the previous phase being evaluated here, but to improve, enhance and continue accruing results based on the experience of OP6.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations here are provided for the next operational phase in Sri Lanka (prioritized since OP7 is already operational in the country) and for future programming. Recommendations either recommend future actions to take and decisions to make in order to channel corrections *or* to reinforce the positive aspects and processes the Programme as a whole has had already implemented or is in the process of implementing. These could that could also act as recommendations for other and future programming in small grants programmes in other countries.

### *Recommendations for the next phase of operation:*

- 1 Continue to work at the landscape levels, generating improved connectivity and exchanges that consolidate a true integrated approach. Deepen the understanding and analysis of the landscapes and of the communities' use of natural resources, as well as the actual and potential linkages and synergies. With the understanding that innovative methodologies such as the landscape integrated approach supported in the new SGP's operational phases are not automatic and take a great deal of time and support, future programming should approach future work as supportive and transformational. Technically, therefore, all projects need to enhance communities' capacity to adopt or reinforce sustainable production and equitable livelihoods that take into account ecological factors. Furthermore, the synergies between the communities, and among the communities with other stakeholders need to be enhanced in order to further this sort of approach. This can also be enhanced by fostering formal and informal exchanges and cooperation between the different stakeholders within each landscape and across all of them, and of the beneficiaries with other key actors (business groups, technical groups, incubators, enterprises at higher levels of value chains, as well as all relevant government levels).
- 2 SGP should strengthen stakeholder engagement processes and/or conflict resolution mechanisms, as well as enhance transparency processes, to deter grievances. Specifically, this could be done as follows:
  - a. Formalise the grants selection processes embedding a number of processes and actions that not only increase efficiency, but also engender transparency.
  - b. Calls for grants should have clear templates and be open and publicised. These should include also well-defined eligibility criteria for grantees and clear criteria for selection that should be visibly followed and applied.
  - c. Future programming should also contemplate caps or rotation of phases when former grantees can apply and/or be selected.
  - d. Templates should include directives for prospective applicants to present documentation of their formal registration which –in turn—should be vetted by the Programme and NSC.



- e. All of these processes need to adhere to SGP Global level standard operating procedures and guidance.
  - f. Grievances mechanism(s) should also be articulated within the SGP.
  - g. The roles and attributions that NSC has should be clearly stated, disseminated and abided by.
- 3 Assistance should accompany proposal procedures, in particular to enhance the capacity of the organisations to present the proposals and implement based on that. Proposal formulation processes need to be assisted or should be accompanied by external advise while maintaining the impartiality of the Programme, the NSC and the agencies involved. For this, and for monitoring as well as for continued technical assistance the Programme should contemplate engaging with technical and procedural consultants from outside of the organisations that can help in these processes.
- 4 At the project - by - project level as well as the at the general SGP level certain features need to be presented or formulated in proposals and thoroughly monitored throughout implementation. Project indicators (as well as overall programme indicators) should be measurable gauges of change (results, effect, impact) and be well defined as to what the achievement expectations are besides products)
- 5 Rely on strategic projects and their institutions to engender capacity, promote transparent proposal harnessing, include crucial factors in projects such as the linking between livelihoods enhancement and strictly environmental issues, and making certain that sustainability factors are imbedded from design. In order for this to be actionable, programme team should work with the different projects to provide templates, technical and procedural assistance and follow up so that projects are strategic.
- 6 Gender mainstreaming should be incorporated early on in the project and be implemented within a rights framework. Work related to gender should be a cross-cutting issue and be based on closing gender gaps in access to and control of resources (which would improve women's participation and decision-making in natural resource governance) and be geared towards socio-economic benefits and services for women, at all levels not only at the household level, taking into account that women are economic and social agents for change.
- 7 With the understanding that the landscape approach might entail working with groups that are outside of the target regions due to low capacity or isolation of these areas, these should nonetheless have proven knowledge of the ecosystems and social systems of the targeted areas as well as expertise in similar areas. They should also clearly work with the communities as distinct end beneficiaries, consulting with them

not only the broad aspects of the projects but also issues that relate to indigenous knowledge, fostering their anchoring in the target communities.

- 8 The generation of knowledge and dissemination of information could be more dynamic than at previous stages, disseminating information more widely and engendering a range of products. This will also enhance transparency and aid in advocacy strategies for uptake, replication and catalytic effects. A concrete and specific communication strategy should be adopted early on in programming or design, not at implementation midpoint. This strategy should also be clear as to what products will be created, and what are the different communicating goals are (transfer of information, capacity building, visibility, transparency, advocacy, etc.) and perform accordingly. Specific user – friendly knowledge management products should be produced for communities to generate replication, enhanced capacity and highlight innovation and best practices. These should be in appropriate didactic formats for the communities or target audiences and be translated to relevant languages.

*Recommendations for future programming:*

- 9 Ensure that there is a harmonious and consistent combination between the issues important to the GEF (e.g., global environmental benefits) and what is crucial for the country and for local communities. This should also be accompanied by monitoring and follow-up instruments, such as indicators, that reflect and capture the relevance of the objectives and targets for all stakeholders in the Programme.
- 10 Environmental projects for small grants should always be accompanied by clear livelihood enhancement approaches and by the creation of incentives for communities and individuals to engage in sustainable natural resource management within their means.
- 11 Gender mainstreaming should be a part of planning and not added in later stages. Activities and projects should not only promote women's participation but should promote gender equity and women's empowerment. This could be highlighted and work in the future to help close gender gaps in access to and control of resources, which would improve women's participation and decision-making in natural resource governance, and be geared towards socio-economic benefits and services for women, at all levels not only at the household level, taking into account that women are economic and social agents for change. Resistance to women's participation and to gender mainstreaming needs to be bypassed with proper tools.
- 12 From early stages (even from planning) SGP and CPMUs need to have proper technical and operational staffing and/or support. This should include not only coordinator and permanent national – level staff, but also engaging local coordinators, technical experts, consultants for specific technical issues (such as social enterprises, value adding, marketing, etc., as it fits the individual projects), gender mainstreaming, KM

and communication, experts as needed or as relevant. This points out to the need to have associated funding for capacity building activities beyond grant making.

- 13 With the understanding that small grants are demonstrative but that change will accrue forcefully if these demonstrations and innovations achieve a higher scale and are sustained, future programming should continue and enhance work on mainstreaming into national, regional and local governance and policies. This should also be accompanied (perhaps with other projects within the portfolio) with capacity building at the different governmental levels.

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## LESSONS LEARNED

There are a number of lessons learned that can be taken from good practices the Programme has attained as well as from the challenges it faced. Some of the most salient lessons based on the Project's best practices and challenges are as follows:

- When grants and projects link livelihood of communities, productivity with sustainable management of natural resources, and engender clear incentives and benefits, then they are more relevant to local actors. Ownership of these sorts of interventions is also more forceful given their embedded benefits and win – win situations.
- Gender strategies are effective if they are developed early on in an inception stage in order to guide gender mainstreaming throughout the implementation process.
- Indicators should be conceived not only as a guide to tallying achievements, but also as a driver to promote change. Therefore, they should be clearly results-oriented and not exclusively based on activities. Indicators, therefore, should be a valued metric not only for ecological factors but also for developmental factors that provide incentives for sustainable equitable practices.
- While it is understood that no small grants are identified a priori the implementation of a programme's phase, the anticipated outcomes overall need to be specified to some degree within a results framework so that expected results / effects/ and impacts are accompanied with outcome oriented, including social pillars and social aspects of sustainable development.
- Indicators should also promote what conceptually small grants within a landscape approach need to promote in an all-encompassing manner. That is, indicators should endorse GEB *and* local sustainable development benefits since that is the overall objective of grants based on the landscape approach.
- Promoted production systems must be sustainable both economically and ecologically; this requires considerable building of the capacities of community organizations to plan and manage sustainable resource use, often with unfamiliar practices and inputs, develop value chains and social enterprises that will reinforce sustainable management practices, and coordinate production and services among communities across the landscape to achieve the economic benefits that incentivize application of conservation practices.
- Transparency of all types is beneficial for a project or programme. Although processes that a project or programme engenders might not have any wrong doing, if these are not communicated properly, clearly and transparently they might be perceived as doubtful.
- Linking with relevant government agencies and generating good working relationships of these with the grantees/beneficiaries not only leads to better results but also creates a path for uptake, upscaling, and capacity building (including technical capacity) of government – related structures and individuals.

- Involving different types of stakeholders, relevant to an area where projects take place, is beneficial not only for the projects themselves but also for their sustainability. The involvement of the private sector, particularly when social enterprises are being promoted, is an indelible component of successful and sustainable projects.

## 6. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE – NATIONAL CONSULTANT



## TERMS OF REFERENCE (Individual Contractor Agreement)

**Title:** Project Management Support – Specialist  
**Project:** FSP OP6 Sri Lanka  
**Duty station:** Home Based (Colombo, Sri Lanka) with travel to project sites in targeted landscapes  
**Section/Unit:** UNDP GEF/SGP Programme  
**Contract/Level:** LICA-10  
**Supervisor:** -----

### 1. General Background

GEF Small Grants Programme embodies the very essence of sustainable development by "thinking globally acting locally". By providing financial and technical support to projects that conserve and restore the environment while enhancing people's well-being and livelihoods, SGP demonstrates that community action can maintain the fine balance between human needs and environmental imperatives.

SGP recognizes the threat of environmental degradation and that poor and vulnerable communities –SGP's primary stakeholders- are most at risk because they depend on access to natural resources for their livelihoods and often live in fragile ecosystems. The programme provides grants of up to \$50,000 directly to local communities including indigenous people, community-based organizations and other non-governmental groups for projects in Biodiversity, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation, Land Degradation and Sustainable Forest Management, International Waters and Chemicals.

**The Terms of Reference (ToR) is set for a National Consultant who will work together with an International Consultant in conducting the Terminal Evaluation (TE) (thereafter referred to as the "TE Team") for the project "Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Sri Lanka".**

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full-sized projects supported by the GEF should undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE) upon completion of implementation. The Final Evaluation is intended to assess the relevance, performance and success of the project. It looks at signed of potential impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global and national environmental goals. The Final Evaluation also identifies/documents lessons learned and makes recommendations that project partners and stakeholders might use to improve the design and implementation of other related projects and programmes.

The Final Evaluation is to be undertaken in accordance with the "GEF Evaluation Policy" (see <http://gefieo.org/sites/default/files/documents/reports/gef-me-policy-2019.pdf>).

This Terms of Reference (ToRs) sets out the expectations for the TE of the full-sized project titled Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Sri Lanka (PIMS#5529) implemented through the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). The project implementation started on 25 January 2017 and is in its fourth year of implementation. The TE process must follow the guidance outlined in the document [Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects](#).

The objective of the Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Sri Lanka (PIMS#5529) full-sized project is to enable community-based organizations to take collective action for adaptive landscape management for socio-ecological resilience through design, implementation, and evaluation of grant projects for global environmental benefits and sustainable development in three ecologically sensitive landscapes. SGP follows COMDEKS approach and promotes the establishment and effective operation of multi-stakeholder platforms at each landscape/seascape and encourages local governments, civil society organizations and the



private sector to partner with local communities for the implementation of participatory landscape/seascape strategies, plans and projects.

The three ecologically sensitive landscapes selected for this phase: the Knuckles Conservation Forest and its buffer zone, the coastal region from Mannar Island to Jaffna, and the Colombo Wetlands. While these areas provide important ecosystem services to the country and are essential for the livelihoods of pastoralist, agricultural, and fisher communities, they all present different levels of biodiversity loss and land degradation, exacerbated by climate change.

