

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Scope and Purpose of the Mid-term Evaluation

The project document for the Dominica SLM project was signed on 4th April 2006 with expected closing date of December 30th 2009. The project was however seriously delayed which is reflected by the fact the mid-term evaluation (MTE) was conducted eight months after the originally planned closing date in August 2010. One of the main conclusions from the MTE is that the project can achieve significant outcome if allowed to continue until the end of 2011. A project extension to the end of 2011 is therefore strongly recommended.

This midterm evaluation consists of a desk review, in country field visit and several one on one interviews with UNDP staff, senior officers in the Government of Dominica, members of the project team, the steering committee and stake holders from civil society. See Annex for persons interviewed.

The evaluation will assess the reasons for the delay, the progress, effectiveness and impact of the project. The evaluation examines the relevance of the project to the current development of the nation state of Dominica, the quality of the outputs, the expectations and role of stakeholders, recognizable change in capacity for land management associated with the project and the sustainability of these changes. It assesses the achievements of the project with respect to the stated objectives and the overall expectation of the global targeted portfolio project on SLM in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Terms of Reference for the evaluation are outlined in the Appendix 1 of this document. The evaluation also examines the management of risk associated with the project as outlined in the logical framework.

The overall SLM goal of the GCOD is “to ensure that agricultural, coastal, forestry and other terrestrial resource in Dominica are used in a sustainable manner, thereby allowing for the maintenance of productive systems that assure ecosystem productivity and ecological functions

while contributing directly to the environmental, economic and social well-being of the people of Dominica.” The SLM project is expected to contribute significantly to this overall outcome.

Project Objective

The overall objective of this Project is “to develop capacities for sustainable land management in appropriate government, civil society institutions and user groups, and mainstream sustainable land management considerations into government planning and strategy development.”

Project Outcomes

The project is the national level slate of actions under the UNDP/GEF LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management. The expected outcomes of this project are consistent with those of the Global Portfolio Project. These were specifically outlined in the Logical Framework as follows:

Outcome 1: SLM mainstreamed into national development policies, plans and regulatory frameworks.

Outcome 2: Individual and institutional capacities for SLM enhanced through (1) stakeholder training on SLM principles through workshops, seminars and technical exchange visits, (2) awareness raising activities around relevant national, regional, and international environmental events and (3) enhancement of national institutional structures and functions to better address SLM.

Outcome 3: Capacities for knowledge management in support of SLM developed through (1) installing a computerized land information system in a GIS Unit (2) the compilation of relevant spatial/attribute datasets and (3) the training of various government and other personnel in the use of land information systems.

Outcome 4: SLM planning and project execution through: (1) dissemination and utilization of knowledge products (tools, guidelines and manuals for capacity development and mainstreaming on selected topics in SLM), (2) facilitation of access to global and regional

knowledge networks and communities of practice, linked to existing networks, such as CAPNET, CPF, etc.

Outcome 5: Adaptive management and learning through documentation and progress reports including lessons learnt.

Progress Toward Results.

While the project has done a considerable amount of good work, there is no clear evidence that the mainstreaming outcome, one of the key elements of the project, is being achieved as measured by the indicators of success. The target for this outcome is that ‘The Ministries of Finance and Economic Planning, Agriculture and Environment adopt SLM guidelines and best practices to support physical and economic development planning and formulating macro-economic policies by the end of 2010’. This MTE finds no evidence of a mechanism for incorporating SLM successes into macro-economic and development plans. One element of the capacity development, the training of farmers, has equipped persons for service that would increase employment and ultimately livelihoods. There is increased consciousness of the value of biodiversity and ecosystems value but this needs to be anchored in a regulatory framework..

There is clear evidence of increase in capacity of the government Planning Department and the Ministry of Agriculture. More detailed GIS maps are available and extension officers are better equipped to meet the increased demand for their services.

All of the project activities have started with the capacity building component (Activity 2 and 3) being the most advanced. Significant progress has been made in achieving the objectives for Activities 2 and 3. However, key indicators for Activity 1 and 4, relating to mainstreaming SLM into national development plans have made little progress to date. There is evidence that some of these indicators will be achieved but to what extent is uncertain.

Project Management

The management of the project has been examined relative to timely delivery of inputs and outcome, achievement of activities as per the time line and assumptions in the project document, financial management and interaction between UNDP, Environment Coordinating Unit (ECU) and the Steering Committee. The ECU is the environmental arm of the government of Dominica and houses the project managers and supporting staff implementing all projects related to Climate Change under the UNFCCC, Land Management under the UNCCD, Biodiversity under the UNCBD and the TPMP under the Montreal Protocol. The Steering committee for the SLM consist of senior officers from related ministries and Civil society organizations (see appendix --). Highly skilled persons were selected to undertake the activities and the process of selection was consistent, detailed and transparent. Communication lines between government agencies, implementing partners and stakeholders were clear and the messages unambiguous. Examination of the Combined Delivery Report from UNDP revealed that the finances of the project are well managed and financial reporting is consistent with UNDP's rules. As a result of the quality of project personnel and the management of the resources the project has an overall satisfactory (S) rating although the delivery was delayed. The project manager its Financial reports, Quarterly Reports, and output documentation to the relevant agency on a regularly basis. However there is not a designated officer charged with project monitoring, therefore, the only non staff monitoring comes from the periodic visit of the UNDP Programme Manager who conducted site visits three (3) times in the last eighteen months.

Project Evaluation

According to the project documents, the project should be subject to two independent external evaluations. One external *Mid-Term Evaluation* that would be undertaken 18 months after the project initiation, and one *Final External Evaluation* on completion of the project.

It is expected that this MTE will assist in adaptive management of the project and enable the project manager to better achieve the project objective and outcomes during the remaining life of the project.

Recommendations

This MTE revealed that the project has executed several activities in keeping with the project document but the findings are not published or circulated in a sufficiently wide manner to create awareness or lead to change in behavior. Several stakeholders were unaware of outcome results and were therefore not in a position to comment on the success or failure of the project. From these observations the following recommendations evolved.

- The project should be extended to the end of 2011 based on clearly observed limited capacity to deliver in Dominica and the fact that it is already delayed.
- The project should have a structured, local monitoring system. The steering committee should institute a monitoring regime that requires them to provide quarterly assessment reports.
- There is need for an effective data dissemination process to share lessons learnt and record feedback from users of the data.
- Promised meetings of Senior Government officials and community level personnel should be carried out to ensure high level government involvement in the mainstreaming process.
- Commitment by the GCOD to fully own the SLM processes and mainstream them into its recurrent planning, budgeting and regulatory procedures has not materialized therefore the ministry of finance needs to become more involved in the project implementation. Funds committed as cofinance should be provided to hire additional staff and make the institutional adjustment necessary for the success of the project. More systematic public awareness and feedback processes should be designed and carried out as part of the adaptive management process in order to achieve maximum ‘buy in’ from all sectors of Dominican society.