



Mid-Term Review of the Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in the Philippines

(Time frame: February 2022 to December 2024)

(GEF Project ID: 10123; UNDP PIMS ID: 6254)

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Government of the Philippines

United Nations Development Programme

Region: RBAP

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**Execution Agency: Foundation for the Philippine Environment
(FPE)**

Final Report

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ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Meaning
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BD	Biological Diversity
BFAR	Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
BMB	Biodiversity Management Bureau
CAPWA	Catubig Association for the Protection of Watershed Areas
CBO	Community Based Organization
CCFI	Caritas Catarman Foundation Inc.
CERD	Centre for the Empowerment and Resources Development
CGI	Calamianes Group of Islands
COMDEKS	Community Development and Knowledge Management
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DA	Department of Agriculture
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DETFAWA	Dimasalang Egongot Tribe Farmers and Weavers Association
DILG	Department of Interior and Local Government
EoP	End of Project
FASPS	Foreign Assisted and Special Project Services
FosPEE	Fostering People's Education, Empowerment, and Enterprise
FPE	Foundation for the Philippine Environment
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HG	NGO Hub Grant
LRTC	Landscape Round Table Committee
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous People
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NSC	National Steering Committee
NTFP-EP	Non-Timber Forest Products-Exchange Programme
PAs	Protected Areas
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PMU	Project Management Unit
PTRC	Project Technical Review Committee
PSR	Project Status Report
RG	Regular Grant
SGP	Small Grant Programme
SEPLS	Socio-ecological Production Landscape and Seascape
SG	Strategic Grant
SGP-7	UNDP-GEF Project: "Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in the Philippines"
SIPLAS	Siargao Island Protected Landscape and Seascape
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound
ToC	Theory of Change
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US\$	United States Dollar

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

E-1. This report summarizes the findings of the Midterm Review conducted via face-to-face meetings between 17 September – 7 October 2024 for the UNDP-GEF Project: “*Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in the Philippines*”, (hereby referred to as the *SGP-7 Project* or the Project) that received a US\$4.436 million grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in February 2022.

Project Information Table

Project Title:	Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in the Philippines (SGP-7 Project)		
UNDP Project ID:	6254	PIF Approval Date	11 June 2019
GEF Project ID:	10123	CEO Endorsement Date	7 June 2021
UNDP Atlas Business Unit, Award ID, Project ID:	Business Unit: UNDP-PHP Award ID: 00081872 Project ID: 00091000	ProDoc Signature	16 February 2022
Country:	Philippines	Date Project Manager hired:	June 2022
Region:	RBAP	Inception Workshop Date:	13 September 2022
GEF Focal Area:	Biodiversity	MTR Completion Date:	31 December 2024
GEF Operational Programme or Strategic Priorities/Objectives:	Objective 2. Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species by: Improving Financial Sustainability, Effective Management, and Ecosystem Coverage of the Global Protected Area Estate	Planned Operational Closure Date:	16 February 2027
Trust Fund:	GEF TF	If revised, propose operational closing date	16 February 2028 or 2029
Executing Agency/Implementing partner:	Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE)		
Other execution partners:	Several NGOs and CSOs to be selected through the grant process		
Project Financing	At CEO Endorsement (US\$ million)	At MTR (US\$ million)	
[1] GEF funding:	4.436	0.733	
[2] UNDP contribution:	0.093	0.030	
[3] Government:	3.395	0	
[4] Other partners:	5.726	0	
[5] Total co-financing [2 + 3 + 4]:	9.214	0.030	
Project Total Costs [1 + 5]	13.650	0.763	

Project Description

E-2. The SGP-7 ProDoc was signed on 16 February 2022 with an intended duration of 60 months (until February 2027). The main objective of the SGP-7 Project is to *“build socio-ecological and economic resilience in four selected landscapes and seascapes through community-based activities on the Eastern Seaboard of the Philippines:*

- *the Catubig Watershed Samar Island;*
- *Aurora Province in the Sierra Madre;*
- *Siargao Island Protected Landscape/Seascape and along the West Philippine Sea; and*
- *the Calamianes Group of Islands in Northern Palawan.”*

E-3. The activities and outputs would lead to 5 outcomes planned under the SGP-7 Project:

- *Outcome 1.1: Ecosystem services and biodiversity within four targeted landscapes and seascapes are enhanced through multi-functional land-use systems;*
- *Outcome 1.2: Sustainability of production systems in the target landscapes is strengthened through integrated agro-ecological practices;*
- *Outcome 1.3: Livelihoods of communities in the target landscapes and seascapes are improved by developing eco-friendly, climate-adaptive small-scale community enterprises with clear market linkages;*
- *Outcome 2.1: Multistakeholder governance platforms strengthened or in place for improved governance of target landscapes and seascapes for effective participatory decision-making to enhance socio-ecological landscape resiliency;*
- *Outcome 2.2: Knowledge from community level engagement and innovative conservation practices is systematically assessed and shared for replication and upscaling across the landscapes, across the country, and to the global SGP network for global environmental benefits and sustainable development.*

Project Progress Summary

E-4. There were several issues with the progress of the SGP-7 Project including:

- delays in the issuance of the Special Presidential Authority by the GoP from the CEO Endorsement date of 7 June 2021 to the start of the Project on 22 February 2022. This was beyond the control of the Project and FPE;
- COVID-19 related restrictions in place during the commencement of the Project from February to September 2022, when the National Inception Workshop was held. This was also beyond the control of the Project and FPE;
- delays in hiring the Project Management Unit (PMU) members to August 2022 caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- many CSOs and potential grantees had been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic forcing the Project to re-establish the NSC and organize more than 5 strategic and regular grant proposal development workshops from October 2022 to October 2023 to help re-build CSO capacity in developing landscape high-quality grant proposals for the Project. Not only did this

take substantial time from the PMU and FPE, no GEF resources were provided to the PMU for this effort;

- the long bureaucratic process of grant proposals has contributed to significant delays in grant implementation. Notwithstanding strong DENR support for the SGP process, these delays do not serve the communities who are very enthusiastic about SGP opportunities to improve their environmental conditions. This is a Project issue for FPE to resolve;
- a tranche of GEF funds were in FPE’s bank account that needed to be disbursed before 15 October 2024. At least 80% of these funds have been disbursed to the grantees just prior to 15 October 2024.

Additional findings can be found on Table A.

Table A: MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for SGP-7 Project in the Philippines

Measure	MTR Rating ¹	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	Design and PRF Rating: 5	Design of the Project was to build on ongoing stakeholder efforts to preserve biodiversity from SGP-5 projects with additions to the SGP-7 Project of having a component targeting knowledge management (Paras 37-38), and a focus on gender, specifically poor Filipino women in the agricultural sector (Paras 43-45). All SGP-7 Project indicators and targets in the PRF meet “SMART” criteria that are effective in monitoring the Project (Para 46).
	Stakeholder Participation Rating: 5	Stakeholder engagement plans included engaging a range of stakeholders in the four selected landscapes and seascapes as specified in the ProDoc (Para 35). In addition, DENR has also been heavily engaged with the Project (Para 36).
Progress Towards Results	Objective Achievement Rating: 3	Though none of the objective-level targets have been achieved, positive progress will be made by the end of 2024 with the 11 grants from the first and second call for proposals (Paras 50-52).
	Outcome 1.1 Achievement Rating: 3	Similar to the objective-level indicators, there has been no progress made at the time of writing this MTR report. However, there are expectations of progress before the end of 2024 with 29 other grants under review (with 20 already approved) and when regular grants are being implemented (Para 53).
	Outcome 1.2 Achievement Rating: 3	Similar to the Outcome 1.1 indicators, there has been no progress made at the time of writing this MTR report. However, there are expectations of progress before the end of 2024 with 29 other grants under review and when regular grants from the first and second call for proposals are being implemented (Para 54).
	Outcome 1.3 Achievement Rating: 3	Similar to the Outcome 1.3 indicators, there has been no progress made at the time of writing this MTR report. However, there are expectations of progress before the end of 2024 with 29 other grants under review and when regular grants are being implemented (Paras 55-56).
	Outcome 2.1 Achievement Rating: 3	LRTCs were setup as multi-sector governance platforms for each of the 4 landscapes/seascapes that brought together different stakeholders, including CSOs, government agencies, academia, and vulnerable groups. Four draft landscape

¹ Evaluation rating indices (except sustainability – see Para 70): 6=*Highly Satisfactory (HS)*: The project has no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives; 5=*Satisfactory (S)*: The project has minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives; 4=*Moderately Satisfactory (MS)*: The project has moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives; 3=*Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)*: The project has significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives; 2=*Unsatisfactory (U)*: The project has major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives; 1=*Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)*: The project has severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives.

Measure	MTR Rating ¹	Achievement Description
		strategies were produced through these platforms and shared for approval with relevant stakeholders of the governance framework including the LTRCs (Paras Error! Reference source not found. -58).
	Outcome 2.2 Achievement Rating: 2	No landscape-level case studies or no gender-responsive knowledge management and communication strategies have been produced. In addition, only 2 NGOs have been approved as NGO hubs with disbursement of their grants still pending. This leaves little to no time remaining for NGO Hubs to undertake the tasks listed in Para 62 (Paras 59-64).
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	Implementation Approach Rating: 3	FPE has established a PMU for the overall coordination and resource management of the SGP-7 Project, and to work closely with other relevant stakeholders to provide centralized project management services, coordinate project activities, and facilitate stakeholder relationships (Para 69). The PMU has had to adaptively manage capacity building activities between October 2022 and October 2023 as a reaction to low capacities of CBOs, NGOs and grantees in their understanding of the SGP process that left them ill-equipped to prepare SGP grant applications, and adapting to a new schedule caused by the delays in obtaining approvals from the NSC for all grants (Para 0). The several implementation issues of the SGP-7 Project are listed in Para 91.
	Monitoring and Evaluation Rating: 5	Results and progress of all activities and outputs of the SGP-7 Project were reported for all 5 Outcomes by the PMU in the 2023 and 2024 PIRs (Para 76).
	Stakeholder Participation Rating: 4	Stakeholders have been engaged. However, communities are simply frustrated with the process of waiting 6 months for the approval of SGP funds to disburse. NSC and PTRC members feel overwhelmed by the complicated volume of grant proposal information received for review. As the information received is generally not well organized, grant proposal reviews are taking a long time (Para 78) Error! Reference source not found.
Sustainability	Sustainability Rating: Moderately Likely	There are still risks socioeconomic risks related to security threats posed by those engaged in illegal wildlife and natural resource extraction in more remote communities, against those who are part of community monitoring and enforcement. There are also environmental risks related to climate change that is expected to increase the frequency and severity of floods in these communities potentially impacting the project’s activities in pilot sites before they are completed (Paras 84-89).
Overall Project Achievement and impact	Rating: 3	Though there has been poor progress to date on many of the indicators, there will likely be progress by the end of 2024 when regular grants are being implemented. Impact of the SGP-7 grants is not expected for at least another year or two.

Conclusions

E-5. The current state of delays on the SGP-7 Project is mostly circumstantial with the aftermath of COVID-19 causing restrictions on public gatherings and face-to-face meetings, and negative impacts on CBOs and potential grantees with a need to re-build their capacities. Bringing the Project back to a schedule where regular grants can be completed before the EoP date of 16 February 2027 will require:

- a streamlining of the grant approval process for third call for grant proposals;
- a unique arrangement for the third call requiring the recruitment of local proposal writers to prepare basic regular grant proposals that incorporate community needs and national proposal

writers to assist in bringing the standard of the proposal to the standards of the UNDP SGP global template;

- scheduling a fourth call for proposals which will involve NGO Hubs recruited under the third call that have local and national proposal writers on staff;
- the Project finalizing the KMC strategy as soon as possible, preferably before the end of January 2025.

E-6. With the current Project scenario envisaging commencing implementation of regular grant proposal activities likely in February 2025, these activities will take 1 to 2 years to complete, likely towards the EoP date of 16 February 2027, leaving no time for monitoring of these grant activities under Outcome 2.2. Some form of Project extension is required into a period beyond the February 2027 EoP of the Project for grant proposal monitoring of effectiveness (Para 92). In addition, logistical assistance is needed from DENR and BFAR to support ground implementation of approved regular grant proposals, notably on landscape restoration where grantees need access to a supply of seedlings and technical advice on planting, and other activities (Para 94).

Lessons Learned

- E-7. Lesson #1: The current process of approving SGP-7 grants is inefficient (Para 96).
- E-8. Lesson #2: NGO Hub grant proposals are the most important grants and should be processed first since they are supposed to help communities to prepare proposals (Para 97).
- E-9. Lesson #3: The global SGP template makes it necessary to hire a local proposal writing consultant who can incorporate the community needs of the proposal and a national writing consultant who can upgrade the local consultant’s proposals to meet the standard of the GEF-SGP template for SGP proposals (Para 98).
- E-10. Lesson #4: Care needs to be taken in requesting disbursements of UNDP-GEF funds knowing that 80% of the funds needs to be expended within 6 months (Para 99).
- E-11. Lesson #5: NGO modality for implementing SGP projects appears to be functioning well (Para 100).

Recommendations

	Recommendation	Entity Responsible	Time Frame
	Outcomes 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3		
E-12.	Recommendation 1: Streamline the approval process for the third call for grant proposals to facilitate proposal disbursement by January 2025 (Para 101).	GoP, FPE and UNDP	Immediate
E-13.	Recommendation 2: For the third call for proposals, immediately recruit local and national proposal writers to work with project proponents. This can be done through planning grant where PMU was given the authority to give its approval. (Para 102).	GoP, FPE and UNDP	Immediate
E-14.	Recommendation 3: Ensure the approval process for the fourth call for regular grant proposals is efficient and allows disbursement by 2Q 2025 (Para 103).	GoP, FPE and UNDP	Immediate
	Outcome 2.2		

	Recommendation	Entity Responsible	Time Frame
E-15.	Recommendation 4: <i>The Knowledge Management and Communications (KMC) strategy needs to be finalized as soon as possible (Para 104).</i>	GoP, FPE and UNDP	Immediate
	Project Implementation & Adaptive Management		
E-16.	Recommendation 5: <i>Extend the SGP-7 Project by 2 years. This is a top priority to accommodate the monitoring functions of Outcome 2.2 of the Project (Para 105).</i>	GoP, FPE and UNDP	Immediate
E-17.	Recommendation 6: <i>DENR and BFAR should facilitate and support (logistics and technical advice) for ground implementation of approved proposals (Para 106).</i>	GoP, FPE and UNDP	Medium Term

1. INTRODUCTION

1. This report summarizes the findings of the Midterm Review (MTR) conducted during the 17-28 September and 30 September-7 October 2024 periods for the UNDP-supported GEF-financed Project entitled: ***“Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in the Philippines”*** (hereby referred to as the SGP-7 Project or the Project). On 16 February 2022, this Project received a US\$ 4.436 million grant from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF-7).

1.1 Purpose of the Mid-Term Review

2. In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects are required to undergo an MTR at the mid-point of implementation of a project to provide a comprehensive and systematic account of the performance of an ongoing project by reviewing its design, process of implementation and achievements vis-à-vis GEF project objectives and any agreed changes during project implementation. This MTR delivers an independent and impartial assessment of the SGP-7 Project that is comprised mainly of technical assistance and capacity building activities. As such, the MTR for this Project serves to:
 - assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made to set the Project on-track to achieve its intended results;
 - strengthen the adaptive management and monitoring functions of the Project;
 - enhance the likelihood of achievement of Project and GEF objectives through analyzing Project strengths and weaknesses and suggesting measures for improvement;
 - enable informed decision-making by identifying and validating proposed changes to the ProDoc to ensure achievement of all Project objectives;
 - create the basis for replication of successful Project outcomes achieved to date; and
 - assess whether it is possible to achieve the objectives in the given timeframe, taking into consideration the pace at which the Project is proceeding.
3. This MTR was prepared to:
 - be undertaken independent of Project management to ensure independent quality assurance;
 - apply UNDP-GEF norms and standards for midterm reviews;
 - assess achievements of outputs and outcomes, likelihood of the sustainability of outcomes, and if the Project met the minimum M&E requirements;
 - provide credible, useful, and evidence-based information of the Project
 - provide recommendations to increase the likelihood of the Project delivering all its intended outputs and achieving intended outcomes;
 - bring up key issues that will serve as a means of strengthening learning within the SGP-7 Project team and its stakeholders to support better decision-making.

1.2 Scope and Methodology

4. The scope of the MTR covers the entire UNDP-supported, GEF-financed, SGP-7 Project implemented by the Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE). This MTR assesses 34 months of Project

progress, achievements and implementation taking into account the status of Project activities, outputs and the resource disbursements made up to 30 September 2024. The MTR estimates the extent of barrier removal in each Project component by reporting on the progress against objective, outcome, output, and impact indicators listed in the latest Project Results Framework (PRF) as provided in Appendix F. The MTR report concludes with recommendations, as appropriate, for the key stakeholders of the Project. The MTR was approached through criteria of *relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact*, as defined, and explained in the UNDP “Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects”², and the GEF M&E policy. The MTR Team was comprised of one international and one national evaluator. The MTR process was conducted in a spirit of collaboration with the provision of constructive inputs that will inform activities of this Project.

5. The SGP-7 Project was reviewed in the context of:

- *Project strategy*: This includes an analysis of the SGP-7 Project design (and Project Results Framework) as outlined in the ProDoc to identify if the strategy is effective in achieving the desired outcomes;
- *Progress towards results*: This is to include information provided from, amongst others, Project work plans, Project implementation reports (PIRs), relevant Project reports and information provided from various Project stakeholders;
- *Project implementation and adaptive management*: This is an assessment of the quality of support to the Project from UNDP as well as the Implementing Partner of the Project, FPE. Assessment parameters include management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, Project level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting and communications; and
- *Sustainability*: The likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period after the end-of-Project (EoP). The MTR sustainability assessment essentially sets the stage for the Terminal Evaluation during which sustainability will be rated under the four GEF categories of sustainability, namely financial, socioeconomic, institutional framework, and governance, and environmental.

6. The evaluation approach adopted was non-experimental evaluation³ where questions needed to be answered concerning policy and market for government stakeholders and Project executors, and the benefits and impacts of community investments for Project beneficiaries. Interviews with government stakeholders were to bring up key issues with respect to the process of prioritizing SGP-7 measures and enhancing diffusion of SGP-7 measures and technologies with policies and the regulatory frameworks; this was to strengthen learning within the SGP-7 Project team and its stakeholders to support better decision-making to attain the Project objective. Project executors were interviewed using a participatory approach on their experiences interacting with beneficiary stakeholders. These approaches contributed to an impartial assessment of the SGP-7 Project.

7. The MTR methodology consisted of:

1. setting up the MTR report in the context of evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, defined as per UNDP “Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects”;

² http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/mid-term/Guidance_Midterm%20Review%20_EN_2014.pdf

³ From the UNEG Compendium of Evaluation Methods: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2939>

- document review of Project documentation (such as PIRs, meeting minutes of the National Steering Committee) and pertinent background information;
 - interviews with key Project personnel (including the current Project Coordinator, Project Coordinators, and technical advisors) as well as relevant stakeholders (including other government agencies, CSOs and NGOs. This was important as these MTR criteria were likely undocumented. The interview process was conducted in a participatory manner and in a spirit of collaboration with SGP-7 PMU personnel with the intention of providing constructive inputs that can inform activities of the SGP-8 Project;
 - field visits to Project sites substituted by interviews with beneficiaries;
 - triangulation of the various data sources that ensured optimum validity and quality of the information and data sources (i.e. interviews, focused group discussions and documents);
 - compile and evaluate the progress and quality of implementation against the indicators of each objective and outcomes in the PRF as provided Appendix F;
 - formulation of MTR conclusions and recommendations that focus on the current setup of the SGP-7 Project to its current completion date of 16 February 2027.
8. The evaluation of the Project is based on evaluability analysis consisting of formal (clear outputs, indicators, baselines, data) and substantive (identification of problem addressed, theory of change, results framework) inputs. Considering the information provided into this MTR (which is mainly whether or not the technical assistance of the SGP-7 Project was effective to SPG-7 stakeholders), the implication of this methodology is that it should be effective in the MTR process and should inform stakeholders and the SGP-7 Project team as it transitions into a subsequent SGP-8 phase.
9. Data and information for this MTR were sourced from:
- Project documentation that was reviewed and deemed important in establishing information pertaining to efforts in implementing the Project. This was done primarily at the home bases of the International and National Evaluators;
 - the combination of in-depth interviews, field visits and focused groups discussions which were semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders within an interview schedule. These discussions were based on questions designed for different stakeholders based on evaluation questions around relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability; interviews were conducted with selected stakeholders to gauge the effectiveness and efficiency of “progress towards results”. Different key groups involved in the Project to be interviewed included Interviews were conducted with:
 - Project team. The purpose of interviews with the UNDP Philippines Country Office (CO) and the RTA at the Bangkok Regional Hub (BRH) are the issues of implementation and execution. Main questions asked involved utilization of GEF grant resources;
 - National Executing partners. This involved execution personnel at the Project Management Unit (PMU) and FPE. Main questions to be asked are what was done or will be done with the GEF grant resources;
 - Project partners. This included the several NGOs, Local Government Units (LGUs) and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DENR) of the GoP, all of whom were involved with Project Technical Review Committee (PTRC), National Steering Committee

(NSC) and Landscape Technical Review Committee (LRTC). This also includes NGOs involved in pursuing SGP regular grants, strategic SGP grants and NGO Hub grants;

- Beneficiaries. This was to involve the local communities who will benefit from SGP resources.