The project is linked to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) through Outcome 4.1: Policies, programmes and capacities to ensure environmental sustainability, address climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to reduce disaster risks in place at national, sub-national and community levels

The project was originally expected to close operationally by 25 January 2021, so that the terminal evaluation was expected in 2020. However, the project has obtained a no-cost extension till 25th July 2022. The cost of the project is USD 5,797,078, of which USD 2,497,078 is from the GEF Trust Fund and USD 3,200,000 is parallel co-financing from the following: UNDP Sri Lanka County Office, Sri Lanka Government and grantees.

Under Operational Phase 6, 41 community-based projects have been funded: 13 in Knuckles including one Strategic Project, 10 in Colombo including one Strategic Project, 11 in Mannar including one Strategic project, 1 Capacity building project covering all three landscapes, and 3 Knowledge Management projects and 3 landscape strategy development projects for the three landscapes respectively, to enable community organizations and NGOs to develop and implement adaptive landscape/seascape management strategies that build social, economic and ecological resilience based on local sustainable development benefits.

The project is composed of one strategic component: **Resilient rural landscapes for sustainable development and global environmental protection**, which is comprised of 4 outcomes. Below is a summary of the progress of the outcomes.

**Outcome 1: Multi-stakeholder partnerships in three ecologically sensitive landscapes develop and execute management plans to enhance socio-ecological landscape resilience and global environmental benefits**

Multi-stakeholder groups in each landscape have been operationalized with agreed TORs. Comprehensive socio-ecological baseline assessments were developed for each landscape. Multi-stakeholder meetings of all three landscapes have been held frequently with recent-most meetings being conducted remotely. The multi-stakeholder groups have also aided in the implementation of the Seventh Operational phase of the GEF SGP. Three landscape management strategies and plans were prepared and then approved by the National Steering Committee in 2017.

Typologies of community level projects and eligibility criteria were developed in the three landscapes by multi-stakeholder groups.

A total of 12 formal agreements have been signed between community organizations and other partners in each landscape to pursue the outcomes of each strategy through community and landscape level projects.

**Outcome 2: Community-based organizations in landscape level networks build their adaptive management capacities by implementing projects and collaborating in landscape management**

An aggregate of 25,546 hectares were brought under protection or sustainable use for biodiversity conservation or improved ecosystem function and a total of 2,214 hectares have been brought under reforestation or farmer-managed natural regeneration. Four new projects (including the Mannar strategic project) were approved in April 2021 after a delayed period due to the COVID-19 pandemic and started thereafter. They are expected to account for approximately an additional 635 hectares.

Also, a total of 6,864 hectares of degraded wetlands have been rehabilitated the four new projects are

expected to account for approximately an additional 2,240 hectares. 650 hectares of forest cover lands were set aside for carbon sequestration and a total of 2,582 hectares of land have been rehabilitated through best practice soil conservation measures and agroforestry.

A total of 2,596 hectares of agricultural land have been brought under agro-ecological practices and systems and 835 individuals are benefited from new sustainable alternative livelihood options.

**Outcome 3: Multi-stakeholder partnerships develop and implement strategic projects that catalyze the broader adoption of successful SGP-supported technologies, practices, or systems**

Three strategic projects to enable and facilitate upscaling of successful SGP-supported initiatives are supported. The Knuckles landscape Strategic Project carried out by Ekabadda Praja Sanwardhana Kantha Maha Sangamaya (EPSKMS) has successfully completed its activities and the Colombo landscape strategic project implemented by the Human Development Foundation of Sri Lanka (HDFSL) is still under implementation. The Mannar landscape Strategic Project was cleared and implementation started. This project is implemented by the Nature Conservation Foundation.

Cumulative numbers of community representatives who have participated in the design and implementation of their respective scaling-up strategic project in Colombo landscape is 252 (204 men and 48 women) and in Knuckles landscape is 700 (200 men and 500 women). The Mannar Strategic Project, which has been recently initiated in late-May, will involve a total of 335 community representatives (150 women and 185 men).

**Outcome 4: Multi-stakeholder landscape policy platforms discuss potential policy innovations based on analysis of project experience and lessons learned.**

The project established three multi-stakeholder governance platforms which convened at least twice each year and were institutionalized through formal agreements since work on this topic started in 2018.

During the past year, three policy dialogues were conducted and three policy papers were prepared for the three landscapes.

As projects are being completed, case studies for each project in each landscape are being developed by the knowledge management grantees in the landscape with 13 in the Knuckles landscape and 7 in the Colombo landscape are in their final draft stage. Case studies include highlights of the projects along with any lessons learnt. Furthermore, 24 newsletters have been released since inception.

4,329 project stakeholder participants have actively engaged in analysis of project experience and landscape management and have participated in platform workshops and dialogues. A communication strategy has been developed and made operational.

The project is implemented by UNOPS and executed by UNDP through the existing mechanism of the GEF Small Grants Program, including the approval of each initiative by the SGP National Steering Committee and proper follow-up and monitoring to be provided under the leadership of the SGP Upgrading Country Program Coordinator.

The incumbent of this position will be a personnel of UNOPS under its full responsibility.

**COVID-19 Context:**

In March 2020, in response to growing numbers of COVID-19 cases in Sri Lanka, an island-wide curfew was imposed. A Presidential Task Force was established to combat the health crisis and its ripple effects on different sectors of the economy, to ensure that essential services continued unhindered. The agriculture sector was one of the worst affected sectors by the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, resulting in breakdowns of supply and value chains during peak harvesting periods and the price collapses of agricultural produce.

Details of the Impact of COVID-19 on Project Implementation and other Challenges

Delays were experienced in receiving approvals for the projects implemented in the Mannar Landscape due to

constraints caused by COVID-19 which were posed by the curfews and lockdowns that resulted in a lack of mobility. Additionally, progress of projects conducted in the Colombo landscape also experienced delays due to the continuous lockdowns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented the ability to conduct group meetings, meet government officials and gather people to conduct necessary trainings. Furthermore, constraints due to the inability to conduct in-person field visits to review progress by projects was also experienced. Four projects (including the Mannar strategic project) that were approved in April 2021 after a delayed period due to the COVID-19 pandemic and started in late-May 2021 thereafter.

Out of National Ethnic Unity Foundation (NEUF) beneficiaries from Knuckles landscape, there are 4 women whose livelihoods depend on sewing. These ladies are currently sewing face masks as an alternative to their usual production of cloth bags, curtains and other cloth items during the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, cultivation of traditional types of rice through organic practices in the region and post COVID-19 agriculture diversification efforts have supported the well-being of the village and surrounding forest. The progress of the project undertaken by the Centre for Sustainability, University of Sri Jayawardenapura, has been challenged due to COVID-19 as students are not permitted to congregate in activities. During the pandemic, it is observed in the SGP projects that women-led projects that were involved in initiatives such as online sales outlets, dissemination of micro-credit finance schemes etc., were more resilient to the impacts of COVID-19.

The pandemic and its consequent inability to meet in-person caused delays in receiving approvals for the latest projects approved by the NSC in the Mannar landscape. Moreover, the pandemic caused delays in progress achieved by projects in the Colombo landscape due to the constraints posed by the continuous lockdowns experienced. Conducting physical verification of work done by the projects in all landscapes was a challenge due to the risk of spreading the virus and travel restriction in place with the 3rd wave of COVID-19. This was overcome by conducting virtual verification via Zoom platform, where videos and images on activities conducted were showcased. Further verification was also conducted by three field coordinators in each landscape.

The project has adapted well to the COVID challenges (which included travel restrictions and mandatory self-isolation) providing technical support, training and continuous communication during this time of COVID challenges. The SGP Team has been in continuous contact with grantees to adjust their projects' action plans taking into consideration delays in implementation and also to minimize or replace physical awareness raising and capacity building activities with online sessions and trainings, which overall have been particularly useful in ensuring continuous progress. Additionally, the SGP Sri Lanka team has been participating in weekly webinars with managers of other SGP Country Programmes from around the region and worldwide to share lessons learned and best practices in addressing challenges arising from COVID, and it is encouraged to maintain this practice.

SGP rapidly responded to the maritime disaster that took place in the country by working closely with UNDP to potentially allocate some of remaining grant funds to support projects aimed at providing relief support to subsistence effects to the seascape and also to support in risk communication and building up alternative livelihoods in the two seascapes (Colombo and Mannar).

## **2. Purpose and Scope of Assignment**

The Project Management Support – Specialist - based in Sri Lanka will work under the guidance of the International Consultant and will provide necessary substantive and operational support to International Consultant in carrying out this TE of the Project. Internationally recruited Consultant will work remotely due to Covid-19 travel restrictions. Field visits to the project sites and stakeholder interviews will be conducted with support of the Project Management Support – Specialist.

Project success will be measured based on the Project Logical Framework (see Annex A), which provides clear performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The evaluation will assess the aspects as listed in evaluation report outline attached in Annex 2.

The Project Management Support – Specialist will help to review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP) the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the International consultant considers useful for this evidence-based evaluation. The TE Team will review the baseline and midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at the CEO endorsement and midterm stages and the terminal Core Indicators/Tracking Tools that must be completed before the TE field mission begins.

The Project Management Support – Specialist will travel to four target landscapes of Sri Lanka in order to interview the local stakeholders and beneficiaries and evaluate the grant project results. The remote/ virtual meetings will be applied if travel to project site is restricted.

An updated stakeholder list with contact details (phone and email) will be provided by the Project Team to the TE Team before the TE field missions start.

The TE Team is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point or her/his designated staff), Implementing Partners, the UNDP Country Office, the Regional Technical Advisor, National Steering Committee members, project beneficiaries, NGOs, grantees, direct beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

The specific design and methodology for the TE should emerge from consultations between the TE Team and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the TE purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The TE Team must use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the TE report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits (for Project Management Support – Specialist) and data to be used in the evaluation must be clearly outlined in the TE Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between the Consultant and Project team, RTA and UNOPS.

The final report must describe the full TE approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the evaluation.

The TE Team will assess project performance against expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework (see ToR Annex A). The TE Team will assess results according to the criteria outlined in the Guidance for TEs of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects.

### **3. Monitoring and Progress Controls**

The TE is a mandatory evaluation of the GEF and must be performed by an external Consultant prior to the conclusion or effective closure of the Project. The TE for SGP Sri Lanka is scheduled to take place in March 2022.

The TE report will assess the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and draw lessons that can improve the sustainability of the benefits of this project and assist in the overall improvement of UNDP programming. The TE report promotes accountability and transparency and assesses the scope of project achievements.

The TE will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the [UNDP Guidance for conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects](#). The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. The TE report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful.

The direct responsibilities of the Project Management Support – Specialist are the following:

- Documentation review and data gathering;
- Contributing to the development of the review plan and methodology;
- Conducting those elements of the evaluation determined jointly with the international consultant and UNDP;
- Contributing to presentation of the review findings and recommendations at the wrap-up meeting;
- Contributing to the drafting and finalization of the review report.

