

Terminal Evaluation
of the
UNDP-GEF Project
“Ensuring Impacts from SLM: Development of a Global Indicator System”

PIMS: 3542 GEF ID: 2863

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GEF Operational Program/Strategic Program	Land Degradation Focal Area SLM #1: To develop an enabling environment that will place sustainable land management in the mainstream of development policy and practices at regional, national, and local levels.
Executing Agency:	United Nations Office of Project Services
Project Partner:	United Nations University – Institute for Water, Environment and Health
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Acronyms

ABS	Access and Benefit Sharing
BD	Biological Diversity
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community-based Organization
CC	Climate Change
CIESIN	Center for International Earth Science Information Network
COP	Conference of the Parties
DPSIR	Driver-Pressure-State-Impact-Response
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (UN)
GEB	global environmental benefits
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GPR-GII-PM	Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally-relevant SLM Impact Indicators for Project-level Monitoring
KM	knowledge management
KM:Land	abbreviation for this project's title "Ensuring Impacts from SLM: Development of a Global Indicator System"
LADA	Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands Project
LD	Land Degradation
MA	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEFI	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Indicators
MoA	Memorandum of Agreement
MSP	Medium Size Project
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OCP	Outcomes and Changed Practices
PM	Project Manager
PMAT	Land Degradation Focal Area - Portfolio Monitoring and Tracking Tool
Prodoc	Project Document
RBM	Results based Management
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable/Attributable, Realistic and Time-bound
STAP	Scientific Technical Advisory Panel
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
TE	Terminal Evaluation
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNU-INWEH	United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health
WCMC	World Conservation and Monitoring Center
WOCAT	World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies

Executive Summary

Brief description of the project

1. The project entitled, “Ensuring impacts from SLM-Development of a Global Indicator System” (KM:Land) became operational in July 2007. The total budget of this “medium size” UNDP-GEF project is US\$ 1,180,000 (GEF: \$1,000,000 & Co-funding: \$180,000). An additional \$158,000 in co-funding was generated after CEO endorsement for a total confirmed co-funding level of approximately \$338,000.

2. This project was submitted to GEF for funding under the Land Degradation Focal Area, Strategic Objective #1: *To develop an enabling environment that will place sustainable land management in the mainstream of development policy and practices at regional, national, and local levels*. The PDF-A for this project was approved in July of 2005. The project document was developed through a preparatory and stakeholder consultation process supported also by UNDP and United Nations University-Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH) funds. CEO Endorsement of the project document came two separate times: first in August of 2006 and second in March 2007.

3. As the GEF Implementing Agency on this project, UNDP had primary oversight responsibility. Using its “Direct Execution” modality, UNDP contracted with the UN Office of Project Services (UNOPS) to serve as the “Executing Agency” for the project as it does for many projects worldwide. UNDP and UNOPS signed the project document in May 2007. UNOPS in turn sub-contracted UNU-INWEH to host the project management unit and to implement the project, with the MoA between UNOPS and UNU-INWEH signed in June 2007. The project’s planned 2-year time period, with closing planned for 30 June 2009, was subsequently extended over two years until June of 2011.

4. The project *goal* is to “contribute to enhancing ecosystem integrity, stability, functions and services through GEF-supported sustainable land management activities.” The project *objective* is to “strengthen the capacity for adaptive management of SLM projects in order to enhance their effectiveness and impact on ecosystem integrity, stability, functions and services in the context of national development priorities”.

5. The project aimed to achieve its objective through the realization of four outcomes:

Outcome 1: Global and local level indicators demonstrate livelihood and environmental benefits derived from actions on combating land degradation.

Outcome 2: A framework for knowledge management and capacity building for SLM is in place.

Outcome 3: A process is defined to establish a harmonized monitoring and evaluation system that supports adaptive and result based management for SLM projects.

Outcome 4: Adaptive management and lessons learned.

Context and purpose of the evaluation

6. This Terminal Evaluation has the following complementary **purposes**¹: a) To promote accountability and transparency and to assess and disclose the extent of project accomplishments; b) To synthesize lessons that can help to improve future GEF financed UNDP activities; c) To contribute to the overall assessment of results in achieving GEF strategic objectives aimed at global environmental benefits.

7. The evaluation focused on several key issues of particular importance to a terminal evaluation. These are listed in Table A below, where project performance is rated according to five overall

¹ UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF-Financed Projects.

parameters and 15 sub-parameters. Among these are included the five parameters of importance to GEF Terminal Evaluation (TE): Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Results, and Sustainability.

8. The evaluation report is structured to consider these parameters with respect to:
- Project formulation and design.
 - Project implementation and its effectiveness and efficiency, including: Results-based management; Sustainability; Partnerships and Stakeholder participation.
 - Progress towards results.

Main Conclusions and Recommendations

Table A. Rating Project Performance

1. Monitoring and Evaluation		
Overall quality of M&E		MS
<i>M&E design at project start up</i>	MS	
<i>M&E Plan Implementation</i>	MS	
2. IA & EA Execution		
Overall Quality of Project Implementation/ Execution.		MS
<i>Implementing Agency Execution</i>	MS	
<i>Executing Agency Execution</i>	MS	
3. Outcomes		
Overall Quality of Project Outcomes		S-
<i>Results</i>	MS	
<i>Relevance</i>	MS	
<i>Effectiveness</i>	S	
<i>Efficiency</i>	S-	
4. Catalytic Role		
<i>Demonstration</i>	Yes	
<i>Replication</i>	Yes	
<i>Scaling up</i>	Yes	
5. Sustainability		
Overall likelihood of Sustainability:		L
<i>Financial resources</i>	L	
<i>Socio-economic</i>	L	
<i>Institutional framework and governance</i>	L	
<i>Environmental</i>	L	
Overall Project Results	MS+	

Ratings for parameters 1-3 and “overall project results” are based on the eight-point scale:

- **Highly Satisfactory (HS)**: no shortcomings
- **Satisfactory (S)**: minor shortcomings
- **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**: moderate shortcomings
- **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**: significant shortcomings
- **Unsatisfactory (U)**: major shortcomings
- **Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)**: severe shortcomings
- **Not applicable (N/A)**
- **Unable to assess (U/A)**

Ratings for parameter 5 (Sustainability) are based upon the following:

- **Likely (L)**: negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes expected to continue into the foreseeable future.
- **Moderately Likely (ML)**: moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained.
- **Moderately Unlikely (MU)**: substantial risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on.
- **Unlikely (U)**: severe risk that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained.
- **Highly Unlikely (HU)**: expectation that **few** if any outputs/activities will continue after project closure.

Elaboration on ratings and related findings by heading above:

1) Monitoring & Evaluation

9. *M&E Design:* The project's basic M&E Plan and Budget is of standard UNDP design. However, it is somewhat lacking in detail. For example, the M&E plan calls for "periodic status reports" but does not specify how frequent they should be in a 2-year project. The M&E plan design does not take into account the unique aspect of this project that would affect M&E – the fact that it was located in a city and country where UNDP had no presence. This would seem to require at least some kind of mention or customization/mechanism to facilitate communication. In addition, the logical framework outcome indicators were not SMART and added little value to the M&E design. Given the weaknesses with the logframe indicators and lack of M&E specification to this project's unique characteristics, the evaluation finds M&E "Design at project start up" to be *Moderately Satisfactory*.

10. *M&E Implementation:* The project's M&E work started out strongly enough, with an inception workshop held in the first 2 months of the project beginning work and with three SC meetings in the first year. The level of project reporting, and the content of the project's four PIR reports reflect a satisfactory adherence to standard UNDP reporting and monitoring requirements, except for an important gap – the quarterly progress reporting between the project management unit and UNDP, which did not occur until 2.5 years into the project's implementation.

11. The project was constantly modifying its design, modifying work plans eight times, amending the UNU-INWEH/UNOPS MoA five times and enacting five budget extensions and these changes continued over virtually the whole lifespan of the project, rather than the first 6 months to a year of project implementation. The project's outcomes and outputs were modified (added to, deleted from, edited, reversed), beginning in July 2007 at project inception and stretching through to February 2010. Table 6 in Part 3.2 of this evaluation illustrates these regularly moving goalposts.

12. With one exception, the evaluation finds that the project's M&E implementation resulted more in reactive than adaptive management. This "reaction" was a direct response to the shifting goalposts mentioned above, and a result of not having the proper design or logframe to enable the project to cope with such shifts or changes.

13. The evaluation finds the steps taken in the final modification of the log frame in February 2010 to represent a more proactive approach to M&E implementation. These were difficult steps -- to cancel whole outputs and outcomes – but were likely necessary and likely resulted in the project being able to focus on producing what resulted in one of its most important and lasting outputs: the "Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally –relevant SLM Impact Indicators for Project-level Monitoring." Ironically, this was one of the original, unchanged outputs under Outcome 1. This action saved the project from what would have been a clear "Unsatisfactory" rating. Instead, the evaluation rates M&E plan implementation "*Moderately Satisfactory*."

2) IA and EA Execution:

9. **IA Execution:** The evaluation finds that UNDP has performed moderately satisfactorily in its role of IA execution. Project assurance should include a robust level of attention to strategic-level project implementation issues, particularly helping to ensure that the project team² first has achievable and realistic (SMART) logframe indicators to guide their work and second, ensuring that the project team maintains a rigorous link to those indicators in their work planning and reporting to ensure the accomplishment of each project outcome. This, ironically, was not done for a project whose main purpose was to develop impact indicators for GEF's LD Focal Area.

10. Evidence points to execution and implementation that began with a high level of momentum and energy for a busy 2-year work plan. The project began facing significant challenges beginning in its seventh month of operation when the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) acting as the project's Steering Committee (SC) decided to conduct an adaptive management review (AMR), which resulted in a 9-month pause in the project's work -- far beyond the 2 month review process that was originally intended. The project had already been delayed by nearly one year by the need to re-submit the MSP for CEO Endorsement in 2006. This additional nine-month delay likely contributed to a loss of project momentum and decreased relevance to many stakeholder agencies' programs and policies.

11. Although the MSP document had no analysis of risk, the evaluation does find evidence in the PIR of attempts by the project and UNDP to manage risk, which is defined as: "Changing priorities of the GEF with regard to the Land Degradation Focal Area" (PIR 2009) and "Ongoing strategic development within the GEF-5" (PIR 2010). The evaluation finds that UNDP and the project team tried to address this strategic risk, with some success towards the close of the project.

12. In the end, the project had five no-cost extensions and eight work plan revisions. This is evidence of a project buffeted by shifting programmatic winds, with the end result being the stopping of work on two of its three primary Outcomes (Outcomes 2 and 3) and the "shelving" of the primary reports and outputs under those outcomes. However, IA execution improved towards the end of the project in early 2010, resulting in the production of two of the project's most useful results that have generated the most impact: the pilot testing of project-level impact indicators and the GPR-GII-PM. Based upon this evidence, the evaluation rates Implementing Agency execution: *Moderately Satisfactory*.

13. **EA Execution:** UNOPS is the official Executing Agency for this project responsible for the project's finances. UNOPS subcontracted UNU-INWEH to implement the project. See Section 2: "Project Description" for details. This evaluation finds the disbursement and expenditure reporting and progress monitoring mechanism as planned in the original MoA between UNOPS and UNU-INWEH to be in line with standard UNDP and UNOPS procedures. Amidst the frequent and sometimes confusing project work planning and timeframe changes, quarterly financial reports were submitted and disbursements were based upon the approval of those reports. Appropriate due diligence seems to have been applied in managing the project's finances with one exception: the fact that Amendment #2 to the MoA required ~12 months to complete. This delay speaks to a low level of communication effectiveness first between UNDP and UNOPS and, to a lesser degree between UNDP and the UNU-INWEH during this period of the project. The evaluation rates Executing Agency execution: *Moderately Satisfactory*.

3) Outcomes

14. **Results:** The evaluation assessed the project's progress towards results, beginning first with the objective level and under each of the four project outcomes. This assessment of progress towards results is based on a comparison of the project document's original logframe indicators and targets and the current status of these indicators and targets. The project struggled with non-SMART Objective and Outcome indicators and respective targets or missing indicators and targets. This presented a challenge, as the evaluation had difficulty assessing the indicator and target achievement

² The phrase "project team" is used by the evaluation to mean the Steering Committee and the Project Management Unit

levels, one of the most important pieces of evidence to support a fair assessment of results.

15. Therefore the evaluation elaborated supplementary evidence of results at the Outcome level from the project's list of outputs under each Outcome, rating the impact of each Outcome's outputs as "Outcomes and Changed Practices" (OCP) on a simplified "Highly Significant – Significant - Insignificant" scale. This full assessment can be found in Section 3.3, Part A, with supplemental information and evidence of impact (OCP) elaborated under Section 3.3 Part F. Combined, the analyses provide the evaluation with its results ratings at the Objective, Outcome and overall Project levels summarized below.

16. Summary Progress Towards Results Rating (See Section 3.3 for details):

Objective:	Both indicator targets were achieved, resulting in a rating of:	S
Outcome 1:	The indicator target was achieved and "Significant" OCP rating reinforces for a rating of:	S
Outcome 2:	This outcome had no indicator target and the OCP rating of "insignificant" (trending towards significant) reinforces a rating of:	MU
Outcome 3:	The indicator target was not produced; the output that was produced had little impact with an OCP rating of "Insignificant":	U
Outcome 4:	No indicators and no target values for this outcome:	U/A
The Overall Progress Towards Results Rating for the Project is:		MS

17. Had the project not experienced difficulties with its indicators and targets, the Results rating may have been higher. As it stands, the evaluation rates the overall progress toward results for the project as being: **Moderately Satisfactory**

18. *Relevance:* The project design is very relevant and appropriate to national development priorities (e.g. combating desertification) and UNDP, GEF and other GEF agency organizational priorities and policies, primarily because the project's work sought to focus on how to improve the results-based effectiveness of SLM initiatives. Improving the effectiveness of international assistance is a priority in the international arena, as is restoring land productivity at the national level worldwide. In addition, the project successfully highlighted the important link between local economic development opportunities and effective SLM. The project design, however, suffered from a low level of understanding of the baseline situation with respect to stakeholder organizations' programs (UNDP, GEF, etc.) whose work it sought to improve. This may have been impossible to clearly understand and predict what GEF would do with its LD program beginning in 2005, but the project design does not demonstrate a serious attempt to do so. In summary, the overall concept of this project is utterly relevant and important to both national and global level priorities. The relevance of the project itself suffered from a rapidly changing LD programmatic context between GEF-4 and GEF-5 resulting in reduced effectiveness and efficiency. This is evidenced by the eight work plan revisions, five MoA amendments and five no-cost budget extensions. Rating: **Moderately Satisfactory**.

Effectiveness: The evaluation's analysis of the Objective-level indicator target values yielded a "Satisfactory" rating. Based upon this evidence (see Section 3.3 Part A for detail), the terminal evaluation finds that the project contributed to the overall goal, and achieved progress towards the Objective of "establishing the conditions which will support the application of knowledge management principles to support coherent strategy and direction." The project achieved the first Objective target of "lessons are available from the project website for use in the development of new projects." It achieved this in the form of *Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally-relevant SLM Impact Indicators for Project-level Monitoring (GPR-GII-PM)* and reports (e.g. pilot testing report) available on multiple websites (UNDP, UNU-INWEH, GEF). The project achieved the second Objective target of "GEF-5 strategy informed by project." Although the project was not the

sole or even likely the most important contributor to the GEF-5 LD strategy's indicators, it was a contributor. Rating on effectiveness: **Satisfactory**.

Efficiency: Cost-effectiveness & efficacy.

19. The project faced many challenges in implementing its planned activities and outputs as evidenced by its no-cost budget extensions. Although the project time frame was extended five times, the costs did not increase. In the end, the project disbursed the budget as planned by outcome and output, maintaining the project outputs in relation to its inputs and costs. Indeed, the project delivered best under Outcome 1, to which nearly 60% of the project budget was dedicated. Even though in the end the project's work was stopped on Outcomes 2 and 3, cost-effectiveness was minimally impacted because the project still produced the main outputs under Outcomes 2 and 3 (A Proposal for a Learning Network for the GEF LD Focal Area; the web-based Land Learning Network, and the Impact Pathways Analysis). In other words, the project for the most part did produce the outputs in relation to planned inputs and costs. What stakeholders actually did with these outputs is another question that goes to the heart of "impact." This is discussed under the "Results" section of this report.