All interviews with the various stakeholders were held face-to-face with the Evaluation Team, or virtually on Zoom, Teams or WhatsApp. A detailed itinerary of the Mission is shown in Appendix B. A full list of people interviewed, and documents reviewed are given in Appendix C and Appendix D respectively. The conclusions and recommendations of the MTR were to focus on the current setup of the SGP-7 Project and its suitability of completion by its scheduled date 16 February 2027.

10. There were few limitations to this MTR process. The Evaluation Team visited Aurora Province and Siargao Island, held virtual discussions with the Calamianes Group of Islands (CGI) and the Catubig Watershed, and met with several key stakeholders in Manila. The only limitation was the Evaluation Team not being able to visit CGI or the Catubig Watershed; however, there was sufficient information provided through virtual discussions and face-to-face meetings in Manila with these stakeholders to form opinions on what has transpired at these sites.

1.3 Structure of the MTR Report

11. This MTR report is presented as follows:
 - An overview of SGP-7 Project activities from a development context from its commencement of operations in February 2022 to the present;
 - An assessment of Project strategy and design;
 - An assessment of Project progress towards results;
 - An assessment of Project implementation and adaptive management;
 - Assessment of sustainability of Project outcomes; and
 - Findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

2.1 Development Context

12. The Philippine archipelago is composed of more than 7,000 islands that face risks of biodiversity loss, severe land degradation and threats from climate change and natural disasters. The country has a rich biodiversity, made up of a variety of ecosystems, species and genetic resources, with a high degree of animal endemism. The Philippines is one of 18 mega-biodiverse countries of the world, containing two-thirds of the earth's biodiversity and between 70% and 80% of the world's plant and animal species. The Philippines is also one of the world's biodiversity hotspots with at least 700 threatened species, thus making it one of the top global conservation areas. The country's marine and terrestrial ecosystems contain some of the richest biodiversity of flora and fauna and its waters are considered as part of the Coral Triangle.
13. Despite this rich ecology, unique geographic/topographic and climatic features and biodiversity, the country faces increasing threats from the destruction of biological resources due to *overexploitation, deforestation, land degradation, climate change and pollution*. Tourism and poor agriculture practices further contribute to pressures on vulnerable islands; slash and burn production threatens critical habitats. Often, the upland rural poor resort to slash and burn since they lack land ownership or land use in more favorable agricultural areas.
14. Civil society has not yet coalesced as a consolidated movement to steward environmental goods and services as they are often constrained by resources, geography and climate. At the governmental level, there are gaps, overlaps and at times, conflicting policies. There are also varying relationships between LGUs and local communities ranging from effective, to others duplicating work and being conflictual. In summary, there is no shared vision on biodiversity and land degradation goals, and actors often perform environmental actions in silos. Community groups and organizations have been unable to promote the stewardship of local resources, and livelihood and commercial activities pose threats to those most dependent on environmental resources. While there are pockets of innovative and sustainable interventions, *these have not manifested at regional levels*.
15. Drivers of biodiversity loss and habitat degradation are related to poverty and range from direct drivers of timber poaching, slash-and-burn and other unsustainable agriculture practices, charcoal production, wildlife hunting, unsustainable fishing practices leading to overharvesting, siltation, mangrove and land conversions, and climate change vulnerabilities (coral bleaching, strong typhoons and sea level rise). Indirect drivers include poverty, community lack of security, tourism and urbanization including infrastructure, lack of environmental awareness, poor natural resource management and agriculture governance.
16. The Philippines also experiences high climate change vulnerability. Many poor, remote and resource dependent communities are affected far more greatly by the impacts of climate change. There are over 35,000 km of coastal areas in the Philippines that are highly susceptible to sea level rise. Coral bleaching from global warming of oceans is now clearly observed in the target seascapes. These areas have also experienced massive destruction of their resource base in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda). Destruction of corals have resulted in very low fish catch in Samar and Palawan for several years after Typhoon Haiyan, impacting food security and livelihoods.

Figure 1: SGP-7 Targeted Landscapes



17. Communities in Aurora, Samar, Siargao, and the Calamian Islands are witnessing the rush to build resorts without adequate infrastructure or attention to biodiversity or water resources, and without a long-term vision of how certain developments can affect natural resources in the long run. They also suffer from the devastating impacts of habitat destruction, biodiversity loss, and extreme climate events. High levels of poverty, lack of awareness and resources for biodiversity protection, fragmented approaches to ecosystems based adaptation, weak governance, and gaps in national and local policies and institutions pose challenges and barriers to improved and sustainable practices. Expansive commercial interests, growing tourism, and a lack of effective public-private partnerships have led to unsustainable practices creating negative stressors on scarce natural resources.

Catubig Watershed in Samar Island

18. Samar Island is the third largest island in the Philippine archipelago and contains some of the Philippines' largest extant, unfragmented tracts of lowland rainforest. The island is located on the Philippines' eastern seaboard and belongs to the Eastern Visayas Bioregion. Samar Island has a rich biodiversity profile and high potential for contributing to biodiversity conservation and helping to meet the country's Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets. The total land area of Samar Island is 1,342,863 ha, with 854,051 ha classified as forest land and 488,812 ha as Alienable and Disposable Land, which are public lands not classified as forestland that can be privately owned. Agricultural production on Samar Island consists mostly of upland crop production, predominantly coconut and abaca, and lowland rainfed irrigated rice production. These crops have been impacted by factors such as low prices for coconut; disease in abaca production, and low productivity in rice production as well as limited access for support services and extension services particularly for upland and rainfed agriculture. Additionally, Samar Island is the most cyclone prone region in the country and experiences extreme heat-related events, increasing ocean temperatures, extreme rainfall events and sea level rise. Samar Island was pounded by Super Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, the world's strongest typhoon ever to hit land.

Aurora Province in Sierra Madre Mountain Range

19. The sites in Aurora Province lies at the mid-eastern coast of Luzon, 232 kilometers from Manila and has 8 municipalities of which 7 are coastal towns with a total of 410 kilometers of sand and reef that play a large role in tourism. Aurora is now recognized as one of the primary tourism destinations in Central Luzon. An estimated 60% of Aurora's land area is classified as forestland, with either steep or very steep slopes while the remaining lands are agricultural. The Province sits in the Sierra Madre Mountain Range, the country's longest mountain range, and contains the largest remaining cover of old-growth tropical rainforest with significant habitat diversity. Though considered a key biodiversity area, the majority of the forestland is covered by huge commercial Integrated Forest Management Agreements, most of which are now largely inactive. Protected Areas (PAs) in Aurora consist of a national park of 5,676 hectares, 20 watersheds and forest reserves covering 75,727 ha.
20. Large areas of remaining forest cover and mangroves are not under effective management and are de facto, under open access conditions. Traditional natural resources conservation systems are encroached upon, including from other Indigenous People's (IP) groups that are migrating from the Northern provinces. Deforestation, massive conversion of forests to agricultural lands, slash and burn farming, timber poaching, charcoal making are among unsustainable practices that degrade forest habitat or cause soil erosion. Fishery resources are also declining due to destructive fishing, overharvesting, siltation and habitat degradation. Moreover, Aurora is prone to climate change exposure, including extreme heat, rainfall events and sea level rise.

Siargao Island Protected Landscape and Seascape (SIPLAS) in Surigao Del Norte Province

21. In 1996, the Siargao Islands Protected Landscape and Seascape (SIPLAS) was identified as one of the top priority protected area sites and is the largest marine protected area of the Philippines with the largest mangrove reserve in Mindanao. It is also part of an important biogeographic region, the Eastern seaboard of Mindanao, identified as an important biodiversity corridor in the Philippines National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Siargao has 4,000 ha of contiguous mangrove stands in Del Carmen with the overall mangrove cover of Siargao group of islands at 7,768 ha. With its mangrove cover and forest land, SIPLAS contributes to water retention, erosion control and reduced flooding. These also support food security by maintaining crop diversity and species, play an important role in climate change adaptation and contribute to mitigation.
22. An estimated 30% of the settlers benefit from agricultural activities by utilizing 64% of the total land area of Siargao or 39,788 hectares. Soils in this landscape generally have poor fertility, and some of the natural vegetation, particularly in most of Socorro, is highly fire prone. Fishing ranks second as a source of income in SIPLAS with 24% of the population municipal fishers. The local fishing in Siargao Island is affected by unsustainable resource utilization such as dynamite fishing. Communities are also engaged in livestock raising, non-timber forest product gathering and tourism.

Calamianes Group of Islands in Palawan Province

23. The Calamianes Group of Islands (CGI) in the Province of Palawan is composed of the municipalities of Busuanga, Coron, Culion and Linapacan, consisting of 160 islands with a total land area of 194,700 ha and a total population of approximately 71,000. Much of the land in the Calamianes is not suited to agriculture and most of its communities rely heavily on fishing. The average monthly income of the fishing households in the CGI is often less than PHP 5,000 or US\$90. An estimated 60% of families (849) in Busuanga and 30% (3,005) in Coron do not have sufficient food.
24. Coron is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the country and is perceived to be quite expensive. Property and housing rentals are high, compared with other towns and cities. Consumer items are higher than anywhere else in the island and in the rest of Palawan. Most vegetables, fruits, basic cooking ingredients, grocery items sold in the public market and smaller markets are imported from Mindoro Occidental, Davao, Manila.

2.2 Problems that the SGP-7 Project Seeks to Address

25. The main problems that the SGP-7 Project sought to address with all landscapes are:
 - community organizations in target landscapes and seascapes lack a larger, more long-term vision and strategy for biodiversity protection, ecosystem and resource management, and suffer from weak adaptive management capacities exemplified by the proliferation of unsustainable livelihood practices and the lack of know-how in pursuing alternative sustainable livelihoods which contribute to conservation;
 - community organizations in target landscapes and seascapes have insufficient capacities and voice to efficiently and effectively advocate policy changes at the local and national levels to support biodiversity conservation and landscape and seascape resilience. This is particularly relevant for women, as most of the community organizations are headed by men;
 - community groups tend to be disparate, at geographical distances or operating in silos without a coherent approach to biodiversity conservation and landscape resilience;

- skepticism towards NGOs with the sector facing declining support from government and the donor community for institutional strengthening. There is also a perceived view of NGOs being associated with security threats or with the far left which further enhances distrust; and
 - weak environmental governance, institutional capacity and inter-governmental and multi-stakeholder collaborations.
26. Local government codes provide mechanisms for participatory governance. However, compliance with this mechanism is generally weakly implemented and poorly monitored. For instance, Rules for Accreditation of NGOs to participate in LGU cross-sectoral planning processes are perceived as cumbersome, and information on government programs and events and opportunities are scarce and unclear.
27. The lack of relevant national and local programs as well as cross sectoral integration of such programs on the ground, have prevented addressing location-specific needs for natural resource management and agricultural development options for communities in fragile landscapes. This includes a lack of focus by the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) on livelihood support services to communities to address their immediate needs. The National Community Based Forest Management program (for upland migrants in production forests) lacks resources to provide for upland agriculture needs of its client communities; national agricultural programs tend to be oriented to lowland agriculture.

2.3 SGP-7 Project Description and Strategy

28. The SGP-7 Project was designed with the objective to “build socio-ecological and economic resilience in four selected landscapes and seascapes through community-based activities on the Eastern Seaboard of the Philippines that includes (i) the Catubig Watershed Samar Island; (ii) Aurora Province in the Sierra Madre; (iii) Siargao Island Protected Landscape/Seascape and along the West Philippine Sea; and (iv) the Calamianes Group of Islands in Northern Palawan
29. The activities and outputs would lead to 5 outcomes planned under this Project:
- Outcome 1.1: Ecosystem services and biodiversity within four targeted landscapes and seascapes are enhanced through multi-functional land-use systems. This Outcome has one Output 1.1.1: “Community level small grant projects in the selected landscapes that restore degraded landscapes, improve connectivity, support innovation in biodiversity conservation and optimization of ecosystem services (including reforestation of riparian gallery forests, forest fire control, enhanced connectivity for wetlands and priority conservation areas; water catchment protection; participatory monitoring of species; restoration of biological corridors)”;
 - Outcome 1.2: Sustainability of production systems in the target landscapes is strengthened through integrated agro-ecological practices. This Outcome has one Output 1.2.1: “Targeted community projects enhancing the sustainability and resilience of production systems, including agroforestry systems, sustainable management of non-timber forest products, soil and water conservation practices, increased on-farm arboreal coverage with native species; biodiversity-friendly agro-ecological practices, multiple cropping systems and small-scale organic agriculture”;
 - Outcome 1.3: Livelihoods of communities in the target landscapes and seascapes are improved by developing eco-friendly, climate-adaptive small-scale community enterprises with clear market linkages. This Outcome has Output 1.3.1: “Targeted community projects promoting sustainable livelihoods, green businesses and market access, including ecotourism; ecological

processing and conversion of organic waste products; beekeeping; green value-added agrobusinesses integrated into value chains, micro-processing”;

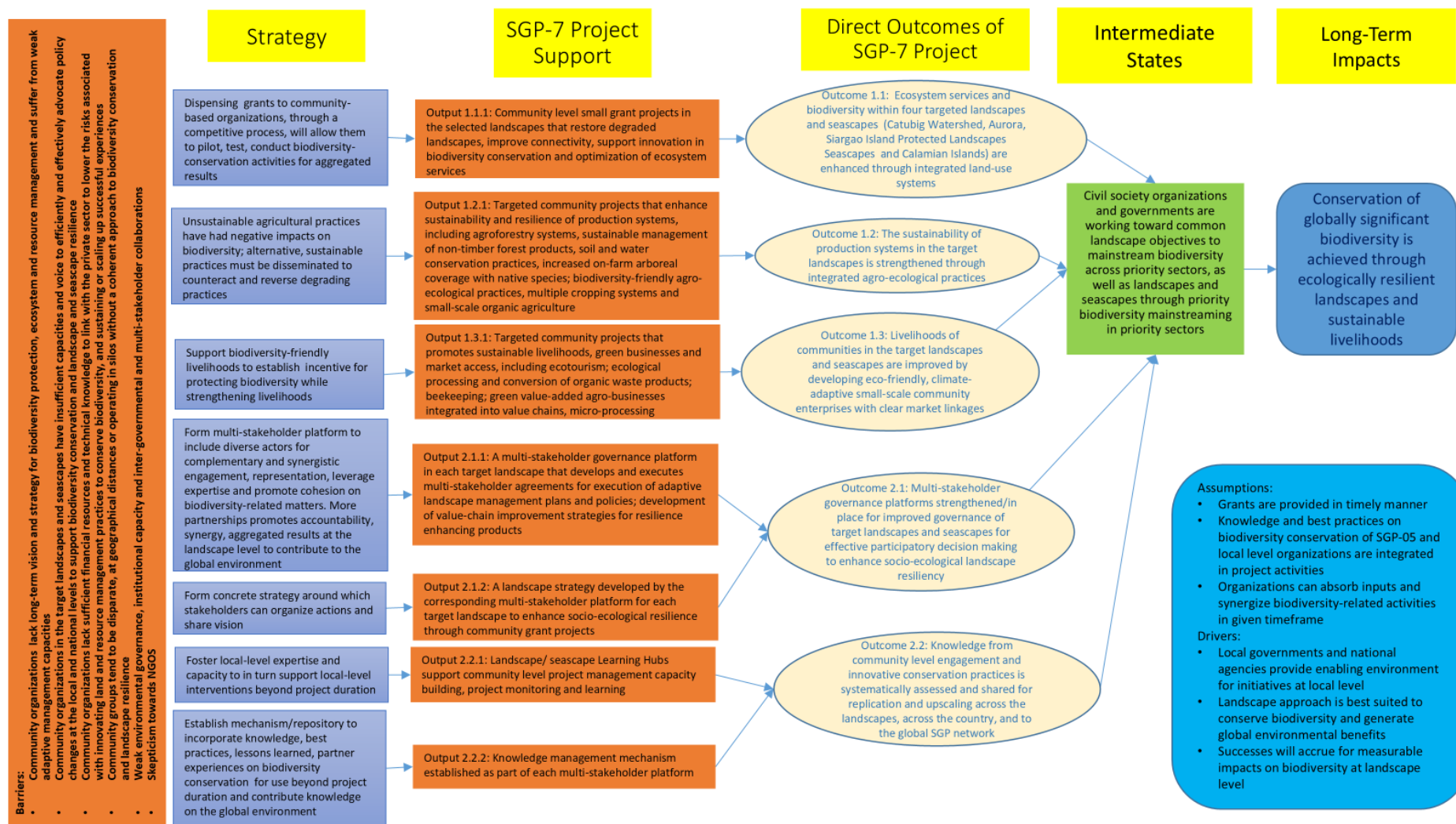
- Outcome 2.1: Multistakeholder governance platforms strengthened or in place for improved governance of target landscapes and seascapes for effective participatory decision-making to enhance socio-ecological landscape resiliency. This Outcome has 2 Outputs:
 - Output 2.1.1: “A multi-stakeholder governance platform in each target landscape develops and executes multi-stakeholder agreements for execution of adaptive landscape management plans and policies; development of value-chain improvement strategies for resilience enhancing products”; and
 - Output 2.1.2: “A landscape strategy developed by the corresponding multi-stakeholder platform for each target landscape to enhance socio-ecological resilience through community grant projects”;
- Outcome 2.2: Knowledge from community level engagement and innovative conservation practices is systematically assessed and shared for replication and upscaling across the landscapes, across the country, and to the global SGP network for global environmental benefits and sustainable development. This Outcome has 3 Outputs:
 - Output 2.2.1: “Landscape/seascape Learning Hubs support community level project management capacity building, project monitoring and learning”;
 - Output 2.2.2: “Knowledge management mechanism established as part of each multi-stakeholder platform”;
 - Output 2.2.3: “Strategic initiatives are supported to upscale successful SGP project experience and practice including community-NGO-government policy dialogues”.

30. A Theory of Change (ToC) for the SGP-7 Project is shown on Figure 2.

2.4 SGP-7 Project Implementation Arrangements

31. The implementing partner for the SGP-7 Project is the Foundation for the Philippines Environment (FPE) responsible and accountable for managing the SGP-7 Project, monitoring and evaluation of Project interventions, achieving Project outcomes, and for the effective use of UNDP resources and matching funds. FPE is responsible for overall implementation of the Project, including the central coordination of Project activities through a Project Management Unit (PMU). The PMU is staffed with a 10-person team consisting of a National Coordinator, a Regional Coordinator, an Institutional and Governance Officer, Knowledge Management and Communications Officer, an Admin and Finance Officer, an Admin and Finance Assistant, and 3 Technical Assistants.
32. The Implementing Partner reports to the National Steering Committee (NSC) to ensure Project planning, review, monitoring, evaluation, and all other reports are completed in a timely manner, that coordination among the various partners is effective and Project activities are completed in a timely manner. The current NSC has 11 members comprised of four (4) representatives from different Government Agencies: DENR-BMB, NEDA-ANRES, DILG, and NCIP, and six (6) representatives from civil society organizations: Malayang Lapihan ng Kababaihan (MALAYA KA), Foundation for Sustainable Society (FSS), Non Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme Philippines (NTFP), Philippine Business for Social Progress (PSP), RARE Philippines and Marine Wildlife Watch – Philippines, and one (1) representative from UNDP Philippines.