The Project Management Support – Specialist will support in the assessment of the following four categories of project progress. See the Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects for extended descriptions.

i. Project Design/Formulation:

- National priorities and country driven-ness
- Theory of Change
- Gender equality and women’s empowerment
- Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)
- Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators
- Assumptions and Risks
- Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design
- Planned stakeholder participation
- Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
- Management arrangements

ii. Project Implementation

- Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
- Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements
- Project Finance and Co-finance
- Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (\*), implementation (\*), and overall assessment of M&E (\*)
- Implementing Agency (UNDP) (\*) and Executing Agency (\*), overall project oversight/implementation and execution (\*)
- Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

iii. Project Results

- Assess the achievement of outcomes against indicators by reporting on the level of progress for each objective and outcome indicator at the time of the TE and noting final achievements
- Relevance (\*), Effectiveness (\*), Efficiency (\*) and overall project outcome (\*)
- Sustainability: financial (\*), socio-political (\*), institutional framework and governance (\*), environmental (\*), overall likelihood of sustainability (\*)
- Country ownership
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Cross-cutting issues (poverty alleviation, improved governance, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster prevention and recovery, human rights, capacity development, South-South cooperation, knowledge management, volunteerism, etc., as relevant)
- GEF Additionality
- Catalytic Role / Replication Effect
- Progress to impact

#### iv. Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- The section on conclusions will be written in light of the findings. Conclusions should be comprehensive and balanced statements that are well substantiated by evidence and logically connected to the TE findings. They should highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project, respond to key evaluation questions and provide insights into the identification of and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to project beneficiaries, UNDP and the GEF, including issues in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Recommendations should provide concrete, practical, feasible and targeted recommendations directed to the intended users of the evaluation about what actions to take and decisions to make. The recommendations should be specifically supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation.
- The TE report should also include lessons that can be taken from the evaluation, including best practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success that can provide knowledge gained from the particular circumstance (programmatic and evaluation methods used, partnerships, financial leveraging, etc.) that are applicable to other GEF and UNDP interventions.
- It is important for the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned of the TE report to incorporate gender equality and empowerment of women.

#### 4. Duration of Work

The total duration of the TE will be approximately 35 *working days* over a time period of **8 weeks** starting on **01 April 2022**. The tentative TE timeframe is as follows:

Timeframe	Activity
01-04 April 2022	Preparation period for Project Management Support - Advisor (handover of documentation)
04-11 April 2022	Document review and preparation of TE Inception Report
11 April 2022	Validation of TE Inception Report
18 April – 01 May 2022	Stakeholder meetings, interviews, etc.
04 May 2022	Wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings
07 - 12 May 2022	Preparation of draft TE report
12 May 2022	Circulation of draft TE report for comments
18 May 2022	Preparation and Issuance of Management Response
12-20 May 2022	Incorporation of comments on draft TE report into Audit Trail & finalization of TE report, including the management response.
20-23 May 2022	Issuance of final management responses
by 25 May 2022	Expected date of full TE completion



## TE DELIVERABLES

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	TE Inception Report	Project Management Support - Advisor clarifies objectives, methodology and timing of the TE	11 April	Project Management Support - Advisor submits Inception Report to RTA, UNOPS and Project Team.
2	Presentation of the TE preliminary findings	Initial Findings	04 May	Project Management Support - Advisor presents to RTA, UNOPS and Project Team.
3	Draft TE Report	Full draft report ( <i>using guidelines on report content in ToR Annex C</i> ) with annexes	12 May	Project Management Support - Advisor submits to Commissioning Unit; reviewed by RTA, UNOPS, UNDP CO and Project Team
4	Final TE Report* + Audit Trail	Revised final report and TE Audit trail in which the TE details how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final TE report ( <i>See template in ToR Annex H</i> )	by 25 May	Project Management Support - Advisor submits both documents to UNDP CO and RTA

\*All final TE reports will be quality assessed by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). Details of the IEO's quality assessment of decentralized evaluations can be found in Section 6 of the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines.<sup>23</sup>

### 5. Duty Station

Home-based.

The Project Management Support – Specialist is expected to undertake field mission trips to assess the projects. 80% of the projects are in the following landscapes/seascape: the Knuckles Conservation Forest and its buffer zone, the coastal region from Mannar Island to Jaffna, and the Colombo Wetlands.

The trips may take place only in the absence of COVID-19 quarantine measures.

All the costs related to the TE field missions will be paid to the Project Management Support – Specialist separately based on UNDP travel procedures.

\*Travel:

BSAFE security course must be successfully completed prior to commencement of travel;

Consultants are required to comply with the UN security directives set forth under <https://dss.un.org/dssweb/>.

### 6. Qualifications and Experience

The consultant cannot participate in the project preparation, formulation and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

<sup>23</sup> Access at: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/section-6.shtml>

**a. Education**

Advanced university degree (master or equivalent) with five years or relevant experience. A Bachelor's degree in combination with two additional years' experience is acceptable.

**b. Work Experience**

- Minimum of five (5) years of experience in environmental management, sustainable development or a related field;
- Knowledge of and experience with UNDP and/or GEF projects is highly desirable;
- Experience with the GEF Small Grants Programme is an advantage;
- Experience with results-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies is desirable;
- Experience with issues related to Gender, Biodiversity, Conservation, Climate Change and Land Degradation is desirable.

**c. Language**

- Fluency in English and Sinhala or Tamil, spoken and written is required.

**d. Key Competencies**

Develops and implements sustainable business strategies, thinks long term and externally in order to positively shape the organization. Anticipates and perceives the impact and implications of future decisions and activities on other parts of the organization.



Treats all individuals with respect; responds sensitively to differences and encourages others to do the same. Upholds organizational and ethical norms. Maintains high standards of trustworthiness. Role model for diversity and inclusion.



Acts as a positive role model contributing to the team spirit. Collaborates and supports the development of others. For people managers only: Acts as positive leadership role model, motivates, directs and inspires others to succeed, utilising appropriate leadership styles



Demonstrates understanding of the impact of own role on all partners and always puts the end beneficiary first. Builds and maintains strong external relationships and is a competent partner for others (if relevant to the role).





Efficiently establishes an appropriate course of action for self and/or others to accomplish a goal. Actions lead to total task accomplishment through concern for quality in all areas. Sees opportunities and takes the initiative to act on them. Understands that responsible use of resources maximizes our impact on our beneficiaries.



Open to change and flexible in a fast paced environment. Effectively adapts own approach to suit changing circumstances or requirements. Reflects on experiences and modifies own behaviour. Performance is consistent, even under pressure. Always pursues continuous improvements.



Evaluates data and courses of action to reach logical, pragmatic decisions. Takes an unbiased, rational approach with calculated risks. Applies innovation and creativity to problem-solving.



Expresses ideas or facts in a clear, concise and open manner. Communication indicates a consideration for the feelings and needs of others. Actively listens and proactively shares knowledge. Handles conflict effectively, by overcoming differences of opinion and finding common ground.

Project Authority (Name/Title):		Contract holder (Name/Title):	
Signature	Date	Signature	Date

ANNEX 2: TERMS OF REFERENCE – INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANT



## TERMS OF REFERENCE (Individual Contractor Agreement)

<b>Title:</b>	Project Management Support – Advisor
<b>Project:</b>	FSP OP6 Sri Lanka
<b>Duty station:</b>	Home Based
<b>Section/Unit:</b>	NYSC SDC GMS
<b>Contract/Level:</b>	ICS-11/IICA-3
<b>Supervisor:</b>	Kirk Bayabos, Head of Cluster

### 1. General Background

UNOPS supports partners to build a better future by providing services that increase the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of peace building, humanitarian and development projects. Mandated as a central resource of the United Nations, UNOPS provides sustainable project management, procurement and infrastructure services to a wide range of governments, donors and United Nations organizations.

New York Service Cluster (NYSC) supports the United Nations Secretariat, as well as other New York-based United Nations organizations, bilateral and multilateral partners in the delivery of UNOPS mandate in project management, infrastructure management, and procurement management

Sustainable Development Cluster (SDC) supports diverse partners with their peacebuilding, humanitarian and development operations. It was formed by combining the following portfolios: Grants Management Services (GMS), UN Technology Support Services (UNTSS), Development and Special Initiatives Portfolio (DSIP) It provides Services to partners' programmes that are designed, structured, and managed with a global perspective and primarily serving partners that are headquartered in New York. The SDC has a footprint of approximately 125 countries.

UNOPS has signed an agreement with the UNDO CO of Kenya to implement the project activities for the Small Grants Programme.

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full sized projects supported by the GEF should undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE) upon completion of implementation. The Final Evaluation is intended to assess the relevance, performance and success of the project. It looks at signs of potential impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global and national environmental goals. The Final Evaluation also identifies/documents lessons learned and makes recommendations that project partners and stakeholders might use to improve the design and implementation of other related projects and programmes.

The Final Evaluation is to be undertaken in accordance with the “GEF Evaluation Policy” (see [http://www.gef.io.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/files/gef-me-policy-2019\\_2.pdf](http://www.gef.io.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/files/gef-me-policy-2019_2.pdf)).

This Terms of Reference (ToRs) sets out the expectations for the TE of the full-sized project titled Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Sri Lanka (PIMS#5529) implemented through the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). The project started on 25 January 2017 and is in its fourth year of implementation. The TE process must follow the guidance outlined in the document '[Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects](#)'.

The **objective** of the Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Sri Lanka (PIMS#5529) full-sized project is to enable community-based organizations to take collective action for adaptive landscape management for socio-ecological resilience through design, implementation, and evaluation of grant projects for global environmental benefits and sustainable development in three ecologically sensitive landscapes. GEF funds for the sixth replenishment comes from STAR funding which is managed by the Operational Focal Point

representing the Ministry of Environment. SGP creates synergies between individual grants by adopting a landscape/seascape approach – under principles of the COMDEKS approach - which enhances overall program impact. Among other approaches, SGP promotes the establishment and effective operation of multi-stakeholder platforms at each landscape/seascape and encourages local governments, civil society organizations and the private sector to partner with local communities for the implementation of participatory landscape/seascape strategies, plans and projects. It also fosters the establishment of partnerships between civil society organizations and the private sector for bringing renewable energy and energy efficient technologies to poor local communities in off-grid areas through proposals that demonstrate innovation, sustainability and the potential for growth. The three ecologically sensitive landscapes selected for this phase: the Knuckles Conservation Forest and its buffer zone, the coastal region from Mannar Island to Jaffna, and the Colombo Wetlands. While these areas provide important ecosystem services to the country and are essential for the livelihoods of pastoralist, agricultural, and fisher communities, they all present different levels of biodiversity loss and land degradation, exacerbated by climate change.

The project is linked to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) through Outcome 4.1: Policies, programmes and capacities to ensure environmental sustainability, address climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to reduce disaster risks in place at national, sub-national and community levels

The project was originally expected to close operationally by 25 January 2021, so that the terminal evaluation was expected in 2020. However, the project has obtained a no-cost extension till 25th July 2022. The cost of the project is USD 5,797,078, of which USD 2,497,078 is from the GEF Trust Fund and USD 3,200,000 is parallel co-financing from the following: UNDP Sri Lanka Country Office, Sri Lanka Government and grantees.

Under Operational Phase 6, 41 community-based projects have been funded: 13 in Knuckles including one Strategic Project, 10 in Colombo including one Strategic Project, 11 in Mannar including one Strategic project, 1 Capacity building project covering all three landscapes, and 3 Knowledge Management projects and 3 landscape strategy development projects for the three landscapes respectively, to enable community organizations and NGOs to develop and implement adaptive landscape/seascape management strategies that build social, economic and ecological resilience based on local sustainable development benefits.

The project is composed of one strategic component: **Resilient rural landscapes for sustainable development and global environmental protection** which is comprised of 4 outcomes. Below is a summary of the progress of the outcomes.