20. The project did contribute to the evolution of GEF specific indicators, the use of which in current LD projects has likely improved their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness. The project's work contributed the evolution of a future portfolio wide impact indicator and monitoring system. If the project's *GPR-GII-PM* contribute to the improved preparation of and monitoring of impact indicators of current and future LD projects, then GEF's relatively modest investment into this project will have been quite cost-effective. Given the above considerations, the evaluations *rates cost effectiveness* "**Satisfactory**."

21. *Efficacy*: The project sprinted out of the starting gate, with a successful inception workshop and an ambitious work plan to accomplish its work in 2 years. Six months into the project, this ambitious 2-year work plan was modified substantially by the introduction of an unplanned adaptive management review, which delayed the project for nine months rather than its originally envisioned two and the project's efficacy was never really able to recover until the final 14 months when it focused on completing what is perhaps its most important outputs, the Report on piloting project level indicators and the *GPR-GII-PM*. Despite this positive final result, the evaluation finds that the project's efficacy suffered during at least two of its four years. *Rating on Efficacy: Moderately Satisfactory*. Overall Rating on Efficiency: **Satisfactory**.

4) Catalytic Role:

22. *Demonstration*: The project's demonstration work was originally planned to focus on global and project level indicators and a web-based KM:Land Learning Network. The project developed a set of four global indicator categories to help prioritize GEF resource allocation for the Land Degradation (LD) Focal Area of the GEF. The four categories were: Land Cover; Land Productivity; Water Availability, and Rural Income. The indicators under these categories included: Land Cover, Global Trend in Greenness, Water Stress, Rural Poverty Rate, and Income Distribution.

23. The demonstration value of the web-based learning network has been minimal to date, given that none of the primary stakeholder organizations have adopted it but this may change as UNU-INWEH continues discussions with other potential partners. However, the project's project-level indicator field-testing work in 2010-2011 bolstered its demonstration value significantly.

24. Building upon its global indicator level work, the project developed sub-indicators for measurement of impact at the project level in order to capture the impacts of SLM achieved through GEF LD funding. These project level indicators included: land use/land cover, land productivity, water availability and human well-being (measured as rural population below a poverty line, chronically undernourished children and maternal mortality ratio). The project undertook a pilot testing exercise to refine the project-level indicator profiles and methods as it was finalizing its *GPR-GII-PM* (see UNDP-GEF's website <http://www.undp.org/biodiversity/> "Related Publications and Resources"). This activity was undertaken in 2010 in collaboration with UNDP. In particular, the pilot

testing focused on examining the measurability, achievability, relevance and time-bound dimensions of each indicator to determine their suitability for tracking impacts in the GEF LD portfolio. Five UNDP/GEF projects were examined in four countries (Dominican Republic, Namibia, Senegal and Tajikistan).

25. This field-testing exercise was well received by UNDP, the GEF and the UNCCD, with the latter building upon this experience to conduct its own field testing work of global indicators that also build upon this KM:Land project's global indicator work. The project's indicator work was also used by the UNCCD in the refinement process of their impact indicators as summarized in Table 8. The evaluation finds this to be convincing evidence of reasonable demonstration value of the project's work on indicators. **Rating: Yes.**

26. *Replication:* The potential for replication of the project's work is strong. For evidence to support this assertion, the evaluation once again points to the newly elaborated GPR-GII-PM, which are the only available practical guidance for project developers on how to elaborate project level LD indicators with global significance. While there are no measurements of this replication as of yet, UNDP has made it official policy to distribute the guidelines widely throughout its 140 country office network (see the link to the UNDP website above where the guidelines can be downloaded). **Rating: Yes.**

27. *Scaling up.* The project achieved some scaling-up during its short 4-year duration with the elaboration of the global indicators that in turned help to inform the GEF-5 Strategy for the LD Focal Area. The ongoing distribution of the GPR-GII-PM via the web, email, and at venues such as the recent UNCCD COP 10 meeting in Korea, will go a long way towards scaling up the project's work. **Rating: Yes.**

5) Sustainability:

28. Across the board, the project has reduced risks to and improved prospects for financial, socio-economic and institutional sustainability. The project's work with measuring impacts from SLM increases the likelihood of sustainability going forward. The project translated project interventions into practical "how-to" tools for SLM indicator development. This is the greatest strength of the project and is the core of the sustainability for project benefits.

29. Overall, sustainability for project inspired changes and for measuring and monitoring SLM impacts going forward is **Likely**. Financial, Socio-economic, Institutional and Environmental sub-ratings are summarized below:

30. *Financial:* This project's unique global/strategic focus puts this question in a different light than a "traditional" project working in a certain sector or place in one or more countries. On a strategic level, this evaluation sees few financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of what this project helped to push forward: improved KM, improved monitoring and measurement of SLM success and improved impact assessment. The momentum of international development assistance is moving increasingly towards results-oriented investments. This is highly unlikely to change and thus there will be more and more financing going towards the ongoing improvement of knowledge management and monitoring and measuring of success (or lack thereof).

31. This is evidenced most immediately by the UNCCD's encouraging moves to build upon this and other initiatives' work as they elaborate their own national indicators for Parties to the CCD to report against. In addition, the fact that the project implementation unit was hosted by UNU-INWEH, which has an independent source of financing for its operations, makes it likely that the project's work and some of the as yet to be adopted elements of it (the Learning Network web-based platform) will eventually find a home or a means of support moving forward.

32. One financial risk does challenge the sustainability of using indicators to demonstrate LD impact: cost. The resource requirements for tracking indicators are a key concern for project teams

and agency partners. While the project's work did not offer any easy solutions to this challenge, it does contribute to enabling project teams to design data collection in a proactive and strategic way, which will be critical to ensuring value for money. Given these considerations above, this evaluation ranks financial sustainability "**Likely**".³

33. **Socio-economic risks:** Social and political risks that may threaten the sustainability of project outcomes. There is moderate risk for instance 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. For example, there is the risk that LD indicators will be too expensive to monitor, too difficult to target the socio-economic effects of LD, and/or just too difficult to show impact from an LD project, hampering improved KM in LD initiatives. However, this project's work helped to reduce this risk, particularly the project's work to pilot the indicators at the project level in four different countries. Stakeholder feedback highlighted this work as one of the most useful outcomes of the project. In addition, for the reasons enunciated under the financial risk section above, this evaluation finds socio-economic risk to be low. Instead the socio-economic pressures facing the world today will likely result in even more demand for improved effectiveness and efficiency of international development investments, and this bodes well for ongoing investment in knowledge management. The evaluation ranks socio-economic risk to sustainability as negligible and socio-economic sustainability as "**Likely**."

34. **Institutional framework and governance risks:** There are institutional and governance risks to sustainability of some of the project's work to be sure. For example, the learning network (LN) has yet to be adopted by any organization and there is the risk that it will languish as a website in limbo until it becomes irrelevant. This risk is mitigated somewhat by the fact that the LN is kept by UNU-INWEH, which has resources of its own and ongoing programs and contacts with many organizations who are likely hosts or partners in launching the LN in the future (*e.g.* UNCCD, FAO, UNDP, DesertNet International).

35. The successful tracking of progress at the portfolio level in relation to the GEF-5's LD indicators requires standardized reporting of information. The project's work has helped to strengthen some important elements that are critical to the long-term sustainability of this emerging global LD/SLM system for monitoring: 1) the project's input on global indicator profiles (set of four global indicators) that contributed the GEF-5's discussions on programmatic indicators and; 2) the *Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally-relevant SLM Impact Indicators for Project-level Monitoring*, now being distributed worldwide by UNDP.

36. The project's work on indicators as well as piloting that work with real projects on the ground was new and different. The fact that UNCCD has consulted and drawn upon this work in its efforts to refine and pilot its own set of impact indicators to improve the ability of the Parties to the UNCCD to report on LD and SLM in their countries increases the likelihood of institutional and governance sustainability going forward. These guidelines, perhaps more than anything else the project has put forward will contribute to a strengthened framework for LD monitoring will be a critical for enhanced sustainability going forward. Given this evidence of emerging sustainability, the evaluation ranks programmatic and institutional risk as moderate and the likelihood of programmatic and institutional sustainability as "**Likely**."

³ Ratings for Sustainability are based upon the following:

- **Likely (L):** negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes expected to continue into the foreseeable future.
- **Moderately Likely (ML):** moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained.
- **Moderately Unlikely (MU):** substantial risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on.
- **Unlikely (U):** severe risk that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained.
- **Highly Unlikely (HU):** expectation that **few** if any outputs/activities will continue after project closure.
- Not Applicable (N/A)
- Unable to Assess (U/A)

37. **Environmental risks:** Climate change poses perhaps the most significant environmental risk to SLM, but the risk varies geographically: in some places, CC may help to improve land condition; in others, it will likely worsen it. The project's work sought to help stakeholders think more clearly about how to measure SLM impact and thus improve the project's focus and attention on the local environmental and human factors that may reduce this impact. In this way, the project's work will help project teams to better define success for their SLM efforts, measure its impacts, and better focus on addressing factors that threaten that success. This will only help stakeholders to reduce environmental risks affecting SLM outcomes. (Rating on Environmental Sustainability: **Likely**)

6) Overall Project Results:

38. Despite formidable challenges associated with a dynamic and changing GEF programmatic environment and a weak logical framework design, the project has made globally significant contributions to improving the ability of stakeholders to design, implement, monitor, and deliver SLM results. The project's work under its Outcome 1 had the most impact, through the development of:

- 1) A set of global indicator profiles to capture the impacts of SLM achieved through the Land Degradation (LD) Focal Area of the GEF. These indicators, and the expert consultations and other work undertaken to produce them, informed the GEF-5's improved LD Strategy (together with many other contributors) and likely informed GEF's global environmental benefits (GEB) index used to support GEF's "system for transparent allocation of resources" or STAR.
- 2) *Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally-relevant SLM Impact Indicators for Project-level Monitoring.* Tracking of progress in relation to global indicators at the GEF portfolio level requires standardized reporting of information at the project level. The project elaborated these guidelines for project managers to enable this to happen. These guidelines and their adoption and use by UNDP and its project teams worldwide, represents a globally significant result.
- 3) The pilot testing of project-level indicators by the project provided useful information and insights that informed the Guidelines above and reinforced the idea among key agency stakeholders that projects can demonstrate/monitor SLM impact. Indeed, the UNCCD drew upon this work during their impact indicator refinement process. KM:Land's project-level indicator work in turn likely helped to validate and perhaps improve GEF's new PMAT Tracking Tool to support its implementation and vertical coherence between global and local levels in GEF-5.

39. In conclusion, the project, originally planned as a two year project to be concluded in June 2009, was a four year project concluded in June 2011. The project was hampered by an overly general project design that did not conceptually anchor itself in the prevailing baseline project. There are reasons for this, the primary one being that it was supposed to be phase 1 of a multi-phase (multi-project) GEF investment. In hindsight this was fraught with risk that the project design never recognized, namely that GEF's LD program would change rapidly as part of a larger organizational/programmatic change, reducing the project's relevance. In fact, this is what happened. This meant that much of the project's implementation period was spent adjusting and readjusting its work to fit or not conflict with the latest changes in the GEF program. This resulted in some shortcomings and thus the "Moderately Satisfactory" ratings that appear in Table A above. However, it is a credit to the UNU-INWEH project management unit and to UNDP that the project was able to focus in the last 16 months of its extended lifespan and produce what would be its most important and useful work apart from its global indicator recommendations. In addition, the evidence points to the project's work having a catalytic effect and contributing to the enhanced sustainability of future LD projects.

40. Consequently, this enabled a final overall rating of: **MODERATELY SATISFACTORY +**.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background & Context

41. Until October 2002, the GEF's LD support focused on addressing LD issues as they related to the GEF's original focal areas – biological diversity, climate change, international waters, and ozone layer depletion. In October 2002, the Second GEF Assembly in Beijing designated land degradation a focal area of the GEF as a means to support the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). This designation made sustainable land management a primary focus of GEF assistance to achieve global environment benefits within the context of sustainable development.

42. GEF's first programmatic document describing its LD program was the GEF Operational Program on Sustainable Land Management – OP-15. OP-15 operationalized the designation of LD as a focal area and outlined, among other things, program objective, expected outcomes, and activities eligible for GEF support. OP-15 also declared GEF's intention to develop impact indicators for its SLM work going forward. The PDF-A for this project was approved under OP-15 in July of 2005. As the GEF-4 Program was being elaborated during 2006, this project was also positioned under GEF-4, Strategic Objective 1: *To develop an enabling environment that will place sustainable land management in the mainstream of development policy and practices at regional, national, and local levels.*

43. The project was developed around a simple idea – that the emerging LD focal area under GEF required a more robust knowledge management approach, similar to that embodied in the IW:Learn program then already funded by the GEF for the IW focal area. At the time this project was developed the LD Focal Area lacked clear indicators of success for the millions of dollars being committed to an increasing number of SLM projects.

44. To fill this gap, the Interagency LD Task Force elaborated this project concept, and UNDP-GEF submitted the PDF-A in July 2005. The UNDP-GEF submitted this Medium Size Project (MSP) to GEF for funding under the LD Focal Area, OP-15/ Strategic Objective 1 on the 18th of April 2006. The MSP Proposal was approved in May of 2006 and GEF CEO approval of the original MSP was received in August 2006. The project was scheduled to start work in September 2006.

45. However, with rapid changes underway at GEF in the latter part of 2006/early 2007 including the revision of GEF strategic objectives, the GEF required this project to be re-submitted for CEO approval. This was done and CEO re-approval of the project was extended in March 2007. UNDP-GEF and UNOPS signed the project document in May 2007 and the first tranche of project funds were released to UNU-INWEH in July 2007. With this timeline the reader can see that the project's work and input to the rapidly changing indicator and knowledge management (KM) field of the GEF was delayed by one year before it even started. It is in this context of dynamic change that the project was developed and implemented.

1.2. Purpose of the evaluation & key issues addressed

46. This Terminal Evaluation has the following complementary **purposes**⁴:
- To promote accountability and transparency and to assess and disclose the extent of project accomplishments.
 - To synthesize lessons that can help to improve the selection, design and implementation of future GEF financed UNDP activities.

⁴ UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF-Financed Projects.

- c. To contribute to the overall assessment of results in achieving GEF strategic objectives aimed at global environmental benefits.

47. The evaluation focused on five key parameters of particular importance to a Terminal Evaluation (TE): Monitoring and Evaluation; IA and EA Execution; Outcomes (results, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency); Catalytic Role.

Table 1. Parameters for Evaluating Project Performance

1. Monitoring and Evaluation

M&E design at project start up

M&E Plan Implementation

2. IA & EA Execution

Implementing Agency Execution

Executing Agency Execution

3. Outcomes

Results

Relevance

Effectiveness

Efficiency

4. Catalytic Role

Demonstration

Replication

Scaling up

5. Sustainability

Financial resources

Socio-economic

Institutional framework and governance

Environmental

48. These five criteria were considered with respect to project formulation (design), project implementation, and project results, as is reflected in the Table of Contents for this evaluation. In addition or as part of this process, the evaluation considered other issues such as: country ownership, partnerships and stakeholder participation; UNDP's comparative advantage, the catalytic role of the project, and impact.

49. UNDP may utilize the evaluation's recommendations and findings, along with any useful supporting materials to help guide future project development and implementation practices. Evaluation findings and recommendations may also inform discussions among stakeholders about possible next steps for other relevant initiatives.

1.3. Methodology of the evaluation

50. One independent expert (hereafter referred to as 'the evaluator') undertook this TE. The evaluator elaborated the methodology and this reports' format based primarily upon the detailed guidance provided by the document entitled: *UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF-Financed Projects and by GEF's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy 2010*. The Terms of Reference (see Annex 1) were also a source of guidance. The evaluation consisted of the following steps⁵: planning, data collection and consideration of baseline and project targets, analysis, report writing and consultation. The methodology used is designed to minimize any bias that may come from using single informants or a limited range of documentation.

⁵ Although these steps are largely taken in chronological order, it was an iterative process.

51. Planning Phase: The planning phase consisted of an initial documentation review, the scoping out of the main issues, reviewing the ToR and proposing changes, determining the most appropriate mission itinerary, collecting documentation and finalizing logistical arrangements.