Figure 2: SGP-7 Theory of Change



2.5 SGP-7 Project Timing and Milestones

33. The SGP-7 Project was designed as a 5-year project that commenced on 16 February 2022 scheduled to end on 16 February 2027. Progress up to 30 September 2024 has been moderately unsatisfactory as further detailed in Para 64. Though the CEO Endorsement document was signed on 7 June 2021, the ProDoc was not signed until 16 February 2022 due to the late signing of the Special Presidential Authority (SPA), beyond the control of the Project. With the date of the Inception workshop of 13-14 September 2022, the Project did effectively commence operations in Q3 of 2022, a time when most of the PMU positions were staffed, and effective outreach to all stakeholders was established with COVID-19 restrictions being relaxed. At the time of writing this MTR report, there is just under 28 months of time remaining to complete all SGP-7 activities. Details of the challenges that remain to achieve all SGP-7 and other progress-related issues are provided in Section 3.3 of this report.
34. A summary of significant events for the first 31 months of the SPG-7 Project include:
- ProDoc signature on 16 February 2022;
 - full complement of PMU staff by August 2022;
 - the national Inception Workshop conducted on 13-14 September 2022 and site-level Inception Workshops conducted for:
 - Siargao Island Protected Landscape/Seascape (SIPLAS) on 11-13 October at Travelers Beach Resort, General Luna, Siargao;
 - Calamianes Group of Islands on 25-27 October 2022 at Coron Weston Resort, Coron, Palawan;
 - Aurora Province on 8-10 November 2022 at Bay's Inn Resort, Baler, Aurora; and
 - Catubig Watershed on 16-18 November 2022 at Royal Palm Resort Hotel, Pambujan, Northern Samar;
 - first SGP-7 disbursement on 27 December 2022;
 - concept note and strategic and regular grant proposal development workshops from February to June 2023;
 - capacity building writing workshops to support the development of high-quality proposals by potential grantees in September 2023;
 - biodiversity awareness and capacity events for the youth sector during October-November 2023;
 - finalization and approval of landscape strategies for each of the 4 target landscape/seascape in December 2023;
 - first call for grant proposals 15 January-15 February 2024;
 - second call for proposals (limited to Landscape NGO Hubs) 15-30 April 2024;
 - review of proposals by LRTC from March to May 2024;
 - review of proposals by PTRC starting on 28 May 2024;
 - review of 11 grant proposals by NSC starting 10 July 2024.

2.6 Main Stakeholders

35. To achieve the specific SGP-7 Project objective of “building socio-ecological and economic resilience in four selected landscapes and seascapes through community-based activities on the Eastern Seaboard of the Philippines”, the SGP-7 Project needed to engage a wide range of stakeholders in the selected landscapes and seascapes (as specified in the ProDoc) that included:
- grant proponents from locally-based CSOs who are pursuing SGP-7 *regular grants*⁴ who are listed in Appendix H;
 - CSOs (NGOs who are seeking SGP-7 grants for *NGO hub services*⁵ or *strategic grants*⁶;
 - members of the Landscape Round Table Committee (LRTC) who were setup as multi-sector governance platforms for each of the 4 landscapes/seascapes that brought together different stakeholders, including CSOs, government agencies, academia, and vulnerable groups;
 - members of the Project Technical Review Committee (PTRC) who provide technical review of the upgraded proposals prior to submission to the NSC Chair;
 - the National Steering Committee (NSC) whose members are listed in Para 32 that includes the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR);
 - local community associations.
36. Even though there is an NGO modality to the implementation of the SGP-7 Project (which is under the National Implementation Modality), the DENR has had significant involvement in the SPG-7 Project. With the Secretary of the DENR coming from a civil society community background and having an educational background as a scientist, there is a very strong backing from GoP for the SGP-7 Project which has the potential to transform poorer communities and enabling them to manage their own natural resources and disaster risk reductions. The Director of FASPS of DENR also has a similar background who regularly conducts field trips to various communities. Hence, DENR as the Chair to the NSC serves as a strong backbone to the SGP-7 Project.

⁴ These grants are targeted community projects that are to carry out restorative, rehabilitative and sustainable activities to improve biodiversity conservation and reverse land degradation; to identify ways to render sustainable agriculture more practical, accessible, and viable for the purposes of biodiversity protection and land rehabilitation; and to promote sustainable livelihoods, green businesses and market access (including ecotourism; ecological processing and conversion of organic waste products; beekeeping; green value-added agro-businesses integrated into value chains, micro-processing).

⁵ These are NGO entities serving as central hubs for technical guidance, information gathering, and knowledge dissemination.

⁶ Strategic grants are strategic initiatives to upscale successful SGP project experience and practice including community-NGO-government policy dialogues.

3. FINDINGS

3.1 Project Strategy

37. The SGP-7 Project is a project that was to build on ongoing stakeholder efforts to preserve biodiversity from grants funded through the 5th operational phase of the GEF-SGP in the Philippines. Project preparations for the SGP-7 Project were conducted in 2019 to early 2020 just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the PPG, a clearer, more detailed understanding was obtained of the types of activities CSOs can carry out and the kind of beneficiaries they are supporting. PPG consultations also provided an opportunity to understand more fully the current threats and barriers, as well as opportunities for synergies, and innovations. This included collaborations and partnerships with other agencies government and civil society to develop and achieve broader landscape-level impacts.
38. Three key addition of the SGP-7 Project to other SGP projects that was identified during the PPG was:
 - a component targeting knowledge management to overcome one of the gaps of previous SGP project: project results, accomplishments, innovations and data that were not often collected using a systematic approach resulting in a large number of lessons learned and best practices that are left underused and unshared. A core aspect of the knowledge management component was to centrally organize the lessons learned to ensure that they reach appropriate target groups;
 - development of landscape strategies; and
 - establishment of multi-stakeholder platforms or the LRTCs.
39. The ProDoc was signed on 16 February 2022 with an intended duration of 60 months (until 16 February 2027) and with an Inception Workshop taking place on 13-14 September 2022. The strategy is illustrated in a Theory of Change (ToC) diagram on Figure 2 that was re-drawn from the original version. The ToC diagram illustrates the pathways from the baseline or the barriers of the Project to the strategies employed, the outputs and the subsequent intended outcomes of SGP-7. These outcomes were to generate an intermediate state and long-term impact of the Project.
40. Underlying assumptions of each baseline activity towards their contribution to achieving the overall Project results was included in the ToC:
 - grants are provided in timely manner;
 - knowledge and best practices on biodiversity conservation of SGP-05 and local level organizations are integrated in project activities; and
 - organizations can absorb inputs and synergize biodiversity-related activities in given timeframe.
41. Drivers of the SGP-7 process included:
 - local governments and national agencies provide enabling environment for initiatives at local level;
 - landscape approach is best suited to conserve biodiversity and generate global environmental benefits;
 - successes will accrue for measurable impacts on biodiversity at landscape level.

42. There were 8 Project risks in the ProDoc. Though there were no issues with the SGP-7 Project design and institutional arrangements, there were impacts related to the Project risk of “COVID-19 may delay project implementation, affecting health of beneficiaries, limiting areas in which the project can be implemented, limiting face-to-face consultations among stakeholders, further marginalizing the disenfranchised that have limited access to resources and technology”. The impacts were related to the need to build capacities of CSOs and LGUs, as explained in Para 62. This led to poor progress of the SGP-7 Project with the primary issue for this MTR being the process of grant approvals, further elaborated in Section 3.2.
43. A review of the SGP-7 ProDoc also reveals that gender issues were considered in the SGP-7 Project. There is a focus on poor Filipino women and biodiversity, with many of the SGP-7 Project activities being in the agricultural sector. Though their contributions to the sector are not accurately measured, women farmers are at a greater disadvantage as they are often underutilized with very few of them owning land, and having access to credit, technology and other resources. As a result, women are less likely to be targeted for extension services as many extension agents still do not recognize women as farmers. Despite their primary role in food security for families, less than 35% of women farmers have access to irrigation, seeds, training, fertilizers and seeds subsidy, pest control management, and to extension services.
44. Women are involved in fisheries and aquaculture mainly because it provides them with better income earning opportunities than other sectors, or their families owned the farms where they have to share work or due to lack of other employment options. Women are involved in various stages of aquaculture from pond preparation, seed collection and hatcheries, feeding and guarding, account and book-keeping, seafood processing, marketing and research and development. Their role is growing significantly in certain areas like the fish processing industry.
45. The Philippines ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) on 5 August 1980, with the Philippines having several other laws, measures and instruments that protect women from discrimination and violence. The GoP’s commitment to integrate and mainstream gender perspectives and concerns into national environmental policies is articulated in the most updated strategic plans of DENR and its attached agencies and the Climate Change Commission. The Project is intent on assisting the GoP in complying with these numerous laws to protect women from discrimination and violence through:
- initial mapping of gender-related resources and expertise in target landscapes and provinces;
 - understanding relevant gender-related information gathered in target landscapes; and
 - implementing a Gender Action Plan where substantive gender indicators in the PRF are to be monitored and reported throughout the SGP-7 Project duration. A separate gender-related PRF is available in the ProDoc that has gender-related actions with baseline, indicator and targets.

3.2 Analysis of Project Results Framework

46. All SGP-7 Project indicators and targets in the PRF meet “SMART” criteria⁷ that are effective in monitoring the Project though there were no risks and assumptions associated with each indicator:

⁷ Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound

- the PRF contains numerical values for the baseline, mid-term targets and EoP targets which makes it easy to monitor progress;
- targets such as the number of beneficiaries and hectares of land or marine habitat protected, facilitates effective tracking of progress;
- though the time-bound aspects of the indicators were not defined, an assumption is made that once the regular grants are completed, there would be progress on towards the targets of the indicators;
- with no risks in the PRF, an assessment of the risk identification in the UNDP Risk Register (Annex 5 of the ProDoc) reveals identified 8 risks to be appropriate. Some of these risks include:
 - discriminations against women based on gender;
 - poor site selection within or adjacent to critical habitats or environmentally sensitive areas.....may enable harvesting of natural resources and forests, plantation development or reforestation;
 - climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of floods in the project area; and commercial interests outside of the project may produce negative environmental impacts.
 - security threats posed by those engaged in illegal wildlife/natural resource trade/extraction in more remote communities, against those that are part of community monitoring and enforcement, may delay project implementation or cause social conflict.

All risks appear to be logical for the SGP-7 Project. However, due to the lack of any disbursed grants, social, environmental, financial, operational, organisational, political, regulatory, strategic, safety and security and other risks have not yet emerged. It is expected that these risks may emerge once grants have been disbursed.

47. As such, the SGP-7 Project design and formulation is rated as **satisfactory** with no further comments.
48. With SGP-7 Project efforts to make up for time lost to COVID-19 and capacity building efforts for CSOs and LGUs (as explained in Paras 66-67), a no-cost extension of the Project is a likely outcome. However, the Project PRF will not need any reset to account for any extension that the Project may seek.

3.3 Progress towards Results

49. Progress towards results is provided on Table 1 against the EOP targets in the SGP-7 Project PRF. Comments on some of the ratings are provided in the following paragraphs. For Table 1, the “achievement rating” is color-coded according to the following scheme:

Green: Completed, indicator shows successful achievements	Yellow: Indicator shows expected completion by the EOP	Red: Indicator shows poor achievement – unlikely to be completed by project closure
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Project objective level targets:

50. The Project reports that in Indicator 1, the number of direct beneficiaries is 1,820 people who benefitted from:

Table 1: Progress Towards the SGP-7 Project PRF (from the February 2022 ProDoc)

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Mid-Term Target	End-of-Project Target	Midterm Level and Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
Project Objective: To build socio-ecological and economic resilience in four (4) selected landscapes and seascapes on the Eastern Seaboard of the Philippines - (1) Catubig Watershed Samar Island, (2) Aurora Province in the Sierra Madre, (3) Siargao Island Protected Landscape/Seascape - and along the West Philippine Sea - (4) Calamian Islands in Northern Palawan - through community-based activities for global environmental benefits and sustainable development	Mandatory Indicator 1: # direct project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (individual people)		10,000 5,000 women; 5,000 men	20,000 10,000 women; 10,000 men ⁸	1,820 direct project beneficiaries 942 women 876 men 2 LGBTQIA		See Para 50
	Mandatory Indicator 2: # indirect project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (individual people)		100,000	300,000 150,000 women; 150,000 men	353 indirect project beneficiaries 209 women 144 men		See Para 51
	Mandatory GEF Core Indicators 2 - 5: Core Indicator 3. Area of land restored (hectares)	65,000	2,000	5,000 ⁹	0		See Para 52
	Core Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas).	70,000	25,000	65,000 ¹⁰	0		
	Core Indicator 5: Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity (hectares)	60,000	10,000	30,000 ¹¹	0		
Outcome 1.1: Ecosystem services and biodiversity within four targeted landscapes and seascapes (Catubig Watershed, Aurora,	Indicator 6: Number of people (disaggregated by gender) within the landscape communities adopting biodiversity conservation, marine	1,500	At least 3,000 men; 3,000 women	At least 6,000 men, 6,000 women	0		See Para 53

⁸ Assume 4 core LGUs per landscape; each LGU has 5-20 villages; each village has 200 households of which 25 % will adopt.

⁹ The restoration work planned for this project is specifically to reverse degraded ecosystems, enhance biodiversity, reforest and re-vegetate biodiversity corridors, coastal zones, and areas that have been heavily deforested.

¹⁰ The target for “Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (Million Hectares)” has been changed to 65,000 hectares. The number has been enhanced to include the area that will be covered by landscape strategies, environmental governance instruments. It is anticipated that there will be 20,000 hectares (approximately 4 municipalities) covered in Samar; 10,000 hectares (approximately 2 municipalities) in Aurora; 15,000 hectares (approximately 3 municipalities) in Calamianes Group of Islands and 20,000 hectares (approximately 3/4 municipalities) in Siargao.

¹¹ The target “Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity (hectares)” has been increased to 30,000 hectares. It takes into account the coastal zones covered by planned interventions. SGP-07 anticipates 10,000 hectares of seascape covered in Samar, 8,000 hectares in the Calamianes Group of Islands; 10,000 hectares of seascape in Siargao and 2,000 hectares in Aurora.

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Mid-Term Target	End-of-Project Target	Midterm Level and Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
Siargao Island Protected Landscapes Seascapes and Calamian Islands) are enhanced through integrated land-use systems	protection and sustainable development methods/techniques						
	Indicator 7: Number of community organizations leading and conducting improved land-use management practice	16	At least 30	At least 80	0		
	Indicator 8: Percentage of SGP-07 projects that improve the participation of women in natural resource governance	0	At least 10%	At least 40%	0		
Outcome 1.2: The sustainability of production systems in the target landscapes is strengthened through integrated agro-ecological practices.	Indicator 9: Number of farmers and fisherfolk (disaggregated by gender) within the landscape communities adopting appropriate agro-ecological/marine/coastal ecosystems-based technologies and systems	1,500	1,000 men; 1,000 women	At least 2,000 men; 2,000 women	0		See Para 54
Outcome 1.3: Livelihoods of communities in the target landscapes and seascapes are improved by developing eco-friendly, climate-adaptive small-scale community enterprises with clear market linkages	Indicator 10: Number of innovative value-added products generated by community projects practicing biodiversity conservation and agro-ecological resource management	5	10	30	0		See Para 55
	Indicator 11: Number of biodiversity-friendly, climate-resilient community initiatives upgraded to profitable enterprises supported by grants	0	1	5 At least two of which are female led	0		
	Indicator 12: Number of projects that target socio-economic benefits and services for women	unknown	At least 5	At least 15	0		
Outcome 2.1: Multi-stakeholder governance platforms strengthened/in place for improved governance of target landscapes and seascapes for effective participatory decision making to enhance socio-ecological landscape resiliency	Indicator 13: Number of multi-stakeholder platforms operational in each sub-landscape, with at least 40% participation of women		4	4	4		See Para Error! Reference source not found.
	Indicator 14: Number of landscape strategies produced through a multi-stakeholder governance platform	0	1	4	4		See Para 58

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Mid-Term Target	End-of-Project Target	Midterm Level and Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
	with specified gender considerations and targets ¹²						
Outcome 2.2: Knowledge from community level engagement and innovative conservation practices is systematically assessed and shared for replication and upscaling across the landscapes, across the country, and to the global SGP network	Indicator 15: Number of landscape-level case studies which include best practices and lessons learned that can be upscaled at the policy-level	3	0	4	0		See Paras 59-60
	Indicator 16: Number of gender-responsive knowledge management and communication strategies	0	1 national, umbrella knowledge management strategy (to be adapted throughout project) 1 national communications strategy (to be adapted throughout project) 4 landscape-specific communications and knowledge management strategies	6 1 umbrella knowledge management strategy 1 national communications strategy 4 landscape-specific communications and knowledge management strategies	0		See Paras 61-63

¹² Examples include: PA plans, local land use and development plans incorporating improved landscape /seascape governance; sectoral plans.

- Socio-ecological Production Landscape and Seascape (SEPLS) baseline assessment workshops to develop indicators on community and ecosystem resilience as of late 2023. The baseline assessments adhered to the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Programme (COMDEKS) framework, starting with thorough SEPLS baseline assessments;
 - additional consultations carried out to support the formulation of landscape strategies for each target landscape/seascape;
 - capacity building writing workshops to support the development of high-quality proposals by potential grantees from September to November 2023;
 - biodiversity awareness and capacity events for the youth sector, or #Youth4Biodiversity (#Y4B);
 - call for submission and review of grant proposals on 15 January 2024.
51. For Indicator 2, the number of indirect Project beneficiaries is 353 persons¹³ who benefitted from:
- participation in the 17th National Marine Science Conference Consultation Workshop in Batangas City on 20-22 July 2023, hosted by Batangas State University;
 - breakout session hosted by the Project during the 3rd National Protected Area Conference organized on 25-28 June 2024 in Quezon City.
52. There was no progress on Core Indicators 3-5, and Indicators 6 to 12, encompassing Outcomes 1.1 to 1.3, due to none of the grants having yet disbursed funds. However, by the end of 2024:
- Core indicator 3 will have 3,094 ha of land restored from activities in Catubig, CGI and Aurora Province (62% of EoP target). Long-term restoration is likely not achievable considering the significant delays in project implementation, and the need for at least 3-5 years before an area can be considered as fully restored;
 - Core indicator 4 will have 94,744 ha of landscapes under improved practices (146% of EoP target);
 - Core indicator 5 will have 16,276 ha under improved practices to benefit biodiversity (54% of EoP target).
- [Outcome 1.1: Ecosystem services and biodiversity within four targeted landscapes and seascapes \(Catubig Watershed, Aurora, Siargao Island Protected Landscapes Seascapes and Calamian Islands\) are enhanced through integrated land-use systems](#)
53. Progress on this Outcome is zero for all indicators. However, there are expectations of what each indicator will generate by the end of 2024 with 29 other grants under review (with 20 already approved) and when regular grants are being implemented:
- Indicator 6 will have 19,106 people (159% of the EOP target, 9,191 men – 153% of the EOP target and 9,915 women – 165% of the EOP target) within the landscape communities adopting biodiversity conservation, marine protection and sustainable development methods and techniques;

¹³ Estimates on indirect beneficiaries is based on the average households' sizes in the target landscapes and on the number of direct grant beneficiaries.

- Indicator 7 will have 80 community organizations to lead and conduct improved land-use management practices (100% of the EOP target);
- Indicator 8 will have 11 proposals expected to be approved by the end of 2024, foreseen to contribute directly to the improvement of women’s participation in natural resource governance (250% of the EOP target).

Outcome 1.2: The sustainability of production systems in the target landscapes is strengthened through integrated agro-ecological practices

54. Progress on this Outcome (Indicator 9) is to zero, although it is anticipated that by the end of 2024 that 1,583 farmers and fisherfolk (932 men – 47% of the EOP, 651 women – 33% of the EOP) within the landscape communities will adopt appropriate agro-ecological/marine/coastal ecosystems-based technologies and systems in 10 out of 11 grant proposals.

Outcome 1.3: Livelihoods of communities in the target landscapes and seascapes are improved by developing eco-friendly, climate-adaptive small-scale community enterprises with clear market linkages

55. Progress on this Outcome is zero for all indicators. However, there are expectations of what each indicator will generate by the end of 2024:
- Indicator 10 is expected to generate 24 innovative value-added products (80% of the EOP target) in 6 out of the 11 grant proposals;
 - Indicator 11 is expected to generate 10 biodiversity-friendly, climate resilience community initiatives updated to profitable enterprises, of which 10 are female-led (500 % of the EOP target) in 10 of the 11 grant proposals;
 - Indicator 12 is expected to target socio-economic benefits and services for women (73% of the EOP target), involving 9,191 men and 9,915 women, totaling 19,106 participants in the 11 grant proposals.
56. Table 2 provides a listing of the 11 grants that were approved from the first call for proposals (15 January to 15 February 2024), with 29 other grants under review and a second call for proposals (limited to landscape-level NGO Hub proposals from 15-30 April 2024).