**Outcome 1: Multi-stakeholder partnerships in three ecologically sensitive landscapes develop and execute management plans to enhance socio-ecological landscape resilience and global environmental benefits**

Multi-stakeholder groups in each landscape have been operationalized with agreed TORs. Comprehensive socio-ecological baseline assessments were developed for each landscape. Multi-stakeholder meetings of all three landscapes have been held frequently with recent-most meetings being conducted remotely. The multi-stakeholder groups have also aided in the implementation of the Seventh Operational phase of the GEF SGP. Three landscape management strategies and plans were prepared and then approved by the National Steering Committee in 2017.

Typologies of community level projects and eligibility criteria were developed in the three landscapes by multi-stakeholder groups.

A total of 12 formal agreements have been signed between community organizations and other partners in each landscape to pursue the outcomes of each strategy through community and landscape level projects.

**Outcome 2: Community-based organizations in landscape level networks build their adaptive management capacities by implementing projects and collaborating in landscape management**

An aggregate of 25,546 hectares were brought under protection or sustainable use for biodiversity conservation or improved ecosystem function and a total of 2,214 hectares have been brought under reforestation or farmer-managed natural regeneration. Four new projects (including the Mannar strategic project) were approved in

April 2021 after a delayed period due to the COVID-19 pandemic and started thereafter. They are expected to account for approximately an additional 635 hectares.

Also, a total of 6,864 hectares of degraded wetlands have been rehabilitated the four new projects are expected to account for approximately an additional 2,240 hectares. 650 hectares of forest cover lands were set aside for carbon sequestration and a total of 2,582 hectares of land have been rehabilitated through best practice soil conservation measures and agroforestry.

A total of 2,596 hectares of agricultural land have been brought under agro-ecological practices and systems and 835 individuals are benefited from new sustainable alternative livelihood options.

**Outcome 3: Multi-stakeholder partnerships develop and implement strategic projects that catalyze the broader adoption of successful SGP-supported technologies, practices, or systems**

Three strategic projects to enable and facilitate upscaling of successful SGP-supported initiatives are supported. The Knuckles landscape Strategic Project carried out by Ekabadda Praja Sanwardhana Kantha Maha Sangamaya (EPSKMS) has successfully completed its activities and the Colombo landscape strategic project implemented by the Human Development Foundation of Sri Lanka (HDFSL) is still under implementation. The Mannar landscape Strategic Project was cleared and implementation started. This project is implemented by the Nature Conservation Foundation.

Cumulative numbers of community representatives who have participated in the design and implementation of their respective scaling-up strategic project in Colombo landscape is 252 (204 men and 48 women) and in Knuckles landscape is 700 (200 men and 500 women). The Mannar Strategic Project, which has been recently initiated in late-May, will involve a total of 335 community representatives (150 women and 185 men).

**Outcome 4: Multi-stakeholder landscape policy platforms discuss potential policy innovations based on analysis of project experience and lessons learned.**

The project established three multi-stakeholder governance platforms which convened at least twice each year and were institutionalized through formal agreements since work on this topic started in 2018.

During the past year, three policy dialogues were conducted and three policy papers were prepared for the three landscapes.

As projects are being completed, case studies for each project in each landscape are being developed by the knowledge management grantees in the landscape with 13 in the Knuckles landscape and 7 in the Colombo landscape are in their final draft stage. Case studies include highlights of the projects along with any lessons learnt. Furthermore, 24 newsletters have been released since inception.

4,329 project stakeholder participants have actively engaged in analysis of project experience and landscape management and have participated in platform workshops and dialogues. A communication strategy has been developed and made operational.

The project is implemented by UNDP and executed by UNOPS through the existing mechanism of the GEF Small Grants Program, including the approval of each initiative by the SGP National Steering Committee and proper follow-up and monitoring to be provided under the leadership of the SGP Upgrading Country Program Coordinator.

The incumbent of this position will be a personnel of UNOPS under its full responsibility.

**COVID-19 Context:**

In March 2020, in response to growing numbers of COVID-19 cases in Sri Lanka, an island-wide curfew was imposed. A Presidential Task Force was established to combat the health crisis and its ripple effects

on different sectors of the economy, to ensure that essential services continued unhindered. The agriculture sector was one of the worst affected sectors by the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, resulting in breakdowns of supply and value chains during peak harvesting periods and the price collapses of agricultural produce.

#### Details of the Impact of COVID-19 on Project Implementation and other Challenges

Delays were experienced in receiving approvals for the projects implemented in the Mannar Landscape due to constraints caused by COVID-19 which were posed by the curfews and lockdowns that resulted in a lack of mobility. Additionally, progress of projects conducted in the Colombo landscape also experienced delays due to the continuous lockdowns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented the ability to conduct group meetings, meet government officials and gather people to conduct necessary trainings. Furthermore, constraints due to the inability to conduct in-person field visits to review progress by projects was also experienced. Four projects ( including the Mannar strategic project) that were approved in April 2021 after a delayed period due to the COVID-19 pandemic and started in late-May 2021 thereafter.

Out of National Ethnic Unity Foundation (NEUF) beneficiaries from Knuckles landscape, there are 4 women whose livelihoods depend on sewing. These ladies are currently sewing face masks as an alternative to their usual production of cloth bags, curtains and other cloth items during the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, cultivation of traditional types of rice through organic practices in the region and post COVID-19 agriculture diversification efforts have supported the well-being of the village and surrounding forest. The progress of the project undertaken by the Centre for Sustainability, University of Sri Jayawardenapura, has been challenged due to COVID-19 as students are not permitted to congregate in activities. During the pandemic, it is observed in the SGP projects that women-led projects that were involved in initiatives such as online sales outlets, dissemination of micro-credit finance schemes etc., were more resilient to the impacts of COVID-19.

The pandemic and its consequent inability to meet in-person caused delays in receiving approvals for the latest projects approved by the NSC in the Mannar landscape. Moreover, the pandemic caused delays in progress achieved by projects in the Colombo landscape due the constraints posed by the continuous lockdowns experienced. Conducting physical verification of work done by the projects in all landscapes was a challenge due to the risk of spreading the virus and travel restriction in place with the 3rd wave of COVID-19. This was overcome by conducting virtual verification via Zoom platform, where videos and images on activities conducted were showcased. Further verification was also conducted by three field coordinators in each landscape.

The project has adapted well to the COVID challenges (which included travel restrictions and mandatory self-isolation) providing technical support, training and continuous communication during this time of COVID challenges. The SGP Team has been in continuous contact with grantees to adjust their projects' action plans taking into consideration delays in implementation and also to minimize or replace physical awareness raising and capacity building activities with online sessions and trainings, which overall have been particularly useful in ensuring continuous progress. Additionally, the SGP Sri Lanka team has been participating in weekly webinars with managers of other SGP Country Programmes from around the region and worldwide to share lessons learned and best practices in addressing challenges arising from COVID, and it is encouraged to maintain this practice.

SGP rapidly responded to the maritime disaster that took place in the country by working closely with UNDP to potentially allocate some of remaining grant funds to support projects aimed at providing relief support to subside effects to the seascape and also to support in risk communication and building up alternative livelihoods in the two seascapes (Colombo and Mannar).

## 2. Purpose and Scope of Assignment

The objective of the evaluation is to assess the achievement of project objectives, the affecting factors, the broader project impact and the contribution to the general goal/strategy, and the project partnership strategy.

The Project Management Support - Advisor will be working remotely, supported by the National Consultant based in Sri Lanka, who will provide necessary substantive and operational support in carrying out this evaluation.

Project success will be measured based on the Project Logical Framework (see Annex 1), which provides clear performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification..

The Project Management Support – Advisor review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP) the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the Project Management Support - Advisor considers useful for this evidence-based evaluation. The Project Management Support - Advisor will review the baseline and midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at the CEO endorsement and midterm stages and the terminal Core Indicators/Tracking Tools that must be completed before the TE field mission begins.

The Project Management Support - Advisor is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), Implementing Partners, the UNDP Country Office(s), the Regional Technical Advisor, direct beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

The specific design and methodology for the TE should emerge from consultations between the Project Management Support - Advisor and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the TE purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The Project Management Support - Advisor must use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the TE report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation must be clearly outlined in the TE Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders and the Project Management Support - Advisor.

The final report must describe the full TE approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the evaluation.

The Project Management Support - Advisor will assess project performance against expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework (see ToR Annex A). The Project Management Support - Advisor will assess results according to the criteria outlined in the Guidance for TEs of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects.

## 3. Monitoring and Progress Controls

The TE is a mandatory evaluation of the GEF and must be performed by an external Consultant prior to the conclusion or effective closure of the Project. The TE for SGP Sri Lanka is scheduled to take place in March through April 2022.

The TE report will assess the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and draw lessons that can improve the sustainability of the benefits of this project and assist in the overall improvement of UNDP programming. The TE report promotes accountability and transparency and assesses



the scope of project achievements.

The TE will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the [UNDP Guidance for conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects](#).

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. The TE report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful.

The Project Management Support – Advisor is responsible for the below mentioned findings which will be delivered in the Findings Section of the TE Report. A full outline of the TE report's content is provided in ToR Annex C.

The asterisk “(\*)” indicates criteria for which a rating is required.

## Findings

### i. Project Design/Formulation

- National priorities and country driven-ness
  - Theory of Change
  - Gender equality and women's empowerment
  - Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)
  - Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators
  - Assumptions and Risks
- Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design
- Planned stakeholder participation
- Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
- Management arrangements

### ii. Project Implementation

- Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
- Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements
- Project Finance and Co-finance
- Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (\*), implementation (\*), and overall assessment of M&E (\*)
- Implementing Agency (UNDP) (\*) and Executing Agency (\*), overall project oversight/implementation and execution (\*)
- Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

### iii. Project Results

- Assess the achievement of outcomes against indicators by reporting on the level of progress for each objective and outcome indicator at the time of the TE and noting final achievements
- Relevance (\*), Effectiveness (\*), Efficiency (\*) and overall project outcome (\*)
- Sustainability: financial (\*), socio-political (\*), institutional framework and governance (\*), environmental (\*), overall likelihood of sustainability (\*)
- Country ownership
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Cross-cutting issues (poverty alleviation, improved governance, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster prevention and recovery, human rights, capacity development, South-South cooperation, knowledge management, volunteerism, etc., as relevant)
- GEF Additionality
- Catalytic Role / Replication Effect
- Progress to impact



Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- The Project Management Support - Advisor will include a summary of the main findings of the TE report. Findings should be presented as statements of fact that are based on analysis of the data.
- The section on conclusions will be written in light of the findings. Conclusions should be comprehensive and balanced statements that are well substantiated by evidence and logically connected to the TE findings. They should highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project, respond to key evaluation questions and provide insights into the identification of and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to project beneficiaries, UNDP and the GEF, including issues in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Recommendations should provide concrete, practical, feasible and targeted recommendations directed to the intended users of the evaluation about what actions to take and decisions to make. The recommendations should be specifically supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation.
- The TE report should also include lessons that can be taken from the evaluation, including best practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success that can provide knowledge gained from the particular circumstance (programmatic and evaluation methods used, partnerships, financial leveraging, etc.) that are applicable to other GEF and UNDP interventions. When possible, the Project Management Support - Advisor should include examples of good practices in project design and implementation.
- It is important for the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned of the TE report to incorporate gender equality and empowerment of women.

