

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

Having reviewed the relevant data and interviewed the appropriate persons, the evaluation found that the project was relevant in both its design and expectations. St. Vincent and the Grenadines, as a Small Island Developing State with limited land resources, is very dependent on these resources and shows a great desire to protect them. The project had two major delays that resulted in over two years of lost time from project signing to inception. Even at inception, there was yet another delay, although not so protracted, which was to facilitate the changeover of the government financial system. The quality of the work produced in the project has been Satisfactory (S), but the many interruptions and delays have reduced its effectiveness. Given this, project implementation up to this point can be considered Unsatisfactory (U).

The overall objectives of the Project are important to the nation, and this has resulted in a strong commitment by stakeholders to drive the execution of the project. In this regard, there is a high likelihood of sustainability of project activities, and the future of the project is well grounded in national development and policy.

The outcomes of the project to date are few but both sound and important. However, the implementation rate needs to be accelerated and be more consistent. There is need for a national monitoring system to assist the project team in staying on track and honouring the expectations as stated in the Logical Framework.

The remaining project activities need to be implemented within the remaining project timeframe. This will require serious dialogue among the Permanent Secretary, the Director of Planning and Project Management. UNDP, in its role as the Implementing Agency, needs to ensure that this discourse takes place, and should even consider leading it and monitoring its progress. The Management Response should take this recommendation into consideration.

The following recommendations emerged out of the discussions and seek to provide guidance for the remaining implementation of the Project.

- There is need to examine the present financial mechanism of the project, with a view to addressing the bottlenecks between the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment in relation to financial disbursements in support of project activities.
- The Public Education Outreach programme should be expedited and should include the use of electronic media and social networks to facilitate information dissemination and stakeholder participation.

- The project management should facilitate the Ministry's development of MOUs with current co-financers (CWSA, VINLEC) and other interested parties as part of its Investment Plan to ensure sustainability of the project's activities.
- The Investment Plan needs to be developed as a matter of urgency, taking into account existing partners, the future direction of the project and the national development plan.
- The project should seek to develop short and medium term linkages with other current projects, including the USAID-OECS Climate Change Project and the PPCR.
- There needs to be the development of a legal framework within which government agencies can safeguard the integrity of their mandates in cases where there is a conflict due to overlapping jurisdictions related to land management and development issues.
- The project Steering Committee should undertake a review of its existing work plan in order to prioritise activities and ensure their financial support over the remaining life of the project.
- The recruitment process needs to be examined in order to reduce the time taken to issue contracts. Where the government system does not support quick issuance of contracts, the government should consider engaging the UNDP support to NIM modality.

6 Lessons Learned

The project risk log provided an overview of potential challenges. However, the project team encountered additional situations for which they were not prepared. From these challenges, the following Lessons can be learned:

- Persons involved in the selection process should be familiar with the technical components of the project, expectations of the Implementing Agency, and current challenges in the project in order to select the most appropriate candidates. This problem was evident in the case of the consultant recruited to undertake review of the Policy, Legislation and Institutional Framework for SLM in St. Vincent and the Grenadines where, six months after the submission date, the consultant was still grappling with the technical expectations of the assignment.
- There should be a clear understanding of the financial mechanisms of UNDP, the government and the peculiarity of the Line Ministry in order to facilitate the smooth flow of funding to support project activities. These arrangements should be clearly articulated before the first disbursement is due.
- The National Project Coordinator should be kept updated as to any changes in the Implementing Agency and government processes, i.e. the specifics of the reporting, financial, and technical requirements.
- The government and the National Project Coordinator should be aware of all implementation options, including the National Implementation Modality (NIM), the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) and the support to NIM.
- The government should endeavour to support the participation of the Project Management in regional fora for capacity building and information dissemination.

7 Annexes

7.1 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONDUCTING THE MID-TERM EVALUATION

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 UNDP/GEF Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policy

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policy at the project level in UNDP/GEF has four objectives:

- i) to monitor and evaluate results and impacts;
- ii) to provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvements;
- iii) to promote accountability for resource use;
- iv) to document, provide feedback on, and disseminate lessons learned.

A mix of tools is used to ensure effective project M&E. These might be applied continuously throughout the lifetime of the project – e.g. periodic monitoring of indicators -, or as specific time-bound exercises such as mid-term reviews, audit reports and final evaluations.

1.2 The project objectives and its context

The project will support the mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management in St. Vincent and the Grenadines through institutional, individual and systemic capacity building. The institutional capacity building will be directed at creating synergies to facilitate maximization of resource in the effective delivery of technical support to government agencies, the private sector, community based organization and civil society groups.