Outcome 2.1: Multi-stakeholder governance platforms strengthened/in place for improved governance of target landscapes and seascapes for effective participatory decision making to enhance socio-ecological landscape resiliency

57. For Indicator 13, LRTCs were setup as multi-sector governance platforms for each of the 4 landscapes/seascapes that brought together different stakeholders, including CSOs, government agencies, academia, and vulnerable groups (such as women, indigenous people, fisherfolk, farmers, and youth). LRTCs are responsible for identifying needs and opportunities in the landscape, monitoring small grant implementation, and integrating landscape strategies into grants led by CSOs. The composition of the LRTCs has an average of 46.5% women participation.

Table 2: Proposed and Approved Grants of the SGP-7 Project from First and Second Calls for Grant Proposals

Landscape	Proposed Budget	Approved to date (as of July 2024) ¹⁴
A. Catubig Watershed	1 - Landscape Level NGO Hub Grant 2 - Strategic Grant 6 - Regular Grants Proposed Budget: PHP 40,950,000 Total of 8 proposals submitted	Regular Grant #1 = PHP 2,637,980 (US\$49,965) Regular Grant #2 = PHP 2,815,459 (US\$50,515) Landscape Level NGO HUB Grant #3 = PHP 8,184,480 (US\$146,518) Sub-total: PHP 13,584,700 (US\$246,998)
B. Calamianes Group of Islands	1 - Landscape Level NGO Hub Grant 1 - Strategic Grant 10 - Regular Grants Proposed Budget: PHP 40,800,000 Total of 15 proposals submitted	Strategic Grant #4 = PHP 8,179,592 (US\$149,953) Regular Grant #5 = PHP 2,757,600 (US\$49,994) Regular Grant #6 = PHP 1,934,200 (US\$35,005) Regular Grant #7 = PHP 2,275,560 (US\$39,250) Sub-total: PHP 15,081,095 (US\$274,202)
C. Siargao Island Protected Landscape/Seascape (SIPLAS)	1- Landscape Level NGO Hub Grant 1. Strategic Grant 9- Regular Grants Proposed Budget: PHP 40,800,000 Total of 6 proposals submitted	Strategic Grant #8. = PHP 8,286,420 (US\$147,726) Landscape Level NGO HUB Grant #9 = PHP 10,084,692 (US\$145,415) Sub-total: PHP 16,122,748 (US\$293,141)
D. Aurora Province	1- Landscape Level NGO Hub Grant 1- Strategic Grant 11- Regular Grants Proposed Budget: PHP 40,850,000 Total of 21 proposals submitted	Strategic Grant #10 = PHP 7,856,500 (US\$142,845) Regular Grant #11 = PHP PHP 2,749,970 (US\$50,000) Sub- Total: PHP 10,606,470 (US\$192,845)
Totals:	PHP 163,053,335 (US\$2,964,606)	PHP 55,856,500 (US\$1,007,186)

58. For Indicator 14, four landscape strategies were produced through the multi-stakeholder governance platforms with specified gender considerations and targets (100% of the EOP target) in late 2023. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) resulted in comprehensive Socio-ecological Production Landscape and Seascape (SEPLS) baseline assessments across all four target landscapes/seascapes, as per the COMDEKS approach. Following these SEPLS baseline assessments, the Project developed the landscape strategies for each target landscape/seascape, aiming to create a balanced approach to development that enhances biodiversity, supports sustainable livelihoods, improves governance, and builds resilience to climate change impacts. These strategies emphasize community engagement

¹⁴ Only estimates of US dollars based on various exchange rates

and collaborative efforts among diverse stakeholders for long-term environmental and socio-economic sustainability. Draft landscape strategies were shared, presented and approved with relevant stakeholders of the governance framework including the LTRCs. These activities involved a total of 152 participants (68 men, 84 women).

[Outcome 2.2: Knowledge from community level engagement and innovative conservation practices is systematically assessed and shared for replication and upscaling across the landscapes, across the country, and to the global SGP network](#)

59. For Outcome 2.2, there was no progress on Indicators 15 and 16:
- there were no landscape-level case studies which include best practices and lessons learned that can be upscaled at the policy-level;
 - there were no gender-responsive knowledge management and communication strategies.
60. However, for Indicator 15, the Project has included the development of case studies in each of the target landscapes/seascapes as part of the landscape/seascape strategies. These case studies will document lessons learned, good practices and innovative solutions arising out of the initiatives funded through the planning, regular, strategic and NGO hub grants. Their development will start when implementation of grant projects is underway by the end of 2024 and starting to generate results and lessons learned.
61. For Indicator 16, the Project has expanded on the draft umbrella Knowledge Management (KM) and national communication strategies with feedback received from various surveys carried out when developing the landscape strategies. With the Project actively documenting best practices and lessons learned including process documentation, photos, and audio recordings throughout 2023 and early 2024, the Project has included provisions for knowledge capture and project documentation, the creation of knowledge repositories and thematic categorization, as well as strategies for knowledge sharing and utilization. Dissemination of these strategies occurred through the FPE Facebook page and other websites. The Project plans to finalize such strategies and delineate them in landscape-specific strategies by the end of 2024.
62. As a part of Outcome 2.2, NGOs were to be hired as knowledge and technical assistance hubs to assist communities in engaging in innovative conservation practices. They would do so employing a systematic approach that would have the potential for replication and upscaling across the other landscapes in the Philippines and to the global SGP network. Tasks for NGO hubs was to include, amongst others:
- support for proposal development for small community organizations through providing research and analytical tools;
 - establishing community-based monitoring tools to assess results including gender assessments;
 - facilitating regular self-assessments of grant proponents including external assessments and sharing of best practices with other participating organizations;
 - catalyzing partnerships between private sector and communities particularly in the area of tourism, bringing sustainable agricultural and handicrafts production to market;
 - provide venues for CSOs, LGUs, indigenous peoples (IPs) and national government agencies to discuss emerging themes, opportunities for scaling-up of interventions to non-SGP areas, using pilot sites as demonstration sites

63. To date, only 2 NGOs have been approved as NGO hubs with disbursement of their grants still pending¹⁵. With the first call for grant proposals on 15 January 2024, the Project requested 50 grant proposals resulting in two NGO Hub proposals that did not qualify¹⁶. A second call for NGO Hub proposals did result in 2 NGO Hub proposals being accepted. However, the Project did not prioritize NGO hub proposals who were supposed to assist communities with their grant proposal preparations. The result as of 30 June 2024 was 11 proposals were approved 6 regular grants, 2 NGO Hub and 3 strategic grants approved. This translates into an estimated 31 remaining regular grant proposals who would not receive any technical assistance from NGO Hubs as designed. This was partially an oversight of the PMU and FPE, and partly the urgency to make up for lost time by getting all types of grants disbursed and implemented by the end of 2024. This clearly has not worked out as intended.
64. Overall, progress has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with many CSOs and potential grantees having been negatively affected. This forced the Project to re-establish the NSC and organize more than 5 strategic and regular grant proposal development workshops from October 2022 to October 2023 to help re-build CSO capacity in developing landscape high-quality grant proposals for the Project. Not only did this take substantial time from the PMU and FPE, no GEF resources were provided to the PMU for this effort. As such, assuming regular grants are to be completed prior to the February 2027 EoP date of the SGP-7 Project, there is little to no time remaining for NGO Hubs to undertake the tasks listed in Para 62. The rating for objective and outcome achievements is ***moderately unsatisfactory***, primarily due to the lack of disbursed regular, strategic and NGO Hub grants to date.

3.2.1. Remaining Barriers to Achieving Project Objective

65. The remaining barriers to the full achievement of the outcomes of the SGP-7 Project include:
- making up for the loss of time from the COVID-19 pandemic and the difficulties in the recruitment of PMU staff;
 - making up for the loss of time from the accompanying loss of CSO and NGO capacities due to the pandemic, and the need to rebuild those capacities to reach Outcomes 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3;
 - a slow inefficient process for approving regular as well as NGO Hub and strategic grants to achieve Outcomes 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3, and to position the Project to achieve Outcomes 2.1 and 2.2.
66. The loss of time and the inefficient process of grant approvals leads to uncertainties on achieving the Project's outcomes:
- there is a risk that implementation of some of the regular grant proposals from the second call for proposals will extend beyond the EoP date of 16 February 2027 especially if these grants start implementation after 16 February 2025;

¹⁵ This includes:

- Strategic Grant #4??: CAT-SG-001 “Enhancing Resiliency of Selected Communities in Catubig Watershed Areas through Community-Based Green Financing” by Samar Crusade against Poverty, Inc. (SCPI): 1,000 individuals (600 men, 400 women); and
- Strategic Grant #8: SIA-SG-003 “KAHIUSA: Empowering PACBRMA Communities through Collaboration and Capacity Building for Sustainable Resource Management in SIPLAS” by Lokal Lab Siargao (LKLLB): 4,236 individuals (2,198 men, 2,038 women).

¹⁶ An additional 9 proposals were already approved by the NSC-PTRC in late November.

- there will be a third call for proposals for 20+ regular grant proposals in November 2024. These grants will need to be implemented in 24 months or less and be completed by the current EoP date of 16 February 2027;
 - there will be a fourth call for regular grant proposals sometime between February and May 2025. These grant proposals will need to be implemented in less than 18 months, also so that these proposals do not extend implementation beyond the EoP date of 16 February 2027;
 - there will be no time for the NGO Hub to systematically monitor grant impacts and disseminate knowledge from community level engagement and innovative conservation practices for replication and upscaling across Filipino landscapes and to the global SGP network. This assumes that all regular grants complete implementation by 16 February 2027;
 - assistance from DENR and BFAR is needed to support ground implementation of approved regular grant proposals. Notably on landscape restoration, DENR should assist the grantees with logistics on supply of seedlings and technical advice on planting, and other activities.
67. Without an extension of 24 months to complete monitoring and knowledge dissemination of the Project, the impact of these barriers would be sustained. The granting of a 24-month Project extension to implement remaining aspects of the Project strategy with remaining SGP-7 Project resources, would remove the significant barriers of an inefficient grant approval process and the loss of time due to the pandemic.

3.2.2. Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming

68. Despite not having disbursed any grants, the SGP-7 Project has prioritized gender equality and women's empowerment throughout all of its activities:
- baseline and post-consultation assessments across all project sites revealed a significant increase in women's knowledge and participation particularly in agriculture and conservation. This ensured that women's perspectives were central to the decision-making process;
 - women were major participants in formulating landscape strategies from strategy formulation to proposal review and governance structures;
 - the Project has actively encouraged women's involvement in traditionally male dominated jobs such as watershed management, forest restoration, and marine conservation;
 - the Project has received a substantial number of proposals from women-led organizations, showcasing their growing role in conservation efforts and women taking on leadership roles in project design; and
 - the Project has strengthened women's participation at all levels of governance from community-based positions to women in academia contributing as resource speakers and collaborators. This also included involvement of women as the chairs, co-chairs and participants in the LRTCs and the PTRC.

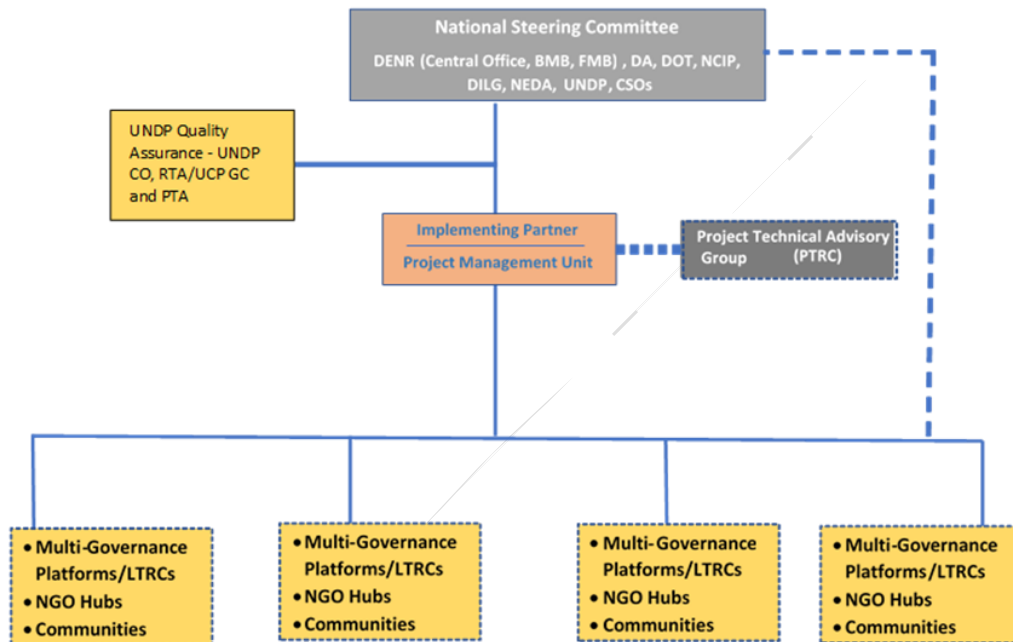
3.3. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

3.3.1. Management Arrangements

69. Management arrangements for the SGP-7 Project are covered under Paras 31-32 and illustrated in Figure 3. Under this NGO implementation modality, UNDP have an oversight role with Project management and implementation being the responsibility of the Implementing Partner, FPE. The

role of DENR is confined to co-chairing the NSC, the main decision-making body of the SGP at the country level, and providing overall oversight, guidance and direction to the country programme. FPE, having established a PMU for the overall coordination and resource management of the SGP-7 Project, works closely with other relevant stakeholders through the PMU to provide centralized project management services, coordinates Project activities, and facilitates stakeholder relationships, with the mindset of an NGO to implement extensive outreach to all SGP communities. In addition, there is the ease of recruiting consultants and other personnel without having to undergo rigorous recruitment procedures of the GoP or UNDP. As such, the NGO modality for implementing SGP projects appears to be working well.

Figure 3: Management arrangements for the UNDP-GEF Project “Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in the Philippines” (SGP-7 Project)



70. Adaptive management by FPE of the SGP-7 Project implementation has mainly consisted of:

- undertaking capacity building activities between October 2022 and October 2023 as a reaction to low capacities of CBOs, NGOs and grantees in their understanding of the SGP process that left them ill-equipped to prepare SGP grant applications. This took considerable time from the PMU;
- adapting to a new schedule caused by the delays in obtaining approvals from the NSC for all grants from the first and second calls for proposals (second call was only limited to landscape level NGO hub grants). There were attempts to streamline the grant approval process that were not optimized with more improvements needed (as detailed in Para 101). To date, 11 grants have been approved by the NSC but are currently awaiting grant disbursement;
- one aspect of Project implementation that was overlooked was the need to prioritize the selection of NGO Hubs as a responsible party for preparing regular grants for communities. The first call for proposals was for regular, NGO Hub and strategic proposals without due consideration of the need for NGO Hubs to be deployed first to assist in regular grant preparations. FPE acknowledges this oversight but were trapped by their efforts to try to bring

the SGP-7 grant process back on schedule from the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to rebuild CSO capacities (as detailed in Para 97)¹⁷.

Overall, the implementation approach and adaptive management of the SGP-7 Project are rated as **moderately unsatisfactory** considering SGP-7 progress is behind schedule.

3.3.2. Work Planning

71. Annual work plans for 2022 to 2024 have been provided to the MTR team that details the planned activities for the SGP-7 Project. As such, work planning for the SGP-7 Project appears to be appropriate.

3.3.3 Finance and Co-Finance

72. After 31 months of Project disbursements, US\$732,803, or 16.5% of the SGP-7 Project grant of US\$4.436 million, has been expended as of 31 August 2024. The expenditure of the GEF SGP-7 Project budget up to 31 August 2024 can be characterized as follows:
- Most of the funds have been expended on capacity building of the CBOs and LGUs with the aim of producing quality grant proposals;
 - A significant amount of funds has been spent on strategic landscape planning exercises with each of the 4 landscapes;
 - No funds have yet been expended on grants, regular, strategic or NGO Hub.
73. Planned expenditures across the different components, M&E and project management may be somewhat varied due to additional expenditures to building capacity of the CBOs and LGUs to produce quality grant proposals. Though the projected grant expenditures for regular, NGO Hub and strategic landscape grants are forecast to be on target, some capacity building funds came out of the component funds for planning. The PMU has not been able to inform the Evaluation Team as to the budgetary impact of these capacity building funds.
74. In conclusion, however, the cost effectiveness of the use of the SGP-7 Project budget to date has been **moderately unsatisfactory**, considering the work placed into preparing the 11 SGP-7 grants for implementation but funds spent on capacity building of LGUs and CBOs, and with delays in disbursing the grants. Disbursement of the GEF resources of the SGP-7 Project is provided in Table 3. Disbursement of the SGP-7 Project GEF resources to date according to QUANTUM codes is provided on Table 4.
75. Co-financing commitments for the SGP-7 Project was in the order of US\$0.030 million against a target of US\$9.214 million. To date, Project co-financing has been **moderately unsatisfactory** in consideration that none of the grant proposals have been disbursed, holding up parallel activities of co-financing with the NGOs and other partners. Once the 11 grant proposals have started implementation, an estimated US\$1.073 million will be co-financed by the NGOs by 2027. The remaining co-financing will be realized when the remaining 39 grants are implemented. Co-financing details are summarized on Table 5, with detailed co-financing of the Project provided on Table 6.

¹⁷ There was also an agreement between the FPE and UNDP CO to have only one call for types of grants, including landscape level and NGO hub grants. The 1st call for proposals was only issued following the completion and approval of landscape strategy of each project site.

Table 3: GEF Project Budget and Expenditures for the SGP-7 Project (in USD as of 31 August 2024)

Component	Budget (from ProDoc)	2022 ³⁰	2023	2024 ³¹	Total Disbursed	Total remaining
Component 1: Resilient landscapes for sustainable development and global environmental protection	2,939,546	2,326	238,700	58,491	299,517	2,640,029
Component 2: Landscape governance and adaptive management for upscaling and replication	1,116,416	2,905	256,784	65,175	324,864	791,552
Project monitoring and evaluation	169,000	0	21,899	11,838	33,737	135,263
Project Management	211,248	2,823	44,034	27,828	74,685	136,563
Total (Actual)	4,436,210	8,054	561,417	163,332	732,803	3,703,407
Total (Cumulative Actual)		8,054	569,471	732,803		
Annual Planned Disbursement (from ProDoc)	2,699,130	57,464	1,613,116	1,028,550		
% Expended of Planned Disbursement		14%	35%	16%		

³⁰ From 16 February 2022³¹ Up to 31 August 2024

Table 4: GEF Project Expenditures for Philippine SGP-7 Project against QUANTUM codes (in USD as of 31 August 2024)

ATLAS Code	Expenditure Description	US\$
71300	Local Consultants	60,300
71600	Travel	48,484
71800	Contractual Services-Individual Impl.Partner	187,253
72200	Equipment and Furniture	4,192
72400	Communications and Audio Visual Equipment	6,678
72600	Micro Capital Grants - Credit	13,986
73400	Rental and maintenance of other office equipment	713
74200	Audio Visual & Print Prod Costs	13,233
74500	Miscellaneous Expenses	511
76100	Realized loss/gain	-76
75700	Training, Workshops and Conference	346,256
72800	Information Technology Equipment	24,705
72500	Supplies	2,835
73100	Rental & Maintenance-Premises	11,366
74100	Professional Services	12,368
Total:		732,804

Table 5: Actual Co-Financing for SGP-7 Project (as of 31 August 2024)

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP own financing (million USD)		Government (million USD)		Partner Agency (million USD)		Private Sector (million USD)		Total (million USD)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants ³²	0.093	0.030	3.395	0.000	5.727	0.000			9.214	0.030
Loans/Concessions									0.000	0.000
• In-kind support									0.000	0.000
• Other									0.000	0.000
Totals	0.093	0.030	3.395	0.000	5.727	0.000	0.000	0.000	9.214	0.030

³² Includes all cash contributions

Table 6: Details of Co-Financing

Classification	Name of Co-financier (source)	Type	Financing Committed	Actuals	% of financing committed
Partner agency	UNDP	In-kind	92,750	30,000	32
Partner agency	UNDP	Cash	0	0	0
Government	DENR	Grant	2,307,920	0	0
Government	DoT	Grant	40,000	0	0
Government	Province of Aurora	In-kind	115,038	0	0
Government	Province of Palawan	In-kind	140,000	0	0
Government	Province of Northern Samar	In-kind	59,183	0	0
Government	Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff	Grant	732,906	0	0
CSO	NSC on behalf of CSOs		3,146,188	0	0
CSO	Foundation for Philippines Environment		1,000,000	0	0
CSO	Forest Foundation of the Philippines		400,000	0	0
CSO	Foundation for a Sustainable Society, Inc.		990,000	0	0
CSO	Haribon Foundation		150,374	0	0
CSO	Culion Foundation Inc.		40,000	0	0
CSO	Dimasalang Egongot Tribe Farmers Association, Inc. (DETFAWAI)			0	0
CSO	Daloy ng Buhay, Inc. (DALUHAY)			0	0
CSO	Center for Empowerment and Resource Development (CERD), Inc.			0	0
CSO	Caritas Catarman Foundation, Inc. (CCFI)			0	0
CSO	Catubig Association for the Protection of Watershed Area (CAPWA)			0	0
CSO	Communities for Resilience, Inc. (CFR)			0	0
CSO	Salvacion Busuanga Rural Waterworks (SBRWSA)			0	0
CSO	The Samdhana Institute			0	0
CSO	Surigao Economic Development and Microfinance Foundation, Inc. (SEDMFI)			0	0
CSO	Lokal Lab Siargao (LKLLB)			0	0
Totals:			9,214,359	30,000	0

3.3.3 Project Level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

76. The SGP-7 Project monitored the re-building of CSO and LGU capacities, as well as the development of all grant proposals. The results and progress of all these activities of the SGP-7 Project were reported for all 5 Outcomes by the PMU in the 2023 and 2024 PIRs. Monitoring activities appear to be well-funded with 2023 and 2024 monitoring activities mainly related to the re-building of CSO and LGU capacities. The PMU are staffed with 2 monitoring and evaluation officers. The PMU is poised to closely monitor the activities of the 11 grant proposals once they are disbursed later in December 2024. Overall, the M&E systems of the SPG-7 Project are rated as **satisfactory** considering detailed reporting of SGP-7 progress.