The total duration of the TE will be approximately 35 *working days* over a time period of **8 weeks** starting on 01 March 2022. The tentative TE timeframe is as follows:

Timeframe	Activity
01-04 March 2022	Preparation period for Project Management Support - Advisor (handover of documentation)
04-11 March 2022	Document review and preparation of TE Inception Report
11 March 2022	Validation of TE Inception Report
14 March – 01 April 2022	Stakeholder meetings, interviews, etc.
04 April 2022	Wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings;
07 - 12 April 2022	Preparation of draft TE report

12 April 2022	Circulation of draft TE report for comments
18 April 2022	Preparation and Issuance of Management Response
12-20 April 2022	Incorporation of comments on draft TE report into Audit Trail & finalization of TE report, including the management response.
20-23 April 2022	Issuance of final management responses
by 25 April 2022	Expected date of full TE completion

## TE DELIVERABLES

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	TE Inception Report	Project Management Support - Advisor clarifies objectives, methodology and timing of the TE	11 March	Project Management Support - Advisor submits Inception Report to RTA, UNOPS and Project Team.
2	Presentation of the TE preliminary findings	Initial Findings	04 April	Project Management Support - Advisor presents to RTA, UNOPS and Project Team.
3	Draft TE Report	Full draft report ( <i>using guidelines on report content in ToR Annex C</i> ) with annexes	12 April	Project Management Support - Advisor submits to Commissioning Unit; reviewed by RTA, UNOPS, UNDP CO and Project Team
4	Final TE Report* + Audit Trail	Revised final report and TE Audit trail in which the TE details how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final TE report (See <i>template in ToR Annex H</i> )	by 25 April	Project Management Support - Advisor submits both documents to UNDP CO and RTA

\*All final TE reports will be quality assessed by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). Details of the IEO's quality assessment of decentralized evaluations can be found in Section 6 of the UNDP Evaluation

Guidelines.<sup>24</sup>

#### 4. Qualifications and Experience

The consultant cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

##### a. Education

- Master's degree preferably in the areas of environment and sustainable development, or other closely related field

##### b. Work Experience

- Minimum seven (7) years' experience in environmental management, sustainable development or a related field
- Knowledge of and experience with UNDP and/or GEF projects is required
- Experience with the GEF Small Grants Programme is an advantage
- Experience with results-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies is desirable
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to Gender and Biodiversity Conservation, Climate Change and Land Degradation is an asset
- Fluency in English, spoken and written

##### c. Key Competencies



Develops and implements sustainable business strategies, thinks long term and externally in order to positively shape the organization. Anticipates and perceives the impact and implications of future decisions and activities on other parts of the organization.



Treats all individuals with respect; responds sensitively to differences and encourages others to do the same. Upholds organizational and ethical norms. Maintains high standards of trustworthiness. Role model for diversity and inclusion.



Acts as a positive role model contributing to the team spirit. Collaborates and supports the development of others. **For people managers only:** Acts as positive leadership role model, motivates, directs and inspires others to succeed, utilising appropriate leadership styles



Demonstrates understanding of the impact of own role on all partners and always puts the end beneficiary first. Builds and maintains strong external relationships and is a competent partner for others (if relevant to the role).

<sup>24</sup> Access at: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/section-6.shtml>



Efficiently establishes an appropriate course of action for self and/or others to accomplish a goal. Actions lead to total task accomplishment through concern for quality in all areas. Sees opportunities and takes the initiative to act on them. Understands that responsible use of resources maximizes our impact on our beneficiaries.



Open to change and flexible in a fast paced environment. Effectively adapts own approach to suit changing circumstances or requirements. Reflects on experiences and modifies own behaviour. Performance is consistent, even under pressure. Always pursues continuous improvements.



Evaluates data and courses of action to reach logical, pragmatic decisions. Takes an unbiased, rational approach with calculated risks. Applies innovation and creativity to problem-solving.



Expresses ideas or facts in a clear, concise and open manner. Communication indicates a consideration for the feelings and needs of others. Actively listens and proactively shares knowledge. Handles conflict effectively, by overcoming differences of opinion and finding common ground.

Project Authority (Name/Title): Kirk Bayabos Head of Cluster		Contract holder (Name/Title):	
Signature	Date	Signature	Date

## ANNEX 3: RATING SCALES

Terminal Evaluation Rating Scales	
Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight, Execution, Relevance	Sustainability ratings:
<p>6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS): exceeds expectations and/or no shortcomings</p> <p>5 = Satisfactory (S): meets expectations and/or no or minor shortcomings</p> <p>4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS): more or less meets expectations and/or some shortcomings</p> <p>3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): somewhat below expectations and/or significant shortcomings</p> <p>2 = Unsatisfactory (U): substantially below expectations and/or major shortcomings</p> <p>1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe shortcomings</p> <p>Unable to Assess (U/A): available information does not allow an assessment</p>	<p>4 = Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability</p> <p>3 = Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks to sustainability</p> <p>2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks to sustainability</p> <p>1 = Unlikely (U): severe risks to sustainability</p> <p>Unable to Assess (U/A): Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability</p>

ANNEX 4: EVALUATION QUESTION MATRIX (EVALUATION CRITERIA WITH KEY QUESTIONS, INDICATORS, SOURCES OF DATA, AND METHODOLOGY)

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Relevance: How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF Focal area, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national level?			
Is the project relevant to the GEF Focal Area objectives?	<p>UNCBD priorities and areas of work incorporated in project design</p> <p>Extent to which the project is implemented in line with incremental cost argument</p>	<p>Project documents</p> <p>National policies and strategies to implement the UNCBD, other international conventions, or related to environment more generally</p> <p>UNCBD and other international convention web sites</p>	<p>Documents Analyses</p> <p>Interviews with project team, UNDP and other partners</p> <p>UNDP Guidance for conducting evaluations during COVID-19</p>
Is the project relevant the GEF biodiversity focal area and other relevant focal areas?	Existence of a clear relationship between the project objectives and GEF biodiversity focal area	<p>Project documents</p> <p>GEF focal areas strategies and documents</p>	<p>Documents analyses</p> <p>GEF website</p> <p>Interviews with UNDP and project team</p>
Is the project relevant to Sri Lanka's environment and sustainable development objectives?	<p>Degree to which the project supports national environmental objectives</p> <p>Degree of coherence between the project and national's priorities, policies and strategies</p> <p>Appreciation from national stakeholders with respect to adequacy of project design and implementation to national realities and existing capacities</p> <p>Level of involvement of government officials and other partners in the project design process</p> <p>Coherence between needs expressed by national stakeholders and UNDP-GEF criteria</p>	<p>Project documents</p> <p>National policies and strategies</p> <p>Key project partners</p>	<p>Documents analyses</p> <p>Interviews with UNDP and project partners (specially MOE focal points on the BD and LD areas)</p>

<p>Is the project addressing the needs of target beneficiaries at the local and regional levels?</p>	<p>Strength of the link between expected results from the project and the needs of relevant stakeholders</p> <p>Degree of involvement and inclusiveness of stakeholders in project design and implementation</p>	<p>Project partners and stakeholders</p> <p>Needs assessment studies</p> <p>Project documents</p>	<p>Document analysis</p> <p>Guidance for Conducting TE of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects</p> <p>UNDP Guidance for conducting evaluations during COVID-19</p> <p>Interviews with relevant stakeholders</p>
<p>Is the project internally coherent in its design?</p>	<p>Level of coherence between project expected results and project design internal logic</p> <p>Level of coherence between project design and project implementation approach</p>	<p>Program and project documents</p> <p>Key project stakeholders</p>	<p>Document analysis</p> <p>Key interviews</p>
<p>Is GEF SGP project's theory of change clearly articulated? How did GEF SGP Project contribute towards and advance gender equality aspirations of the Government of Sri Lanka? How well does GEF SGP project react to changing work environment and how well has the design able to adjust to changing external circumstances?</p>	<p>Level of coherence between project expected results and project design internal logic</p> <p>Level of coherence between project expected results and individual CBOs/NGOs proposals</p> <p>Adequacy of Indicators (SMART)</p> <p>Evidence of gender monitoring</p> <p>Appreciation from national stakeholders with respect to adequacy of project design and implementation to national realities and existing capacities: evidence of incorporation of their perspective</p>	<p>Project documents</p> <p>UNDP/GEF/SGP policies and strategies</p> <p>National policies and strategies</p> <p>Key project partners and stakeholders</p>	<p>Documents analyses</p> <p>UNDP website</p> <p>GEF SGP website</p> <p>Interviews with UNDP, GEF/SGP, project staff and participating national stakeholders</p> <p>Guidance for Conducting TE of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects</p> <p>UNDP Guidance for conducting evaluations during COVID-19</p> <p>Interviews with relevant stakeholders</p>
<p>How is the project relevant with respect to other donor-supported activities?</p>	<p>Degree to which program was coherent and complementary to other donor programming nationally and regionally</p>	<p>Documents from other donor supported activities</p> <p>Other donor representatives</p> <p>Project documents</p>	<p>Documents analyses</p> <p>Interviews with project partners and relevant stakeholders</p>
<p>Does the project provide relevant lessons and experiences for other</p>		<p>Data collected throughout evaluation</p>	<p>Data analysis</p>



similar projects in the future?			
Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?			
Has the project been effective in achieving the expected outcomes and objectives?	See indicators in project document results framework and log frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project documents</li> <li>• Project team and relevant stakeholders</li> <li>• Data reported in project annual and quarterly reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documents analysis</li> <li>• Interviews with project team</li> <li>• Interviews with relevant stakeholders</li> </ul>
How is risk and risk mitigation being managed?  What have been the social environmental safeguards and to what extent those were implemented effectively?	<p>Completeness of risk identification and assumptions during project planning and design</p> <p>Quality of existing information systems in place to identify emerging risks and other issues</p> <p>Quality of risk mitigations strategies developed and followed</p>	<p>Project documents</p> <p>Project documents and reporting</p> <p>Project Case Studies</p> <p>UNDP/GEF-SGP, project staff and partners</p> <p>Beneficiaries</p>	Document analysis Interviews
What lessons can be drawn regarding effectiveness for other similar projects in the future?		<p>Data collected throughout evaluation</p> <p>Project documents and reporting</p> <p>Project Case Studies</p>	Data analysis
Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in line with international and national norms and standards?			
<p>Was project support provided in an efficient way?:</p> <p>Was adaptive management used or needed to ensure efficient resource use?</p> <p>Did the project logical framework and work plans and any changes made to them use as management tools during implementation?</p> <p>Were the accounting and financial systems in place adequate for project management and producing accurate and timely</p>	<p>Availability and quality of financial and progress reports</p> <p>Timeliness and adequacy of reporting provided</p> <p>Level of discrepancy between planned and utilized financial expenditures</p> <p>Planned vs. actual funds leveraged</p> <p>Cost in view of results achieved compared to costs of similar projects from other organizations</p> <p>Adequacy of project choices in</p>	<p>Project documents and evaluations</p> <p>Monitoring reports</p> <p>APRs</p> <p>PIRs</p>	<p>Document analysis</p> <p>Key interviews</p>