The project objective is to strengthen and develop capacity for sustainable land management in relevant government ministries, the private sector and civil society organizations, and to mainstream sustainable land management into national development planning. The project will realize five outcomes: (1) SLM mainstreamed into national development policies, plans and regulatory frameworks (2) Individual and institutional capacity for SLM developed, (3) Capacity for knowledge management in support of SLM developed, (4) Investment planning and resource mobilization for implementation of SLM interventions are elaborated (5) Adaptive Management and Learning. The three year project will be implemented by the Environmental Services Unit in the Ministry of Health and the Environment using the multi-stakeholder participatory approach involving public, private and non-government organizations.

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) is a requirement of UNDP and GEF and thus it is principally initiated by UNDP CO in Barbados. It will be conducted according to guidance, rules and procedures for such evaluations established by UNDP and the Global Environment Facility.

The overall objective of the MTE is to analyze the implementation of the project, review the achievements made by the project to deliver the specified objectives and outcomes. It will establish the relevance, performance and success of the project, including the sustainability of results. The evaluation will also collate and analyze specific lessons and best practices pertaining to the strategies employed, and implementation arrangements, which may be of relevance to other projects in the country and elsewhere in the world.

The main stakeholders of this MTE are the Ministries of Health and the Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries and Finance and Planning. Other stakeholders include the Steering Committee and the NGO community.

The MTE must provide a comprehensive and systematic account of the performance of the project to date by assessing its project design, process of implementation and results vis-à-vis project objectives including the agreed changes in the objectives during project implementation. MTEs have four complementary purposes:

- To promote accountability and transparency, and to assess and disclose levels of project accomplishments;
- To synthesize lessons that may help improve the selection, design and implementation of future UNDP-GEF activities;
- To provide feedback on issues that are recurrent across the portfolio and need attention, and on improvements regarding previously identified issues, for example in the mid term evaluation.

3 PRODUCTS EXPECTED FROM THE EVALUATION

The evaluation team is expected to deliver the following products:

Oral presentation of main findings of the evaluation: This should be presented to UNDP CO before the mission is concluded in order to allow for clarification and validation of evaluation findings.

Evaluation written report: This report will be submitted to the UNDP Country Office, the UNDP-GEF regional Coordination Unit (RCU) and project team electronically within 2 weeks after the evaluation mission has been concluded. These parties will review the document and provide feedback to the evaluation team within 1 month after the evaluation report draft has been submitted. The evaluator will address these comments and provide a final report within a period of 1 week. In case of

discrepancy between parties and the evaluation team an anNIM should be included at the end of the document explaining the discrepancies.

General considerations of the report:

- Formatting: Times New Roman – Font 11; single spacing; paragraph numbering and table of content (automatic); page numbers (centered bottom); graphs and tables and photographs (where relevant) are encouraged.
- Length: Maximum 50 pages in total excluding anNIMes
- Timeframe of submission: first draft within 2 weeks of completion of the country mission

4 METHODOLOGY OR EVALUATION APPROACH

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. Any changes should be in line with international criteria and professional norms and standards as adopted by the UN Evaluation Group². Any change must be cleared by UNDP before being applied by the evaluation team.

- (i) **Documentation review** (desk study): the list of documentation is included in AnNIM 2. All the documents will be provided in advance by the Project Team and by the UNDP Country Office. The evaluator should consult all relevant sources of information, including but not limited to the following list of documentation: UNDP and GEF evaluation policy, the project document, project reports, Project Steering Committee minutes and decisions, project budgets, project work plans, progress reports, PIRs, project files, UNDP guidance documents, national legislation relevant to the project and any other material that they may consider useful. The National Project Coordinator will also provide a report of the project's accomplishments and lessons.
- (ii) **Interviews** will be held with the following organizations and persons as a minimum: The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health and the Environment, The Director of Finance (UNDP's focal point), the Environmental Director/Coordinator, members from **the project Steering Committee and the National Project Coordinator**.
- (iii) **Field Visits** should be made to any site where there are demonstration activities.
- (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
- (v) **Questionnaires**
- (vi) **Participatory Techniques and other approaches for the gather and analysis of data**

². www.uneval.org

5 EVALUATION TEAM

This evaluation will be undertaken by a single consultant who must be familiar with the subject matter as well as the local conditions in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

6 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Management Arrangements

The evaluation is being solicited by UNDP, led by UNDP Barbados and the OECS as project Implementing Agency. The UNDP Sub-regional Office for Barbados and the OECS has overall responsibility for the coordination and logistical arrangements. Briefing sessions will be scheduled as necessary.

Payment modalities and specifications: The evaluators will be contracted directly from the project budget. Payment will be 50% at the submission of the first draft to the UNDP-CO, and the other 50% once the final report has been completed and cleared by UNDP Sub-regional office. The quality of the evaluator's work will be assessed by the UNDP-CO and UNDP-GEF- RCU. If the quality does not meet standard UNDP expectations or UNDP-GEF requirements, the evaluators will be required to re-do or revise (as appropriate) the work before being paid final installments.