3.3.4 Stakeholder Engagement

77. Stakeholder engagements by the SGP-7 Project have been with all communities applying for SGP grants, and committee members from the LRTC, PTRC and the NSC, including national government agencies, LGUs, CSOs and NGOs. Engagements with communities have involved landscape and seascape strategy meetings, and inputs into grant proposals. Engagements with LRTC, PTRC and the NSC members have involved review of grant proposals (mainly regular grants).

78. Stakeholder feedback on the SGP process is as follows:

- Community and LRTC feedback: After providing as much information as possible from their side, communities are simply frustrated with the process of waiting 6 months for grant approval and funds to disburse. The process of grant approvals using the LRTCs and the PTRC were formed during the Inception phase. As such, communities inherited a complex process for grant approvals;
- NSC and PTRC members: They feel overwhelmed by the complicated volume of grant proposal information received for review. The information received is generally not well organized in a manner for quick review; hence the reviews are taking a long time. Various NSC and PTRC members have suggested that grant proposal information for review be organized into sectoral compartments and not to involve all 10 PTRC and 11 NSC members in a detailed review of information.

79. There is also concern on the capacities of NGO Hubs to be able to assist communities with their proposals (notably for the third call for proposals when all NGO Hubs will have been recruited). There is the need to address the community's needs on the proposal but the need to comply with the global SGP template that satisfies GEF requirements. A balance needs to be achieved to meet the needs of acceptable grant proposals, regular, strategic or NGO Hub. For these reasons, stakeholder participation is rated as *moderately satisfactory*.

3.3.6 Reporting

80. There were 2 PIRs from the SGP-7 Project. There were also annual progress reports for 2022 and 2023, quarterly progress reports for 2022 and Q1 of 2023, a progress report for January-June 2023, and Inception Reports for the National Workshop and the 3 Site Inception Workshops (only Catubig site was missing). Project Status Reports of 2022 and 2023 from DENR, describing actions taken on major project concerns, were made available to the Evaluation Team. Overall, reporting has been rated as *satisfactory* considering a complete volume of reports.

3.3.7 Communications

81. The PMU is poised to finalize the comprehensive Knowledge Management and Communications (KMC) strategy once the grants are awarded and after consultation with grantees. With the grantee's key roles in shaping the strategy, grantee capacities to access mobile networks and the internet will be critical in ensuring effective knowledge management and communication. The KMC strategy needs to be adaptable to accommodate various levels of expertise, resources, and technological access of the grantees as well as specific needs and capabilities of the grantee communities. As such, the finalization of the KMC by FPE has been delayed until the grants are awarded. The finalization of the KMC strategy for Outcome 2.2, however, should actually be finalized without further delays as suggested in Recommendation 4 (Para 104).

82. In the meantime, the Project continues to capture best practices and lessons learned including key elements of each landscape/seascape strategies through detailed process documentation, photographic records, and audio recordings while conducting capacity development activities. These are disseminated through FPE's Facebook page with over 200 posts and cross-posting on the websites of FPE, UNDP Philippines, and DENR-BMB. The draft proposes sections such as "Towards Resilience" (a fundamental aspect of the SGP-7 Project), "Knowledge Management as Defined and Rationalized by the Project" highlighting the principles of the 2019 SGP Communication Strategy, action plan of OP7 Technical Guidance Note for Knowledge Management, and "Continuous Learning

for Stakeholders, Knowledge Transfer, and Succession" to ensure that stakeholders are well-informed and prepared for future challenges. As a result, communication has been rated as **satisfactory**.

3.4 Sustainability

83. In assessing sustainability of the SGP-7 Project, the mid-term reviewers asked, "how likely will the Project outcomes be sustained beyond Project termination"? UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects are intended to be environmentally as well as institutionally, financially, politically, culturally, and socially sustainable. Sustainability of these dimensions was rated using a simple ranking scheme:
- 4 = *Likely (L)*: negligible risks to sustainability;
 - 3 = *Moderately Likely (ML)*: moderate risks to sustainability;
 - 2 = *Moderately Unlikely (MU)*: significant risks to sustainability; and
 - 1 = *Unlikely (U)*: severe risks to sustainability; and
 - U/A = *unable to assess*.
84. Financial risks to sustainability: There are no financial risks to the sustainability of the SGP-7 Project. In-kind and grant co-financing is available from all 11 grant proposals. Though the remaining 39 grants have yet to be prepared, they are going to be sustainably financed by the Project, containing adequate amounts of co-financing to obtain NSC approval.
85. The likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends is a bit difficult to forecast at this point in time. Assuming income generating activities and some donor and private funds are available, financial resources should be adequate for sustaining Project outcomes. However, thus far, there has been no financial and economic instruments and mechanisms established to ensure the ongoing flow of benefits once the GEF assistance. For this reason, the rating for financial risks to sustainability is moderately likely (ML)
86. Socioeconomic risks to sustainability: All communities are ready for their grants to be implemented after disbursement. However, there are still risks related to security threats posed by those engaged in illegal wildlife and natural resource extraction in more remote communities, against those who are part of community monitoring and enforcement. There may also be discriminations against women based on gender though a prepared Gender Action Plan will mitigate these discriminations.
87. There is also a risk that the level of stakeholder ownership by governments and other key stakeholders is insufficient to allow for the project outcomes to be sustained. Currently, most (if not all) key stakeholders are aware that it is in their interest to have landscape project benefits continue to flow. However, there are no lessons being learned since SGP projects are not being implemented at this time. Thus, socioeconomic risks to sustainability are rated as moderately likely (ML).
88. Institutional framework and governance risks: There is the review of landscape strategies and alignment of grant proposals with the corresponding strategies through the LRTC and the PTRC who have members who are a part of LGUs and DENR. From interviews with senior DENR officials, DENR have a commitment to make legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes efficient that will create mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer. This will reduce risks that may jeopardize project benefits provided institutional capacities are built to be operated after the EoP. These capacities also do not include yet-to-be-identified

champions; the process of selecting champions is underway. As such, the strong involvement of the LGUs and DENR on the SGP-7 Project only somewhat mitigates the institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability that is rated as moderately likely (ML).

89. Environmental risks to sustainability: All grants are related to promoting and conserving the community biodiversity. However, there are still risks related to climate change that are expected to increase the frequency and severity of floods in these communities potentially impacting the Project's activities in pilot sites before they are completed. As there is no certainty of how often this may occur, the rating of environmental risks to sustainability as moderately likely (ML).
90. Overall sustainability of the SGP-7 Project is ***moderately likely***.

4. FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Findings

91. The SGP-7 Project has not yet disbursed any grants and it is behind schedule of delivery. A total of 11 grants have been approved but not yet disbursed. A summary of the several implementation issues are provided as follows:

- the issuance of the Special Presidential Authority by the GoP on 21 February 2022 delayed the start of the Project. With the GEF CEO document approved on 7 June 2021, the ProDoc was not signed until 22 February 2022. This was beyond the control of the Project and FPE;
- during the commencement of the Project from February to September 2022, there were still COVID-19 related restrictions in place for public gatherings and face-to-face meetings, which caused delays in organizing both the national and site level inception workshops. This was also beyond the control of the Project and FPE;
- there were delays in hiring the Project Management Unit (PMU) members due to applicants securing other assignments while the recruitment process was still on-going. PMU staff were not fully aboard the Project until August 2022. This issue was caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- many CSOs and potential grantees, especially Community-Based Organizations, had been negatively impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic. This included former heads and senior staff who were no longer engaged with these organizations with new staff facing a steep learning curve. This forced the Project to re-establish the NSC and organize more than 5 strategic and regular grant proposal development workshops from October 2022 to October 2023 to help re-build CSO capacity in developing landscape strategies and eligible, high-quality, strategic and regular grant proposals for the Project. Not only did this take substantial time from the PMU and FPE, no GEF resources were provided to the PMU for this effort;
- the long bureaucratic approval process for grants (for the first and second calls for grant proposals) consumed too much time for the Project and contributed to significant delays in grant implementation. Notwithstanding strong DENR support for the SGP process, this does not serve the communities who are very enthusiastic about SGP opportunities to improve their environmental conditions. This is a Project issue for FPE to resolve; and
- a tranche of GEF funds were in FPE's bank account that needed to be disbursed before 15 October 2024. At least 80% of these funds have been disbursed to the grantees prior to 15 October 2024;
- overall, the SGP-7 Project is behind schedule. This will require an accelerated and streamlined approval process for the subsequent calls for grant proposals.

Table 6 reflects further findings of this MTR.

Table 6: MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for SGP-7 Project in the Philippines

Measure	MTR Rating ³³	Achievement Description
Project Formulation	Design and PRF Rating: 5	Design of the Project was to build on ongoing stakeholder efforts to preserve biodiversity from SGP-5 projects with additions to the SGP-7 Project of having a component targeting knowledge management (Paras 37-38), and a focus on gender, specifically poor Filipino women in the agricultural sector (Paras 43-45). All SGP-7 Project indicators and targets in the PRF meet “SMART” criteria that are effective in monitoring the Project (Para 46).
	Stakeholder Participation Rating: 5	Stakeholder engagement plans included engaging a range of stakeholders in the four selected landscapes and seascapes as specified in the ProDoc (Para 35). In addition, DENR has also been heavily engaged with the Project (Para 36).
Progress Towards Results	Objective Achievement Rating: 3	Though none of the objective-level targets have been achieved, positive progress will be made by the end of 2024 with the 11 grants from the first and second call for proposals (Paras 50-52).
	Outcome 1.1 Achievement Rating: 3	Similar to the objective-level indicators, there has been no progress made at the time of writing this MTR report. However, there are expectations of progress before the end of 2024 with 29 other grants under review (with 20 already approved) and when regular grants are being implemented (Para 53).
	Outcome 1.2 Achievement Rating: 3	Similar to the Outcome 1.1 indicators, there has been no progress made at the time of writing this MTR report. However, there are expectations of progress before the end of 2024 with 29 other grants under review and when regular grants from the first and second call for proposals are being implemented (Para 54).
	Outcome 1.3 Achievement Rating: 3	Similar to the Outcome 1.3 indicators, there has been no progress made at the time of writing this MTR report. However, there are expectations of progress before the end of 2024 with 29 other grants under review and when regular grants are being implemented (Paras 55-56).
	Outcome 2.1 Achievement Rating: 5	LTRCs were setup as multi-sector governance platforms for each of the 4 landscapes/seascapes that brought together different stakeholders, including CSOs, government agencies, academia, and vulnerable groups. Four draft landscape strategies were produced through these platforms and shared for approval with relevant stakeholders of the governance framework including the LTRCs (Paras 57-58).
	Outcome 2.2 Achievement Rating: 2	No landscape-level case studies or no gender-responsive knowledge management and communication strategies have been produced. In addition, only 2 NGOs have been approved as NGO hubs with disbursement of their grants still pending. This leaves little to no time remaining for NGO Hubs to undertake the tasks listed in Para

³³ Evaluation rating indices (except sustainability – see Para 70): 6=*Highly Satisfactory (HS)*: The project has no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives; 5=*Satisfactory (S)*: The project has minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives; 4=*Moderately Satisfactory (MS)*: The project has moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives; 3=*Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)*: The project has significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives; 2=*Unsatisfactory (U)*: The project has major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives; 1=*Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)*: The project has severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives.

Measure	MTR Rating ³³	Achievement Description
		62 (Paras 59-64).
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	Implementation Approach Rating: 3	FPE has established a PMU for the overall coordination and resource management of the SGP-7 Project, and to work closely with other relevant stakeholders to provide centralized project management services, coordinate project activities, and facilitate stakeholder relationships (Para 69). The PMU has had to adaptively manage capacity building activities between October 2022 and October 2023 as a reaction to low capacities of CBOs, NGOs and grantees in their understanding of the SGP process that left them ill-equipped to prepare SGP grant applications, and adapting to a new schedule caused by the delays in obtaining approvals from the NSC for all grants (Para 70). The several implementation issues of the SGP-7 Project are listed in Para 91.
	Monitoring and Evaluation Rating: 5	Results and progress of all activities and outputs of the SGP-7 Project were reported for all 5 Outcomes by the PMU in the 2023 and 2024 PIRs (Para 76).
	Stakeholder Participation Rating: 4	Stakeholders have been engaged. However, communities are simply frustrated with the process of waiting 6 months for the approval of SGP funds to disburse. NSC and PTRC members feel overwhelmed by the complicated volume of grant proposal information received for review. As the information received is generally not well organized, grant proposal reviews are taking a long time (Para 78) Error! Reference source not found..
Sustainability	Sustainability Rating: Moderately Likely	There are still risks socioeconomic risks related to security threats posed by those engaged in illegal wildlife and natural resource extraction in more remote communities, against those who are part of community monitoring and enforcement. There are also environmental risks related to climate change that is expected to increase the frequency and severity of floods in these communities potentially impacting the project’s activities in pilot sites before they are completed (Paras 84-89).
Overall Project Achievement and impact	Rating: 3	Though there has been poor progress to date on many of the indicators, there will likely be progress by the end of 2024 when regular grants are being implemented. Impact of the SGP-7 grants is not expected for at least another year or two.

4.2 Conclusions

92. The current state of delays on the SGP-7 Project is mostly circumstantial. With the aftermath of COVID-19 causing restrictions on public gatherings and face-to-face meetings, and negative impacts on CBOs and potential grantees with a need to re-build their capacities, the Project faced unexpected challenges that are very similar to those experienced by projects across the biodiversity sector of the DENR and the GoP. As a result, the SGP-7 Project is behind schedule. Bringing the Project back to a schedule where regular grants can be completed before the EoP date of 16 February 2027 will require:

- a streamlining of the grant approval process for third call for grant proposals. This will require unique arrangements of hiring proposal writers for the grant preparations since NGO Hubs

(whose responsibility is to assist communities with grant proposal preparations) will not have yet been recruited for the third call for proposals. Grant fund releases need to be approved by 29 January 2025 (see Para 101);

- a unique arrangement for the third call requiring the recruitment of *local proposal writers* to prepare basic regular grant proposals that incorporate community needs and *national proposal writers* to assist in bringing the standard of the proposal to the standards of the UNDP SGP global template. Proposals writers need to be recruited as soon as possible (see Para 102);
 - scheduling a fourth call for proposals which will involve NGO Hubs recruited under the third call that have local and national proposal writers on staff. This grant approval process (which only incorporates regular grants that have an implementation period of 18 months or less) must also be efficient to meet the grant approvals time frame of 15 June 2025 (see Para 103);
 - the Project finalizing the KMC strategy as soon as possible, preferably before the end of January 2025. The Project should not wait until grants are disbursed to finalize this strategy (see Paras 81 and 104).
93. With the current Project scenario envisaging commencing implementation of regular grant proposal activities likely in February 2025, these activities will likely take 1 to 2 years to complete, likely towards the EoP, leaving no time for monitoring of these grant activities under Outcome 2.2. Some form of Project extension is required into a period beyond the February 2027 EoP of the Project for grant proposal monitoring of effectiveness. A 2-year extension is being recommended in Para 105 and as part of the original approved share of the overall Project budget, though the share of the Project management budget will be stretched thin by a 1 or 2-year extension that will prompt some form of co-financing by FPE or other donors to manage the grant proposal monitoring. If the current 11 grants that have been approved are being disbursed before 31 December 2024, there will be pressure for FPE and UNDP to approve the remaining 39 grant proposals (mostly regular grants) under a far more efficient approval process that allows all Project proponents to complete regular grant activities before the EoP.
94. In addition, logistical assistance is needed from DENR and BFAR to support ground implementation of approved regular grant proposals. This is notable on grant proposals that encompass landscape restoration where grantees need access to a supply of seedlings and technical advice on planting, and other activities. DENR and BFAR should be involved with these activities (see Para 106).

4.3 Lessons Learned

95. The SGP-7 grants will also overlap with the SGP-8 project that will be led by another NGO. GoP and UNDP are committed to start implementing SGP-8 towards the end of 2024 or early in 2025, and the GoP are committed to NGO modality for implementation of SGP-8. Hence, lessons from SGP-7 implementation to date are important in the context of informing how will SGP-8 can be scaled-up and replicated to efficiently serve communities. It is our understanding that the SGP-8 project has not yet conducted stakeholder consultations that will define SGP-8 to align with the CO programme strategies. However, the development of the Country Programme Strategy has started through a grant awarded to the HARIBON foundation including a stakeholder consultation process. Lessons learned from SGP-7 are provided in the following Paras.
96. Lesson #1: The current process of approving SGP-7 grants is inefficient. This process needs to be streamlined. It took more than 6 months, from the first and second call for grant proposals to process

approval of grants. Streamlining the grant approval process for the third call for grant proposals can be found in Recommendation 2 under Para 102.

- 97. Lesson #2: NGO Hub grant proposals are the most important grants and should be processed first since they are supposed to help communities to prepare proposals. This was not done by FPE, an action which they fully acknowledged. However, FPE were trapped by their own efforts in attempts to bring the SGP-7 grant process back on schedule from the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to rebuild CSO capacities.
- 98. Lesson #3: The global SGP template makes it necessary to hire a local proposal writing consultant who can incorporate the community needs of the proposal and a national writing consultant who can upgrade the local consultant’s proposals to meet the standard of the GEF-SGP template for SGP proposals (as described in SGP operational guidelines). Dedicated proposal writers, local and national, were not available for the second call for proposals, making the process of approving these grants cumbersome. Local and national proposal writing consultants needs to be hired by FPE to facilitate implementation of the grants for a third call for proposals (see Recommendation 3 - Para 103). However, the fourth call for proposals will likely involve the NGO Hub whose ToRs are to be responsible for this task (see Recommendation 4 – Para 104). All SGP communities in the Philippines are ill-equipped to respond to these stringent GEF requirements (such as the requirement for an SESP). Hence, there is an acute need for local and national proposal writers.
- 99. Lesson #4: Care needs to be taken in requesting disbursements of UNDP-GEF funds knowing that 80% of the funds need to be expended within 6 months. There was a first tranche release of PHP 25 million (US\$446,000) in mid-February 2024 with the expectation that this would be disbursed to grant proponents within less than 6 months. This has not been the case as tranche disbursement has been delayed by delays in the approvals for grant proposals (from the first and second call for proposals). There was a real risk that the unspent portion of the tranche needed to be returned to UNDP-GEF. Prudence by the PMU is required to carefully forecast when the funds will be disbursed.
- 100. Lesson #5: The NGO modality for implementing SGP projects appears to be functioning well. Notwithstanding delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the NGO modality for implementing SGP projects appears to be working well. Reasons for this include the ease of recruiting consultants and other personnel without having to undergo rigorous recruitment procedures of the GoP or UNDP and having an NGO mindset for implementing extensive outreach to all SGP communities (Para 69).