<p>financial information?</p> <p>Were progress reports produced accurately, timely and responded to reporting requirements including adaptive management changes?</p> <p>Was project implementation as cost effective as originally proposed (planned vs. actual)</p> <p>Did the leveraging of funds (co-financing) happen as planned?</p> <p>Were financial resources utilized efficiently? Could financial resources have been used more efficiently?</p> <p>Was procurement carried out in a manner making efficient use of project resources?</p> <p>How was results-based management used during project implementation?</p>	<p>view of existing context, infrastructure and cost</p> <p>Quality of results-based management reporting (progress reporting, monitoring and evaluation)</p> <p>Occurrence of change in project design/ implementation approach (i.e. restructuring) when needed to improve project efficiency</p> <p>Cost associated with delivery mechanism and management structure compare to alternatives</p>	<p>Midterm review</p> <p>UNDP/ GEF SGP</p> <p>Project team</p>	
<p>How efficient are partnership arrangements for the project:</p> <p>To what extent partnerships/linkages between institutions/ organizations were encouraged and supported?</p> <p>Which partnerships/linkages were facilitated?</p> <p>What was the level of efficiency of cooperation and collaboration arrangements?</p> <p>Which methods were successful or not and why?</p>	<p>Specific activities conducted to support the development of cooperative arrangements between partners,</p> <p>Examples of supported partnerships</p> <p>Evidence that particular partnerships/linkages will be sustained</p> <p>Types/quality of partnership cooperation methods utilized</p>	<p>Project documents and evaluations</p> <p>Project partners and relevant stakeholders</p>	<p>Document analysis</p> <p>Interviews</p>
<p>Did the project efficiently utilize local capacity in implementation?:</p> <p>Was an appropriate balance struck between utilization of</p>	<p>Proportion of expertise utilized from international experts compared to national experts</p> <p>Number/quality of analyses done</p>	<p>Project documents and evaluations</p> <p>UNDP/GEF SGP</p>	<p>Document analysis</p> <p>Interviews</p>

<p>international expertise as well as local capacity?</p> <p>Did the project take into account local capacity in design and implementation of the project?</p> <p>Was there an effective collaboration between institutions responsible for implementing the project?</p>	<p>to assess local capacity potential and absorptive capacity</p>	<p>Beneficiaries</p>	
<p>What lessons can be drawn regarding efficiency for other similar projects in the future?:</p> <p>What lessons can be learnt from the project regarding efficiency?</p> <p>How could the project have more efficiently carried out implementation (in terms of management structures and procedures, partnerships arrangements etc.)?</p> <p>What changes could have been made (if any) to the project in order to improve its efficiency?</p>		<p>Data collected throughout evaluation</p>	<p>Data analysis</p>
<p>Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-political, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?</p>			
<p>Were sustainability issues integrated into the design and implementation of the project?</p>	<p>Evidence / quality of sustainability strategy</p> <p>Evidence / quality of steps taken to ensure sustainability</p>	<p>Project documents and evaluations</p> <p>UNDP/GEF SGP and project personnel and project partners</p> <p>Beneficiaries</p>	<p>Document analysis</p> <p>Interviews</p>
<p>Financial sustainability:</p> <p>Did the project adequately address financial and economic sustainability issues?</p> <p>Are the recurrent costs after project completion sustainable?</p> <p>What are the main institutions/organizations in country that will take the project</p>	<p>Level and source of future financial support to be provided to relevant sectors and activities after project ends</p> <p>Evidence of commitments from international partners, governments or other stakeholders to financially support relevant sectors of activities after project end</p>	<p>Project documents and evaluations</p> <p>UNDP/GEF SGP and project personnel and project partners</p> <p>Beneficiaries</p>	<p>Document analysis</p> <p>Interviews</p>

efforts forward after project end and what is the budget they have assigned to this?	Level of recurrent costs after completion of project and funding sources for those recurrent costs		
<p>Institutional and governance sustainability:</p> <p>Were the results of efforts made during the project implementation period well assimilated by organizations and their internal systems and procedures?</p> <p>Is there evidence that project partners will continue their activities beyond project support?</p> <p>What degree is there of local ownership of initiatives and results?</p> <p>Were laws, policies and frameworks addressed through the project, in order to address sustainability of key initiatives and reforms?</p> <p>What is the level of political commitment to build on the results of the project?</p> <p>Are there policies or practices in place that create perverse incentives that would negatively affect long-term benefits?</p>	<p>Degree to which project activities and results have been taken over by local counterparts or institutions/organizations</p> <p>Level of financial support to be provided to relevant sectors and activities by in-country actors after project end</p> <p>Efforts to support the development of relevant laws and policies</p> <p>State of enforcement and law making capacity</p> <p>Evidences of commitment by government enactment of laws and resource allocation to priorities</p>	<p>Project documents and evaluations</p> <p>UNDP/GEF SGP and project personnel and project partners</p> <p>Beneficiaries</p>	<p>Document analysis</p> <p>Interviews</p>
Are there adequate incentives to ensure sustained benefits achieved through the project?		<p>Project documents and evaluations</p> <p>UNDP/GEF SGP , project personnel and project partners</p> <p>Beneficiaries</p>	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Documentation review</p>
<p>Are there risks to the environmental benefits that were created or that are expected to occur?</p> <p>Are there long-term</p>	<p>Evidence of potential threats such as infrastructure development</p> <p>Assessment of unaddressed or emerging threats</p>	<p>Project documents and midterm review</p> <p>Threat assessments</p> <p>Government documents</p>	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Documentation review</p>

<p>environmental threats that have not been addressed by the project?</p> <p>Have any new environmental threats emerged in the project's lifetime?</p>		<p>or other external published information</p> <p>UNDP/GEF SGP, project personnel and project partners</p> <p>Beneficiaries</p>	
<p>Is the capacity in place at the regional, national and local levels adequate to ensure sustainability of the results achieved to date?</p>	<p>Elements in place in those different management functions, at the appropriate levels (regional, national and local) in terms of adequate structures, strategies, systems, skills, incentives and interrelationships with other key actors</p>	<p>Project documents</p> <p>UNDP, project personnel and project partners</p> <p>Beneficiaries</p> <p>Capacity assessments available, if any</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Documentation review</li> </ul>
<p>Is there potential to scale up or replicate project activities?</p> <p>Did the project's Exit Strategy actively promote replication?</p>	<p>Number/quality of replicated initiatives</p> <p>Number/quality of replicated innovative initiatives</p> <p>Scale of additional investment leveraged</p>	<p>Project Exit Strategy</p> <p>UNDP/GEF SGP, project personnel and project partners</p>	<p>Document analysis</p> <p>Interviews</p>
<p>What are the main challenges that may hinder sustainability of efforts?</p> <p>Have any of these been addressed through project management?</p> <p>What could be the possible measures to further contribute to the sustainability of efforts achieved with the project?</p>	<p>Challenges in view of building blocks of sustainability as presented above</p> <p>Recent changes which may present new challenges to the project</p> <p>Education strategy and partnership with school, education institutions etc.</p>	<p>Project documents and evaluations</p> <p>Beneficiaries</p> <p>UNDP/GEF SGP, project personnel and project partners</p>	<p>Document analysis</p> <p>Interviews</p>
<p>Which areas/arrangements under the project show the strongest potential for lasting long-term results? What are the key challenges and obstacles to the sustainability of results of the project initiatives that must be directly and quickly addressed?</p>		<p>Data collected throughout evaluation</p>	<p>Data analysis</p>

Gender equality and women's empowerment: How did the project contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment?

<p>What factors contribute or influence GEF SGP Sri Lanka project's ability to positively contribute to policy change from a gender perspective, women's economic empowerment</p>		<p>Gender Action Plan</p> <p>Project documents and reporting</p> <p>Project Case Studies</p> <p>Data collected throughout evaluation</p>	<p>Data analysis</p>
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## ANNEX 5: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS WITH GUIDANCE QUESTIONS

Place:	Date:	Stakeholder (s) name (s):	Male/ Female
Type of Institution	_____	_____	_____

***Design, Planning, Approval Process***

- (1) Was your institution involved in the project preparation before receiving support from the Project?
- (2) Were you provided support for the presentation phase of your grant?
- (3) Did the project attend to the needs of the organisation, communities or stakeholders?

***Effectiveness***

- (4) What have been the project’s achievements? What has changed due to the Project?
- (5) Have there been any unexpected or unplanned positive results occurred?

***Efficiency***

- (6) What sort of guidance did you receive from the project, committees, or other institutions, if any? Guidance in terms of implementation, monitoring, reporting?
- (7) Was this efficient?
- (8) What sort of technical guidance have you received from the Project and its associates, if any? Was this efficient?
- (8) What have been the projects weaknesses, if any?
- (9) Has disbursement of grants been done according to plan?



### ***Sustainability***

(10) What are the probabilities that results would be sustained over the medium/long term? If project outputs/outcomes were achieved, what variables have helped with sustainability (institutional, social, financial, etc.)?

#### **Other: Gender**

(11) Has the project promoted gender equality and women's empowerment? If yes, how?

#### **Other: Externalities affecting project**

*(12) What are the challenges faced by your institution? What have been the challenges associated with COVID-19 and how have they been solved?*

*(13) How other challenges have you faced?*

*(14) How have the above impacted upon sustainability risks and perspectives?*

#### **Lessons learned/Recommendations.**

(15) If something could have been done different, in hindsight what could this have been (lesson learned)?

(16) What are your recommendations for the remaining implementation period? For future programming? How can these be achieved?

ANNEX 6: FIELD MISSION ITINERARY

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Landscape</b>
28.04.2022	9:00 AM	Organization for Aquatic Resources Management (OARM)	Colombo
28.04.2022	3:30 PM	Emotional Intelligence and Life Skills Training Team	Colombo
28.04.2022	4:30 PM	Emotional Intelligence and Life Skills Training Team	Colombo
03.05.2022	11:00 AM	Centre for Integrated Indigenous Knowledge Systems (CIIKS)	Knuckles
03.05.2022	1:40 PM	Centre for Integrated Indigenous Knowledge Systems (CIIKS)	Knuckles
03.05.2022	4:30 PM	Centre for Integrated Indigenous Knowledge Systems (CIIKS)	Knuckles
03.05.2022	5:40 PM	Centre for Integrated Indigenous Knowledge Systems (CIIKS)	Knuckles
03.05.2022	6:20 PM	Centre for Integrated Indigenous Knowledge Systems (CIIKS)	Knuckles
04.05.2022	10:25AM	Community Development Centre (CDC)	Knuckles
04.05.2022	10:28 AM	Community Development Centre (CDC)	Knuckles
04.05.2022	4:00PM	National Ethnic Unity Foundation (NEUF)	Knuckles
04.05.2022	3:40PM	National Ethnic Unity Foundation (NEUF)	Knuckles
05.05.2022	12:30PM	Integrated Community Development Women's Federation (ICDWF)	Knuckles
05.05.2022	2:20PM	Integrated Community Development Women's Federation (ICDWF)	Knuckles
05.05.2022	4:00PM	Dumbara Mithuro	Knuckles
05.05.2022	4:15PM	Dumbara Mithuro	Knuckles
05.05.2022	5:30PM	Dumbara Mithuro	Knuckles
06.05.2022	12:00PM	Grama Abhiwurdhi Foundation for Environmental Conservation	Knuckles
07.05.2022	12:30PM	Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF)	Mannar
07.05.2022	1:30PM	Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF)	Mannar
08.05.2022	11:45AM	Soba Kantha Environment and Community Development Foundation	Mannar
08.05.2022	10:40AM	Soba Kantha Environment and Community Development Foundation	Mannar
08.05.2022	04:10PM	Association for Women Empowerment (AWE)	Mannar
08.05.2020	5:20PM	SGP	Mannar
09.05.2020	9:10AM	Save a life	Mannar
09.05.2020	10:50AM	Save a life	Mannar
09.05.2020	10:50AM	Save a life	Mannar
09.05.2020	1:20PM	Local Government	Mannar
09.05.2020	4:00PM	Sri Lanka Turtle Conservation Project	Mannar
09.05.2020	5:10PM	Local Government	Mannar
11.05.2020	5:00PM	SGP	Colombo
20.05.2020	9:40AM	Centre for Sustainability, University of Sri Jayawardenapura	Colombo
20.05.2020	12:30PM	Human Development Foundation of Sri Lanka (HDF)	Colombo

