



Terms of Reference

Final Project Evaluation

Project: Capacity building support to the Suriname Conservation Foundation (SCF)
UNDP Project Number: TTO10 **00036896** and award number **00034614** and
SUR10 **00070446** and award number **00057117**

1. Introduction

The project “Capacity building support to the Suriname Conservation Foundation (SCF)” is Suriname’s co-financing component of US\$ 3.6 million for the project: “Conservation of Globally Significant Forest Ecosystems in Suriname’s Guayana Shield Bio-region “ as was implemented in the period 2000-2006.

The project “Capacity building support to SCF” was signed in September 2004 and the actual implementation started in January 2005. This project is financed by the Government of Suriname with resources from the Dutch Treaty Fund, and scheduled for 6 years. The project is being implemented for 6 years now. The originally scheduled mid-term evaluation was changed into a management support mission support to the project. This was due to the fact that the Final evaluation of the Conservation of Globally Significant Forest Ecosystems in Suriname’s Guayana Shield Bio-region project took place at the end of 2006 and the final report was released in April 2007 and included also recommendations with regard to the SCF capacity building support project. The recommendations to have a management support mission for the “Capacity Building Support to the SCF” project and not another evaluation, was agreed and supported by the Oversight Committee.

1.1. Background/Rationale for the Project

The Republic of Suriname lies on the north coast of South America, bordered by Brazil, Guyana and French Guiana. Forests cover 90% of Suriname, including 80% of pristine forest totalling approximately 118,000 km². The forest ecosystems are intimately linked to the freshwater ecosystems. They also provide habitat to a wide variety of wildlife species. The interior of the country has witnessed little development.

As a former Dutch colony, it gained independence from the Netherlands in 1975. Suriname is one of the least densely populated countries in the world, with a human population of about 480,000. Roughly 87- 90% of the population is concentrated in the capital city of Paramaribo and along the coastal region, while the remaining 10-13 % of the population lives in the interior, mostly in small villages. The varied population includes Creoles, Indians, Javanese, Maroons - who represent the only intact communities descended from runaway slaves in the New World - Amerindians and Chinese. Almost all-economic activities are concentrated along the coastal zone.

Suriname’s economy remains dominated by the mining and oil sectors. In 2008, alumina, gold, and oil amounted to 55 percent of GDP and accounted for some 95 percent of total exports of goods. Bauxite mining is the oldest sector, and the production of alumina dates back to the early 20th century. Oil production began in 1980 by Staatsolie, a state-owned company, while gold production by the formal sector started in 2004. The production of alumina sharply contracted in 2009. Gold production has become the main source of export earnings.

Agricultural production, which is concentrated in the coastal zone, consists mainly of rice and bananas, and accounts for 10 % of export earnings and 12 % of employment. Per capita income is estimated at US\$ 5,791 (2008).

2. Project objectives

The main objectives of the project are to strengthen the long-term environmental management capacity of the Suriname Conservation Foundation (SCF) to enable SCF to support conservation management, research, awareness, advocacy, and ecotourism activities. As a result SCF will be able to carry out its functions to a higher

degree of quality and relevance that meet internationally accepted standards and the requirements of the GEF, UNDP and other donors. At the same time the government agencies responsible for protected area management will be strengthened through the provision of financial and technical capacity building support under this project. Through this capacity strengthening the SCF Endowment fund will reach its initial capitalization target of USD \$15 million to provide long-term sustainable financing for biodiversity conservation.

These project results will contribute to the goal as formulated for the project "Conservation of Globally Significant Forest Ecosystems in Suriname's Guayana Shield Bio-region outcome, formulated as "To engender sustainable conservation of the globally significant Guayana Shield tropical forest wilderness biota".

The major achievements of the project to date have been:

- Support to the SCF's Administrative costs;
- Renewal of SCF's vision, mission and goals;
- The establishment of a monitoring and reporting system.
- A SCF Strategic Plan 2007-2012, training plan, branding and outreach activities, were developed and implemented;
- Strengthening of the Nature Conservation Division with technical assistance, training and goods, specifically by increasing number of game wardens with 100%
- Strengthening of the Biodiversity Focal point: development of the biodiversity Strategy and draft Action Plan;
- Preparation for design of Biodiversity Information Network.
- Financing of several grants as approved by the SCF Board for Protected Area management, research, awareness, advocacy, and ecotourism activities.
- The SCF Endowment fund reached the targeted amount of USD 15 million in 2007.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

In accordance with the UNDP M&E policies and procedures, all projects with long-term implementation period (e.g. over 5 years) are encouraged undergo final evaluation at the end of the project to support accountability and to identify the key lessons learnt for future planning and knowledge generation.