6.2 Timeframe, resources, logistical support and deadlines

The total duration of the evaluation will be **24** days according to the following plan:

Preparation before field work: (4 days including travel time)

- Acquaintance with the project document and other relevant materials with information about the project (PIRs, TPR reports, Mid term Evaluation report and other evaluation report, etc);
- Familiarization with overall development situation of country (based on reading of UNDP-Common Country Assessment and other reports on the country).
- Detailed mission programme preparation, including methodology, in cooperation with the UNDP Country office and the Project team.

Mission: (**10** days-)

- Meeting with UNDP Country office team;
- Meetings with key stakeholders in St. Vincent
- Joint review of all available materials with focused attention to project outcomes and outputs
- Visit to Project site

- 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.

Draft report (8 days-): To be provided within two weeks of mission completion

- Final interviews / cross checking with UNDP CO, Project team.
- Drafting of report in proposed format
- Telephone review of major findings with UNDP CO
- Completing of the draft report and presentation of draft report for comments and suggestions within 1 month

Final Report (2days-)

- Presentation of final evaluation report

7 SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION AND SPECIFIC ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

The scope of a MTE will depend upon project type, size, focal area, and country context. In all cases, the TE should properly examine and assess the perspectives of the various stakeholders. In most cases, the TE will include field visits to ascertain project accomplishments and interviews of the key stakeholders at national and, where appropriate, local levels. It also analyses the use of GEF and co-financing resources in the broader context of the country.

In general it is expected that evaluations in the GEF explore the following five major criteria :

- **Relevance.** The extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time.
- **Effectiveness.** The extent to which an objective has been achieved or how likely it is to be achieved.
- **Efficiency.** The extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible; also called cost effectiveness or efficacy.
- **Results.** The positive and negative, and foreseen and unforeseen, changes to and effects produced by a development intervention. In GEF terms, results include direct project outputs, short- to medium-term outcomes, and longer term impact including global environmental benefits, replication effects, and other local effects.

- **Sustainability.** The likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially and socially sustainable.

The following should be covered in the TE report:

General information about the evaluation.

The TE report will provide information on when the evaluation took place; places visited; who was involved; the key questions; and, the methodology. More details are provided in the template of Terms of Reference (**ToR**) in AnNIM 2.

Assessment of Project Results

TEs will at the minimum assess achievement of outputs and outcomes and will provide ratings for outcomes. This assessment seeks to determine the extent to which the project outcomes were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, and assess if the project has led to any other positive or negative consequences. While assessing a project's outcomes, the TE will seek to determine the extent of achievement and shortcomings in reaching the project's objective as stated in the project document, and also indicate if there were any changes and whether those changes were approved and achieved. If the project did not establish a baseline (initial conditions), the evaluator- together with the Project Team- should seek to estimate the baseline condition so that achievements and results can be properly established. Since most GEF projects can be expected to achieve the anticipated outcomes by project closing, assessment of project outcomes should be a priority. Outcomes are the likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs. Examples of outcomes could include but are not restricted to stronger institutional capacities, higher public awareness (when leading to changes in behavior), and transformed policy frameworks or markets. **For GEF 4 projects it is required**, and for GEF 3 projects it is encouraged, that the evaluators assess the project results using indicators and relevant Tracking Tools.

To determine the level of achievement of project results and objectives following three criteria will be assessed in the TE:

- **Relevance:** Were the project's outcomes consistent with the focal areas/operational program strategies and country priorities? The evaluators should also assess the extent outcomes specified in the project appraisal documents are actually outcomes and not outputs or inputs.
- **Effectiveness:** Are the project outcomes commensurable with the expected outcomes (as described in the project document) and the problems the project was intended to address (i.e. original or modified project objectives)? In case in the original or modified expected outcomes are merely outputs/inputs then the evaluators should assess if there were any real outcomes

of the project and if yes then whether these are commensurate with the realistic expectations from such projects.

- **Efficiency:** Was the project cost effective? Was the project the least cost option? Was the project implementation delayed and if it was then did that affect cost-effectiveness? Wherever possible the evaluator should also compare the cost-time vs. outcomes relationship of the project with that of other similar projects.