4.4 Recommendations

Rec #	Recommendation	Entity Responsible	Time Frame
	Outcomes 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3		
101.	Recommendation 1		
	<p><u>Streamline the approval process for the third call for grant proposals to facilitate proposal disbursement by January 2025.</u> This would include the 20+ grant proposals (16+ regular grants, 2 strategic grants and 2 NGO Hub grants) where the regular grant have an implementation period of 2 years or less. This would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruitment by FPE and use of a local proposal writer to work with project proponents to prepare a basic regular 	GoP, FPE and UNDP	Immediate

Rec #	Recommendation	Entity Responsible	Time Frame
	<p>grant proposal by the end of December 2024 (see Recommendation #2 – Para 102);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruitment by FPE and use national proposal writers to review the basic grant proposals and assist in bringing the standard of the proposal to the standards of the UNDP SGP global template by the end of December 2024 (see Recommendation #2 – Para 102); • <u>submit the upgraded grant proposal from the national proposal writer (on behalf of the project proponent) to the PMU by early January 2025;</u> • <u>the PMU and LRTC jointly evaluate upgraded proposals</u> for completeness and alignment to strategic landscape (or seascape) plans, and <u>under a strict time restriction³⁴;</u> • <u>the proposal will be submitted by the PMU to the PTRC and NSC.</u> The PMU will continue to serve as the secretariat for the Project, responsible for all reports going to the PTRC and NSC by 15 January 2025; • <u>the PTRC performs technical review of the upgraded proposal with minor feedback to the national proposal writer, LRTC and PMU (if necessary) and submits to NSC for approval.</u> This should be a process that saves time due to the presence of the national proposal writer. Again, <u>the time for review or approvals of the grant proposals should be under a strict time restriction. Deadline for submission to the NSC is 22 January 2025;</u> • <u>NSC approves proposals with grant funds released.</u> The NSC chair reserves his right to veto any additional reviews and expedites the approval of regular and NGO Hub grants bearing in mind the time constraints of implementing these grants. These steps will also provide time savings for the regular and NGO Hub grant approval process. Deadline for NSC approval of grant fund release is 29 January 2025; • change the ToRs of the NSC, PTRC, LRTC and the PMU for their new roles in the grant approval process. This may include strict time-bound periods for the NSC, PTRC, LRTC and the PMU to review of all grant proposals and the NSC chair reserving his veto rights to enforce time restrictions. <p>The streamlined process for the third call for proposals is illustrated on Figure 4.</p>		

³⁴ LRTC can only provide technical advise but not on writing the proposal. The high rate of rejection on grant proposals will discourage further participation of the communities (IPs, POs, CSOs, CBOs) to the programme.

Rec #	Recommendation	Entity Responsible	Time Frame
102.	Recommendation 2		
	<p><u>For the third call for proposals, FPE should immediately recruit local and national proposal writers to work with project proponents. This can be done through the planning grant where PMU was given the authority to give its approval.</u> Local proposal writers will need to be recruited by the end of December 2024 to prepare basic regular grant proposals that incorporate community needs. In addition to the one national proposal writer who has already been recruited, 3 additional national proposal writers (one for each landscape) need to be recruited to review the basic grant proposals and assist in bringing the standard of the proposal to the standards of the UNDP SGP global template. All this will be necessary for the third call for proposals since NGO Hubs (who were to be responsible to help communities to prepare proposals) will not be available to assist in obtaining community requirements for the grants.</p> <p>As of December 2024, there were currently no dedicated local proposal writers in any of the landscapes, and there is only one national proposal writer recruited by the Project. For the third call proposals (that includes 16+ regular grants, 2 strategic grants and 2 NGO Hub grants), regular grant proposals will have an implementation period of 2 years or less. Proposal writers will be asked to prepare proposals within a 6-week period from mid-December 2024 to the end of January 2025. <i>Project proponents will be under a strict time restriction to prepare these proposals to enable proposal disbursement by the end of January 2025.</i> Again, the streamlined process for the third call for proposals is illustrated on Figure 4.</p>	GoP, FPE and UNDP	Immediate
103.	Recommendation 3		
	<p><u>Ensure the approval process for the fourth call for regular grant proposals is efficient and allows disbursement by 2Q 2025.</u> This would include the 10+ regular grant proposals that all have an implementation period of 18 months or less:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a local proposal writer to work from the selected NGO Hub with project proponents to prepare a basic regular grant proposal to obtain community requirements for the grants. There should be at least one in each of the four landscapes with more to be recruited if possible. <i>the project proponents will be under a strict time restriction to prepare these proposals;</i> • the NGO Hub will have a national proposal writer who will review the basic grant proposals and assist in bringing the 	GoP, FPE and UNDP	Immediate

Rec #	Recommendation	Entity Responsible	Time Frame
	<p>standard of the proposal to the standards of the GEF SGP template;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>submit the upgraded grant proposal from NGO Hub (on behalf of the project proponent) to the PMU;</u> • <u>the PMU and LRTC jointly evaluate upgraded proposal</u> for completeness and alignment to strategic landscape (or seascape) plans, and <u>under a strict time restriction;</u> • <u>the proposal will be submitted by the PMU to the PTRC and NSC.</u> The PMU will continue to serve as the secretariat for the Project, responsible for all reports going to the PTRC and NSC. This should be a process that saves time due to the presence of the NGO Hub’s national proposal writer. <u>Proposal submission date is proposed to be 15 May 2025;</u> • <u>the PTRC performs technical review of the upgraded proposal with minor feedback to the NGO Hub, LRTC and PMU (if necessary) and submits to NSC for approval.</u> Again, <u>the time for review or approvals of the grant proposals should be under a strict time restriction to enable proposal disbursement by 2Q 2025;</u> • <u>NSC approves proposals with grant funds released.</u> The NSC chair reserves his right to veto any additional reviews and expedites the approval of regular and NGO Hub grants bearing in mind the time constraints of implementing these grants. These steps will also provide time savings for the regular grant approval process. Approval of proposals is proposed for 15 June 2025. 		
	Outcome 2.2		
104.	Recommendation 4		
	<p><u>The Knowledge Management and Communications (KMC) strategy needs to be finalized as soon as possible.</u> Finalization of the KMC by FPE has been delayed until the grants are awarded. Arrangements should be made to complete this as soon as possible without further delays even before grants are awarded and after consultation with grantees, possibly before the end of January 2025. There is a role of the Project to assist in the grantee’s capacity to shape landscape strategies, with their abilities to access mobile networks and the internet being critical in ensuring effective knowledge management and communication.</p>	GoP, FPE and UNDP	Immediate

Rec #	Recommendation	Entity Responsible	Time Frame
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management			
105.	Recommendation 5:		
	<p><u>Extend the SGP-7 Project by 2 years.</u> This is a top priority to accommodate the monitoring functions of Outcome 2.2 of the Project. This would involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • justification for the extension that includes the factors mentioned in Para 91; • getting the third call for grant proposals for (20+ grant proposals including 2 strategic and 2 NGO Hub grants) ready for disbursement by January 2025; • getting fourth call for proposals (that includes 15+ regular grant proposals all under 18 months implementation) ready for disbursement by 2Q 2025; • completing implementation of all regular grant proposals before February 2027; • an extension for 2 years to accommodate monitoring activities required from landscape or seascape NGO Learning Hub grants. This is for knowledge from community level engagement and innovative conservation practices to be systematically assessed and shared for replication and upscaling across the landscapes, across the country, and to the global SGP network. <p>A one-year extension is possible if the monitoring functions of Outcome 2.2 are managed by the SGP-8 project (there may be contracting issues with the SGP-7 PMU) or if FPE or another donor can co-finance. Suggested allocation of SGP-7 Project resources is provided on Table 7. Suggested SGP-7 activities for the Project extension are illustrated on Figure 5.</p>	GoP, FPE and UNDP	Immediate
106.	Recommendation 6		
	<p><u>DENR and BFAR should facilitate and support (logistics and technical advice) for ground implementation of approved proposals.</u> On landscape restoration, DENR should be able to assist the grantee with their logistics such as supply of seedlings and technical advice on planting, maintenance of landscape for restoration, regular patrolling of PAs to ensure that no illegal activities are done on project sites during the implementation of the approved proposals.</p>	GoP, FPE and UNDP	Medium Term

Figure 4: Suggested streamlined process for regular grant approvals (only for third call for proposals)

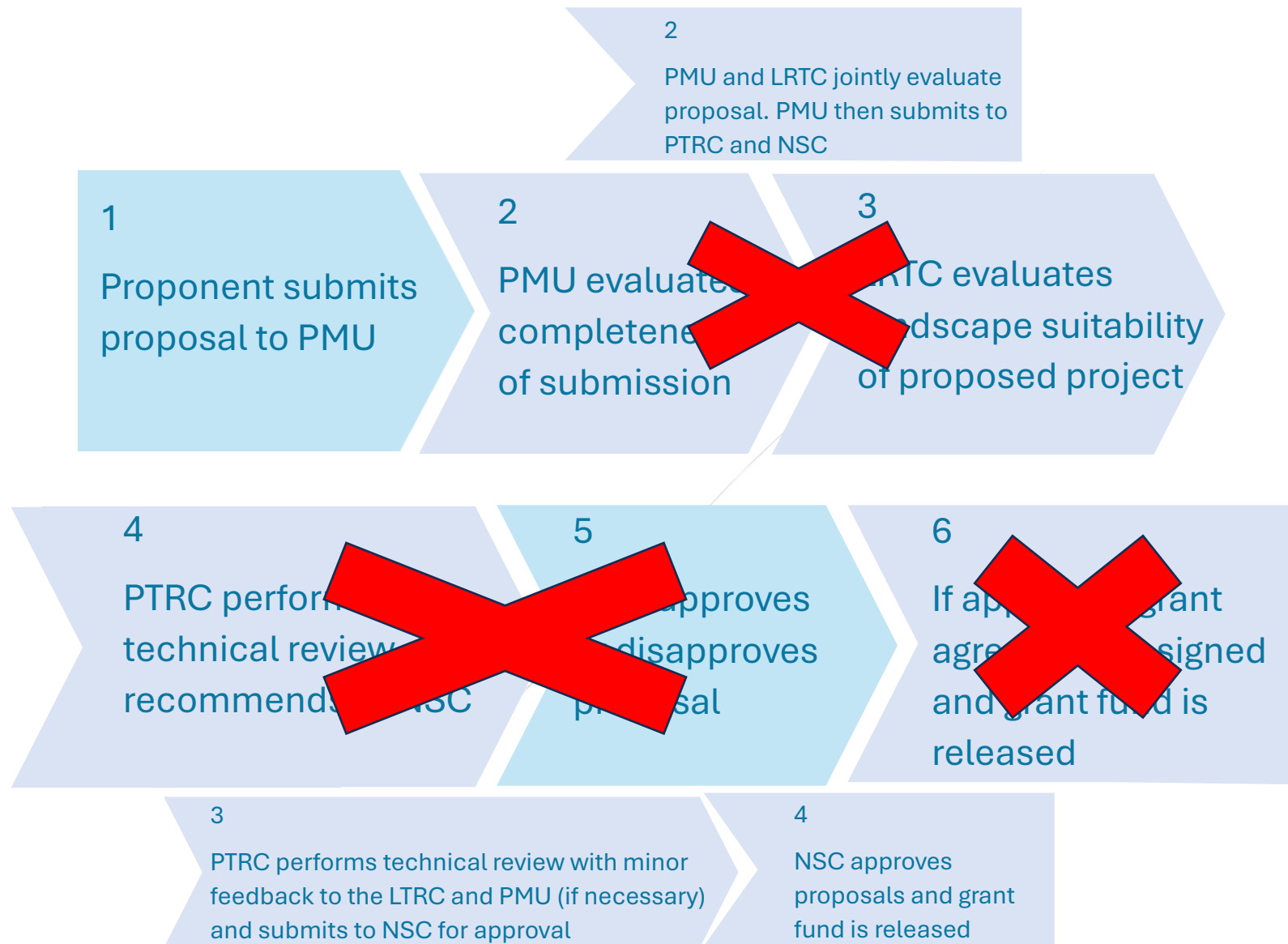


Table 7: Suggested Allocation of SGP-7 Project Resources

Outcome	Budget (from ProDoc)	Total Disbursed (as of 31 August 2024)	Total remaining	Re-Allocated Budget
Component 1- Resilient landscapes for sustainable development and global environmental protection	2,939,546	299,517	2,640,029	2,640,029
Component 2- Landscape governance and adaptive management for upscaling and replication	1,116,416	324,864	791,552	791,552
Project monitoring and evaluation	169,000	33,737	135,263	135,263
Project Management	211,248	74,685	136,563	136,563
Total (Actual)	4,436,210	732,803	3,703,407	3,703,407

APPENDIX A – TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR SGP-7 PROJECT MTR

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the *full-sized* project titled *Seventh Operational Phase of the Small Grants Programme in the Philippines (SGP-OP7)* (PIMS#6254) implemented through the *Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE)*, which is to be undertaken in 2024. The project started on the *16 February 2022* and is in its *third* year of implementation. In line with the UNDP-GEF Guidance on MTRs, this MTR process was initiated before the submission of the second Project Implementation Report (PIR). This ToR sets out the expectations for this MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*:

http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/mid-term/Guidance_Midterm%20Review%20_EN_2014.pdf

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Project Duration: 16 February 2022 – 16 February 2027

Total Budget: USD4,436.210

Planned Co-financing: USD9,214,359

Communities in Aurora, Samar, Siargao and the Calamian Islands suffer from the devastating impacts of habitat destruction, biodiversity loss and extreme climate events. High levels of poverty, lack of awareness and resources for biodiversity protection, fragmented approaches to ecosystems-based adaptation, weak governance, gaps in national and local policies and institutions pose challenges and barriers to improved and sustainable practices. Expansive commercial interests, growing tourism and a lack of effective public private partnerships often lead to unsustainable practices creating negative stressors on scarce natural resources.

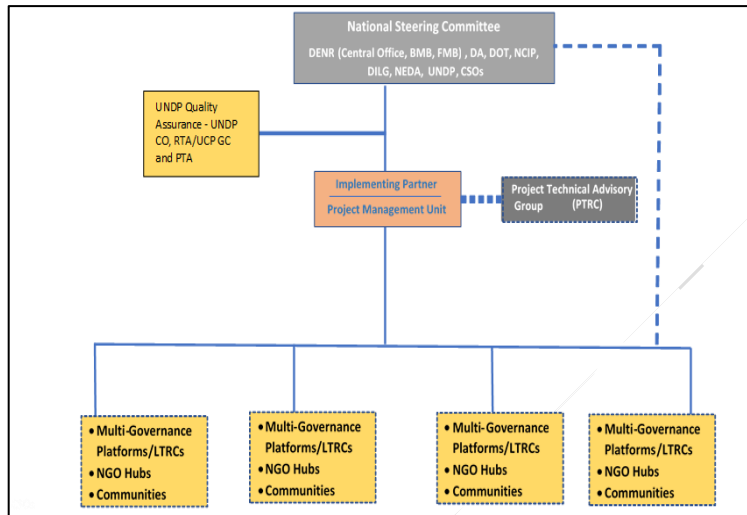
This project seeks to address pressing environmental and associated social and economic challenges, by capacitating local communities and institutions, with support from government to pilot and implement initiatives that promote biodiversity protection. The project will promote the landscape approach, thereby supporting multi-stakeholder interventions, which mutually reinforce one another to result in landscape-level results. The objective of the project is to build socio-ecological and economic resilience in four selected landscapes and seascapes on the Eastern Seaboard of the Philippines - (1) Catubig Watershed Samar Island, (2) Aurora Province in the Sierra Madre, (3) Siargao Island Protected Landscape/Seascape - and along the West Philippine Sea - (4) Calamianes Group of Islands in Northern Palawan - through community-based activities for global environmental benefits and sustainable development.

The following five outcomes are planned under this project:

- Ecosystem services and biodiversity within four targeted landscapes and seascapes are enhanced through multi-functional land-use systems.
- The sustainability of production systems in the target landscapes is strengthened through integrated agro-ecological practices.
- Livelihoods of communities in the target landscapes and seascapes are improved by developing eco-friendly, climate-adaptive small-scale community enterprises with clear market linkages.

- Multistakeholder governance platforms strengthened/in place for improved governance of target landscapes and seascapes for effective participatory decision making to enhance socio-ecological landscape resiliency.
- Knowledge from community level engagement and innovative conservation practices is systematically assessed and shared for replication and upscaling across the landscapes, across the country, and to the global SGP network.

The project is governed and managed by the institutional arrangements, taking into account the protocols of the SGP Operational Guidelines:



Implementing Partner (IP): The Implementing Partner (Executing Agency) for this project is Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE). The Implementing Partner is the entity to which the UNDP Administrator has entrusted the implementation of UNDP assistance specified in this signed project document along with the assumption of full responsibility and accountability for the effective use of UNDP resources and the delivery of outputs, as set forth in this document. The Implementing Partner is responsible for executing this project.

The **Country Programme Management Unit**, led by the Country Programme Manager and lodged within the Implementing Partner, is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the project. This includes supporting NSC strategic work and grant selection by developing technical papers, undertaking ex-ante technical reviews of project proposals; taking responsibility for monitoring the grant portfolio and for providing technical assistance to grantees during project design and implementation; mobilizing cash and in-kind resources; preparing reports for UNDP, GEF and other donors; implementing a capacity development Programme for communities, CBOs and NGOs, as well as a communications and knowledge management strategy to ensure adequate visibility of GEF investments, and disseminating good practices and lessons learnt.

UNDP (Implementing Agency): UNDP is accountable to the GEF for the implementation of this project. This includes oversight of project execution to ensure that the project is being carried out in accordance with agreed standards and provisions. UNDP is responsible for delivering GEF project cycle management services comprising project approval and start-up, project supervision and oversight, and project completion and evaluation. UNDP is responsible for the Project Assurance role of the Project Board/SGP National Steering Committee.

UNDP will provide overall Programme oversight and take responsibility for standard GEF project cycle management services beyond assistance and oversight of project design and negotiation, including project monitoring, periodic evaluations, troubleshooting, and reporting to the GEF. UNDP will also provide high level technical and managerial support from the UNDP GEF Global Coordinator for the SGP Upgrading Country Programmes, who is responsible for project oversight for all SGP Upgraded Country Programme projects³⁶. The SGP Central Programme Management Team (CPMT) will monitor Upgraded Country Programmes for compliance with GEF SGP core policies and procedures.

Project Board (National Steering Committee (NSC)): The Project Board is responsible for taking corrective action as needed to ensure the project achieves the desired results. In order to ensure UNDP's ultimate accountability, Project Board decisions should be made in accordance with standards that shall ensure management for development results, best value for money, fairness, integrity, transparency and effective international competition. Establishment and operations of SGP National Steering Committee are carried out in accordance with the SGP Operational Guidelines which will be the basis of the Manual of Operations that will be drafted by the Implementing Partner and, reviewed and approved by NSC at the start of Project implementation.

Technical Advisory Group (Project Technical Review Committee)- In accordance with the global SGP Operational Guidelines, the NSC may also establish a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) with a pool of voluntary experts on call to serve as a technical sub-committee, for review of proposals and in relation to specific areas of programming and partnership development. The TAG can also be tasked by the NSC to provide specific technical guidance in specialised areas of work, such as carbon measurement, payments for ecosystem services, marketing and certification of products, transboundary diagnostic analysis, and other relevant fields. In addition, the TAG may also be formed in response to donor and co-financing requirements mobilised for the SGP country programme. The TAG will provide technical guidance with regards to project selection and the quality of project proposals, prior to final review and approval by the NSC. In such cases, minutes from TAG meetings will be a pre-requisite and fully report on the review process and recommendations made to the NSC. In certain cases, and depending on the area of technical specialization required, the NSC may decide to invite other organisations or individual experts to assist in project review.