The overall objective the Final Evaluation is to assess the achievements made by the project to deliver the specified objectives, outputs and outcomes during its implementation period. It will establish the relevance, performance and success of the project in terms of effectiveness and efficiency, including the sustainability of results. The evaluation team should identify specific lessons pertaining to the strategies employed, and implementation arrangements, which may be of relevance to other projects that provide for establishment of environment trust funds, institutional strengthening and grant making. This evaluation will focus on the following priority issues:

1. Assessing project achievements and shortcomings at the product and outcome level.
 - Where the stated products and outcomes achieved?
 - What are the main contributions to outcome level results for which the SCF project is recognised?
 - What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving the intended results?
 - To what extent the project incorporated gender and human right issues to enhance effectiveness? What other factors have contributed to the effectiveness?
 - Has the partnership strategy been effective?
2. Sustainability, in terms of:
 - Financial resources. What is the likelihood that financial and economic resources will be available so that the project outcomes/benefits will be sustained once the SCF project ends?

- Stakeholder ownership. Do the various key stakeholders perceive a continued flow of benefits to be in their interest?
- Institutional framework and governance. Are the legal frameworks, policies and governance and public administration structures and processes in place to support the objectives of the project and the continued flow of benefits? While responding to this question the evaluators should consider if the required systems for accountability and transparency and the required technical know-how are in place.

3. The effectiveness of the project's M&E system, including the use of the logical framework for implementation management, the use of measurable indicators and related targets to guide progress, and the measurement of progress towards targets.

4. PRODUCTS EXPECTED FROM THE EVALUATION

1. Inception Report -

An inception report should be prepared by the evaluation team before going into the full fledged evaluation exercise. The report should contain an evaluation matrix that displays for each of the evaluation criteria, the questions and sub questions that the evaluation will answer, and for each question, the data that will be collected to inform that question and the methods that will be used to collect that data¹. In addition, the inception report should make explicit the underlying theory or assumptions about how each data element will contribute to understanding the development results—attribution, contribution, process, implementation and so forth—and the rationale for data collection, analysis and reporting methodologies selected. It should also include a proposed schedule of tasks/activities and deliverables, designating a team member with the lead responsibility for each task or product. The inception report will be presented during the initial briefing in the beginning of the field mission.

2. Draft evaluation Report

3. The final product of the evaluation will be the Final Evaluation Report.

A detailed breakdown of the evaluation report into sections and ratings is given in Section 7.

4.1 Notes on the Terminal report

Formatting:	Times New Roman – Font 11; single spacing; paragraph numbering and table of contents (automatic); page numbers (centred); graphs and tables and photographs (where relevant) are encouraged.
Length:	maximum 50 pages in total excluding annexes
Timeframe of submission:	First draft within 2 weeks of completion of the country mission
Should be submitted to:	Ministry of Finance and UNDP Country Office- Suriname
Should be circulated for comments to:	all key stakeholders and participants of the project including governmental agencies involved in the project implementation, UNDP country office, project team, Dutch Embassy and other partners.

If there are discrepancies between the impressions and findings of the evaluation team and the aforementioned parties these should be explained in an annex attached to the final report.

4.2 METHODOLOGY OR EVALUATION APPROACH

¹ UNDP Handbook, p. 172

An outline of the evaluation approach is provided below. However, it should be made clear that the evaluation team is responsible for revising the approach as necessary and present its methodological proposal as part of the inception report. Evaluation methods should be selected for their rigor in producing empirically based evidence to address the evaluation criteria, to respond to the evaluation questions, and to meet the objectives of the evaluation. Any changes should be in line with international criteria and professional norms and standards as adopted by the UN Evaluation Group²). The proposed methodology should be in line with the UNDP Manual for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation for Development Results (2009)³. They must also be cleared by UNDP before being applied by the evaluation team.