52. In order to structure data collection and analysis and guide documentation review, a simple framework of inquiry was developed based upon the main points highlighted in the ToR and in UNDP's newly elaborated guidance for evaluations entitled, "UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects." Indeed, the format for this evaluation follows the format recommended in this new guidance provided by UNDP to the evaluator. This framework of inquiry helped the evaluator ensure that relevant issues and questions were discussed with each stakeholder.

53. Data Collection: The data collection phase included two main parts: (i) an in-depth review of documentation, and (ii) stakeholder consultations in person and by telephone. The evaluator worked at the UNU-INWEH for three days, meeting with stakeholders each of the three days. Face-to-face consultations were held only with stakeholders in UNU-INWEH offices in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. These consultations took the form of one-on-one interviews as well as round-table discussions when more than one stakeholder was available to be interviewed. Telephone interviews were conducted with nine stakeholders. See Annex 3 for the mission itinerary and the list of people interviewed.

54. The in-depth review of documentation covered the main elements of the project's documentation, including the Project Document and CEO Endorsement Request, and annual project reports (APR/PIR) and primary project outputs. Annex 2 provides a list of the documentation reviewed.

55. Validating the baseline and targets: Ideally, the project document describes the baseline, the benchmarks and SMART logframe indicators of success, which the evaluator uses as the main objective tool to assess the project's progress and likelihood of success. This evaluation sought to understand the baseline situation clearly as a basis for viewing the project as a whole. For this understanding, the evaluator relied upon the baseline as described in the approved project document itself (pages 15-24) completed in 2006, as well as upon his own professional experience in similar areas of work.

56. Analysis Phase: The project's logical framework included in the approved project document is supposed to enable the project to monitor and the evaluator to evaluate the more substantive impacts of the project in achieving the project's objective.

57. With respect to the logical framework, the evaluator reviewed progress towards the project Objective and each Outcome by assessing two things: a) the status of each indicator based upon the project's outputs, annual reports, quarterly reports, stakeholder interviews and other evidence; and b) the impact of the outputs as evidenced by actions taken by stakeholders to adopt them and/or to use them.

58. In line with GEF guidelines, the evaluator used the evidence available in order to provide ratings for *M&E* (design and implementation), *IA and EA Execution*, *Outcomes* (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), *Catalytic role*, and *Sustainability* (financial, socio-political, institutional/governance and environmental). For the important step of providing ratings for the effectiveness of each Outcome, the evaluator compared indicator targets with actual levels achieved by project end. Another factor taken into account was evidence of *momentum* associated with the project's impact going forward.

59. Evidence. GEF guidelines require that *sufficient* and *convincing* evidence be collected to support each finding of the evaluation, notably with regards to results. The evaluator sought to collect independent, verifiable evidence in the time allowed.

1.4 Structure of the Evaluation & Evaluation Team

60. The structure and contents of this report are designed to meet the purposes of this medium size project evaluation and satisfy the information needs of the report's intended users. The structure of the report follows the structure recommended in the newly developed "UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF-Financed Projects."

61. One solo evaluator comprised the evaluation team for this medium-size project terminal evaluation. The evaluator's background, experience and skills are appropriate and lend additional support to this evaluation, apart from the stakeholder input and evidence provided in the form of reports and studies. The evaluator interviewed all non-project staff stakeholders in the absence of project or UNDP staff.

1.5. Ethics.

62. Attached to this report is a 'Code of Conduct' form signed by the evaluator (See Annex 4). This evaluation was undertaken per the "UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations," including deliberate consideration of the obligations of evaluators, such as:

- **Independence.** This evaluation was conducted in a way as to be demonstrably free of bias. The exercising of independent judgment is an important element of this evaluation and this evaluator sought to ensure that the views or statements of any one party did not unduly influence the evaluation.

- **Impartiality.** This evaluation seeks to give a balanced presentation of strengths and weaknesses of the project, taking due account of the views of a diverse cross-section of stakeholders. To do so, the evaluator strove to: (a) operate in an impartial and unbiased manner at all stages of the evaluation; (b) collect diverse perspectives on the subject under evaluation and (c) guard against distortion in their reporting caused by their personal views and feelings.

This evaluation was conducted in such a way as to ensure the rights and confidentiality of persons interviewed. No person is quoted by name in this evaluation.

- **Credibility.** This evaluation emphasizes the importance of being credible and being based on reliable data and observations. The evaluation seeks to demonstrate consistency and dependability in data, findings, judgments and lessons learned; and seeks to reflect appropriately the quality of the methodology, procedures and analysis used to collect and interpret data. The evaluator endeavored to ensure that the evaluation is accurate, relevant, and timely and that it provides a clear, concise and balanced presentation of the evidence, findings, issues, conclusions and recommendations.

- **Conflicts of Interest.** This evaluator has had no involvement in or responsibility for the design, implementation or supervision of the project.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ITS DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

2.1. Project start and duration

63. The project entitled, "Ensuring impacts from SLM – Development of a Global Indicatory System" or "KM:Land" became operational in July 2007 with the release of funds from UNOPS to UNU-INWEH. As the GEF Implementing Agency for this project, UNDP had primary oversight responsibility for the project. Using its "Direct Execution" modality, UNDP contracted with UNOPS to serve as the "Executing Agency" for the project as it does for many projects worldwide. UNOPS in turn sub-contracted UNU-INWEH to host the project management unit and to implement the project.

As such, the UNU-INWEH was the implementing partner, supervised by UNDP and working closely with UNDP and UNOPS. The total budget of the project is US\$1,200,000 (GEF: \$1,000,000 & Co-funding: \$180,000).

64. As excerpted from the project document's management arrangements description:

KM: Land will be an interagency exercise, involving all members of the GEF's LD Task Force. The first phase of KM: Land will be coordinated by UNDP. UNDP will be the Implementing Agency of the MSP on behalf of the inter-agency group. The project will be managed through UNOPS, and subcontracted to UNU-INWEH... A project management unit will be established at UNU-INWEH, consisting of the UNU-INWEH Director, Project Manager and support staff. This unit will carry out the implementation of the project, as well as monitoring and evaluation of progress.

A Steering Committee will be established consisting of Members of the LD Task Force (GEFSEC, UNDP, UNEP, WB, IFAD, FAO, AsDB, IADB and AfDB), who have been consulted in the development of the MSP, as well as any other Donor providing substantial co-funding to the MSP. The Steering Committee participants will primarily be from the technical units of the agencies, and will meet at least twice a year. The Steering Committee will remain in close communication with the GEF Evaluation Office to ensure that all aspects of the GEF M&E policy are followed. The Steering Committee will be chaired by the GEF Secretariat, with UNDP acting as its Secretariat.

65. In the same month of July 2007, the inception workshop was held to prepare for the project implementation. The UNDP/GEF Principal Policy Adviser for LD attended the workshop, as did GEF Secretariat, GEF-STAP, UNEP, WB and IADB. Originally planned to be a 2 year project concluding in June 2009, project delays and no-cost extensions meant the project finally closed operations in June of 2011, five years after its initial approval by GEF and four years after its second approval by GEF.

66. The project document defines the development context in which this project was developed and initiated in the excerpted text below from the Part I: Project Concept "A: Summary", page 15:

The Land Degradation Focal Area of the GEF has completed its first cycle (GEF-3) and is in a position to take lessons from this pilot phase to establish its strategic direction and policies for GEF-4 and beyond... The GEF Council has requested the GEF Secretariat and the IAs and EAs to ensure that projects in the LD Focal Area adhere to a coherent strategy and direction in the overall portfolio. The Council has requested all Focal Areas of the GEF to have measurable and verifiable indicators by 2008. This MSP is the first phase (two years) of a three-phased process that will provide the scientific-technical basis for selecting such indicators, develop a community of practice for GEF projects in LD, develop Knowledge Management (KM) tools and guidelines as well as exchanges of experiences, and finally develop the suitable frameworks and mechanisms to monitor results from SLM projects. The results of this MSP are expected to contribute to the ongoing work of the GEF Family, including the GEF Council, in making a strategic choice on defining global benefits from the LD Focal Area, and agreeing on GEF-specific project and portfolio-level indicators for the LD Focal Area. While the MSP will focus on activities of relevance to the wider global community, any GEF-specific activity will, however, be done through a special initiative to be presented as part of the GEF Secretariat Corporate Budget for FY07 and FY08.

The results of the indicator development activities within this MSP will provide the technical basis for the selection of appropriate indicators at the local and global levels. At the global level, the CCD process and its efforts to develop benchmarks and indicators will greatly benefit from its results. Developing a comprehensive results management framework and harmonizing such indicators across aid agencies, while also incorporating state of the art expertise from the scientific community and practitioners, has proven difficult in the past. The GEF, with its network structure, catalytic role and partnership approach, is in a unique situation to bring together the international community and develop indicators that will reflect the multi-dimensional impact of SLM.

2.2. Problems that the project seeks to address

67. The problem(s) the project is designed to address are inherent in the project's definition of the project objective and the project's main barriers preventing stakeholders from achieving the objective. The primary problem definition underlying the rationale for this project can be phrased in different ways, but settles essentially upon the following: "Current conditions are inadequate to support the application of knowledge management principles to support coherent strategy and direction of SLM projects and programs."

68. Other underlying issues and barriers the project sought to address include: a) a lack of knowledge management for controlling and mitigating land degradation (MSP paragraph 15); b) the extraction of best practices from the LD portfolio is hampered by the lack of consensus on indicators of success (impact and performance) and better understanding of the benefits from combating land degradation (MSP paragraph 15).

69. The project also highlights that while there is an existing (yet evolving) system of monitoring and evaluation in the GEF (The GEF Evaluation Office, the GEF Sec, the IA and EA) as well as some collaboration on reviewing PIR between the GEF Sec and the IA, "the monitoring procedures and even indicator terminologies of the agencies are different. Some but not all agencies have adopted an RBM approach. As a result, it is difficult to aggregate the impact across SLM projects." The project document summarizes the baseline for LD knowledge management as such:

Overall, the baseline for LD knowledge management is constrained due to information fragmentation and overload, lack of "user-friendly" methods for knowledge dissemination, and a reliance on academic and internet-based communication tools, which restricts access to those that have high-speed electronic capacity. Various targeted research activities and information networks exist and have developed the knowledge base, however most KM programs and activities either focus on information dissemination, or knowledge acquisition, or capacity building. These are carried out separately from monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management activities in the IAs and across the GEF. Rarely are all combined into one "Community of Practice", or termed as a "Learning Network" in the context of this project. The GEF Evaluation Office has an evolving system of monitoring and evaluation for all Focal Areas, including Land Degradation.

However, the lack of baseline land degradation data against which to measure the results of any Sustainable Land Management (SLM) projects in terms of actual environmental improvement over time is currently presenting a practical challenge for effective evaluation of initiatives. As a result, it is difficult to aggregate impact across SLM projects. The GEF Council has requested a major strengthening of the Logical Framework Analysis of projects in general. In order to address the need for clarity on measurable indicators, the STAP is conducting conceptual studies, which will provide guidance on how the knowledge management activities in this initiative can be tailored to the needs of the GEF. In the meantime, the UNEP-GEF Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands project (LADA), led by FAO, initiative of the GEF is collating indicators relevant to LD, although LADA only covers dryland ecosystems, and in addition will not address the issues of global benefit or attribution, which are both key to developing GEF-related indicators.

2.3. Project Goal, Project objective, Primary outcomes and related outputs

20. The **project goal** is to "contribute to enhancing ecosystem integrity, stability, functions and services through GEF-supported sustainable land management activities." The **project objective** is to "To establish the conditions which will support the application of knowledge management principles to support coherent strategy and direction⁶." The project aimed to achieve its objective through the realization of three outcomes and related outputs:

⁶ Inception report.

Outcome 1: Global and local level indicators demonstrate livelihood and environmental benefits derived from actions on combating land degradation.

Output 1.1: Selection Criteria for Indicators.

Output 1.2: Set of selected indicators.

Output 1.3: Guidance materials on standards for measuring and reporting on these indicators.

Output 1.4: Guidance disseminated to all stakeholders.

Output 1.5: Measures for review and update of indicators and guidance.

Outcome 2: A framework for knowledge management and capacity building for SLM is in place⁷.

Output 2.1: Initial Learning network and planning of future activities.

Output 2.2: Synthesis of lessons on SLM.

Outcome 3: A process is defined to establish a harmonized monitoring and evaluation system that supports results-based management for SLM projects.

Output 3.1: Consensus reached on a tracking tool that supports adaptive and result based management for SLM.

Output 3.2: Outline for development of a harmonized monitoring and evaluation system.

Outcome 4: Adaptive management and lessons learned.

Output 4.1: Evaluation of MSP and adaptations to project design as a result of M&E.

Output 4.2: Efficient delivery of MSP.

2.4. Main stakeholders

70. The project document states that the project was an “interagency exercise,” driven by the multi-agency Land Degradation Task Force (LD-TF), whose members comprise the main stakeholder agencies for this project. Members of the LD-TF were: WB, GEF Secretariat⁸, GEF STAP, UNDP, UNEP, WB, IFAD, FAO, AsDB, IUADB and AfDB. This LD-TF appears to have been actively engaged in the project preparatory process, as evidenced by meetings held in Rome prior to the drafting of the PDF-A preparatory request. The LD-TF became the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) for the project, which acted as its Steering Committee (SC), with the GEF Sec chairing the IAWG.

71. Although the project document does not include a project stakeholder list with anticipated roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, the project document does elaborate in general upon how the project was to be supported by a number of LD-TF members’ core programmes, including:

- UNDP’s “knowledge services”
- UNEP’s “comprehensive assessment programme on natural ecosystem/land resources” including the GLCM and LADA.
- AsDB’s “knowledge transfer” mandate
- IFAD’s priority to “establish a comprehensive system for measuring and reporting on the results and impact of IFAD programmes”
- FAO’s programmes in sustainable forest management, agriculture, fisheries, genetic resources, biodiversity important for agriculture
- IADB’s project supervision and evaluation obligations
- World Bank’s “results agenda” that emphasizes the SLM knowledge and information needs of policy and program managers in developing countries.

⁷ Wording of Outcomes 2 and 3 was modified at the inception workshop— this is the modified version.

⁸ The GEF Secretariat’s M&E office was engaged in project preparation workshops but did not participate actively in the project implementation itself.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Project Formulation

A. Analysis of LFA (Project logic/strategy; indicators):

Does the logical framework or hierarchy make sense as represented by the project's goal, objective and main outcomes? Is the wording of the objective clear and unambiguous?

Project goal: to contribute to enhancing ecosystem integrity, stability, functions and services through GEF-supported sustainable land management activities.

Project objective: To establish the conditions, which will support the application of knowledge management principles to support coherent strategy and direction.

Outcome 1: Global and local level indicators demonstrate livelihood and environmental benefits derived from actions on combating land degradation.

Outcome 2: A framework for knowledge management and capacity building for SLM is in place.

Outcome 3: A process is defined to establish a harmonized monitoring and evaluation system that supports results-based management for SLM projects.

Outcome 4: Adaptive management and lessons learned

72. The project's logical hierarchy is shown above. The logical flow from goal to objective to outcomes (and reverse) is clear even though the project's objective wording is somewhat vague and ambiguous. The objective lacks clarity and suffers from elements of ambiguity because of the use of words and phrases such as "conditions" and "support coherent strategy and direction." What conditions? Whose and/or what strategy and direction? The outcomes are phrased so that they logically could establish "conditions" to support "the application of knowledge management principles." The evaluation finds the logical hierarchy as written above to be adequate. Whether it has proven to be feasible during implementation is another question discussed under the Results section (3.3.) of this report.

73. In any GEF project, proponents must describe the baseline situation relevant to the project, which serves as the foundation for the logic of the project design and the elaboration of a SMART logical framework. A well-defined baseline is key to justifying the need for the project (i.e. how the project will improve upon this baseline situation) or what is strong and/or weak with respect to the baseline situation. Equally as important, it is key to facilitating the measurement of results and key to better understanding the importance or significance of the results by providing a baseline scenario with which to compare.