Landscape Level NGO Hubs: In each of the four targeted landscape, an area-based NGO will be selected and be provided with a small grant to assist candidate grantees in proposal preparation and grant implementation. They will coordinate the plans and actions of grantees and manage partnerships with government agencies and other actors in the landscape to support overall direction and priorities set by the NSC (as recommended by the multi-stakeholder platforms) for each landscape.

The project is its third year of implementation. It has successfully completed key milestones that laid the foundation to enable the rolling out of the call for proposals for the grant component to be initiated. This took off with the national and site-level inception workshops and the establishment of different governance mechanisms and composition, followed by the completion and approval of landscape strategies which provide direction and guidance on landscape-level priorities, initial capacity building activities across four sites as a preparatory initiative for potential proponents, conduct of HACT activities, and the releasing of the first two batches of call for proposals. With the ongoing evaluation of grant proposals, it is expected for SGP-7 to accelerate its implementation through grant disbursement starting

³⁶ GEF/C.54/05/Rev.01 *GEF Small Grants Programme: Implementation Arrangements for GEF-7*, approved by GEF Council.

this year until the end of project implementation. It is also critical for the project to completely implement its M&E plan and the management responses from all HACT activities.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE MTR

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

The findings shall be acted upon by UNDP, FPE, and other project stakeholders. FPE, together with UNDP, will ensure relevant management responses are implemented and relevant project stakeholders are informed of the project developments through its National Steering Committee. The MTR results, including lessons and recommendations, is expected to inform the continuity of the implementation until the end of project, and contribute to the internal programming of UNDP such as but not limited to the enhancement and eventual implementation of the next phase of the Small Grants Programme in the Philippines and other relevant development initiatives.

4. MTR APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

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

The MTR team is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach³⁷ ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office(s), UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisers, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR.³⁸ Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to *Department of Environment and Natural Resources, including its Biodiversity Management Bureau and Foreign Assisted and Special Project Services*; executing agencies, senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Additionally, the MTR team is expected to conduct field missions to *Manila*, including the following project sites *Aurora, Palawan, Samar and Siargao*.

The specific design and methodology for the MTR should emerge from consultations between the MTR team and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the MTR purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The MTR team must use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender

³⁷ For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Evaluation strategies and techniques, see [UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results](#), 05 Nov 2013.

³⁸ For more stakeholder engagement in the M&E process, see the [UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 3, pg. 93.

equality and women’s empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the MTR report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, respondents, and data sources, among others, to be used in the MTR must be clearly outlined in the Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders, and the MTR team.

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

5. DETAILED SCOPE OF THE MTR

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

i. Project Strategy

Project design:

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

Results Framework/Logframe:

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

- Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART ‘development’ indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits.

ii. Progress Towards Results

Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

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

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

Project Strategy	Indicator ³⁹	Baseline Level ⁴⁰	Level in 1 st PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target ⁴¹	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment ⁴²	Achievement Rating ⁴³	Justification for Rating
Objective:	Indicator (if applicable):							
Outcome 1:	Indicator 1:							
	Indicator 2:							
Outcome 2:	Indicator 3:							
	Indicator 4:							
	Etc.							
Etc.								

Indicator Assessment Key

Green= Achieved	Yellow= On target to be achieved	Red= Not on target to be achieved
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In addition to the progress towards outcomes analysis:

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

iii. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Management Arrangements:

- Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.

³⁹ Populate with data from the Logframe and scorecards

⁴⁰ Populate with data from the Project Document

⁴¹ If available

⁴² Colour code this column only

⁴³ Use the 6 point Progress Towards Results Rating Scale: HS, S, MS, MU, U, HU

- Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.

Work Planning:

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

Finance and co-finance:

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

Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:

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

Gender

- Review of implementation of Gender Action Plan.
- Assess project's progress towards gender results.

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
- Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?

- Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?
- Assess the implementation of stakeholder engagement strategy.

Reporting:

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

Communications:

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

iv. Sustainability

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

Financial risks to sustainability:

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

Socio-economic risks to sustainability:

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

transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:

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

Environmental risks to sustainability:

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

Conclusions & Recommendations

The MTR team will include a section of the report setting out the MTR’s evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.⁴⁴

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

The MTR team should make no more than 15 recommendations total, inclusive of the conclusions and recommendations on cross-cutting issues. Recommendations should be concrete, practical, feasible, targeted, and supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation.

Ratings

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

Table. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for (*Project Title*)

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A	
Progress Towards Results	Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 2 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 3 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Etc.	
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
Sustainability	(rate 4 pt. scale)	

⁴⁴ Alternatively, MTR conclusions may be integrated into the body of the report.

6. TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the MTR will be approximately (25 days) over a time period of (12 weeks) starting (7 June 2024), and shall not exceed five months from when the consultant(s) are hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITY
20 May 2024	Application closes
24 May 2024	Select MTR Team
28 May 2024	MTR Team Onboarded
31 May 2024	Initial Call and Prep with the MTR Team
5 Jun 2024	Handover of Project Documents
7 Jun 2024 (3 days) (recommended: 2-4)	Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report
6-11 Jun 2024	Review of MTR Inception Report
13 Jun 2024 (3 days)	Finalization and Validation of MTR Inception Report- latest start of MTR mission
24 Jun-5 Jul 2024 (10 days) (r: 7-15)	MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits
10 Jul 2024	Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of MTR mission
11-31 Jul 2024 (5 days) (r: 5-10)	Preparing draft report
7 Aug 2024 (2 days) (r: 1-2)	Draft report submission for review and comment
9 Aug 2024	ERG Meeting for presentation of draft report
12-16 Aug 2024	Consolidation of feedback from ERG, Preparation and issue of management response
20 Aug 2024	Incorporation of audit trail from feedback on draft report, Finalization of MTR report (note: accommodate time delay in dates for circulation and review of the draft report)
31 Aug 2024	Expected date of full MTR completion

Options for site visits should be provided in the Inception Report.

7. MIDTERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	MTR Inception Report	MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review	No later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission: 13 June 2024	MTR team submits to the Commissioning Unit and project management
2	Presentation	Initial Findings	End of MTR mission: 1 day 0 July 2024	MTR Team presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit
3	Draft Report	Full report (using guidelines on content outlined in Annex B) with annexes	Within 3 weeks of the MTR mission: 7 Aug 2024	Sent to the Commissioning Unit, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFF
4	Final Report* + Completed Audit Trail	Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft: 20 Aug 2024	Sent to the Commissioning Unit

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
		Presentation and submission of MTR report		

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

8. MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is *the UNDP Philippines Country Office*.

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

An Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) shall be formed to ensure that the MTR will undergo a peer review process that will assure the quality of the report before it is finalized. It shall be composed of representatives from FPE, DENR (FASPS and BMB), UNDP, and other selected representatives from the Project Board.

9. TEAM COMPOSITION

A team of two independent consultants will conduct the MTR - one team leader (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally) and one team expert, usually from the country of the project.

- The review lead/coordinator (international consultant) will mainly be responsible for initiating and managing the MTR process and leading the overall design and writing of the MTR, maintaining the integrity and independence of the process, and ensuring that the MTR translates into a relevant and actionable product for organizational and national results-based management and development.
- The technical expert (National Consultant) will provide support to the review lead/ coordinator and serve as the subject matter expert at the national level. S/he should have a strong background on the subject and will mainly be responsible for studying the dynamics among stakeholders and how it affects project performance, progress and results achievement, and potential development pathways for the country, highlighting gains, uncovering gaps, and proposing appropriate corrective measures that the project can take.

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

The selection of consultants will be aimed at maximizing the overall "team" qualities in the following areas: *(give a weight to all these qualifications so applicants know what is the max amount of points they can earn for the technical evaluation)*

- Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies (15 pts);
- Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios (10 pts);
- Competence in adaptive management, as applied to *Biodiversity* (5 pts);

- Experience working with the GEF or GEF-evaluations (5 pts);
- Experience working in *Asia and the Pacific* (5 pts);
- Work experience in relevant technical areas for at least 10 years (10 pts);
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and *biodiversity*, experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis (15 pts).
- Excellent communication skills (5 pts);
- Demonstrable analytical skills (10 pts);
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset (15 pts);
- A Master's degree in *environment and natural resources management, community development, or other closely related field* (5 pts).

10. ETHICS

The MTR team will be held to the highest ethical standards and is required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment. This MTR will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The MTR team must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The MTR team must also ensure security of collected information before and after the MTR and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information, knowledge and data gathered in the MTR process must also be solely used for the MTR and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

11. PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

20% payment upon submission of the final MTR Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit

30% payment upon presentation of initial findings and submission of the draft MTR report to the Commissioning Unit

50% payment upon submission of the final MTR report, with completed audit trail, and approval by the Commissioning Unit

Criteria for issuing the final payment of 50%:

- The final MTR report includes all requirements outlined in the MTR TOR and is in accordance with the MTR guidance.
- The final MTR report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other MTR reports).
- The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

APPENDIX B – MISSION ITINERARY (FOR SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2024)

#	Activity	Stakeholder involved	Place
17 September 2024 (Tuesday)			
	Arrival in Manila	UNDP	
1	Meeting with FPE and PMU	FPE	Manila
18 September 2024 (Wednesday)			
2	Meeting with PTRC members	BFAR	
3	Meeting with PTRC members	DENR-BMB	
19 September 2024 (Thursday)			
4	Meeting with PTRC Members	NCIP. PTRC Chair	Manila
20 September 2024 (Friday)			
5	Meetings with LRTC for Catubig Watershed	NAC, CAPWA	
6	Meetings with Catubig Watershed stakeholders	Catubig stakeholders (CCFI, Catubig MGLU, CERD)	Zoom on-line
29 September 2024 (Sunday)			
	Travel to Siargao		
30 September 2024 (Monday)			
7	Field visit and meetings with NGO	Lokal Lab (Tropikal Academy)	Siargao
8	Meetings with Siargao LRTC	DENR Region 13, DILG, Municipality of Burgos	Siargao
9	Meetings with LRTC CSOs	Sentro para sa Ikaunlad ng Katutubong Agham at Teknolohiya (SIKAT), Tawintawin Farmers Association (TAWFA) and Surigao Economic Development and Microfinance Foundation, Inc. (SEDMFI)	Siargao
1 October 2024 (Tuesday)			
	Travel back to Manila		
2 October 2024 (Wednesday)			
10	Meeting with CGI NGO	Culion Foundation Inc.	Manila
11	Meeting with DENR	Undersecretary DENR	Manila
12	Meeting with Implementing Partner	FPE	Manila

#	Activity	Stakeholder involved	Place
13	Meeting with CGI NGOs		Zoom on-line
3 October 2024 (Thursday)			
	Travel to Aurora Province		
4 October 2024 (Friday)			
14	Site visit with NGO	Dimasalang Egongot Tribe Farmers and Weavers Association (DETFAWAI) and Daloy ng Buhay (DALUHAY), Inc.	Dianawan
15	Group meeting with LRTC for Aurora consisting of LGUs and NGOs	DENR, DILG, Aurora State College of Technology (ASCOT)	Baler
5 October 2024 (Saturday)			
	Travel back to Manila		
6 October 2024 (Sunday)			
	Working on MTR		
7 October 2024 (Monday)			
16	Meeting with FPE	CEO, FPE	
17	Meeting with NEDA	NEDA	
18	Meeting with FASPS	FASPS	
19	Meeting with NGOs	Calamianes Group of Islands	Zoom on-line
20	Wrap-up meeting for SGP-7 Project with PMU	FPE	Quezon City
8 October 2024 (Sunday)			
	Travel back to Vancouver		
8 October 2024 (Sunday)			
21	Meeting with UNDP	UNDP Philippines	Zoom On-line

Total number of meetings conducted: 21

APPENDIX C – LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

This is a listing of persons contacted in the Philippines (unless otherwise noted) during the Mid-Term Review Period only. The Evaluation Team regrets any omissions to this list.

1. Atty. Jonas Leones, CESO I, Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and International Affairs, SGP-7 National Steering Committee (NSC) Chairperson;
2. Dr. Al Orolfo, DENR Foreign-Assisted Special Projects and Services (FASPS), SGP-7 NSC Alternate Chairperson;
3. Atty. Analiza Rebuelta- Teh, Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and International Affairs and Climate Change, DENR;
4. Mr. Rene Zalde Porlaje, Chief, Coastal Resource Management Section, DA Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA BFAR);
5. Ms. Juvy Ladisla, OIC Division Chief, Caves and Wetlands, Division (CAWED);
6. Mr. Kelvin Balaquit, Ecosystem Management Specialist;
7. Ms. Mary Jane M. Dela Rosa, Chief Economic Development Specialist, NEDA-Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Environment Staff (NEDA-ANRES)-Natural Resources Division;
8. Mr. Harvie Joy Manejar, OIC-Supervising EDS, ANRES-NRD;
9. Ms. Jowell Angelo Banda, EDS II, ANRES-NRD;
10. Ms. Floradema Eleazar, Team Leader, Climate Action Programme, UNDP;
11. Ms. Maria Theresa V. Espino-Yap, EnP, Programme Analyst, Climate Action Programme, UNDP;
12. Ms. Alyssa Carreon, UNDP;
13. Mr. Mark Jabines, Senior Program Officer (Calamianes-based), CFI;
14. Mr. Eugene Caccam, Executive Director (Head Office), CFI;
15. Mr. Jimmy Aberin, DENR Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO), Municipality of Dingalan;
16. For. Jestonee Bitong, Officer, MENRO, Municipality of Casiguran;
17. Engr. Rosanna Hernandez, Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG);
18. For. Mary Jane Aragon-Marigmen, Aurora State College of Technology (ASCOT);
19. Ms. Rosalinda Francia, President, DETFAWAI;
20. Dr. Marivic Pajaro, Executive Director, DALUHAY;
21. Ms. Ruth Canlas, Executive Director, Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme (NTFP) Philippines;
22. Dr. Marie Pascua, CESO III, NCIP Director IV, Region IVB;
23. Ms. Salve Narvadez, Executive Director, Fostering People's Empowerment, Education and Enterprises, Inc (FosPEEE), SGP-7 PTRC Co-chairperson;
24. Mr. Julio Tan, Managing Trustee, Center for Empowerment and Resource Development (CERD) of Catubig Watershed;

25. Mr. Jesus Acebuche, Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office (MENRO), Municipality of Laoang of Catubig Watershed;
26. Mr. Almira Apelo, Program Coordinator, Caritas Catarman Foundation, Inc. (DSAC-CCFI) of Catubig Watershed;
27. Mr. Romula Obelopas, Program Coordinators, Caritas Catarman Foundation, Inc. (DSAC-CCFI) of Catubig Watershed;
28. Ms. Valentin Tenedero, President, Catubig Association for the Protection of Watershed Area (CAPWA);
29. Ms. Maybelle Mangada-Camps, CSO Alliance/Chairperson, Nortehano Access Center (NAC) of Catubig Watershed;
30. Mr. Mark David Pintucan, Executive Director, Lokal Lab Siargao LKLLB;
31. Ms. Bianca Espinos, Manager, Tropikal Academy, Lokal Lab Siargao LKLLB;
32. Ms. Cleofie Aranas, Chief of Protected Areas, Ecotourism and Biodiversity Section (PABES), DENR R13;
33. Mr. Milafe Nohara, Assistant Protected Area Superintendent (PASu), PAMO-SIPLAS;
34. Ms. Wendy Gona, Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office, LGU Burgos;
35. Ms. Celynita Digao, Program Head, Sustainable and Resilient Communities, Surigao Economic Development and Microfinance Foundation, Inc. (SEDMFI);
36. Mr. R.J. Magbunua, Project Manager, Sentro para sa Ikauunlad ng Katutubong Agham at Teknolohiya (SIKAT);
37. Mr. Janry Ducado, Agricultural Technician, Municipal Agricultural Office (MAO) Coron;
38. Mr. Eric Lopez, Executive Director, Communities for Resilience (CFR);
39. Mr. Asuncion Aguilar, Manager, Salvacion Busuanga Rural Waterworks, Assoc. (SBRWSA);
40. Mr. Jerome Montemayor, PhD, Executive Director, FPE;
41. Mr. Errol Gatumbato, SGP-7 Project Coordinator, PMU;
42. Ms. Joan Christa Arbolado, MBA, Institutional Development Lead, PMU;
43. Ms. Louie Tesalona, PhD, Program Lead, PMU;
44. Ms. Thelma Fegason, Finance Lead, PMU;
45. Ms. Ma. Lourdes J. M. Reyes (Dessa), Knowledge Management Officer, PMU

APPENDIX D – LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

1. PIF Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in the Philippines (GEF-SGP 07);
2. ProDoc for the Seventh Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in the Philippines (GEF-SGP 07);
3. 2023 and 2024 Project Implementation Reports (PIR);
4. Minutes of the 4th National Steering Committee (NSC) Meeting – 10 July 2024;
5. Minutes of the 3rd National Steering Committee (NSC) Meeting – 16 November 2023;
6. Project Status Report of the Project, GEF SGP 7, as of CY 2024, 2nd Quarter -DENR;
7. Project Status Report of the Project, GEF SGP 7, as of CY 2024, 1st Quarter – DENR;
8. GEF8 Core Indicator Reporting SGP 7 MT;
9. GEF SGP 7 Call for Submission of Grant Proposals;
10. GEF SGP 7 Second Call for the Submission of Landscape Level NGO Hub Proposals;
11. Annual Progress Report Year 2022;
12. GEF SGP 7 National Inception Workshop Documentation - September 2022;
13. Semestral Progress Report. January to June 2023;
14. 2023 Annual Progress Report, GEF SGP 07;
15. Project Brief: Fostering Socio-ecological Resilience by Initiating a Network of Community-managed Micro watersheds in Aurora Province-Daloy ng Buhay (DALUHAY) – Strategic Grant- Aurora Province;
16. Project Brief: Promoting Livelihood and Food Security to Conserve and Protect;
17. The Dimasalang Ancestral Domain - Dimasalang Egongot Tribe Farmers Association, Inc.;
18. DETFAWAI, Regular Grant, Aurora Province;
19. Project Brief: Catubig Watershed Landscape Hub and Learning Center, Center for Empowerment and Resource Development, Inc, Landscape Level NGO Hub Grant, Catubig Watershed;
20. Project Brief: Advancing Safeguards of the CAPWA- CBFMA Project, Catubig Association for the Protection of Watershed Area (CAPWA), Regular Grant, Catubig Watershed;
21. Project Brief: Integrated Environmental Sanitation and Watershed Management, Caritas Catarman Foundation, Inc. (CCFI), Regular Grant, Catubig Watershed;
22. Project Brief: Strategic Collaborative Responses Towards Environmental Sustainability (SCORES);
23. Project Brief: The Samdhana Institute, Strategic Grant, Calamianes Group of Islands (CGI);
24. Project Brief: Enhancing Resilience of Local Conservation Area and Lubao Water Source through Biodiversity Protection, Management and Water 3R in Salvacion Busuanga Palawan, Salvacion-Busuanga Rural Waterworks and Sanitation Association Inc., Regular Grant, Busuanga Municipality, Palawan;
25. Project Brief: Resilience Building of Communities and the Environment through Food Forest Systems in Busuanga, Palawan (ReBuild Food in Busuanga, Palawan), Communities for Resilience, (CFR) Inc. Regular Grant, Busuanga, Palawan;

26. Project Brief: Integrated Coastal and Marine Management Towards Ecosystem and Community Resilience, Culion Foundation Inc., Regular Grant, Coron Municipality, Palawan;
27. Project Brief: Establishing an Efficient Communication and Resource Management Hub for the SIPLAS Surugao Economic Development and Microfinance Foundation Inc. (SEDMFI), Landscape-Level NGO-Hub Grant;
28. Project Brief: KAHUSA: Empowering PACBRMA Communities through Collaboration and Capacity Building for Sustainable Resource Management in SIPLAS. LOKAL LAB SIARGAO INC. Strategic Grant, Siargao Island Protected Landscape and Seascape (SIPLAS), covering municipalities of San Isidro, Sta. Monica, Pilar, Dapa, Socorro

APPENDIX E – GEF-7 CORE INDICATOR WORKSHEET

[PIMS Number: 6418] [Country: Philippines]

Annexed as a separate file



APPENDIX F – PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK FOR PHILIPPINES SGP-7 PROJECT FROM FEBRUARY 2022 (WITH SUGGESTED EDITS IN RED FONT)

No changes were made in this PRF with the assumption of a Project extension of 12 to 24 months to enable to the PMU to work towards closer achievement of the objective level targets.