- (i) **Documentation review** (desk study): the list of documentation is included in Annex 2. All the documents will be provided in advance by the Ministry of Finance and by the UNDP CO. The evaluator should consult all relevant sources of information, including but not limited to the following list of documentation: the project document, project reports, OC minutes and decisions, project budgets, project work plans, progress reports, project files, UNDP guiding documents, national legislation relevant to the project and any other material that they may consider useful.
- (ii) **Interviews** will be held with the following organizations and persons as a minimum:
 - Ministry of Finance (Department Planning and Development Cooperation)
 - Dutch Embassy in Paramaribo
 - UNDP CO – Suriname: Country Director and Environment Programme Manager
 - Ministry of Physical Planning Land and Forest Management
 - Stinasu
 - Suriname Conservation Foundation,
 - Ministry of Labour, Technological Development and Environment,
 - Other organizations: NIMOS, Conservation International Suriname, World Wild Life Fund Guianas,
 - Oversight Steering Committee.
- (iii) **Field Visits** should be made to CSNR : (Raleigh falls) and Bigi Pan
- (iv) **Semi-structured interviews** – the team should develop a process for semi-structured interviews to ensure that different aspects are covered. Focus group discussions with project beneficiaries will be held as deemed necessary by the evaluation team. Please add if you want specific discussions with local communities.
- (v) **Questionnaires**
- (vi) **Participatory Techniques and other approaches for the gather and analysis of data**

Although the evaluator should feel free to discuss with the authorities concerned all matters relevant to his/her assignment, they are not authorized to make any commitment on behalf of UNDP or the project management. It is recommendable that the evaluation process supports planning, monitoring and evaluation capacity building. The evaluation should apply the ethical and quality principles of the United Nations Evaluation Group⁴.

5. COMPOSITION OF THE EVALUATION MISSION

The evaluation will be performed by a two person team. The team will comprise one international consultant (Team Leader) with expertise in Monitoring and Evaluation of Biodiversity related projects and one national

² www.uneval.org

³ <http://www.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/>

⁴ <http://www.unevaluation.org/ethicalguidelines>

consultant in Natural Resource Management. The team will have a wide range of skills, including prior evaluation experience, expertise in biodiversity conservation and related activities, and experience with economic and social development issues.

Team Qualities:

- Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies
- Experience applying participatory monitoring approaches
- Recent knowledge of UNDP's results-based evaluation policies and procedures
- Knowledge of logical framework methodology
- Experience in monitoring and evaluation of projects in forest ecosystems
- Recognised experience with Environmental Trust Funds and grants making
- Knowledge of the administrative and reporting systems of projects similar in focus, area, scope and complexity
- Competence in Adaptive Management, as applied to conservation or natural resource management projects
- Recognized expertise in the management and sustainable use of natural resources in South America
- Experience working in countries with small economies, and in particular, knowledge of Suriname and its political, social and economic context
- Familiarity with protected area policies and management structures in South America, and in particular, in the Guyana Shield region
- Demonstrable analytical skills

The consultants will be responsible for preparing the final evaluation report and its completion in accordance with UNDP Monitoring and Evaluation guidelines. The Team Leader will have overall responsibility for the delivery and quality of the evaluation products. Team roles and responsibilities will be reflected in the contract.

The evaluators must be independent from both the policy-making process and the delivery and management of assistance. Therefore applications will not be considered from evaluators who have had any direct involvement with the design or implementation of the project. This may apply equally to evaluators who are associated with organizations, universities or entities that are, or have been, involved in the project. Any previous association with the project, the relevant government counterparts, UNDP-Suriname or other partners/stakeholders must be disclosed in the application. The team members are expected to sign the Code of Conduct for Evaluators in the UN System as part of their contract⁵.

If selected, failure to make the above disclosures will be considered just grounds for immediate contract termination, without recompense. In such circumstances, all notes, reports and other documentation produced by the evaluator will be retained by UNDP.

6. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

6.1. Management arrangements

The evaluation is a joint evaluation by the Government of Suriname (Ministry of Finance) and UNDP. The evaluation is being solicited by UNDP, but the Ministry of Finance has the responsibility as implementing partner of the project, has overall responsibility for the coordination and logistical arrangements of the evaluation as well as day-to-day support to the evaluation team (travel, accommodation, office space, communications, etc) with support from the UNDP Country Office in Suriname. The evaluation team will be briefed by the Ministry of

⁵ <http://www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct>

Finance and the UNDP Country Team, upon the commencement of the assignment, and will also provide a terminal briefing. Other briefing sessions may be scheduled, if deemed necessary.