74. A solid baseline description for this project would ideally be an analysis of the "baseline project" relevant to the development and application of knowledge management principles to the strengthening of GEF's Land Degradation strategy, with an analysis of strengths and weaknesses and a solid understanding of programs and processes underway to do this. Although, project documents were not required to describe and analyze "baseline projects" in 2006 as they are now required to do, project documents were required to describe and analyze the project "baseline" and how the project "alternative" will improve upon this baseline. Such a description and analysis helps to provide clarity

by comparing and contrasting what “would likely happen” in the baseline scenario, with what the project proposes to happen under its alternative.

75. The project document/project design does not provide a useful analysis of the KM baseline (existing or emerging) of the GEF Secretariat, of UNDP, or of any of the other members of the LD-TF. Neither current nor emerging KM programs is described and analyzed in a way that lends logical support to what the project proposes as an alternative. This gap becomes particularly important because it is manifested in vague, non-specific, non-SMART logframe indicators in the results framework, an issue discussed in detail under Section 3.3.

Do the indicators as designed in the prodoc serve to strengthen this logical structure with specific, measurable, attributable, realistic and time-bound targets?

76. The results expected by this project are reflected in the results framework (or logical framework) indicators included in the project document. The indicators are clearly stated for the most part. Indicator baseline and target values, however, vary widely. The logical framework’s five indicators (Table 2a) include one each for the objective and the four Outcomes. The long-time standard for indicator formulation in UNDP-GEF projects is that they be “SMART⁹” indicators to facilitate effective monitoring of project implementation, adaptive management, and ultimately to minimize ambiguity when evaluating project effectiveness during a Terminal Evaluation.

77. Table 2a summarizes the SMART attributes of each indicator as judged by this evaluation. The SMART attributes are indicated in the cell next to each indicator and separated by a “-“. For example, Indicator #1 is found to be Measurable, Attributable, Realistic and Time-bound or “M-A-R-T.” These findings are closely related to and based upon the analysis of indicators under the Section 3.3 of this evaluation.

Table 2a: Analysis of SMART attributes of project indicators (and corresponding baseline and target values) as designed in the prodoc.

Project Purpose	Indicator	Baseline	Target by End of Project	S-M-A-R-T ?
Objective: To establish the conditions which will support the application of knowledge management principles to support coherent strategy and direction	Contribution of knowledge to project design and FA strategy	Documented lessons on/from LD projects not available for use in design of new projects. No GEF-5 strategy	By the end of the project, documented lessons are available from the project website for use in the development of new projects GEF-5 strategy informed by project	M-A-R-T A
Outcome 1: Indicators demonstrate global environmental and livelihood-related impact derived from actions on combating land degradation	Enhanced capacity to measure impacts at project level. Informed allocation of resources at portfolio level.	Preliminary global and project indicators are not integrated with one another or connected to learning processes within the wider community.	Projects submitted for approval under GEF-5 use indicators that build on the proposed indicator set for SLM.	A-R
Outcome 2: A framework for Knowledge	Learning Network	No learning network exists	Learning network launched	A-R

⁹ i.e.: specific, measurable, achievable & attributable, relevant & realistic, time bound & targeted.

Project Purpose	Indicator	Baseline	Target by End of Project	S-M-A-R-T ?
Management and Capacity Building for SLM is in place.				
Outcome 3: A process is defined to establish a monitoring and evaluation system that supports result based management for SLM projects.	Outline of an M&E system at the focal area level.	No outline	By the end of the project, an outline for a tracking tool to be implemented during the follow-on project has been developed	A-R-T
Outcome 4: Adaptive Management and lessons learnt.	Implementation of improvements of the MSP.	None provided in MSP	None provided in MSP	Unable to assess

78. Table 2b contains an overall analysis of the SMART attributes as they relate to this project's indicators and end-of-project targets for each indicator.

Table 2b: Analysis of the SMART attributes of project indicators.

SMART Attribute	Analysis
<u>S</u> pecific:	0 of 6. The evaluation finds none of the indicators and respective targets to be specific in terms of "increase in number" or "percent of" or scorecard values.
<u>M</u> easurable	1 of 6. The evaluation finds that 1 of the 6 indicators are measurable in a practical and easily understood way.
<u>A</u> ttributable:	5 of 6. Table 2a above assesses that 5 of the 6 indicators are/could be directly attributable to the project's work.
<u>R</u> ealistic:	4 of 6. The evaluation holds "realistic" to mean that the indicator is achievable by the project given time allowed and funding resource constraints. Four of the six indicators are found to be realistic. This conclusion is informed by the analysis conducted under Section 3.3: Project Results.
<u>T</u> ime-bound	2 of 6. Two of six are time-bound in that the target is defined as "by End of Project."

79. Summary: The evaluation finds that the project design had many of the basic elements in place that comprise an adaptive management framework, particularly a project design that, utilized correctly, could enable adaptive management (*i.e.* an M&E plan, results frameworks, mention of replication of lessons learned). The project did not have an outcome focused upon learning lessons and replication of those lessons.

80. However, the project's logical structure, particularly its indicators, would have benefitted from a project preparation that included more analysis and informed understanding of the situation with respect to the baseline programs for indicator development within the GEF Secretariat and the main Implementing Agencies. The project document lacks evidence of this clear understanding and the project suffered as a result in that the "SMART" attributes of its indicators were diminished, reducing their usefulness as an adaptive management tool. This is highly ironic given that the purpose of the project itself was to develop indicators for the GEF's LD focal area when the project itself had indicators that failed to provide additional clarity and integrity to the project design. The evaluation recognizes that this project was developed nearly 6 years ago and that the GEF's use of indicators has progressed since then, however, the project and UNDP had multiple opportunities to update this log frame throughout its 4-year lifespan.

81. As the sub-title of this section implies, indicators are meant also to help to strengthen and focus the project's design in terms of outputs and activities in particular. This evaluation asked the question "Is there evidence that the project's indicators helped to strengthen and focus the project's design?" Not one of six indicators were "Specific" and only 1 of the 6 is "Measurable." Five of six are "Attributable, four of six are "Realistic" and only two of six were "Time-bound." One of the outcome indicators lacks baseline and target values altogether. Therefore, the evaluation finds that there is little evidence that the indicators helped to strengthen and focus the project's design.

B. Risks and Assumptions

82. The project document fails to assess risks and assumptions. There is no "risk and assumptions analysis" section of the MSP document; the word "risk" is mentioned once in the MSP in a different context. The MSP's logical framework leaves the "Assumptions" column blank. This was modified slightly at project inception, when one output assumption was included and one Outcome assumption is included (Outcome 3) in the logical framework.

83. Overall, the evaluation finds the project's risks and assumptions did not inform the formulation of the project's logical structure (outcomes, outputs and activities). This absence of robust consideration of risk and assumptions is a major flaw and weakness in the project design, which underlies many of the difficulties that the project faced in its long and difficult lifespan.

84. Relevant Externalities. The GEF's re-organization beginning in 2006 had profound impacts upon this project because the GEF was the "target beneficiary" of this project. Although this is never specifically elaborated in the MSP document, it is clear that the project seeks to develop new indicators and KM tools for the GEF's LD Focal Area. With the reorganization of the GEF program as part of the GEF-4/GEF-5 evolution, this destabilized the already under-defined baseline for collaboration between GEF and the project/UNDP.

85. It is a reasonable conclusion that the shifting programmatic priorities at the GEF as it evolved from GEF-4 to GEF-5 and the resulting uncertainty on the part of UNDP hampered the project in its implementation and its ability to achieve results.

C. Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project implementation:

86. The project calls for incorporating lessons from other relevant projects globally. The MSP's Annex 2 is devoted to "Learning Lessons in the GEF." The Annex reviews five GEF projects related to knowledge management:

- IW:Learn
- IW:Learn 2
- Biodiversity Support Program (BSP)
- Mega-diversity Knowledge and Policy Network (MKPN) (biodiversity)
- Adaptive Learning Mechanism: Learning while Doing (climate change)

87. The MSP's Annex 2 is a lengthy review of the projects above, complete with summaries of lessons learned/best practice for each of the profiled projects. However, the review stops there – there is no clear application of these lessons to the MSP design or implementation process and so the reader is left to guess how these lessons and/or best practices influenced the project design. The project appears to have been inspired by IW:Learn as a model for a similar knowledge management initiative for LD. The evaluation finds that the project document's incorporation of lessons learned from other projects to be satisfactory but with much room for improvement. The significant amount of work done

to review other KM projects indicates a fair amount of thought was put into this and partially offsets the project document's lack of specifics in this regard.

88. Lessons learned were incorporated into the project's implementation in the sense that the project's primary reports and technical support elements incorporated experience worldwide into the body of the work and analysis presented within each report. For example, this is evidenced by most of the project's technical reports such as: "Indicator Use in Selected GEF SLM Projects" or "Project Indicator Profiles for the GEF Land Degradation Focal Area." In addition, the project's use early on of the Expert Advisor Group and its collaboration with other initiatives such as LADA also speaks to the project's intentional use and incorporation of experience worldwide.

89. Many of the project's intended outputs are directly relevant to replication. Examples of this include: the creation of a learning network; of model indicators to be used to influence the work of individual projects worldwide; the elaboration of an SLM training strategy; and the strengthening of GEF SLM project designs through impact analysis. The project document addresses this issue by putting it off to the future, essentially. The project design is based upon the assumption that multiple phases will be funded by the GEF. As the MSP states on page 25, "The work of KM:Land is expected to evolve as experience is gained during implementation of the initial phases." This is illustrated in the fact that Output 2.3 in the original MSP (later changed), was "A proposal for an Inter-Agency GEF-funded full-size project..."

D. Stakeholder Participation

90. Evidence points to a solid level of stakeholder participation and input in project formulation, particularly the LD-TF members comprised of the primary GEF Implementing Agencies and GEF Sec staff. The MSP's "Stakeholder Involvement" section on page 43 states that "The core stakeholders were also actively involved in the preparation of this project proposal, participating in two planning workshops, one in Rome in September 2005, and the other in Nairobi in October 2005." A high level of stakeholder engagement in project development is also evidenced by the composition of the original Inter-Agency Working Group for the MSP (GEF Sec, GEF STAP, UNDP, UNEP, WB, IFAD, FAO, AsDB, IADB and AfDB), acting as the MSP's Steering Committee.

91. Curiously, this robust level of IA engagement in the project development does not carry through in the MSP design itself. The project document does not include a stakeholder table with relevant roles and responsibilities or a stakeholder participation plan with anticipated roles and responsibilities summarized for each. The MSP provides a superficial overview of other stakeholders as reflected in this excerpt from the document:

The stakeholders in KM:Land are all the stakeholders for projects and programs supporting SLM. Key members of project implementation teams will be involved through participation initially in global workshops and other information exchange activities. These stakeholders will form the Learning Network that is the main output under Outcome 2 of this project. In addition, other stakeholders will be engaged as relevant, including eminent and international experts and NGOs (expert consultations), and governments, local stakeholders and project proponents (field testing of indicators).

92. The evaluation finds a stakeholder-relevant information in the MSP's "Institutional Coordination and Support" section. This section highlights the relevance to the project of different IA core programs, including those of the: UNDP, UNEP, AsDB, IFAD, FAO, IADB, and the World Bank. However, this discussion and the information provided in Annex 2 of the MSP summarizes facts about existing programs and does not go the next step with even a simple bullet-point vision for what roles and responsibilities key stakeholder organizations will undertake in order to implement this project successfully.

93. A clear and targeted stakeholder analysis is closely linked to a well elaborated baseline analysis (the GEF now calls this a “baseline project.”). The absence of this targeted stakeholder analysis is evidence of a weak baseline understanding and analysis in the project design. For example, the GEF Sec, an unidentified but key stakeholder and primary target of the project, is not profiled at all in the MSP document. The same is true for UNDP and its own emerging KM program at the time.

94. The MSP design lacks the essence of a typical stakeholder involvement strategy that summarizes anticipated roles and responsibilities. Nearly every project that GEF supports is designed to help people do something differently. If there is nothing wrong with what people are doing, then there is no need for the project. A quick review of some of the project’s outcomes yields simple but crucial questions related to stakeholder participation in project design. For example, with respect to Outcome 2, who (in terms of organizations) is going to utilize the “framework for knowledge management and capacity building for SLC”? With respect to Outcome 3, who is going to implement the “process ... to establish a monitoring and evaluation system that supports result based management for SLM projects”? These are questions that needed to be asked and clearly answered in the project design but were not. Project implementation suffered in part from this ambiguity as will be seen in the next section of the review.

95. Stakeholder participation in project formulation work is rated “Satisfactory.” Stakeholder participation as a concept that is incorporated into project design is rated as “Moderately Satisfactory – Unsatisfactory.”

E. UNDP Comparative Advantage

96. Was UNDP’s comparative advantage adequately considered in the project design? UNDP has developed and was managing the largest portfolio of GEF-funded LD projects at the time of this project design in 2005. The experience and capacity that this implies was a significant comparative advantage in developing and implementing this project. Interviews with key stakeholders point to this experience playing a key role in initiating the project idea and project document preparation. UNDP’s comparative advantage is also apparent in that it either led or co-led together with UNEP all five of the knowledge management projects summarized in the MSP’s Annex 2 (including IW:Learn). In addition, as summarized in the MSP under “Institutional Coordination and Support”, the project was relevant to UNDP’s knowledge services that it provided through two mechanisms: 1) thematically defined “knowledge networks” that functioned as global communities with a shared interest and professional focus, and 2) geographically organized “Sub-regional Resource Facilities” or SURFs.

97. However, this evaluation finds little evidence that the content of the project itself and its focus on strengthening knowledge management and impact drew upon this depth of experience within UNDP. Again, this speaks to the weakness in the stakeholder analysis and in the overall baseline program analysis in the project design.

98. The evaluation finds that UNDP’s experience in the LD and KM fields could have been more clearly and effectively considered in the design of a project like this. As pointed out above in “Section C: Lessons learned from other projects”, the prodoc left most of the details of what lessons learned would be considered by the project to the implementation phase rather than incorporating them into the design phase. One recommendation at the end this evaluation explores how UNDP might facilitate improved sharing and learning of lessons across its portfolios.

3.2. Project Implementation

A. The logical framework used during implementation as a management and M&E tool.

99. A project's Logical Framework indicators and targets are meant to guide the project's work planning and to play a central role in its adaptive management approach. The project revised the MSP document logical framework five times: In August 2007 (post inception meeting); in early 2009 after the adaptive management review; in July 2009 after the June 1-3 Steering Committee and EAG meeting at FAO HQ in Rome; in October 2009; and in February 2010. On its face, this is a surprising number of log frame revisions and raises questions about the effectiveness and efficiency of the project implementation process (as well as project design, addressed earlier).

100. Five log frame modifications in less than four years is not an indicator of adaptive management; rather it points more towards a project implementation process that was bordering on being *ad-hoc*. The value of a logical framework is two-fold: 1) it helps to strengthen, clarify, and specify project design during the project design process; and 2) it should serve as the unambiguous "definition of success" for each of the project's primary outcomes – thus the phrase "indicators of success." These indicators are supposed to be, at the end of the day, markers of how the project defines success and how this success will be measured by evaluations like this one. If a log-frame is to guide project implementation, it ideally should not be modified beyond the first year, typically not beyond the inception workshop. To change the goalposts continuously during "the game" (the project) undermines the value of the "end of game score."

101. The following excerpt from the 2011 PIR illustrates these moving goalposts:

Modifications to the LogFrame were made following the Adaptive Management Review in 2008. These changes emphasized the project's mandate to develop a set of global-level indicators for the purpose of GEF resource allocation and to develop a set of project-level indicators for the purpose of measuring impacts at the GEF project level. They also re-focused the project towards developing a set of guidance materials on the measurement and reporting of indicators. The changes also reflected the lesser degree to which the project will focus on knowledge management activities, including developing an initial Learning Network, reflecting the changing shifts within the GEF. The modifications also re-oriented the project's focus on M&E towards developing guidance on linking intervention logics with the development of the GEF tracking tool, in collaboration with the GEF Secretariat.

Following the SC meeting in June 2009, further modifications were suggested to the LogFrame and Workplan to account for the shifting strategic priorities within the GEF. Namely, it was suggested that the LogFrame be modified to include an additional output on the development of a set of intermediate core output/outcome indicators to link with the GEF tracking tool development; however, this was subsequently removed as it was considered outside of the project's remit, as noted in the AMR. The LogFrame and Workplan were also modified to accommodate the GEF Sec's request to link the work on intervention logics (impact pathways) with the RBM frameworks; however, these were also subsequently modified when the GEF indicated that they will not use the KM:Land project to inform the development of the RBM framework, as previously suggested. The LogFrame and Workplan were therefore modified again in October 2009 and early 2010 to reflect these shifts.