The evaluation of relevancy, effectiveness and efficiency will be as objective as possible and will include sufficient and convincing empirical evidence. Ideally the project monitoring system should deliver quantifiable information that can lead to a robust assessment of project's effectiveness and efficiency. Since projects have different objectives assessed results are not comparable and cannot be aggregated. To track the health of the portfolio, project outcomes will be rated as follows:

Highly Satisfactory (HS): The project had no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Satisfactory (S): The project had minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Moderately Satisfactory (MS): The project had moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): The project had significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Unsatisfactory (U) The project had major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The project had severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

The evaluators will also assess positive and negative actual (or anticipated) impacts or emerging long term effects of a project. Given the long term nature of impacts, it might not be possible for the evaluators to identify or fully assess impacts. Evaluators will nonetheless indicate the steps taken to assess project impacts, especially impacts on local populations, local environment (e.g. increase in the number of individuals of an endangered species, improved water quality, increase in fish stocks, reduced greenhouse gas emissions) and wherever possible indicate how the findings on impacts will be reported to the GEF in future.

Assessment of Sustainability of project outcomes

The TE will assess, at a minimum, the "likelihood of sustainability of outcomes at project termination, and provide a rating for this." The sustainability assessment will give special attention to analysis of the risks that are likely to affect the persistence of project outcomes. The sustainability assessment

should also explain how other important contextual factors that are not outcomes of the project will affect sustainability. More details on the sustainability assessment are provided in the Template for ToR provided in AnNIM 2.

Catalytic role

The terminal evaluation will also describe any catalytic or replication effect of the project. If no effects are identified, the evaluation will describe the catalytic or replication actions that the project carried out.

Assessment of monitoring and evaluation systems

The TE will assess whether the project met the requirements for project design of M&E and the application of the Project M&E plan. GEF projects must budget adequately for execution of the M&E plan, and provide adequate resources for the implementation of the M&E plan. Project Managers are also expected to use the information generated by the M&E system during project implementation to improve and adapt the project. Given the long duration of many GEF projects, projects are also encouraged to include long-term monitoring plans to measure results (such as environmental results) after project completion. The TE reports will include separate assessments of the achievements and shortcomings of these two types of M&E systems.

Final report Outline

1. Executive summary

- Brief description of project
- Context and purpose of the evaluation
- Main conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned
- Table summarizing main ratings received

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

In addition to the Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency assessment described above, a descriptive assessment must be provided. All criteria marked with **(R)** should be rated using the following divisions: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), and Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Please see AnNIM 2 for an explanation on the GEF terminology.

4.1. Project Formulation

This section should describe the context of the problem the project seeks to address. It should describe how useful the project conceptualization and design has been for addressing the problem, placing emphasis on the logical consistency of the project and its Logical Framework. This section should seek to answer the following questions: *Was the project well-formulated? Were any modifications made to the Project's LogFrame during implementation, and if so, have these modifications resulted or are expected to result in better and bigger impacts?*

- **Conceptualization/Design (R):** This should assess the approach used in design and an appreciation of the appropriateness of problem conceptualization and whether the selected intervention strategy was the best option to address the barriers 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. It should also 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 project design.
- **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.
- **Stakeholder participation (R):** Assess information dissemination, consultation, and “stakeholder” participation in design stages.

- 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 relates to actual practices undertaken during implementation).
- Other aspects: to assess in the review of Project formulation approaches, the comparative advantage of UNDP as IA for this project; the consideration of linkages between projects and other interventions within the sector and the definition of clear and appropriate management arrangements at the design stage.

4.2. Project Implementation

- Implementation Approach (R): Independent from the issue of whether the project was well designed or not, the NIMt question should be *how well has the project been implemented?* This section should include an assessment 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 & 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.
- 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. For evaluating this, it is proposed that evaluators use the following criteria: i) to evaluate if the project has an appropriate M&E system to follow up the progress towards achieving the project result and objectives ii) to evaluate if appropriate M&E tools have been used, i.e baselines, clear and practical indicators, data analysis, studies to evaluate the expected results for certain project stages (results and progress indicators). iii) to evaluate if resources and capacities to conduct an adequate

monitoring are in place and also if the M&E system has been utilized for adaptive management

- 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:

(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 area.

(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: includes actual project cost by activity, financial management (including disbursement issues), and co-financing. If a financial audit has been conducted the major findings should be presented in the TE. See more details and explanation of concepts in AnNIM 3 This section should include:

(i) The actual project cost by objectives, outputs, activities

(ii) The cost-effectiveness of achievements (has the project been the cost effective?)

(iii) Financial management (including disbursement issues)

(iv) Co-financing Apart from co-financing analysis the evaluators should complete the co financing and leverages resources table provided in AnNIM 3.

- Execution and implementation modalities. This should consider the effectiveness of the UNDP counterpart and Project Co-ordination Unit participation in selection, recruitment, assignment of experts, consultants and national counterpart staff members and in the 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 the Government 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. This section should seek to answer questions such as: *Was the project's implementation done in an efficient and effective manner? Was there effective communication between critical actors in response to the needs of implementation? Were the administrative costs of the Project reasonable and cost efficient?*