The evaluators will be contracted directly from the project budget. The quality of the evaluators' work will be assessed by the Ministry of Finance and UNDP-Suriname in consultation with oversight Committee. If the quality does not meet standard GOS or UNDP expectations and requirements for the UN evaluations, the evaluators will be required to re-do or revise (as appropriate) the work before being paid final instalments. The evaluation team is ultimately responsible for the quality of the evaluation report. The evaluator must clear input from other contributors before final payment is given.

These Terms of Reference follow the UNDP policies and procedures, and together with the final agenda will be agreed upon by the Ministry of Finance, The Dutch Embassy and UNDP Country Office. These three parties will receive a draft of the final evaluation report and provide comments on it prior to its completion.

Although the final report must be cleared and accepted by UNDP before being made public, the UNDP Evaluation Policy underlines that the evaluation function should be structurally independent from operational management and decision-making functions in the organization. The evaluation team will be free from undue influence and has full authority to submit reports directly to appropriate levels of decision-making. UNDP management will not impose restrictions on the scope, content, comments and recommendations of evaluation reports. In the case of unresolved difference of opinions between any of the parties, UNDP may request the evaluation team to set out the differences in an annex to the final report.

6.2. Timeframe, resources, logistical support and deadlines

The total duration of the evaluation will be 22 days in the period Oct to Dec 2011 according to the following plan:

Preparation before field work: (5 days)

- Acquaintance with the project document and other relevant materials with information about the project (GEF final evaluation report, half year and yearly progress reports, Oversight committee OC minutes Mission support report and other report, etc);
- Familiarization with overall development situation of Suriname (based on reading of CCA and other agency reports on the country).
- Detailed mission programme preparation in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance, UNDP Country office and the Project partners.

Field mission:

Paramaribo (5 days)

- Meeting with the Ministry of Finance;
- Meeting with UNDP Country office team;
- Meetings with relevant national project partners and other stakeholders in Paramaribo (as detailed in Section 4)
- Joint review of all available materials with focused attention to project outcomes and outputs

Project site – Raleigh falls and Bigi Pan (4 days)

- Observation and review of completed and ongoing field activities,(capacity development, awareness /education, sustainable use demonstration activities, community development, etc)
- Interviews with key beneficiaries and stakeholders, including representatives of local authorities, local environmental protection authorities, local community stakeholders, etc.

Briefing on the preliminary finding and conclusions (after the field visits).

Draft report (6 days): To be provided within two weeks of mission completion

- Final interviews / cross checking with UNDP CO, Ministry of Finance and Project partners.
- Drafting of report in proposed format
- Telephone review of major findings with UNDP CO and the Ministry of Finance
- Completing of the draft report and presentation of draft report for comments and suggestions
- Comments will be provided within 10 working days. These comments will focus on providing any requisite factual corrections but will not question the Evaluation Team's findings.

Final Report (2 days)

- Presentation of final evaluation report

Detailed work plan clearly indicating submission dates of reports and response from project partners within the period Oct – Dec 2011 will be agreed upon and part of the contract.

7. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION – SPECIFIC ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

This section describes the categories that the evaluation will look into in line with the evaluation report outline included in section III. It also highlights specific issues to be addressed under each broad category. These categories are the minimum required by UNDP. For further reference, see Annex 7 of the UNDP Handbook

1. Executive summary

- Brief description of project
- Context and purpose of the evaluation
- Main conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

2. Introduction

- Purpose of the evaluation
- Key issues addressed
- Methodology of the evaluation
- Structure of the evaluation

3. The project(s) and its development context

- Project start and its duration
- Problems that the project seek to address
- Immediate and development objectives of the project
- Main stakeholders
- Results expected

4. Findings and Conclusions

4.1. Project Formulation (approx 3 pages)

- Conceptualization/Design. This should assess the approach used in design and an appreciation of the appropriateness of problem conceptualization and whether the selected intervention strategy addressed the root causes and principal threats in the project area. It should also include an assessment of the logical framework and whether the different project components and activities proposed to achieve the objective were appropriate, viable and responded to contextual institutional, legal and regulatory settings of the project.
- Logical Framework Targets. It should assess the indicators defined for guiding implementation and measurement of achievement and whether lessons from other relevant projects (e.g., same focal area) were incorporated into targets.