During 2010, consultations with UNDP clarified that the GEF Sec was currently re-thinking their policies on RBM, which may include a KM component. Given these strategic shifts within the GEF, UNDP advised that any discussion on KM would be impractical and inappropriate at this time; this also included the planning of any future follow-on phases of KM:Land, which UNDP advised would no longer take place. As such, UNDP indicated that it was not necessary for the project to further pursue the knowledge management and learning components of the project.

102. The evaluation considered potential positive elements of such a high number of log frame modifications. For example, perhaps these changes could indicate a project with strong adaptive management -- constantly tweaking, constantly updating. However, a review of the different versions of the log frame provided to this evaluation shows that the *outcome* indicators changed little if at all – it was the *output* indicators that were modified each time. This shows two things: First, a surprisingly low level of familiarity with the concept of "SMART" indicators; the outcome indicators needed to be modified because, as this evaluation elaborates earlier in Section A of Part 3.1, they were not

“SMART” indicators. Second, it illustrates that the project team¹⁰ did not take actions that reflected an understanding of the value of impact indicators and spent most of their adaptive management time making minor changes to output language rather than focusing on impact. In other words, the logical framework was not used by the project team (and particularly UNDP as the lead Implementing Agency) as the strategic adaptive management tool for which it was designed to be used.

103. Output oriented: In the four PIRs (2008 - 2011) reviewed by the evaluator the project reported progress (or lack thereof) against each outcome indicator. The evaluator finds little evidence that the outcome indicators of the logical framework were used during project implementation as a management and M&E tool, strategically adjusting its work priorities based upon which indicator seemed to be lagging. Because the outcome indicators were not “SMART” or impact oriented, they provided little strategic support or guidance to project implementation and it was not possible to report clearly and quantifiably against each indicator. The output indicators or targets were used as a point of reference during stakeholder meetings (“this is in the log frame/this is not in the log frame”) to try and keep the project implementation on the track as planned, but this was output oriented rather than strategic.

104. While the annual PIR process summarizes progress on the logical framework indicators, it reveals little in terms of whether and how the project’s work planning was results-based. Reporting of results by the project manager was linked to project indicators in the first two years, but it appears to be only a perfunctory link – not a deep and influential integration of indicator targets into work planning processes. Evidence for this assertion can be found across nearly every indicator. For example, in the 2008 PIR target value for Outcome 1 indicator was written as follows: “By year 2, 20% of projects submitted for approval under GEF-4 use indicators that build on the proposed indicator set for SLM (under GEF-5 this percentage should increase further).” This indicator, which is the only example of a truly SMART indicator in the project’s multiple versions of logical frameworks, was not carried forward into 2009 and beyond. The reasons for this could be many. For example, the delays associated with the AMR, may have affected the relevance this and other indicators. As another example, the evaluation finds little evidence of feedback and support from UNDP to the project management unit as to how to improve indicator quality and usefulness as a management and M&E tool. In conclusion, little attention was paid to strengthening and utilizing this or any outcome indicator as an effective management and M&E tool.

105. A review of eight revised work plans yields the following insight on the use of the logical framework as a management/M&E tool. None of the work plans are linked to outcome-level log frame indicators. Rather, they are linked clearly to the project outcomes and outputs themselves. The evaluation finds that while the work plans were helpful in planning work to be done and outputs to be generated, they were not helpful to the project team or the Steering Committee in keeping a clear eye on the overall objective and individual outcome-level “indicators of success.” This is likely both a cause and an effect of the “indicator neglect” described above.

106. The evaluation finds that this hampered the project’s ability to take a more results-based work planning approach – one that links project work to project results as reflected in the project’s results framework in a way that is clear and easily understandable. Based upon this analysis, combined with the findings in Part 3.1, Section A “Project Formulation – Analysis of Project Strategy, Logic and Indicators”, the evaluation finds M&E design at project start up to be Moderately Satisfactory. The basic M&E plan adheres to standard UNDP practice and is Satisfactory. However, the weak indicator link pushes down this M&E rating to “Moderately Satisfactory.”

¹⁰ The phrase “project team” is used by the evaluation to mean the Steering Committee and the Project Management Unit.

B. Effective partnerships arrangements established for implementation of the project with relevant stakeholders involved in country/region.

107. The project implementation unit had no formal partnership arrangements with any particular organization except UNOPS, which oversaw project finances and disbursements. The project was developed as an inter-agency project and collaboration was clearly envisioned by way of the LD Task Force (GEFSEC, UNDP, UNEP, WB, IFAD, FAO, AsDB, IADB and AfDB), which became the project's "Steering Committee". Also important to project implementation was the project's collaboration with GEF STAP and UNCCD. However, collaboration between and among any of these actors was never clearly specified as to how it would work and lacked specific drivers such as putting one agency in charge of one outcome and respective budget resources.

108. Despite this shortcoming, the project's implementation process did engage other initiatives and organizations in productive collaborative work. The Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands (LADA) project was co-implemented by FAO and UNEP and funded by GEF. This project's work closely complemented KM:Land's work and the KM:Land project benefited from ongoing, informal collaboration with LADA, which participated in and facilitated the project's work to elaborate new indicators and KM recommendations. The LADA and KM:Land project collaborated closely on indicator work as evidenced simply by the number of joint workshops organized at FAO's headquarters in Rome beginning in 2005 before the PDF-A and running all the way up to October 2010 near the project's end. Indeed, UNU-INWEH is mentioned as a project partner on LADA's website.

109. UNCCD is an important stakeholder in the project, its Global Mechanism and Committee on Science and Technology are described in the MSP document's stakeholder section. Beginning in 2008, UNCCD began to focus more upon developing its own indicators, and became more interested in the project's work. UNCCD was present at the workshop in Bonn in 2008 discussing both global and project indicators. Beginning in 2010, the KM:Land project and UNCCD began to communicate more intensively, with UNCCD inviting KM:Land to: present "Lessons from KM:Land initiative for UNCCD indicator methodologies" at a technical workshop on indicator refinement in December 2010; and to present the project's existing indicator work at the inception workshop for the UNCCD pilot impact indicator tracking exercise in June-July 2011 and participate in the conclusion workshop in October 2011. While this is not so much a partnership, it is evidence of good collaboration that may likely evolve into a productive partnership in future years.

110. The project's work to pilot indicators at the project level is another example of a productive partnership or collaboration. In the third year of the project's work, in a more innovative and less traditional effort to elicit more stakeholder engagement and feedback, the project conducted an indicator piloting process with SLM projects in four countries: Tajikistan, Namibia, Senegal, and the Dominican Republic. The effort marked the first time a project or agency reached out to SLM projects to assess the methods each project was using to report progress. The objective was to refine the project's indicator profiles and methods to be used to report progress from the project level. The project assessed the SMART attributes at the field level of its indicators as well as testing the draft methodological guidance materials. This pilot testing KM:Land global indicators and its close links with each one of the SLM projects produced one of the project's most useful outputs and results – knowledge and experience gained from understanding better the challenges and opportunities faced by individual projects in monitoring and measuring SLM progress.

111. The World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT) is a global network of Soil and Water Conservation (SWC) specialists, focusing on sustainable land management (SLM) and the prevention of land degradation. UNU-INWEH is listed on WOCAT's web site as a "Participating Institution" in the WOCAT network. WOCAT was consulted on indicator selection and elaboration with the project. Although this was a paid consulting relationship, the project's work likely benefited from being linked with the global network of WOCAT.

112. Ironically, the project implementation unit located in Hamilton, Ontario struggled to form effective lasting partnerships with what should have been key partner organizations such as UNDP and the GEF Secretariat and UNOPS. It is beyond the remit of this evaluation to endorse the reasons why or why not but it is reasonable to conclude that there are at least 3 key contributing factors:

1) Communication among the three entities suffered in part due to a high rate of staff turnover within all three entities. High staff turnover also contributed to reduced institutional memory about the project, which likely contributed to the delays experienced by the project. Four UNDP staff have been engaged in the project as lead or co-leads; The current staff person at the GEF Secretariat engaged in this project is the third GEF point person during the project's four years. During the same time period three project managers at UNU-INWEH came and went.

2) Project delays sapped momentum and weakened stakeholder interest. The project's originally envisioned short 2-year timeframe required a significant amount of intensity and momentum to implement all outcomes and outputs successfully. The project began with such momentum (note attendance records from the inception workshop and the first two expert advisory groups). The adaptive management review, commissioned in Jan 2008 on the assumption that it would require 2-3 months to complete, actually delayed the project by 9 months, during which time project work was put on hold. Indeed, the project's expert advisory group did not meet until June 2009, nearly 18 months after the Jan 2008 meeting when the AMR was approved. Indeed, at the June 2009 EAG meeting, experts voiced their frustration at having lost this momentum and connection with the project and decided their work was finished at this meeting. Evidence points to this 9-month delay costing the project valuable momentum and reduced relevance in the fast changing programmatic context of the GEF and GEF Implementing Agencies.

3) The project was never clearly and directly linked to UNDP's or GEF's knowledge management baseline in terms of how the project itself would modify that and how those respective baseline programs would incorporate the project's work in order to do things differently. This was more assumed than clearly stated -- as evidenced by the lack of SMART indicators and robust baseline analysis in this respect. These assumptions were strong and well understood initially by individuals. When those individuals left, the project was left with minimal design structure and integrity (SMART indicators, clear vision of who would do what, etc...) to support continuation of those assumptions.

113. In closing, the project created and strengthened some effective partnership arrangements with some relevant stakeholders, particularly for the purposes of generating specific outputs. These partnerships were central to the project's work. In addition, the project began to and is still forming a partnership with UNCCD to allow it to share its work under KM:Land. However, the project struggled with what should have been its core partnerships -- with the UNDP, the GEF Sec and other Implementing Agencies of the GEF. These partnerships, while central to this inter-agency, global project, were never clearly spelled out in the project document or subsequent documents and thus were "on-again/off-again" during project implementation. This hampered the project's effectiveness and efficiency as is discussed below in the respective sections.

C. Finance and Co-finance

114. This section of the evaluation provides the financial particulars of the project, including the extent of co-financing planned and realized. Project cost and funding data is presented, including annual expenditures.

115. The total GEF budget for this project is US\$952,550 (not counting the PDF-A). Table 3 below summarizes the project's budget¹¹ by Outcome as of September 2011. Not counting the 35,023 set aside for this Terminal Evaluation, the table below reflects total expenditures of \$917,527 -- a 96% disbursement rate. This will increase to 100% with the completion of this TE and final settling of project accounts.

Table 3. Project Budget and Expenditure Summary as of September 2011.

Budget KM:Land - FINAL (30 September 2011)									
GEF Outcome/Atlas Activity	Responsible Party (Implementing Agent)	Source of Funds			Total Funds transferred to UNOPS	UNOPS 6% fee	Total funds transferred to UNU (from UNOPS)	UNU 8% fee	Direct Expenditure by UNU
OUTCOME 1: Local and global level indicators demonstrate livelihood and environmental benefits derived from actions on combating desertification	UNOPS	GEF	71200	International Consultants	190,037	10,757	179,280	13,280	166,000
			71600	Travel	179,394	10,154	169,239	12,536	156,703
			72300	Supplies	49,799	2,819	46,980	3,480	43,500
			72400	Communications	4,980	282	4,698	348	4,350
			74200	Print Production	159,101	9,006	150,095	11,118	138,977
				sub-total:	583,310	33,018	550,292	40,762	509,530
OUTCOME 2: An expanded and coherent SLM portfolio is supported by a Learning Network linking SLM project stakeholders	UNOPS	GEF	71200	International Consultants	41,213	2,333	38,880	2,880	36,000
			71600	Travel	68,688	3,888	64,800	4,800	60,000
			72300	Supplies	10,189	577	9,612	712	8,900
			72400	Communications	5,724	324	5,400	400	5,000
			74200	Print Production	56,076	3,174	52,902	3,919	48,983
OUTCOME 3: A process is defined to establish a harmonized monitoring and evaluation system that supports adaptive and results-based management	UNOPS	GEF		sub-total:	181,889	10,296	171,594	12,711	158,883
			71200	International Consultants	19,258	1,090	18,168	1,346	16,822
			71600	Travel	14,827	839	13,988	1,036	12,952
			72400	Communications	7,876	446	7,430	550	6,880
OUTCOME 4: Monitoring, learning and evaluation	UNOPS	GEF		sub-total:	41,961	2,375	39,586	2,932	36,654
			71200	International Consultants (Final evaluation)	35,023	1,982	0	0	0
			71200	Locally recruited personnel	10,768	610	10,158	752	9,406
Project operational management	UNOPS	GEF	71200	International Consultants	45,792	2,592	43,200	3,200	40,000
			71600	Travel	28,620	1,620	27,000	2,000	25,000
			72100	Misc	2,290	130	2,160	160	2,000
			71300	Locally recruited personnel	22,896	1,296	21,600	1,600	20,000
				sub-total:	145,389	8,230	104,118	7,712	96,406
GRAND TOTAL					952,550	51,935	865,591	64,118	801,473

116. Table 3 above shows that the project disbursed the budget as planned by outcome. This can be seen by comparing the first figures column entitled "Total Funds Transferred to UNOPS" with the third figures column entitled "Total Funds Transferred to UNU-INWEH (from UNOPS)."

117. UNOPS (UN Office of Project Services) is the executing agency and was responsible for the project's finances. UNOPS sub-contracted UNU-INWEH, the pre-selected institution for implementing the project. The pre-selection was done by UNDP, together with other LD Focal Area partners as described in the "Management Arrangements" section of the PDF-A document and as specified in the MSP document (page 6). UNOPS signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with UNU-INWEH that specifies the duration of the agreement, specific financial disbursement procedures, and a payment schedule among other responsibilities and terms. The MSP document serves as the Terms of Reference for the MoA.

118. The financial monitoring mechanism and reporting schedule between UNU-INWEH and UNOPS is detailed in the original MoA between the two. In the original MoA, financial reporting was scheduled for every 3 months for the two-year project. Disbursements were tied to the submission of these quarterly financial reports. Disbursements to UNU-INWEH were to be made by UNOPS based upon approval of the submitted financial reports demonstrating that the funds were being spent according to the schedule of activities of the project work plan.

119. However, the project's 2-year work plan, upon which the first MoA was based, became irrelevant six months into project implementation with the commissioning of the adaptive

¹¹ The slightly modified version of the budget, which was done post-AMR.

management review (AMR) of the project. The change in schedule caused by the AMR precipitated the first Amendment to the MoA signed in April 2008 in order to revise the payment schedule to reflect the fact that all project activities were put on hold during the AMR and therefore no funds were being spent (since the payments were tied to the level of funds being spent).

120. Upon completion of the AMR in late 2008, a second Amendment to the MoA was required in order to detail the no-cost extension granted by the AMR and the new reporting schedule and payment disbursement schedule and extend the duration of the project beyond the June 2009 expiration date then still in effect under the original MoA. Amendment #1 expired on June 2009; Amendment #2 was not finalized for signature until April 2010. The subsequent financial reporting schedule was complicated by the 12-18 month delay in finalizing MoA Amendment #2.

121. Amendment #2 updated the financial reporting and disbursement schedule. MoA amendments continued three months later with Amendments #3 (July 2010), #4 (December 2010) and #5 (June 2011). With all of these interruptions and changes in the project's work, quarterly reporting was disrupted as the PMU awaited the finalization of the next amendment. By the end of the project, UNU-INWEH had submitted a total of four annual reports (PIR) and nine quarterly financial reports covering a period of 48 months. Indeed, this works out to nearly semi-annual reporting.

122. This evaluation finds the disbursement and expenditure reporting and progress monitoring mechanism as planned in the original MoA between UNOPS and UNU-INWEH to be in line with standard UNDP and UNOPS procedures. Amidst the frequent and sometimes confusing project work planning and timeframe changes, appropriate due diligence seems to have been applied in managing the project's finances with one exception: the fact that Amendment #2 to the MoA required 12 months to complete (a one page simple amendment) is astounding and cause for concern and mention in this evaluation.