ANNEX 7: PROJECT INFORMATION GENERATED BY NATIONAL CONSULTANT WITH INPUTS FROM SITE VISITS

Names	Objectives	Achievements
COLOMBO LANDSCAPE		
<p>Organization for Aquatic Resources Management (OARM). Habitat restoration and enrichment project for the Heen Ela marsh Rajagiriya, Colombo,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 60 ha. of degraded wetlands rehabilitated at Heen-Ela marsh at Rajagiriya</li> <li>• Over 100 ha. protected from human-snake conflict around Heen-Ela marsh-Rajagiriya</li> <li>• Conservation of Heen-Ela Marsh through public awareness</li> <li>• New ecotourism enterprises established at Heen-Ela marsh, Rajagiriya.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 176 ha of biodiversity conservation</li> <li>• 16 beneficiaries were benefitted directly from project activities (but few were very active)</li> <li>•The project contributed to Heen-Ela Marsh being declared a sanctuary.</li> <li>•Knowledge networking with other grantees that have taken project ideas and lessons to other areas.</li> <li>•Partnerships with external stakeholders on conservation efforts that will aid with sustainability of activities.</li> </ul>
<p>Centre for Sustainability, University of Sri Jayawardenapura. Restoration and Sustainable Redevelopment of Diyasaru Wetland Park Ecosystem, Thalawathugoda, Sri Jayewardenepura</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Habitat Improvement of fauna species including the flagship species at the wetland</li> <li>• Enrichment the Butterfly Garden</li> <li>• Improvement of flora species to enhance the floral diversity at the wetland</li> <li>• Improvement of water quality in wetland ecosystem while enhancing its ecosystem services by building water purification mechanism at Diyasaru Wetland Park</li> <li>• Canal bank Stabilization</li> <li>• Providing Awareness on wetland functions, benefits and Active engagement in biodiversity conservation and enhancement of ecosystems for the local community, SLLRDC, visitors, school children, researchers</li> <li>• Research and Education on wetland ecosystem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•30 ha of biodiversity conservation and 30 ha of rehabilitation of degraded wetlands.</li> <li>•Using a public space for research and educational purposes for students over time</li> <li>•Creating an online and onsite digital platforms for awareness creation wetland conservation.</li> <li>•Establishing new conservation methods to deal with flooding</li> </ul>
<p>Emotional Intelligence and Life Skills Training Team. An initiative on wetland conservation and livelihood enhancement by a youth community group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation of biodiversity in 28 ha of Gotatuwa marsh and enhance ecosystem services.</li> <li>• Develop successfully running 10 eco-friendly social enterprises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 109 ha of degraded wetlands were rehabilitated</li> <li>• 81 beneficiaries were benefitted directly from project activities (a small group of youth remain active continuously)</li> <li>•Partnerships with external stakeholders on conservation efforts.</li> <li>•Youth empowerment in socially stigmatized locality.</li> <li>•Use of technology to encourage youth to engage in conservation that also benefits conservation</li> </ul>

<p>Human Development Foundation of Sri Lanka. Restoration of 151 ha. of degraded abandoned paddy lands in Watareka Surrounding wetlands, Homagama through cultivating local paddy varieties while upscaling other ongoing farming SGP projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultivate 151 Ha. of abandoned paddy lands with local paddy varieties.</li> <li>• Promote 60 community driven self-employments.</li> <li>• Cultivate 35 Koratu lands with vegetables and crops</li> <li>• Increase the biodiversity of 540 ha. in Watareka and surrounding areas</li> <li>• Reconstruction of 6.2km of irrigational canals system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•500 ha of degraded wetlands have been rehabilitated and 100 ha of biodiversity conservation.</li> <li>• 546 beneficiaries were benefitted directly from project activities</li> <li>•13km of irrigation canals were reconstructed.</li> <li>•Expansion of project activities by Co-financing.</li> <li>•State declaring the Barawa wetland a sensitive ecological zone.</li> <li>•Re-utilising of unused land for organic agriculture – in the current context has value for food security.</li> <li>•Creating market links and moving farmers towards organic certification has encouraged conversion.</li> </ul>
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Names	Objectives	Achievements
KNUCKLES LANDSCAPE		
Centre for Integrated Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Promoting biodiversity conservation in 3 villages, minimizing human animal conflict and developing eco-tourism activities (kandy side/Hasalaka)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the possibility of occurring &amp; spreading forest fires in 50 ha by 50%.</li> <li>• Conserve five watersheds and catchment areas linked to Hasalaka canal.</li> <li>• Reduce soil degradation in 60 slopping farmlands by 60%.</li> <li>• Reduce damages to farmlands and general life of 300 families due to strong winds occurring in some months.</li> <li>• Improve ecotourism and monthly income of 5 families by Rs. 3000.</li> <li>• Improve monthly income of 70 families by Rs.3000 and reduce crop damages from animals by 20%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 200 ha biodiversity conservation and forest degradation.</li> <li>• 71 beneficiaries were directly benefited from project activities (many as recipients of fruits trees/soil erosion support)</li> <li>• Soil conservation in three villages and the surrounding forest.</li> <li>• Effective natural fire belt constructed.</li> <li>• Reconstruction of nature trails 150 ha, to increase ecotourism.</li> <li>• Community health clinics and developed transportation infrastructure.</li> <li>• Raised awareness in sustainable extraction of commons.</li> </ul>
Community Development Centre. Productivity and Sustainability improvement of Agro Eco-System in the Knuckles Buffer Zone and Livelihood Development (not sure which side)	<p>The expected outcome of the project is to use sustainable agricultural practices to improve sustainable agriculture ecosystems and its efficiency through,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing 2 community-based societies and building their capacities</li> <li>• Soil conservation and management through the community-based societies</li> <li>• Establish crop genetic resources conservation system</li> <li>• Create business opportunities based on least used crops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1000 ha of biodiversity conservation, 500 ha of reforestation and 500 ha of land rehabilitated through best practice soil conservation measures and agroforestry</li> <li>• 73 beneficiaries were benefitted directly from project activities</li> <li>• 4 km of electrical fencing reconstruction with community support, reducing human-elephant conflicts.</li> <li>• networking, with other grantees &amp; gathering knowledge on about other projects done by the NGO.</li> <li>• Introduction of high value and value added agro products.</li> <li>• Community development and skill training.</li> <li>• Female empowerment.</li> <li>• Strengthening market links via the CBO</li> </ul>
National Ethnic Unity Foundation. Conserving the Ratna Ella conservation forest and developing eco-tourism activities for community livelihoods (kandy side/hasalaka)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve ecotourism around Rathna Ella falls and Kaluwa Watuna Ella falls by strengthening the community in Rathna Ella village</li> <li>• Raise the monthly income of 30 families by Rs. 5000.00 by formalizing eco-tourism</li> <li>• Introduce a proper operational waste management system</li> <li>• Reduce the damage by 60% to the Rathna Ella sanctuary due to heavy pesticide usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 700 ha of biodiversity conservation</li> <li>• 53 beneficiaries were benefitted directly from project activities</li> <li>• Community development and skill training.</li> <li>• Small and medium enterprises developed around eco-tourism.</li> <li>• Introduction and strengthening of organic farming.</li> <li>• Diversification of agriculture products.</li> <li>• Active and self-sustaining CBO was produced.</li> </ul>
Ekabadda Praja Sanwardhana Kantha Maha Sangamaya. Rehabilitation of 2000 hectares through suitable soil conservation methods and agro-forestry in 4 GN divisions in Wilgamuwa Urban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soil conservation</li> <li>• Organic agroforestry</li> <li>• Water conservation, sustainable use and reduce pollution</li> <li>• Establish 4 CBOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1000 ha of land rehabilitated through best practice soil conservation measures and agroforestry and 1000 ha of agro-ecological practices to increase productivity and conserve crop genetic resources</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce value added products to the market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 501 beneficiaries were benefitted directly from project activities</li> <li>• 4 women's CBOs formed, joined forces with 52 other women's groups, forming a total of 56 CBOs in the area.</li> <li>• An electrical fence was reconstructed to reduce the human-elephant conflicts in the area. (900 ha approx.)</li> <li>• Expansion of project activities by external partnerships and co-financing.</li> <li>• Self-sustaining credit system was developed.</li> <li>• Reduced water scarcity for agriculture.</li> <li>• Increased food security by introducing new fruit plants and agriculture techniques.</li> <li>• Developed existing livelihoods, and Introduced livelihoods to previously unemployed women.</li> <li>• Marketing links improved via the CBO.</li> </ul>
<p>Dumbara Mithuro. Biodiversity conservation in four villages in the Knuckles Conservation Forest through community participation (matale side)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity conservation of 40ha. In Knuckles area through community-based reforestation.</li> <li>• Restoration of six watersheds.</li> <li>• Improve standard of living of 50 low-income families</li> <li>• Biodiversity conservation in Pitawala Pathana area.</li> <li>• Conserve forest reserve through public &amp; school awareness programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 135 ha of biodiversity conservation</li> <li>• 93 beneficiaries were directly benefitted from project activities</li> <li>• New eco-tourism activities/persons developed.</li> <li>• National recognition to traditional medicine.</li> <li>• Diversification /value addition and quality improvements to agriculture products, and created market links.</li> <li>• Increased water security in the dry season.</li> </ul>
<p>Grama Abhiwurdhi Foundation for Environmental Conservation. Develop 100 acres of abandoned tea lands in the Medawatta Estate in Rattota as environmental servicing lands (Matale side)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reforestation, tea plantation and establish a plant nursery</li> <li>• Rehabilitation of Dankanda tank</li> <li>• Eco-tourism promotion</li> <li>• Land preparation for eco-tourism promotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500 ha of reforestation, 100 ha of land rehabilitated through best practice soil conservation measures and agroforestry and 100 ha of agro-ecological practices to increase productivity and conserve crop genetic resources</li> <li>• 55 beneficiaries were benefitted directly from project activities</li> <li>• Developed eco-tourism trails (13km approx.), guides and activities.</li> <li>• Extra income opportunities to estates women.</li> <li>• A business plan was developed.</li> <li>• Fisheries introduced to a lake in an attempt to increase food security.</li> <li>• Working with the plantation company and estate community to increase productivity of the estate land</li> </ul>



