1. Executive Summary

The SIRM project stipulates that achieving island-wide ecosystem management involves institutionalizing cross-sectoral planning mechanisms, developing information-based decision-making tools, and engaging participatory processes around development (environmental, economic, and social). In keeping with the project goal, MTE finds that the project design has proven to be the right mix of environmental mainstreaming, policy learning, planning and downstream demonstration. Ecosystem management is sustainable development and risk reduction in Antigua/Barbuda, and separating it from economic and social development planning in general would be a mistake.

A focus on national demonstration solves critical problems, promotes public environmental education and reduces immediate risks, while the global demonstration of ecosystem management as a governance and management issue works towards a main project objective of sharing good practices on island-wide sustainable development of risk reduction systems and policies. Ecosystem management in Antigua/Barbuda is cross-sectoral sustainable development and risk reduction planning. Downstream demonstration are solving critical problems, providing economic and social valuation, and supporting the data collection process for building the government-wide EIMAS.

The project had minor shortcomings in progress toward achieving its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency. Most significant shortcomings in progress are related to the bottlenecks resulting from not completing important activities, including the alternative livelihoods briefings and cost benefit analysis. The project is, however, on target toward reaching its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency as it is strengthening mechanisms and putting into place tools for better information management and transparent decisions focused on natural resource management.

The main issue with implementation (based on the review of the original log frame and proposed targets) was scheduling upstream activities. However, MTE maintains that this is a timing issue rather than one of poor implementation or progress towards the desired policies. Instituting systems and mechanisms that support ecosystem management at the national level and solve critical downstream problems was essential. Many assumptions in SIRM design were about the time it takes to influence policy and institutional development for SIRM. New targets have been proposed by the project implementation team, and MTE supports that these are more realistic and support a higher probability of achievement in an end-of-project scenario however, also suggests that the new targets be revisited to take into account findings of this evaluation and be 'smarter'- specific and time bound.

SIRM project is implemented during structural adjustment. This economic shock has negatively impacted the original plan in the short term in terms of slowing co-financing and weakening institutional capacities. Nonetheless, MTE found an unexpected benefit as the project is demonstrating an *efficient* cross- sectoral planning mechanism and providing utility beyond the environmental outcomes, i.e. identifying cross-sectoral projects, influencing economic development planning, etc.

The project's outcome focuses on generating information tools and development systems for planning, i.e. EIMAS system, and the national coordination mechanism PCC has proved to be of great value and utility to the different departments and technical units involved. It must become a primary focus for end-of-project results, and if the information system can be developed and instituted, all of the other outcomes can be achieved in time.

MTE finds that although the SIRM project is effectively demonstrating adaptive management at the national level, it is operating primarily at technical level and is not therefore, providing sufficient support

for influencing policies and institutions, that is, upstream changes (enabling environment and structures) for institutionalizing IWRM and ecosystems management. In this regard, the MTE found that the SIRM project is hinging dangerously on garnering appropriate political support. Although the project has support at the higher Ministerial level and that of the technicians involved, more is needed to ensure that the tools, lessons, and demonstrations are institutionalized.

In order to gain a higher level of support and to document the project to provide utility to other island states, the project coordinator must conduct regular briefings and engage in persuasive activities, such as finalizing important activities mentioned above, including the economic and social valuation in and around the four demonstration projects.

As benchmark indicator for end of project success, the SIRM Project coordinator must orient work and remaining funding toward finalizing concrete deliverables, including institutionalizing important decision-making tools (finalizing the EIMAS system and its corresponding institutional environment and formalizing the PCC as a cross-sector coordination mechanism), conducting enabling work toward the development of a National Physical Land Use plan (DCA, economic valuation training, alternative livelihood briefs, scenarios arising from the demonstrations, identifying a political/civil champion for support to transparent land use planning), and capturing and sharing knowledge, fostering strategic communications (focusing on policy and public and international audiences), and doing project documentation for strengthening public awareness and sharing good and bad practices, case studies, PSAs, education strategies, community organizing, etc.

In terms of the demonstration projects, three are situated within the jurisdiction of Antigua, while one is contingent on governance and local planning in Barbuda. For the Antigua-based demonstrations, lessons arising from the projects must be viewed as important inputs to national land use planning, and lessons arising from these demonstrations can provide inputs into this process. The sustainability of the new National Park in Barbuda is contingent on securing local government support. The recommendation for this is to provide an advisor to the council to support sustainable development planning as the park is an integral part of that process.

As a first step, the project may immediately develop “toward end-of-project strategy” with MoAb and revisit the targets and work plan in light recommendations arising from the MTE. Reframing the project goals to that of sustainable development may be necessary.

The SIRM project has generated excellent lessons including;

1. Flexible project design necessary for facilitating adaptive management approaches;

2. Institution of an adaptive island-wide management approach, regarding influence of policies and understanding of the timing of the ebbs and flows in public sector reform processes (i.e., correct scheduling of project activities around that objective);

3. Facilitation of development of a cross-sect oral coordination mechanism is supporting the integration of science into policy making; because of the unique mixture of responsibilities and sectors represented.

4. Focus on instituting a functioning EIMAS system providing value beyond the government’s work on ecosystem management and disaster risk reduction. This presents a good investment for GEF toward sustainable development and governance objectives, offering great utility beyond the scope of project;

5. Making the business (economic) case important for policy makers to embody the ecosystem services approach, which translates into involving them heavily in project activities through trainings and briefings;

6. Participating in cross-sect oral integration and planning mechanism, is enabling effective knowledge sharing and guidance across sector. The PC is effectively facilitating the PCC, guided by the NEMS strategy as a facilitator of environmental and natural resource management solutions. The PC and environment division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Housing, Lands and Environment acts as facilitator and environmental gap filler and therefore, does not threaten cooperation across sectors and departments as an environmental "super-agency."

7. The right technical and policy mix of people on the coordination committee is enabling adaptive management for national ecosystem approaches integrating their work into development planning and enabling successful 'science meets policy' demonstration project implementation and results;

8. Demonstrations of *"learning by doing,"* the modus operandi for adaptive management. The originally prescribed scenario was not necessarily the best option, given the local realities. However, adaptive management and approaches must still undertake EIA. For example, Body Ponds adjusted its demonstration model from weed whacking to a terracing model more in line with local needs and budget;

9. Fostering alternative livelihoods requires capacity strengthening and startup costs. Since people cannot work as volunteers, small grants provide a good avenue of funding for this;

10. Proper framing of environmental and natural resources issues as sustainable development is important as ecosystems management or natural resource management is not in everybody's interest where as sustainable development may be.

Table 1- Main Project Ratings		
Project Formulation		**Rating**
	Conceptualization	**Highly Satisfactory**
	Stakeholder Participation	**Satisfactory**
Project implementation		
	Implementation Approach	**Satisfactory**
	Monitoring and Evaluation	**Moderately Satisfactory**
	Stakeholder participation in implementation	**Satisfactory**
Results	**Attainment of outcomes/ Achievement of objectives**	**Moderately Satisfactory**
Sustainability	**Financial resources**	**Moderately Likely (ML). There are moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.**
	Socio-political:	**Moderately Likely (ML). There are moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.**
	Institutional framework and governance:	**Moderately Likely (ML). There are moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.**
	Environmental:	**Moderately Likely (ML). There are moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.**