123. The evaluation considered why at least 12 months passed before the second amendment was signed. The evaluation concludes this was caused in part by the turnover of staff at UNOPS during this period and to a lesser degree at the project management unit¹². But this does not explain such a lengthy delay. The PM at UNU-INWEH changed once and the UNOPS point person also changed during this period, likely causing 1-2 months of delay as each new person came up to speed on his or her portfolio of work. There was also some difficulty with the PIR finalization in 2009 that led to some delays in considering the Amendment #2. However, Amendment #2 was to be drafted based on the updated, post-AMR logframe and work plan being submitted to UNDP and UNOPS, both of which were submitted by the end of 2008. The 2009 PIR should not have been a factor in determining whether the Amendment was prepared. But again, this was unlikely to be the primary cause of such delay. The evaluation is left to surmise that the primary cause of the delay was ineffective communication among UNDP, UNU-INWEH and UNOPS. UNOPS would not have been able to amend the MoA without proper authority from UNDP. UNDP would not give such authority to UNOPS unless it was satisfied with the state of work at UNU-INWEH, which required effective communication between UNU-INWEH and UNDP.

124. This system of financial control and reporting in theory allowed for project management to make informed decisions regarding the budget on an ongoing basis and for the proper and timely flow of funds, and for the payment of satisfactory project deliverables. However, when the project was knocked off of its original 2-year time frame and work plan, the subsequent five amendments to the original MoA created delay and confusion, given the time required to agree on how to amend the MoA and sign the amendment.

125. Under the "Atlas" financial system used by UNOPS each project is an individual entity, which allows the tracking of funds separately for each project. There is no audit report for this project

¹² Email correspondence from this period shows that the Amendment was chased up several times by UNU-INWEH with both UNOPS and UNDP.

because no independent audit was conducted of this project's finances. No UNOPS audit was done because there was no budget for an audit included in the MSP document. Under the MoA, UNOPS required UNU-INWEH to keep clear and accurate records regarding the receipt and expenditure of funds. UNOPS stated to this evaluation that UNU-INWEH kept clear, accurate and complete records of funds received and spent under this agreement. Indeed, the MSP document includes no separate specification of auditing requirements except for one bullet point on page 8 of the MSP document. UNU-INWEH also did not conduct a separate audit of the use and management of funds under this project. These funds were managed by UNU-INWEH's finance department and were audited as part of UNU-INWEH's normal auditing procedure for all of UNU-INWEH's finances.

126. **Co-funding:** Table 4 below shows planned and actual co-financing commitments. Two co-funders confirmed their original figures through requests for written confirmation of co-funding expended. One confirmed a lower level of co-funding. One was not possible to secure confirmation from. Total co-funding for the project as included in the project document (revised at project inception) was US\$180,000. Additional co-funding leveraged over the course of the project's extended implementation period is US\$151,799 for a total co-funding level of \$296,799. Actual co-financing increased, largely because the project's lifespan ended up being twice as long as planned: 4 years instead of two. For example, UNU-INWEH's in-kind co-funding increased from \$50,000 to US\$230,000 in the form of in-kind time spent on the project by the UNU-INWEH Director, the UNU-INWEH Assistant Director, and travel by non-core staff members engaged in KM:Land work. However, some committed co-financing did not materialize or was not confirmed for this evaluation, including \$28,201 from IFAD and \$35,000 from UNEP.

127. IFAD and UNEP were originally members of the project's IAWG. After the ARM, the role of the IAWG as the Steering Committee was ended at the end of 2008 and these agencies' roles somewhat diminished in the project. This may explain the reduced co-funding from IFAD. The mixed picture presented by increased co-financing from UNU-INWEH and reduced or static co-financing from other agencies likely captures the varied levels of commitment to project implementation. In addition, the reporting done through the PIR/APR process did not provide any additional information regarding co-funding: in 2010 it was un-confirmed and in 2011 it was not reported. The information in the table below was gathered directly from the agencies themselves by the evaluation. The evaluation finds that there was sufficient clarity in the reported co-financing to substantiate in-kind and cash co-financing from all sources. The total rate of co-financing disbursement as of Nov 2011 was more than 87% greater than that of the total originally planned co-funding level included in the project document.

Table 4: Status of Agency Co-financing Contributions to Project.

Type of Partner or Contributor	Name of co-funder	Amount committed in project document	Amounts committed during implementation	Total confirmed disbursement by end of project
Cash Co-financing				
GEF Implementing Agency	UNDP	\$10,000	0	\$10,000
In-Kind Co-financing				
GEF Implementing Agency	UNDP	\$50,000	6,943.90	\$56,944
	UNEP	35,000	0	\$35,000
	IFAD	35,000	(\$28,201)	\$6,799
	UNU-INWEH	\$50,000	\$180,000	\$230,000
Total Co-financing at Project End		\$180,000	\$158,743	\$338,743

128. The evaluator finds the timeliness and efficiency of the project's financial planning and management efforts to be Moderately Satisfactory. The project budget underwent five no-cost extensions, with the second one requiring approximately 12 months to finalize. This number of no-cost extensions and the amount of work and time required to secure each new amendment to the MoA reduced project timeliness and efficiency.

129. The UNU-INWEH/UNOPS financial monitoring mechanism used by this project did support a dynamic management effort. The evidence points to stakeholders continually seeing the need for and attempting to up-date the project's financial disbursement schedule. This is not by itself automatically a good thing, but it does demonstrate a laudable attention to detail. However, The 12-month delay in finalizing amendment #2 to the MoA and the fact that the final amendment to the MoA was signed on the very last day of the project also speaks to a low level of effectiveness in communication regarding financing up to the very end of the project. The evaluation finds the project's financial management and planning to be "Moderately Satisfactory."

130. **Cost effectiveness:** With respect to cost effectiveness the project complied with the incremental cost concept and mandate of the GEF. The evaluation finds, that as indicated in the prodoc, GEF funds were used to finance additional activities that would not have taken place without GEF funding. The project funded some "firsts" with respect to contributing to the evolution of effective SLM project impact measurement and project design going forward. These include the piloting of project-level indicators for SLM and the production of practical "how to" guidelines for preparing and reporting SLM indicators. The project also secured co-funding and associated funding to complement GEF's incremental funding, as discussed above.

131. Project stakeholders, particularly UNU-INWEH, provided more project support than was envisioned in the prodoc, at no extra cost as evidenced simply by the five no-cost extensions to the project timeline. As a result, UNU-INWEH hosted the project for two years longer than originally planned, and more than quadrupled its originally intended level of co-financing.

132. The MSP document cited three important factors that would ensure cost effectiveness. The table below summarizes each and assesses their relevance now at project end.

Factors cited in MSP that would ensure cost-effectiveness.	Findings of evaluation.
Whereas most other focal areas have not established a learning process at the outset, KM: Land will provide the scientific-technical basis for selecting GEF-specific indicators at the project and portfolio-levels and establish a comprehensive programme promoting learning and adaptive management in the GEF LD focal area. This will contribute to ensure that cost effectiveness of the GEF portfolio as a whole is maximized.	<p>This is a difficult cause and effect relationship for the evaluation to assess or determine. The project did generate scientifically supported GEF-specific indicators at the project and portfolio levels. It was not the only actor that did this, with LADA and GEF-STAP also generating information and cited by GEF in its description of the Global Benefits Index for LD, which informed GEF-5 STAR allocations. The project did not establish a comprehensive programme promoting learning and adaptive management in the LD Focal Area. This was essentially cancelled in the last year of project operations. The project did develop a pilot website, despite the outcome being cancelled.</p> <p><i>Finding:</i> the project did contribute to the evolution of GEF specific indicators, the use of which in current LD projects has likely improved their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness.</p>
The multi-agency participation in KM:Land ensures cross-agency learning, and cost effectiveness in progress towards establishing a portfolio-wide monitoring system and promoting adaptive management in the portfolio.	<p>The project did not measure or monitor cross agency learning as such and so it is difficult for this evaluation to assess. However the project did result in some agency learning, based upon feedback obtained from stakeholder interviews. The project's "<i>Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally-relevant SLM Impact Indicators...</i>" are the first such guidelines of their kind for LD projects and could very well result in a portfolio wide system of improved preparation and reporting on SLM impact indicators.</p>

	<i>Finding:</i> the project's work contributed to some agency learning and to the evolution of a portfolio wide impact indicator and monitoring system. If the project's <i>Guidelines</i> do contribute to the improved preparation of and monitoring of impact indicators of current and future LD projects, then GEF's relatively modest investment into this project will have been quite cost-effective.
The project's phased approach allows adaptive management of the KM: Land process and therefore greater ability to adjust the project design during the 8-year process.	The project's phased approach did not come to fruition. This was cancelled. <i>Finding:</i> the phased approach did not contribute to the cost-effectiveness of the project.

133. **In conclusion:** The project faced many challenges in implementing its planned activities and outputs as evidenced by its no-cost budget extensions. Although the project time frame was extended, the costs did not increase. In the end, the project disbursed the budget as planned by outcome and output, maintaining the project outputs in relation to its inputs and costs. Even though in the end the project's work was stopped on Outcomes 2 and 3, the project produced the main outputs under each – the learning network proposal, the web-based learning platform, and the Recommendations for impact pathways. The question of the impact of these outputs will be discussed under the “Results” section of this report.

The project did contribute to the evolution of GEF specific indicators, the use of which in current LD projects has likely improved their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness. The project's work contributed the evolution of a future portfolio wide impact indicator and monitoring system. If the project's *Guidelines* do contribute to the improved preparation of and monitoring of impact indicators of current and future LD projects, then GEF's relatively modest investment into this project will have been quite cost-effective. Given the above considerations, the evaluations rates cost effectiveness “Satisfactory.”

A. M&E activities used for adaptive management.

134. Applying adaptive management involves changing project approaches and methods in response to new or different information obtained through day-to-day monitoring of project experience. The MSP called for UNDP to monitor the project's performance using three tools: quarterly reports or meetings, the annual work plan, and annual Project Implementation Reviews (PIR). Table 5 summarizes the reporting requirements of the project.

Table 5: Reporting tools of the project:

Type of Report	Provide the necessary information for monitoring?
Project inception report	One-time report. Provides a basis for solid launching of the project and as a reference for monitoring and evaluation.
Quarterly reports and/or meetings	Called for in the MSP document but not used until 2010.
Annual work plan	Important daily/monthly monitoring tool. Project work plans lacked a link to the project's indicators of success at the critical objective and outcome levels.
Project Implementation Review (Annual)	UNDP's premier annual monitoring tool. In this four-year project, four were produced, but inadequate indicators reduced its usefulness to monitoring in support of adaptive management during the project. Also, the fact that this was the primary means of monitoring what was supposed to be a two-year project is inappropriate.
Quarterly financial reports; UNU-INWEH/UNOPS	The quarterly financial reports confirm that funds are or are not being spent as planned. In the absence of quarterly progress updates, the qualitative aspects of the reporting would be missing.
Terminal Report	Completed by the Terminal Evaluation; Focuses on lessons learned, Impact, Targeted Recommendations.

Quarterly Reports from the PMU to UNDP:

135. The project document, in the M&E Annex, calls for "Short reports outlining main updates in project progress will be provided quarterly to UNDP/GEF by the project team." The first work plan produced by the project at project inception calls for quarterly meetings between the project and UNDP instead of quarterly reports, but these meetings were never actually scheduled and never occurred. Up to January 2010 (2.5 years into the project implementation) this evaluation finds no evidence that quarterly reporting occurred between the project team and UNDP – either written or verbal. Instead the project relied upon the annual reports and communication via email. UNDP beginning in Jan 2010 required brief, quarterly narrative progress reports. In all, a total of five were submitted. This was a much-needed shift to improve UNDP's monitoring of this project's work in the last year of the project's implementation.

136. Overall, this evidence points to the a low-frequency of monitoring of the project's work in part because the standard UNDP quarterly reporting tool was not used by the project for the first 2.5 years to facilitate and document the communication among the project team and UNDP and UNOPS and the project team, among the project team and the SC members and to document the project's work. The evaluation finds the reliance of the project on annual reports to be inadequate to support proactive M&E for a two-year or even a four-year project.

137. *Project Implementation Review (PIR):* The main reporting mechanism for the project was the annual PIR, submitted by UNU-INWEH annually to UNDP. The project produced four PIR reports covering the four years of the project duration (2008 -2011). The PIR is meant to be an important tool to help projects apply a results-based management approach to implementation. Ideally, it is as much of a monitoring process as it is a reporting document. For example, the PIR requires project teams to report on progress vis-à-vis the project's logical framework indicators and report against larger impact targets for GEF's overall strategic priorities.

138. The PIR reports produced are of satisfactory quality, sufficient level of detail. The responses in the PIR are written taking into account the project's non-SMART objective and outcome-level log frame indicators. For example, the reporting did try to answer questions on how the project is "enhancing knowledge" and "enhancing capacity" – but these leave ample room for interpretation. Given that there is ample evidence of the project modifying work plans eight times and amended the UNU-INWEH UNOPS MoA five times and enacted five budget extensions, the evaluation might expect stakeholders to have updated the non-SMART objective and outcome-level indicators as part of this PIR process. The evaluation finds no evidence that this occurred.

139. The evaluation finds that the PIR reports focused more on activities and outputs and less on questions such as "Are we achieving our objectives? Are we meeting our indicators?" The evaluation

finds this to be a result of how the log frame was written and it illustrates again the importance of the log frame to effective reporting and communication. This lack of regular, effective communication between the project and UNDP and the lack of a strategic perspective are two important weaknesses in the overall monitoring and oversight of the project.

140. Clearly there was a lot of “monitoring” and “responding” to the changing dynamic of LD program development in the greater GEF arena, given the revised the project work plans and log frames, and amended MoA and no-cost budget extensions. Does this mean that the project practiced effective monitoring and adaptive management? Or is it evidence more of a reactive, *ad-hoc* approach? The evaluation considered this question carefully.

141. The evaluation considered the steps UNDP and the SC took to manage the project in adaptive manner, including: 1) The adaptive management review (AMR); and 2) the steps taken by UNDP beginning in 2010 to consolidate the project’s results up to that point and bring the project to a close.

142. The evaluation considered the AMR in some detail. The evaluation searched for a clear rationale on record justifying the AMR, but was unable to find one apart from the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the AMR. The ToR for the AMR raise central issues that are not addressed directly and clearly by the AMR report. For example, the ToR justify the AMR by stating that two GEF Council decisions had been approved since the project document was written that needed to be taken into account by the project going forward: “*Focal Area Strategies and Strategic Programming for GEF-4*” (GEF/C.31/10) and “*Results-based management framework*” (GEF/C.31/11). The AMR report does not directly address either one of these in a way that is obvious to this evaluation. Curiously, the AMR does little to help address the project’s log frame indicator weaknesses already discussed by this evaluation.

143. There is evidence of an *ad-hoc* approach with this AMR: it was conducted only 6 months into the project’s original two-year lifespan. It was not planned in the project document – indeed a mid-term evaluation was ruled out in the MSP due to the short duration of the project. The modest overall changes made to the project’s structure by the AMR can be seen in the Table 6 below in the form of the blue shaded boxes under Column 2. A comparison between Column 2 and Column 1 illustrates the modifications made to the project structure in response to the AMR. Outcome 1 was changed the most, Output 1.2 was split into two outputs – one for global and one for project level indicators. Output 1.4 was added “Practical framework for measuring and reporting project impact indicators.” Output 3.1 was changed from a tracking tool to “Guidance for linking intervention logic for GEF projects to project impact indicators.” The AMR was intended to last 2-3 months but delayed the project by a total of nine months. The results of the AMR as evidenced by the official management response (12/12/2008) to the AMR do not seem to have been worth a nine-month delay. For example, some of the more useful inputs from the AMR cited in the management response are relevant to what was supposed to be the next phase of the project, not this first phase.

144. The evaluation delved further to find other evidence of adaptive or reactive management. Table 6 below illustrates the changes made to the project’s outcomes and outputs across its four-year lifespan. Throughout the table, the shaded boxes or highlighted text indicate modified outputs as compared to the previous column. The red text in Column 4 indicates stopped or cancelled outputs.

Table 6: Outcomes-Outputs evolution across the project’s lifespan.