Names	Objectives	Achievements
MANNAR LANDSCAPE		
<p>Nature Conservation Foundation. Establish a mechanism for climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation through rehabilitation of medium scale tanks and irrigation systems, introduce sustainable water management practices and implement organic farming in Kuchchukulam, Mathakiramam villages with community participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tank rehabilitation to improve the water retention capacity enabling beneficiaries to harvest higher yield</li> <li>Aid in organic fertilizer production and develop organic cashew plantation in 500 hectares both in home gardens and adjoining areas</li> <li>• Establish proper irrigation system in home gardens through agro-wells and rainwater harvesting mechanisms</li> <li>• Increase the forest cover by 600 hectares through reforestation using the gap filling mechanism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1100 ha of degraded wetlands will be rehabilitated, 500 ha of land will be rehabilitated through best practice soil conservation measures and agroforestry, 500 ha of reforestation.</li> <li>•136 families trained in organic fertiliser production</li> <li>• maluvarayan-kaddaiadampan tank restoration work was begun to increase water security in dry seasons (different tank to what was intended).</li> <li>•Introduced crops to increase food security and income.</li> </ul>
<p>Soba Kantha Environment and Community Development Foundation. Introduce new fishing techniques and no fishing zones to curtail excessive fishing in the Thalaimannar Pier Coastal area across 131 hectares and introduce environment friendly techniques to promote dry fish production to ensure sustainability among low income fishing</p>	<p>Community awareness, empowerment programmes on environment friendly fishing and provide solar dryers to fishing community to prepare dry fish along with necessary fishing related equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a sales centre and construction of permanent huts to protect the yield from weather</li> <li>• Promote home gardening as a livelihood option apart from traditional fishing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60 beneficiaries were benefitted directly from project activities.</li> <li>•2000 indirect beneficiaries, by working with 100 households on home gardening and other livelihood options.</li> <li>•The beach and shore around Thalaimannar Pier was reduced of coastline pollution (100 ha approx. )</li> <li>•Increased food security, through organic farming and incomes.</li> <li>•Female empowerment. and increased social cohesion.</li> <li>•Knowledge networking as they learnt from projects elsewhere.</li> <li>•Education on sustainable use of commons.</li> <li>•Market links via CBO</li> </ul>
<p>Association for Women Empowerment. Biodiversity interventions to protect migrant and native birds in Vankalai Bird Sanctuary and promote tourism in Mannar District</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a bird watchtower</li> <li>• Train 10 bird lovers and 10 WLC officers on Ornithology</li> <li>• Conduct Awareness for two community and 8 schools (240 students)</li> <li>• Plant Mangroves along the strip of Mannar causeway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500 ha of degraded wetlands will be rehabilitated, 105 ha of reforestation, 105 ha of soil conservation and agro-forestry.</li> <li>•453 ha of biodiversity conservation in the Vankali Bird sanctuary.</li> <li>•Knowledge networking, and use of links as most of the projects activities done with consultation with scientific community.</li> <li>•Expansion of project activities by external partnerships and co-financing</li> <li>•Good coordination and relationship with state shareholders.</li> </ul>

<p>Save a life. Promoting agro forestry by introducing mix vegetation and shady plantation along with coastal biodiversity conservation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mangrove plantation in 5 ha of coastal area in Paramankiraai, Pooneryn</li> <li>• Introduction of agro forestry systems</li> <li>• Polythene and plastic waste reduction/ Waste to resource concept</li> <li>• Introduction of agro forestry systems</li> <li>• At least 500 trees of Palmyra plantation as a wind barrier</li> <li>Constructing small marketing place for the local products and organic foods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100 ha of land will be rehabilitated through best practice soil conservation measures and agro-forestry</li> <li>• 51 beneficiaries will be benefitted directly from project activities.</li> <li>• A CBO with microfinancing capability was established.</li> <li>• Expansion of project activities by external partnerships and co-financing.</li> <li>• New plant crops introduced increased incomes and aided in increasing food security.</li> </ul>
<p>Sri Lanka Turtle Conservation Project. Promoting the wise use of marine and coastal habitats by coastal communities through education and incentives in Vidathalativu, Mannar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eco-tourism Programme</li> <li>• Introduce community sewing programme as a livelihood for the community to reduce the over exploitation of marine and coastal resources</li> <li>• Introduce community Ornamental fish breeding programme as a livelihood for the community to reduce the over exploitation of marine and coastal resources</li> <li>• Enhance community awareness on natural resource management and capacity developed to reduce the over exploitation of marine and coastal resources and to increase community participation in conservation actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3000 ha of biodiversity conservation and 1000 ha of rehabilitation of degraded wetlands</li> <li>• 23 beneficiaries were directly benefitted from project activities (however at the time of national evaluation site visit they were not active)</li> </ul>

ANNEX 8: LIST OF NATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL CONSULTED STAKEHOLDERS

Name	Designation
Dinali Jayasinghe	National Coordinator – GEF/SGP
Nuwan Perera	Programme Assistant – GEF/SGP
Malmi Gunarathna	Intern – GEF/SGP
Senuri Jayawardena	Administration Assistant – GEF/SGP
Diana Salvemini	Senior Technical Advisor - SGP UCP Global Coordinator
Rosanna de Luca	Associate Portfolio Manager UNOPS
S. A. M. Azmy	Chairperson NSC
Malin Herwig	Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP
Pathma Abaykoon	Director – Biodiversity – MoE
Buddika Hapuarachchi	Team Lead – Climate and Environment – UNDP
Lalith Welamedage	Chairman, Lanka Social Ventures
Sureka Perera	UNDP Programme Quality & Design Analyst
Dharmakeerthi Wickramasinghe	Technical Advisor SGP Sri Lanka
Manjula Amerarathne	Dept. of Wildlife Conservation
W. M. W. Weerakoon	Rtd. Director General, Dept. of Agriculture
Priyangani Gunathilaka	Director - Natural Resource Management - Central Environmental Authority
Nishantha Edirisinghe	Deputy Conservator, Department of Forest Conservation
Sujatha Wijethilaka	NSC

ANNEX 9: LIST OF PROJECT-RELATED STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED BY THE NATIONAL EVALUATOR

<i>Individuals</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Landscape</i>
Shantha Munasinghe	KPI	Organization for Aquatic Resources Management (OARM)	Colombo
Prasad Jayasinghe	KPI	Emotional Intelligence and Life Skills Training Team	Colombo
Nishanthi Perera	Programmes Coordinator (Colombo)	SGP	Colombo
Udeyshika Jayapali.	KPI	Centre for Sustainability, University of Sri Jayawardenapura	Colombo
Sunethra Marasinghe, Senerath Kodithuwakku and Uvindu Gamage	KPI	Human Development Foundation of Sri Lanka (HDF)	Colombo
Susantha Jayasuriya	KPI	Centre for Integrated Indigenous Knowledge Systems (CIIKS)	Knuckles
Kapila Bandara	Local Level Official (BFO)	Centre for Integrated Indigenous Knowledge Systems (CIIKS)	Knuckles
Damayanthi Godamulla and Upuli	KPI	Community Development Centre (CDC)	Knuckles
Community Group (14F)	Beneficiaries (FGD)	Community Development Centre (CDC)	Knuckles
B. W. Gunasekara	KPI	National Ethnic Unity Foundation (NEUF)	Knuckles
Renuka Bhadrakanthi	KPI	Integrated Community Development Women's Federation (ICDWF)	Knuckles
Nimal A. Kanaheraachchi and Indika A. Kumara	KPI	Dumbara Mithuro	Knuckles
B.G. Saliyadasa.	Beneficiary (M)	Dumbara Mithuro	Knuckles
Podi Menike and Kalu Menike	Beneficiary (F)	Dumbara Mithuro	Knuckles
Gamini Jayatissa	KPI	Grama Abhiwurdhi Foundation for Environmental Conservation	Knuckles
Asanka Gunawardana	KPI	Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF)	Mannar
Nilmini Mudalige	KPI	Soba Kantha Environment and Community Development Foundation	Mannar
Rebecca Miranda	KPI	Association for Women Empowerment (AWE)	Mannar
Jayawardani Anthon	National coordinator for Mannar (GEF SGP)	SGP	Mannar
Ramalingam Balachandran.	Local Level official (School Principal)	Save a life	Mannar
Rakulan Kandasami and Karthiga Inthirakuman	KPI	Save a life	Mannar
Sribaskaran and A. Ketheeswararan	Local Level official	Local Government	Mannar
Quenson Marynathan	KPI	Sri Lanka Turtle Conservation Project	Mannar
A. Stanley De Mel	Local Level official	Local Government	Mannar

## ANNEX 10: LIST OF CONSULTED DOCUMENTS AND ONLINE RESOURCES

- GEF.C.46.13\_GEF\_Small\_Grants\_Programme\_-\_Implementation\_Arrangements\_for\_GEF-6\_April\_30\_2014\_1.pdf (thegef.org)
- Mid Term Review.
- Project Document
- Project Implementation Report (PIR). 2018.
- Project Implementation Report (PIR). 2019.
- Project Implementation Report (PIR). 2020.
- Project Implementation Report (PIR). 2021.
- UNDP website: <https://www.undp.org/srilanka/press-releases/enhancing-socio-ecological-resilience-urban-wetlands-colombo>
- Colombo Page: [http://www.colombopage.com/archive\\_22A/Jun14\\_1655178684CH.php](http://www.colombopage.com/archive_22A/Jun14_1655178684CH.php)
- Lanka News Web: <https://lankanewsweb.net/archives/14048/undp-assists-to-develop-colombo-wetland-sites/>
- Colombo Gazette: <https://colombogazette.com/2022/06/14/over-six-wetland-sites-being-developed-in-colombo-metropolitan-region/>
- Ceylon Digest: <https://www.ceylondigest.com/enhancing-socio-ecological-resilience-in-the-urban-wetlands-of-colombo/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/UNDPSriLanka/status/1536210316891025408>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/263760760325120/posts/pfbid02RHEBN4C5La2TXEHKBi3BSHhubNc576F2iviPsMKUAszov2ZQGoF6nvi37nZWYkyel/>
- SGP “What’s Up” newsletter –July-August 2020 Edition
- <http://gefsgpsl.org/NewsPaper/Whats%20UP%20Newsletter%20July-August%202020.pdf>
- SGP “What’s Up” newsletter –September-October 2020 Edition
- <http://gefsgpsl.org/NewsPaper/Whats%20UP%20Newsletter%20Sep-Oct%202020.pdf>
- SGP “What’s Up” newsletter -November-December 2020 Edition
- <http://gefsgpsl.org/NewsPaper/Whats%20UP%20Newsletter%20Nov-Dec%202020.pdf>
- SGP “What’s Up” newsletter – January-February 2021 Edition



- <http://gefsgpsl.org/NewsPaper/Whats%20UP%20Newsletter%20Jan-Feb%202021.pdf>
- SGP “What’s Up” newsletter –March-April 2021 Edition
- <http://gefsgpsl.org/NewsPaper/Whats%20UP%20Newsletter%20March-%20April%202021.pdf>
- Creating sustainable livelihoods: <https://undpsrilanka.exposure.co/creating-sustainable-livelihoods>
- Protecting diversity: [https://undpsrilanka.exposure.co/protecting-biodiversity?fbclid=IwAR1c3B7XZqfO9TM6IMoC1og9f2\\_P3U1hZGILTAvaVjoG0RfzlqaS52\\_uvIU](https://undpsrilanka.exposure.co/protecting-biodiversity?fbclid=IwAR1c3B7XZqfO9TM6IMoC1og9f2_P3U1hZGILTAvaVjoG0RfzlqaS52_uvIU)
- <https://undpsrilanka.exposure.co/all-for-one-and-one-for-all>

## ANNEX 11: EVALUATION CONSULTANT AGREEMENT FORM

### Evaluators:

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

### Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form<sup>25</sup>

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

**Name of International Consultant:** Maria ONESTINI

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

Signed at *Indiana, USA* on *March 16 2022*

Signature:



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<sup>25</sup> [www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct](http://www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct)

ANNEX 12: TE REPORT CLEARANCE FORM

<b>Terminal Evaluation Report for (Project Title &amp; UNDP PIMS ID) Reviewed and Cleared By:</b>
<b>Commissioning Unit (M&amp;E Focal Point)</b>
Name: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____
_____
<b>Regional Technical Advisor (Nature, Climate and Energy)</b>
Name: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____
_____