- Country-ownership/Driveness. Assess the extent to which the project idea/conceptualization had its origin within national, sectoral and development plans and focuses on national environment and development interests.
- Replication approach. Determine the ways in which lessons and experiences coming out of the project were/are to be replicated or scaled up in the design and implementation of other projects (this also related to actual practices undertaken during implementation).

4.2. Project Implementation

- Implementation Approach (R). This should include assessments of the following aspects:
 - (i) The use of the logical framework as a management tool during implementation and any changes made to this as a response to changing conditions and/or feedback from M and E activities if required.
 - (ii) Other elements that indicate adaptive management such as comprehensive and realistic work plans routinely developed that reflect adaptive management and/or; changes in management arrangements to enhance implementation.
 - (iii) The project's use/establishment of electronic information technologies to support implementation, participation and monitoring, as well as other project activities.
 - (iv) The general operational relationships between the institutions involved and others and how these relationships have contributed to effective implementation and achievement of project objectives.
 - (v) Technical capacities associated with the project and their role in project development, management and achievements.
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- Monitoring and evaluation (R). Including an assessment as to whether there has been adequate periodic oversight of activities during implementation to establish the extent to which inputs, work schedules, other required actions and outputs are proceeding according to plan; whether formal evaluations have been held and whether action has been taken on the results of this monitoring oversight and evaluation reports.
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- Stakeholder participation (R). This should include assessments of the mechanisms for information dissemination in project implementation and the extent of stakeholder participation in management, emphasizing the following:
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 - (i) The production and dissemination of information generated by the project.
 - (ii) Local resource users and NGOs participation in project implementation and decision making and an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the approach adopted by the project in this arena.
 - (iii) The establishment of partnerships and collaborative relationships developed by the project with local, national and international entities and the effects they have had on project implementation.
 - (iv) Involvement of governmental institutions in project implementation, the extent of governmental support of the project.
- Financial Planning: Including an assessment of:
 - (i) The actual project cost by objectives, outputs, activities
 - (ii) The cost-effectiveness of achievements
 - (iii) Financial management (including disbursement issues)
- Sustainability. Extent to which the benefits of the project will continue, within or outside the project domain, after it has come to an end. Relevant factors include for example: development of a sustainability

strategy, establishment of financial and economic instruments and mechanisms, mainstreaming project objectives into the economy or community production activities.

- Execution and implementation modalities. This should consider the effectiveness of the selection, recruitment, assignment of experts, consultants definition of tasks and responsibilities; quantity, quality and timeliness of inputs for the project with respect to execution responsibilities, enactment of necessary legislation and budgetary provisions and extent to which these may have affected implementation and sustainability of the Project; quality and timeliness of inputs by UNDP and GoS and other parties responsible for providing inputs to the project, and the extent to which this may have affected the smooth implementation of the project.

4.2. Key findings in terms of Relevance, Effectiveness and Sustainability

- Effectiveness: Contribution to Outcomes/ Achievement of objectives (R): Including a description of the extent to which the project's objectives (environmental and developmental) were achieved. If the project did not establish a baseline (initial conditions), the evaluators should seek to determine it through the use of special methodologies so that achievements, results and impacts can be properly established.
- This section should also include reviews of the following.
- Sustainability: Including an appreciation of the extent to which benefits continue, within or outside the project domain after external assistance in this phase has come to an end.
- Has the project contributed to improve the enabling environment through effective policies, institutional capacity building, increased public awareness, appropriate stakeholder involvement, promoting conservation and sustainable use research, leveraging resources and providing incentives for conservation? Explain.

5. Conclusions

6. Recommendations

- Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project
- Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

7. Lessons learned

This should highlight the best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success.

8. Evaluation Report Annexes

- Evaluation TORs
- Evaluation Matrix
- Itinerary
- List of persons interviewed
- Summary of field visits
- List of documents reviewed
- Questionnaire used and summary of results
- Comments by stakeholders (only in case of discrepancies with evaluation findings and conclusions)

VIII. ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of Documents to be reviewed by the evaluators

Annex 2: UNDP Handbook

Annex 3. Explanation on Terminology

Annex 4. Transitional Modifications