Column 1. Inception Workshop Revised Version of the Log Frame – July 2007.	Column 2. Post AMR – December 2008 – Revised Project Structure in response to the AMR.
Outcome 1: Global and local level indicators demonstrate livelihood and environmental benefits derived from actions on combating land degradation.	Outcome 1: Indicators demonstrate livelihood and environmental benefits derived from actions on combating land degradation.
Output 1.1: Selection Criteria for Indicators.	Output 1.1: Selection Criteria for Indicators.
Output 1.2: Set of selected indicators	Output 1.2: Set of Global Level Indicators for Investment

	Decisions by GEF
Output 1.3: Guidance materials on standards for measuring and reporting on these indicators.	Output 1.3: Set of project level indicators for impact assessment
Output 1.4: Guidance disseminated to all stakeholders.	Output 1.4: Practical framework for conducting the measurement and reporting of project impact indicators.
Output 1.5: Measures for review and update of indicators and guidance.	Output 1.5: Guidance materials on standards for measuring and reporting on these indicators.
	Output 1.6: Measures for review and update of indicators and guidance.
Outcome 2: A framework for knowledge management and capacity building for SLM is in place.	Outcome 2: A framework for knowledge management and capacity building for SLM is in place.
Output 2.1: Initial Learning network and planning of future activities.	Output 2.1: Initial Learning network and planning of future activities.
Output 2.2: Synthesis of lessons on SLM.	Output 2.2: Design for synthesis of lessons on SLM.
Outcome 3: A process is defined to establish a harmonized monitoring and evaluation system that supports results-based management for SLM projects.	Outcome 3: A process is defined to establish a monitoring and evaluation system that supports results-based management for SLM projects.
Output 3.1: Consensus reached on a tracking tool that supports adaptive and result based management for SLM.	Output 3.1: Guidance for linking intervention logics for GEF projects to project impact indicators (in collaboration with GEF Sec).
Output 3.2: Outline for development of a harmonized monitoring and evaluation system.	
Outcome 4: Adaptive management and lessons learned.	Outcome 4: Adaptive management and lessons learned.
Output 4.1: Evaluation of MSP and adaptations to project design as a result of M&E.	Output 4.1: Evaluation of MSP and adaptations to project design as a result of M&E.
Output 4.2: Efficient delivery of MSP.	Output 4.2: Efficient delivery of MSP.

Column 3. July 8 2009	Column 4. February 2, 2010 Final Modification of Log Frame
Outcome 1: Indicators demonstrate livelihood and environmental benefits derived from actions on combating land degradation.	Outcome 1: Indicators demonstrate livelihood and environmental benefits derived from actions on combating land degradation.
Output 1.1: Selection Criteria for Indicators.	Output 1.1: Selection Criteria for Indicators.
Output 1.2: Set of Global Level Indicators for Investment Decisions by GEF	Output 1.2: Set of Global Level Indicators for Investment Decisions by GEF
Output 1.3: Set of project level indicators for impact assessment of the GEF Land Degradation Focal Area.	Output 1.3: Set of project level indicators for impact assessment of the GEF Land Degradation Focal Area.
Output 1.4: Practical framework for conducting the measurement and reporting of project impact indicators.	Output 1.4: Practical framework for conducting the measurement and reporting of project impact indicators.
Output 1.5: Guidance materials on standards for measuring and reporting on project impact indicators.	Output 1.5: Guidance materials for measuring and reporting on project impact indicators.
Output 1.6: Set of intermediate project level indicators to assess progress towards achieving core outputs of the LD FA strategy.	Output 1.6: Measures for review and update of indicators and guidance materials.
Outcome 2: A framework for knowledge management and capacity building for SLM.	Outcome 2: A framework for knowledge management and capacity building for SLM.
Output 2.1: Initial Learning network and planning of future activities.	Output 2.1: Initial Learning network and planning of future activities.
Output 2.2: Consultation to assess capacity building needs for knowledge management.	Output 2.2: Consultation to assess capacity building needs for knowledge management.
Outcome 3: A process is defined to establish a monitoring and evaluation system that supports results-based management for SLM projects.	Outcome 3: A process is defined to establish a monitoring and evaluation system that supports results-based management for SLM projects.
Output 3.1: Guidance for linking intervention logics for GEF projects to project impact indicators (in collaboration with GEF Sec).	Output 3.1 Guidance for linking intervention logic for GEF projects to project impact indicators.
Outcome 4: Adaptive management and lessons learned.	Outcome 4: Adaptive management and lessons learned.
Output 4.1: Adaptation of project design in order to meet changing requirements of GEF	Output 4.1: Adaptation of project design in order to meet changing requirements of GEF
Output 4.2: Identification of future needs	Output 4.2 Identification of future needs (gap analysis)

145. As can be seen from Table 6 above in Columns 3 and 4, changes to the project's outcomes/outputs continued after the AMR inspired changes (Column 2) up to February 2010. Output 1.6 was changed in July 2009 and then changed back in February 2010. Also in July 2009, Outputs 2.2 and 4.1 were modified. The evaluation highlights the wording of the revised Output 4.1 (*Adaptation of project design in order to meet changing requirements of GEF*) as it is unusual and highlights the struggles the project had in finding a solid basis upon which to implement its work. It is the first time this evaluator has seen an output that focuses on adapting the design of the project. Less than one year later, in February 2010 the UNDP cancelled all of Outcomes 2 and 3, and Output 4.2 (as indicated by red text) in order to consolidate project gains and bring the project to a close.

146. Overall, given the evidence above, the evaluation finds that the project's M&E resulted more in ad-hoc than adaptive management. The project reacted to changes in GEF programs announced at one meeting or another without the foundation or the anchor that is provided by a robust project design and a robust logical framework and with little to no advance notice or documentation to enable a more proactive, adaptive management approach. As Table 6 illustrates, the project faced regularly moving goalposts in the form of modified outputs and outcomes, some of which were subsequently reversed or cancelled. The steps taken in the final modification of the log frame (February 2010) to cancel whole outputs and outcomes, while tough, were likely necessary and likely resulted in the project being able to focus on producing what resulted in its one of its most important and lasting output: the "Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally –relevant SLM Impact Indicators for Project-level Monitoring." Ironically, this was one of the original, unchanged outputs under Outcome 1. This action saved the project from what would have been a clear "Unsatisfactory" rating. Instead, the evaluation rates M&E plan implementation "*Moderately Satisfactory*."

Execution modalities/Implementation and management by UNDP country office/Coordination

147. Under this section, the evaluation assesses and rates the quality of Implementing Agency (UNDP) execution. UNDP executed this project under UNDP's "Direct Execution" modality executed through UNOPS by way of a MoA with UNU-INWEH. To begin this assessment, the evaluation considers whether there was an appropriate focus on results by UNDP.

148. IA & EA supervision: An Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) served as the steering committee of the project and primary project coordination and oversight body of the project. The IAWG was comprised of Members of the LD Task Force (GEFSEC, GEF STAP, UNDP, UNEP, WB, IFAD, FAO, AsDB, IADB and AfDB). The MSP Prodoc, does not specify the key roles and responsibilities of the SC, although the PMU provided a set of ToR to IAWG members at the IWAG meeting in Iceland in 2007. The ToR distributed to the IAWG members called for the following:

- Review the progress of the MSP to ensure conformity with GEF and Agency strategies and priorities, review annual progress reports and project impacts;
- Enhance inter-agency cooperation and coordination;
- Advise on inter-linkages with the CCD and other conventions;
- Advise on new developments and new opportunities for synergies between the MSP and ongoing Agency projects and programs related to indicator development and knowledge management.

149. Normally, SC roles and responsibilities include: overseeing project implementation; (iii) approving any major changes in project plans. The MSP document called for the IAWG to meet semi-annually. This was done during the first 18 months of the project when the project IAWG met three times. However in 2009 and 2010, the SC met only once each year, after UNDP advised that it could only attend one SC meeting per year for an MSP. Through the minutes of the 2nd and 3rd IAWG meetings, the evaluation finds the IAWG to have fulfilled some of these anticipated roles. In the 3rd Meeting of the Inter-Agency Working Group in Bonn Germany in January 2008, the IAWG members took the decision that, "a forward-looking evaluation of the KM:Land initiative was needed in order for the project to reflect the changing context within the GEF Secretariat. As a result, a formal

revision of the MSP's logical framework may be needed. Related components of the project's scheduled activities will therefore be put on hold until the forward-looking evaluation is completed." The report from the same Bonn meeting also provides evidence of concern early on that members were not fulfilling other important roles, such as providing linkages to their own knowledge management and indicator development programs. For example, the Report highlights "The importance of a stronger involvement of the M&E unit of the GEF, and possibly the M&E units of other partner agencies, the LD TF, and the UNCCD Secretariat and the UNCCD CST was emphasized."

150. The MSP also established a "Tripartite Review Committee" (TPRC). Comprised of UNU-INWEH, UNOPS and UNDP (and any other donor providing support to the project), the TPRC was tasked with monitoring the execution of the project and with meeting formally once/year to review project execution and the TPR report. The only record this evaluation has seen of a TPRC meeting is one held on October 31, 2008 -- 14 months after project inception and just at the end of the AMR process¹³. Organizations present were UNDP, UNU-INWEH and UNOPS. The minutes of the meeting demonstrate responsiveness to the AMR process on the part of UNDP and UNOPS. The meeting largely focused upon what kind of modifications to the MoA would be needed to respond to the AMR adequately. The minutes show that the project's PIR reporting requirements were discussed, a clear supervision requirement. The future terminal evaluation, still more than 14 months away at that time (and 3 years away in reality) was discussed prematurely it seems, given the challenges then facing the project. The evaluation finds that this speaks to the level of ownership and engagement by UNDP and UNOPS in the project at that time. A revised logical framework is attached to the minutes, indicating some attention to results, albeit with the weaknesses profiled in this report above (lack of impactful, SMART outcome indicators). The TPRC concludes with agreement to hold the next TPRC in October 2009. The evaluation finds no evidence that this or any other TPRC meeting was held during the remainder of the project. Stakeholder input informs the evaluation that the TPRC was folded into the SC for the last two annual SC meetings.

151. As the IA, one of UNDP's primary roles was to supervise project implementation using different reporting tools, namely quarterly reports from the project team and by overseeing the annual PIR finalization process. The Principle Policy Advisor (PPA) for LD Focal Area played this role initially from UNDP-HQ in New York, including frequent and informal interactions with the project team in Hamilton, Ontario (same time zone as New York). Turnover in this position in late 2007 resulted in the new PPA being based in Bangkok, which hampered communication simply by virtue of the increased time difference, among other factors.

152. UNDP took on a significant management challenge with this project for the simple reason that UNDP has no presence in Hamilton, Ontario where the PMU (UNU-INWEH) was located and indeed no presence in Canada at all. This is likely an important lesson learned for this project – the challenge of managing a global project not based in any country or city where UNDP has a presence. This created a fair amount of distance between UNDP and the project – a distance that could be bridged by a staff member instrumental in conceiving the project (the first UNDP PPA) but a distance that became more difficult to bridge with staff turnover and passing time.

153. UNDP ensured that the project adhered to most of the PIR reporting requirements in the M&E plan and that satisfactory PIR were prepared and submitted. The evaluation finds the PIR to be of satisfactory quality in the documents themselves. The evaluation finds that more attention could be paid to the process aspect of the PIR tool – the process of filling in the forms every year could be a more useful adaptive management/learning exercise. Feedback to this evaluation stated that the PIR process was seen more as a "chore" than a valuable opportunity to reflect and adaptively manage. As highlighted above, in the discussion of M&E activities, quarterly reports were not required by UNDP until January 2010 to facilitate effective communication between the project team and UNDP. The

¹³ There was a TPRC meeting held on 29 June, 2007 when the MoA was signed. However, there is no report from that meeting. Email correspondence exists that such a meeting took place.

evaluation also finds that the project would have benefited from more frequent succinct progress reporting and communication between the PMU and UNDP. An informal survey of PMU members during this evaluation rated the communication effectiveness of UNOPS “2” and UNDP a “3” on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest. To be sure, this was an informal survey but it is cited here to illustrate that clearly there was room for improvement.

154. Although the MSP document had no analysis of risks, the evaluation does find evidence in the PIR of attempts by the project/UNDP to manage risk. The 2009 and 2010 PIR reports define the primary critical strategic risk facing the project as: “Changing priorities of the GEF with regard to the Land Degradation Focal Area” (PIR 2009) and “Ongoing strategic development within the GEF-5” (PIR 2010). The 2009 PIR provides evidence of the project seeking to address and mitigate this risk by identifying opportunities for collaboration between the project and GEF. The result was that the project made “minor modifications in the formulation of outcomes (actually outputs) for clarification as agreed upon during the Steering Committee meeting in June 2009.” Risk management is ideally something that is integrated into the project’s implementation and review work alongside the monitoring of SMART and impactful indicators of success. These minor changes, which can be seen in this evaluation’s analysis of changes as reflected in Table 6 above, had a modest effect on helping to improve the project’s level of success in the end, largely because they were tinkering with minor outputs, rather than strategic outcome-level impacts. The evaluation finds that IAWG tried to address this strategic risk in January of 2008 when it called for the formal review of the project (the Adaptive Management Review). However, the AMR (and UNDP as the lead agency) missed this opportunity to dramatically improve the project’s logical framework, making only minor modifications highlighted in Table 6.

155. In a factual sense, project implementation proceeded according to standard UNDP policy. But the evaluation finds that UNDP struggled to facilitate coordination in the programmatically dynamic context during the first two years. Project assurance should include a healthy level of attention to strategic-level project implementation issues, particularly helping to ensure that the project team first has achievable and realistic (SMART) indicators to guide their work and second, ensuring that the project team maintains a rigorous link to those indicators in their work planning and reporting, and maintaining clear and open lines of communication to facilitate project assurance. This did not happen in this project, rendering a key tool to support of the project’s implementation and management less useful.

156. In closing, evidence discussed in this section (the project’s struggles with risk management; the fledgling TPRC process that never quite took flight; the quarterly reporting requirement that was not applied until January 2010, and the missed opportunity to significantly strengthen the project’s logical framework through the AMR process) and earlier sections of this report point to UNDP implementation that faced significant challenges. The evaluation finds that UNDP’s project assurance performance in this multi-faceted role varied, starting strongly, with semi-annual steering committee meetings, and slowing significantly in 2009 and 2010, with only one SC meeting in each year and strengthening again from early 2010 through the end of the project. The evaluation finds UNDP and UNOPS to be responsive in some cases and in others (UNOPS’ 18th month delay to finalize the MoA Amendment #2) non-responsive.

157. The evaluation rates both UNDP Implementing Agency and UNOPS Execution Agency execution as: “Moderately Satisfactory.”

3.3. Project Results

A. Attainment of objectives

158. Beginning first with the objective level and then the four project outcomes, the narrative below assesses the project's progress towards results. This assessment of progress towards results is based on a comparison of the project document's original indicators and targets and the current status of these indicators and targets now, at the end of project implementation. The project struggled with poorly elaborated Objective and Outcome indicators – particularly the indicator targets for end of project. Of the five indicator targets, none were considered “SMART” by this evaluation (see Part 3.1). This presented a challenge for the evaluation, as some of the most important pieces of evidence for “results” – the indicator target achievement levels – were not available for use.

159. Therefore, the evaluation elaborated supplementary evidence of results at the Outcome level from the project's list of outputs under each Outcome, presented in Part F of Section 3.3, rating the impact of each Outcome's outputs as “Outcomes and Changed Practices” (OCP) on a simplified “Highly Significant – Significant-Not Significant” scale.

Summary Progress Towards Results Rating (elaborated in detail below):

Objective:	Both indicator targets were achieved, resulting in a rating of:	S
Outcome 1:	The indicator target was achieved for a cumulative <i>Satisfactory</i> rating The “Significant” OCP rating reinforces the rating of:	S
Outcome 2:	This outcome had no indicator target and the OCP rating of “insignificant” (trending towards significant) reinforces a rating of:	MU
Outcome 3:	The indicator target was not produced, and the output that was produced Instead had little impact with an OCP rating of “Insignificant”:	U
Outcome 4:	No indicators and no target values for this outcome:	U/A
The Overall Progress Towards Results Rating for the Project is:		MS

Progress toward results at the objective level:

Project *goal*: To contribute to enhancing ecosystem integrity, stability, functions and services through GEF-supported land degradation mitigation activities.

Project *objective*: “To establish the conditions which will support the application of knowledge management principles to support coherent strategy and direction”

The project aimed to achieve its objective through the realization of four outcomes.