<p>This project will contribute to the following Sustainable Development Goal (s): 1) No Poverty; 2) Zero Hunger; 5) Gender Equality; 8) Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; 11) Sustainable Cities and Communities; 12) Responsible Consumption and Production; 13) Climate Action ; 14) Life Below Water; 15) Life on Land and 17) Partnerships to achieve the Goal</p>
<p>This project will contribute to the following country outcome (UNDAF/CPD, RPD, GPD):</p>

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline ⁴⁵	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target ⁴⁶
<p>Project Objective: To build socio-ecological and economic resilience in four (4) selected landscapes and seascapes on the Eastern Seaboard of the Philippines - (1) Catubig Watershed Samar Island, (2) Aurora Province in the Sierra Madre, (3) Siargao Island Protected Landscape/Seascape - and along the West Philippine Sea - (4) Calamian Islands in Northern Palawan - through community-based activities for global environmental benefits and sustainable development.</p>	<p>Mandatory Indicator 1: # direct project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (individual people)</p>	✓	10,000 5,000 women; 5,000 men	20,000 10,000 women; 10,000 men ⁴⁷
	<p>Mandatory Indicator 2: # indirect project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (individual people)</p>		100,000	300,000 150,000 women; 150,000 men
	<p>Mandatory GEF Core Indicators 2 - 5: Core Indicator 3. Area of land restored (hectares)</p>	65,000	2,000	5,000 ⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Baseline figures are from previous SGP phases but only from the same sites. It is worth noting that the methodology for calculating hectares covered will be different from SGP-05 which took entire communal areas into account when conducting work in a particular area, given the lack of clarity with tenure agreements. In SGP 07, the project will be assessed against a new results architecture and identifies areas of direct impact.

⁴⁶ SGP 07 targets do not include the baseline figures in their estimates, rather the targets are *new* work, funded by funds made available under SGP-07. It is estimated that about 20% of the funds will support the upscaling or replication of SGP-05 work, but these will be new interventions.

⁴⁷ Assume 4 core LGUs per landscape; each LGU has 5-20 villages; each village has 200 households of which 25 % will adopt.

⁴⁸ The restoration work planned for this project is specifically to reverse degraded ecosystems, enhance biodiversity, reforest and re-vegetate biodiversity corridors, coastal zones, and areas that have been heavily deforested.

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline ⁴⁵	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target ⁴⁶
	Core Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas).	70,000	25,000	65,000 ⁴⁹
	Core Indicator 5: Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity (hectares)	60,000	10,000	30,000 ⁵⁰
Project component 1	1. Resilient landscapes for sustainable development and global environmental protection			
Project Outcome 1.1 1.1 Ecosystem services and biodiversity within four targeted landscapes and seascapes (Catubig Watershed, Aurora, Siargao Island Protected Landscapes Seascapes and Calamian Islands) are enhanced through integrated land-use systems	Indicator 6: Number of people (disaggregated by gender) within the landscape communities adopting biodiversity conservation, marine protection and sustainable development methods/techniques	1,500	At least 3,000 men; 3,000 women	At least 6,000 men, 6,000 women
	Indicator 7: Number of community organizations leading and conducting improved land-use management practices	16	At least 30	At least 80
	Indicator 8: Percentage of SGP-07 projects that improve the participation of women in natural resource governance	0	At least 10%	At least 40%
Outputs to achieve Outcome 1.1	Output 1.1.1: Community level small grant projects in the selected landscapes that restore degraded landscapes, improve connectivity, support innovation in biodiversity conservation and optimization of ecosystem services (including reforestation of riparian gallery forests, forest fire control, enhanced connectivity for wetlands and priority conservation areas; water catchment protection; participatory monitoring of species; restoration of biological corridors)			

⁴⁹ The target for “Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (Million Hectares)” has been changed to 65,000 hectares. The number has been enhanced to include the area that will be covered by landscape strategies, environmental governance instruments. It is anticipated that there will be 20,000 hectares (approximately 4 municipalities) covered in Samar; 10,000 hectares (approximately 2 municipalities) in Aurora; 15,000 hectares (approximately 3 municipalities) in Calamianes Group of Islands and 20,000 hectares (approximately 3/4 municipalities) in Siargao).

⁵⁰ The target “Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity (hectares)” has been increased to 30,000 hectares. It takes into account the coastal zones covered by planned interventions. SGP-07 anticipates 10,000 hectares of seascape covered in Samar, 8,000 hectares in the Calamianes Group of Islands; 10,000 hectares of seascape in Siargao and 2,000 hectares in Aurora.

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline⁴⁵	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target⁴⁶
Outcome 1.2 1.2 The sustainability of production systems in the target landscapes is strengthened through integrated agro-ecological practices.	Indicator 9: Number of farmers and fisherfolk (disaggregated by gender) within the landscape communities adopting appropriate agro-ecological/marine/coastal eco-systems-based technologies and systems	1,500	1,000 men; 1,000 women	At least 2,000 men; 2,000 women
Outputs to achieve Outcome 1.2	Output 1.2.1. Targeted community projects enhancing the sustainability and resilience of production systems, including agroforestry systems, sustainable management of non-timber forest products, soil and water conservation practices, increased on-farm arboreal coverage with native species; agro-ecological practices, multiple cropping systems and small-scale organic agriculture			
Outcome 1.3 Livelihoods of communities in the target landscapes and seascapes are improved by developing eco-friendly, climate-adaptive small-scale community enterprises with clear market linkages	Indicator 10: Number of innovative value-added products generated by community projects practicing biodiversity conservation and agro-ecological resource management	5	10	30
	Indicator 11: Number of biodiversity-friendly, climate-resilient community initiatives upgraded to profitable enterprises supported by grants	0	1	5 At least two of which are female-led
	Indicator 12: Number of projects that target socio-economic benefits and services for women	unknown	At least 5	At least 15
Outputs to achieve Outcome 1.3	1.3.1. Targeted community projects promoting sustainable livelihoods, green businesses and market access, including ecotourism; and eco-processing and conversion of organic waste products; beekeeping; green value-added agro-businesses integrated into value chains, micro-processing.			
Project component 2	2.0 Landscape governance and adaptive management for upscaling and replication			
Outcome 2.1 Multi-stakeholder governance platforms strengthened/in place for improved governance of target landscapes and seascapes for effective participatory decision making to enhance socio-ecological landscape resiliency	Indicator 13: Number of multi-stakeholder platforms operational in each sub-landscape, with at least 40% participation of women		4	4
	Indicator 14: Number of landscape strategies produced through a multi-stakeholder governance platforms with	0	1	4

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline⁴⁵	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target⁴⁶
	specified gender considerations and targets ⁵¹			
Outputs to achieve Outcome 2.1	<p>2.1.1 A multi-stakeholder governance platform in each target landscape develops and executes multi-stakeholder agreements for execution of adaptive landscape management plans and policies; development of value-chain improvement strategies for resilience enhancing products; and enhanced community participation in land-use decision making and management;</p> <p>2.1.2 A landscape strategy developed by the corresponding multi-stakeholder platform for each target landscape to enhance socio-ecological resilience through community grant projects</p>			
Outcome 2.2 Knowledge from community level engagement and innovative conservation practices is systematically assessed and shared for replication and upscaling across the landscapes, across the country, and to the global SGP network	Indicator 15: Number of landscape-level case studies which include best practices and lessons learned that can be upscaled at the policy-level	3	0	4
	Indicator 16: Number of gender-responsive knowledge management and communication strategies	0	<p>1 national, umbrella knowledge management strategy (to be adapted throughout project)</p> <p>1 national communications strategy (to be adapted throughout project)</p> <p>4 landscape-specific communications and knowledge management strategies</p>	<p>6</p> <p>1 umbrella knowledge management strategy</p> <p>1 national communications strategy</p> <p>4 landscape-specific communications and knowledge management strategies</p>
Outputs to achieve Outcome 2.2	<p>2.2.1 Landscape Learning Hubs support community level project management capacity building, project monitoring and learning;</p> <p>2.2.2 Knowledge management mechanism established as part of each multi-stakeholder platform;</p> <p>2.2.3 Strategic initiatives are supported to upscale successful SGP project experience and practice including community-NGO-government policy dialogues</p>			

⁵¹ Examples include: PA plans, local land use and development plans incorporating improved landscape /seascape governance; sectoral plans, etc.

APPENDIX G – EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Project Strategy: To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best route towards expected results?			
Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?	Number of stakeholders participating in PPG Number of stakeholders participating in project sponsored training sessions and meetings	PPG stakeholder meeting minutes Project designers QPRs	Desk review of QPRs and interviews with project designers, PMU, stakeholders
Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)?	Quality of outcomes and indicators on log frame	Project document	Desk review
Were relevant gender issues (e.g., the impact of the project on gender equality in the programme country, involvement of women’s groups, engaging women in project activities) raised in the Project Document?	Gender indicators in PRF	QPRs	Desk review, interviews with PMU and stakeholders
Are the project’s objective and outcomes clear, practical, and feasible to be realized within its time frame?	Quality of outcomes and indicators on log frame	Project document	Desk review
Are each of the project components comprised of the relevant and necessary activities that will deliver the required outputs that will collectively bring about the expected outcome in each component?	Quality of outcomes and indicators on log frame	Project document	Desk review
Progress Towards Results: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved thus far?			
Has the Project been effective in achieving the expected outcomes and objectives?	Effectiveness ratings of the project by the evaluation	QPRs	Desk review, interviews with PMU and stakeholders
How well are risks, assumptions and impact drivers being managed?	Content of risk management in QPRs	QPRs and information from PMU personnel	Desk review, interviews with PMU and GoP personnel
To what extent has the project contributed to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> institutional arrangements strengthened effective information dissemination program developed stakeholder capacity enhanced 	Indicator targets of GoP and other institutional strengthening Indicator targets of governate and stakeholder strengthening	Progress reports, QPRs, and information from PMU and GoP personnel	

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
To what extent did the dissemination activities facilitate progress towards Project impacts?	Number of knowledge products created by Project	Survey of feedback of training sessions, testimonial evidence from training participants, and information from PMU and GoP personnel	Desk review, interviews with training participants, PMU and GoP personnel
Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? To what extent are project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting, and project communications supporting the project’s implementation?			
Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear?	Effectiveness ratings of the project by the evaluation	QPRs	Desk review, interviews with PMU and stakeholders
Do the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner and/or UNDP and other partners have the capacity to deliver benefits to or involve women? If yes, how?	Adaptive management reporting in QPRs	QPRs and information from PMU personnel	Desk review, interviews with PMU
What is the gender balance of project staff? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in project staff?	Adaptive management reporting in QPRs	QPRs and information from PMU personnel	Desk review, interviews with PMU
What is the gender balance of the Project Board? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in the Project Board?	Adaptive management reporting in QPRs	QPRs and information from PMU personnel	Desk review, interviews with PMU
Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results.	Annual work plans	AWPs and information from PMU personnel	Desk review, interviews with PMU
Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?	Institutional arrangements of the Project	QPRs and information from PMU personnel	Desk review, interviews with PMU
Is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly to align financing priorities and annual work plans? Are the committed co-financing by the project partners/co-financers being realized?	Institutional arrangements of the Project	QPRs and information from PMU personnel	Desk review, interviews with PMU
Regarding monitoring tools being used, do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they	Monitoring systems	QPRs and information from PMU personnel	Desk review, interviews with PMU

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?			
Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?	Level of stakeholder engagement	QPRs and information from PMU personnel and stakeholders	Desk review, interviews with PMU and stakeholders
Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?	Level of stakeholder engagement	QPRs and information from PMU personnel and stakeholders	Desk review, interviews with PMU and stakeholders
To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?	Level of stakeholder engagement	QPRs and information from PMU personnel and stakeholders	Desk review, interviews with PMU and stakeholders
How does the project engage women and girls? Is the project likely to have the same positive and/or negative effects on women and men, girls, and boys? Identify, if possible, legal, cultural, or religious constraints on women’s participation in the project. What can the project do to enhance its gender benefits?	Level of stakeholder engagement	QPRs and information from PMU personnel and stakeholders	Desk review, interviews with PMU and stakeholders
How has the Project Team addressed poorly rated PIRs, if applicable?	Monitoring systems	QPRs and information from PMU personnel	Desk review, interviews with PMU
Is internal project communication with stakeholders regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?	Adaptive management reporting in QPRs	QPRs and information from PMU personnel	Desk review, interviews with PMU
Are proper means of external project communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)	Level of stakeholder engagement	QPRs and information from PMU personnel and stakeholders	Desk review, interviews with PMU and stakeholders
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?			

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project’s outcomes)?	Opinions of stakeholders	Survey of feedback of training sessions, and testimonial evidence from government personnel and stakeholders	Desk review, interviews with government personnel and stakeholders
Appropriateness of the institutional arrangement and whether there was adequate commitment to the Project	Number of institutions and local government agencies that have had capacities built	Progress reports, QPRs, and information from PMU and GoP personnel	Desk review, interviews with government personnel and stakeholders
To what extent are the stakeholders are realizing benefits from the project?	Opinions of stakeholders (i.e., farmers, fishermen, local residents)	Stakeholder interviews	Stakeholder interviews
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial risks to sustaining long-term project results?			
What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project’s outcomes)??	Opinions of GoP and PMU personnel	Stakeholder interviews	Desk review, interviews with government personnel, PMU and stakeholders
Appropriateness of the institutional arrangement and whether there was adequate commitment to the Project	Number of institutions and local government agencies that have had capacities built	Progress reports, QPRs, and information from PMU and DoECC personnel	Desk review, interviews with government personnel and stakeholders
To what extent are the stakeholders are realizing benefits from the project?	Opinions of stakeholders (i.e., farmers, fishermen, local residents)	Stakeholder interviews	Stakeholder interviews
Sustainability: To what extent are there institutional risks to sustaining long-term project results?			
How effective is the project in terms of strengthening the capacity of GoP professionals?	Opinions of training participants	Survey of feedback of training sessions, and testimonial evidence from government personnel and stakeholders	Desk review, interviews with government personnel and stakeholders
Appropriateness of the institutional arrangement and whether there was adequate commitment to the Project	Number of institutions and local government agencies that have had capacities built	Progress reports, QPRs, and information from PMU and GoP personnel	Desk review, interviews with government personnel and stakeholders
Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits?	Opinions of GoP stakeholders and PMU	Stakeholder interviews	Stakeholder interviews

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Sustainability: To what extent are there socio-economic risks to sustaining long-term project results?			
What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained?	Opinions of training participants and GoP personnel	Survey of feedback of testimonial evidence from government personnel and stakeholders	Desk review, interviews with government personnel and stakeholders
Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project?	Opinions of training participants and GoP personnel	Survey of feedback of testimonial evidence from government personnel and stakeholders	Desk review, interviews with government personnel and stakeholders
Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?	Opinions of training participants and GoP personnel	Survey of feedback of testimonial evidence from government personnel and stakeholders	Desk review, interviews with government personnel and stakeholders
Sustainability: To what extent are there environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?			
Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?	Opinions of training participants and GoP personnel	Survey of feedback of testimonial evidence from government personnel and stakeholders	Desk review, interviews with government personnel and stakeholders

ANNEX H – LIST OF CSOs WITH SGP-7 GRANTS APPROVED

1. AUP-RG #11: Dimasalang Egongot Tribe Farmers Association, Inc. (DETFAWAI) for PHP 2,749,970;
2. AUP-SG #10: Daloy ng Buhay, Inc. (DALUHAY) for PHP 8,471,000;
3. CAT-HG #3: Center for Empowerment and Resource Development (CERD), Inc. for PHP 8,184,480;
4. CAT-RG #1: Caritas Catarman Foundation, Inc. (CCFI) for PHP 2,637,980;
5. CAT-RG #3: Catubig Association for Protection of Watershed Area (CAPWA) for PHP 2,815,459;
6. CGI-RG #7: Communities for Resilience, Inc. (CFR) for PHP 2,275,560;
7. CGI-RG #5 Culion Foundation, Inc. (CFI) for PHP 2,757,600;
8. CGI-RG #6: Salvacion Busuanga Rural Waterworks (SBRWSA) for PHP 1,934,200;
9. CGI-SG #4: The Samdhana Institute for PHP 8,179,592;
10. SIA-HG #9: Surigao Economic Development and Microfinance Foundation, Inc. (SEDMFI) for PHP 10,084,692;
11. SIA-SG #8: Lokal Lab Siargao (LKLLB) for PHP 8,286,420.

ANNEX I - QUESTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

These questions apply to all stakeholders.

1. Has the Project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? If not, what needs to be done?
2. Has the COVID-19 pandemic affected Project implementation and how? Were alternative approaches considered in the course of implementation? What are other potential risks for the Project's efficient implementation?
3. What has been your experience and role with Project implementation and performance of Project partners thus far?
4. Has financing technical assistance been an issue in implementing the Project?
5. What should be strengthened in the Project post MTR? What are the weaknesses?
6. What main risks did you see in this GEF project?
7. Is there any specific need for training?

These are some specific questions for the PMU, DENR, NSC members (of the PTRC) and PFE, mainly pertaining to the proposal process:

12. How effective was the process of building the capacity building for the grant applicants, and how much did this affect progress;
13. What efforts were required to bring the capacities up to acceptable levels?
14. Are there efforts to streamlining the grant review process?
15. Do SGP funds finance activities such as community-based forest management, BD conservation, BD friendly agricultural practices, Sustainable Land Management (SLM), and Marine Protected Area (MPA) management, upgrading biodiversity-friendly, climate-resilient community initiatives to profitable enterprises, among others? What specific activities does SGP look to finance?
16. How then does the SGP 7 project reduce biodiversity threats (arresting habitat loss and decline of biodiversity populations, to climate extremes, and unsustainable commercial and tourism activities)? Is governance to be strengthened?
17. What role do implementation partners have in SGP7 (CBOs, CSOs and NGOs)?
18. What is being co-financed?
19. What is the role of NCIP?
20. Are there any significant awareness raising activities such as the #Youth4Biodiversity (#Y4B) initiative?

Further questions for the grant applicant stakeholders, mainly on what they are going to do with the SGP funds:

1. How effective was the learning process of writing grant proposals? What did you like and dislike about the process?

2. What activities are you hoping SGP finances? Community-based forest management, BD conservation, BD friendly agricultural practices, Sustainable Land Management (SLM), and Marine Protected Area (MPA) management, upgrading biodiversity-friendly, climate-resilient community initiatives to profitable enterprises, among others?
3. How do you engage others to assist you in your efforts to conserve biodiversity of the landscapes and seascapes?
4. How do these activities reduce biodiversity threats (arresting habitat loss and decline of biodiversity populations, to climate extremes, and unsustainable commercial and tourism activities)?
5. How will governance of biodiversity to be strengthened?
6. What is being co-financed?

APPENDIX J – RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED ON DRAFT MTR REPORT

Annexed as a separate file



APPENDIX K – EVALUATION CONSULTANT AGREEMENT FORM

Evaluator 1:

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 during 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.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing or advising on the project being evaluated.


Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form⁴⁰

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

Name of Consultant: Roland Wong

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): _____


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

Signed at Surrey, BC, Canada on 26 December 2024 

⁴⁰ www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct

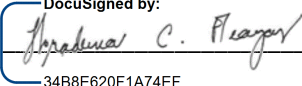
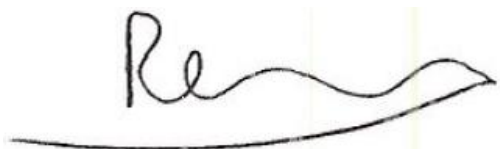
Evaluator 2:

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 during 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.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing or advising on the project being evaluated.

<p>Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form⁴¹</p> <p>Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System</p> <p>Name of Consultant: <u>Cenon Padolina</u></p> <p>Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): _____</p> <p>I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-end; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 40%;"> <p>Signed at <i>Dasmarias City, Cavite, Philippines</i> on <i>26 December 2024</i></p> </div> <div style="width: 50%; text-align: right;">  </div> </div>

⁴¹ www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct

APPENDIX L – MTR FINAL REPORT CLEARANCE FORM

Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:	
Commissioning Unit (Climate Action Programme)	
Name: _____	Floradema Eleazar
Signature: _____	<small>DocuSigned by:</small>  <small>34B8E620F1A74EF...</small>
Date: _____	07-Jan-2025
Regional Technical Advisor (Nature, Climate and Energy)	
Name: Hugo REMAURY	
Signature: _____	
Date: _____	6 January 2025