160. The significance to this evaluation of the logical hierarchy of “project goal” and “project objective” is the following. The project is supposed to *contribute* to the achievement of the project goal, but is not held responsible for this because it should be a larger, broader goal that no single project can accomplish alone. The project is supposed to be held *accountable* for achieving the project objective, which should be phrased in such a way as to enable the project to achieve it.

161. Table 7a examines the objective level indicators of the project. The logic behind these indicators is the following. They are supposed to be written in such a way as to “indicate” achievement of the objective in a neutral, verifiable manner.

Table 7a: Summary of the end of project status of Objective-level logical framework indicator target excerpted from project logical framework (last version).

Description of Objective Indicators	Baseline Level	Target for end of project	Level at end of project	Rating ¹⁴
Contribution of knowledge to project design and FA strategy	- Documented lessons from LD projects not available for use in design of new projects.	- By the end of the project, documented lessons are available from the project website for use in the development of new projects.	- Achieved in the form of <i>Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally-relevant SLM Impact Indicators for Project-level Monitoring (GPR-GSLMII-PM)</i> and reports (e.g. pilot testing report) available on multiple websites (UNDP, UNU-INWEH, GEF).	S
	- No GEF-5 strategy	- GEF-5 strategy informed by project	- GEF-5 project strategy is informed by project – global indicators included in LD FA strategy.	MS

162. With respect to Objective Indicator #1, the indicator is of poor quality and definitely not SMART. The target value is fairly specific, but not impactful: “lessons are available on the website” is not objective-level indicator target material. However, the evaluation must work with what is written. The project has achieved the first target above as written, by way of its “Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally Relevant SLM Impact Indicators for Project-level Monitoring” and the other list of reports and outputs that are available on the project’s website. In addition, the *GPR-GSLMII-PM* are available on several other websites (also discussed below under impact). For Indicator target #1, the evaluation rates this indicator target: **Satisfactory** or **S** rating.

163. With respect to Objective Indicator #2, the target value of “GEF-5 strategy informed by project” is very general, limiting its usefulness as a target. The sole purpose of an indicator and its target is to avoid wishy-washy, subjective language such as “GEF-5 strategy informed by project.” What does this mean? How is the evaluation to assess this in a clear and unambiguous way? To be sure the GEF-5 strategy does include SLM indicators that are the same or very close to the same as the SLM indicators elaborated by this project. The evaluation sought out evidence through stakeholder interviews as to whether it was this project that provided those indicators or other initiatives such as GEF-STAP, the Technical Advisory Group for GEF-LD focal area, LADA, and so on. The consensus opinion among stakeholders was that the project’s global indicator work did inform the GEF-5 strategy document. Stakeholders also agreed that KM:Land was not the only project or initiative that provided input to the GEF-5 strategy for LD.

164. For the actual accomplishment of helping to further the evolution and improvement SLM indicators, the evaluation rates Objective Indicator Target #2: **Moderately Satisfactory** or **MS**. Had the indicator and target been more robust and SMART and measured by the project more clearly and quantitatively, the rating would very likely be higher.

Progress towards results at the outcome level:

165. Moving from the objective to the outcome level, the evaluation assesses progress towards results under each of the project’s four outcomes. Although mentioned above, it bears repeating here. The evaluation sought first to assess progress toward results by comparing the level of achievement of each indicator at the end of the project to the target levels. Because some of the indicator targets are difficult to assess, the evaluation elaborated supplementary evidence of progress toward results from the project’s outputs under each Outcome, presented in Part F of Section 3.3. In Section 3.3, the

¹⁴ HS: Highly Satisfactory; S: Satisfactory; MS: Marginally Satisfactory; MU: Marginally Unsatisfactory; U: Unsatisfactory; HU: Highly Unsatisfactory; U/A: Unable to assess; NA: Not applicable.

evaluation asks of each primary output – “What have stakeholders done or are planning to do with this output? What has been the impact?” Based upon best professional judgment, the evaluator rated the impact of each Outcome’s outputs (as a group) as “Outcomes and Changed Practices” (OCP) on a simplified “Highly Significant – Significant - Not Significant” scale.

Outcome 1: Indicators demonstrate global environmental and livelihood-related impact derived from actions on combating land degradation

166. Table 7b below summarizes the status of indicator targets for Outcome 1.

Table 7b: Excerpt from project logical framework (last version): a summary of the end of project status of logical framework indicator targets for Outcome 1.

Description of Outcome 1 Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Level at end of project	Rating
1a) Enhanced capacity to measure impacts at project level	Preliminary global and project indicators are not integrated with one another or connected to learning processes within the wider community	Projects submitted for approval under GEF-5 use indicators that build on the proposed indicator set for SLM	- Some of the project’s proposed project-level indicators have been included in GEF-5 LD FA strategy. - GPR-GII-PM Publication distributed worldwide by UNDP. - Global indicators may have informed the Global Benefits Index for LD used by GEF’s STAR.	MS
1b) Informed allocation of resources at portfolio level				HS
				U/A

167. Outcome 1 logframe indicators focus on enhanced capacity and improved allocation of LD portfolio resources. The target for Indicators 1a and 1b is not SMART and is not customized for each indicator, pertaining more to 1a than 1b. With respect to 1a and whether the project was able to reach this target, the evaluation sought evidence that projects submitted for approval under GEF used “indicators that build on the proposed indicator set for SLM”. Unfortunately, the indicator and target wording are vague and the project did not measure this in any way and so the evaluation was unable to assess the status of this target, apart from interviews with stakeholders and by reasonably assessing the probability of the GPR-GII-PM influencing project development under GEF-5. UNDP and others are distributing the guidelines worldwide and have been for many months now. It is likely that the GPR-GII-PM are helping projects to be submitted under GEF-5 to use improved indicators. The evaluation finds it reasonable to rate project’s achievement of indicator 1a as a “**Satisfactory**” or **S**.

168. With respect to Indicator 1b there is no specific target for this indicator and it is vague and non-specific – not SMART (*e.g.* whose portfolio? What resources?). The evaluation was left to simply ask, “Did the project’s work inform the “allocation of resources at portfolio level”?”

169. The project did not measure whether Indicator 1b was achieved or not or to what extent it was achieved (*i.e.* how did it inform resource allocation¹⁵). The PIR report from 2011 states that the project’s “global indicators will have a strong link to the STAR.” But these are unsubstantiated claims that this evaluation is unable to base its ratings upon. One stakeholder mentioned to this evaluator that the project’s global indicators were used to inform the development of Global Benefits Index-LD for GEF’s System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR), adopted by GEF in 2010. If this was the case and could be verified, then the project would have achieved this indicator even though there

¹⁵ Note: the evaluation is informed by the PMU of verbal confirmation from GEF from several years ago and the availability of un-edited notes confirm the achievement of this indicator. However, the evaluation finds this to be an inadequate “means of verification” upon which to base a results rating. Documented results in the PIR and actual project monitoring reports are examples of adequate means of verification.

was no target value. After some searching and questioning of stakeholders, the evaluation was able to find evidence that the LADA project informed this index, but not this project. In summary, because Indicator 1b does not have a target value and no means of verification were provided to the evaluator, this evaluation was unable to assess whether the project achieved Indicator 1b. Rating: **Unable to Assess** or **U/A**.

170. The evaluation sought additional dimension and supplemental evidence for progress towards results under “Section 3.3, Part F: Impact” below, where the outputs from each outcome are evaluated for their outcomes and impact. The most impactful output under Outcome 1, is the project’s “Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally relevant SLM Impact Indicators for Project level Monitoring” (GPR-GII-PM), published in 2011, which are in fact being actively distributed by UNDP to project development teams and country offices worldwide and by UNU-INWEH at international workshops and meetings such as the UNCCD COP10, and so there is a reasonably good chance that an increasing number of projects submitted for approval under GEF-5 will utilize the work conducted by this project on SLM indicators. The rating of OCP rating for Outcome 1 is: **Significant or S.**

171. In conclusion for Outcome 1, the evaluation rated Indicator 1a result Moderately Satisfactory and Indicator 1b result Unable to Assess. The evaluation considered these two, combined with the supplementary OCP rating of “Significant.” By combining the S and the U/A with the Significant, the evaluation is able to give an overall **Satisfactory** or **S** rating for “Results” under Outcome 1.

Outcome 2: A framework for Knowledge Management and Capacity Building for SLM.

172. Table 7c below summarizes the status of indicator targets for Outcome 2.

Table 7c: Excerpt from project logical framework: a summary of the end of project status of logical framework indicator targets for Outcome 2.

Description of Outcome 2 Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Level at end of project	Rating
Enhanced capacity of GEF agencies to manage knowledge	No baseline included	- No target included -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project produced a proposal for a Learning Network for the GEF LD FA – proposal never adopted Project developed a pilot website Project input incorporated into PMAT, which could help GEF in future to consolidate knowledge on LD portfolio. 	MU U/A

173. The indicator target for Outcome 2 does not allow this evaluation to quantify success – to rate success in a clear, measurable way. There is no target value enunciated. With respect to the indicator wording itself, again it is vague and ambiguous. It is not SMART. “Enhanced capacity” could be the result of a new computer or an elaborate organization-wide training program or any number of other things. Indicators like this need to go further to the heart of the matter – how has capacity been enhanced? What indicates this enhanced capacity, such as tracking tool scores or “before and after” tests given to training participants? However, the project did do work to try to achieve this vague indicator. It produced a proposal for Learning Network for the GEF LD FA and a pilot “Learning Network” website, but these were never adopted by GEF or any GEF agency. Both outputs were developed to help GEF agencies enhance capacity. Both are still available for adoption. The project input may have been incorporated into PMAT, but the evaluation was unable to verify this and thus the evaluation cannot take this into account under the rating.

174. The vague nature of this indicator, the lack of a specific indicator target and the lack of evidence of adoption or uptake of the project's work, makes the evaluation's rating task difficult. Under Section 3.3 Part F below, the Rating of the OCP for Outcome 2 is: "Insignificant" trending towards "Significant." This means that the evaluation recognizes that one or both of these outputs may be adopted in the future by one or more GEF agencies or partners. Given that the two outputs under this outcome represent solid work that was intended to "enhance capacity," but tempered by the serious problems with the lack of specific indicator targets, the evaluation rates this indicator "**Moderately Unsatisfactory**" or MU.

175. Combined, the two ratings of "MU" and "Insignificant trending towards Significant" mean the MU rating remains unchanged.

Outcome 3: A process is defined to establish a monitoring and evaluation system that supports result based management for SLM projects.

Table 7d: Summary of the end of project status of Outcome 3 logical framework indicator targets excerpted from project logical framework.

Description of Outcome 3 Indicators	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Level at end of project	Rating
Enhanced capacity for result based management of SLM projects	No outline	By the end of the project, an outline for a tracking tool to be implemented during the follow-on project has been developed	Report produced on enhanced framework for enhanced SLM impact pathways analysis.	U

176. Table 7d above summarizes the status of indicator targets for Outcome 3. The wording of the Indicator for Outcome 3 above is vague and ambiguous – not SMART. The target value is much better with a time-element and more specific wording but it is not impactful, calling for an "outline for a tracking tool." No tracking tool was developed by the project. As reflected in Table 6 above, this output of the project was modified in 2008. Instead the project produced a report entitled: "Impact Pathways Analysis: A Framework for Enhanced Sustainable Land Management Project Design." The report has not been adopted by the GEF, UNDP or any GEF Agency. The project's document "Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally-relevant Impact Indicators for Project-level Monitoring" (GPR-GII-PM) is likely the most relevant product to this indicator, particularly since UNDP has adopted it by way of posting it on its website and distributing it to project teams worldwide, but this has already been considered under Outcome 1. Project input may have been incorporated into GEF's tracking tool (PMAT) for LD, which could help GEF in future to consolidate knowledge on LD portfolio, but this was not verifiable by the evaluation and so cannot be considered here.

177. Given the target value as written above, the target was not produced. The OCP rating under this Outcome under Section 3.3 Part F below is "Insignificant, resulting in the rating for this Outcome 3 indicator being: "**Unsatisfactory**" or "U." This rating does not reflect badly on the efforts of the PMU, but simply is one of the casualties of the "shifting goalposts" that the PMU struggled to deal with throughout the project's lifespan, as summarized in Table 6 above.

Outcome 4: Adaptive Management and lessons learnt.**Table 7e:** Summary of the end of project status of Outcome 4 logical framework indicator targets excerpted from project logical framework.

Description of Outcome 3 Indicators	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Level at end of project	Rating
Implementation of improvements of the MSP	No baseline provided.	No target value provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 unplanned 9-month adaptive management review. • 4 revised LogFrames • 8 revised work plans • 5 MoA amendments and no-cost budget extensions. 	U/A

178. Table 7e above summarizes the status of indicator targets for Outcome 4.

179. Outcome 4 seems to add little to the project's logical structure. As analyzed in Table 2a of this evaluation, the indicator is the least SMART ("specific, measurable, attributable, realistic and time-bound") of all the project's indicators. It is actually an activity, rather than an indicator. There is no baseline value or target value provided for this very non-SMART indicator. This fact combined with the fact that the indicator is an activity, leads the evaluation to find it impossible to assess the status of this indicator. The evaluation offers some quantification for "level at end of project" in Table 7e above but these really have no meaning apart from illustrating the level of near continuous change this project experienced. This is rated **Unable to Assess** or **U/A**.

B. Stakeholder Ownership and Mainstreaming.

180. An important result for UNDP projects financed by the GEF is that they are seen to address country priorities. For most UNDP projects, this is made manifest by the extent of national government involvement. In these projects, it is important for the evaluation to find evidence that the project fits within stated sector development priorities of a country. In this case, the KM:Land project was a global project working at the strategic level of GEF's larger program, focusing on the GEF Sec and the Agencies represented in the LD Task Force, which became the project's Inter-Agency Working Group. Consequently, the evaluation sought evidence in the MSP document and the project's record of meetings and outputs that the project fit within the stated priorities of these respective agencies. The evaluation also sought evidence of GEF and GEF agency involvement in this project and uptake of this project's work.

181. To assess this fully, the evaluation considered key elements of stakeholder ownership up front at the project's beginning. The MSP document addressed this in some detail under the "Institutional Coordination and Support" section. These elements of effective stakeholder ownership are addressed in the following table:

Elements:	Elements as indicated in the MSP document
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the project concept have its origin within the agency plans and/or programs? 	<p>Project's links with IAWG's Core Programs:</p> <p>GEF – GEF Council requests GEF Sec to improve the results-based elements of its work.</p> <p>UNDP – Project linked with two mechanisms of "knowledge services" offered by UNDP: thematic "knowledge networks" and geographically organized sub-regional resource facilities (SURFs)</p> <p>UNEP – Important links to its assessment programme on natural ecosystem/land</p>

	<p>resources in partnership with other agencies (FAO, UNDP WB) and related to projects LADA, GLCN, etc.</p> <p>AsDB: Transfer of knowledge an essential element of ADB's mandate.</p> <p>IFAD: New Evaluation Policy and the Framework for Results and Impact Management System (RIMS) to improve accountability and learning.</p> <p>FAO – relevant to substantial and varied work across its relevant programs (forest, agriculture, fisheries, biodiversity and genetic resources).</p> <p>World Bank: results agenda seeks to improve delivery management, operational quality and aid effectiveness.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were relevant stakeholder representatives actively involved in project identification, planning. 	<p>PDF-A proposal highlights significant involvement of the LD Task Force comprised of representatives of UNDP, UNEP, WB, FAO, IFAD, AsDB, IADB, AfDB. Interestingly enough, although GEF Sec is mentioned throughout most of the MSP document, GEF Sec is not listed as a stakeholder in either the MSP or the PDF-A. LD Task force meetings were held prior to the beginning of this project to discuss the project.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders have approved policies and/or program frameworks in line with the project's objectives. 	<p>The documentation provides little evidence of this. The MSP's "Country Driven-ness" section describes in general terms how the project seeks to strengthen the "capacity for adaptive management of SLM initiatives" and states that the "primary target beneficiaries of the project are initiatives responding to country-driven identification of priority actions to combat LD, this project will address those demands."</p> <p>Missing from the MSP is any discussion of how it relates to UNDP's or GEF's longer term strategies and immediate programs related to knowledge management and improvement of adaptive management for SLM initiatives, M&E programs, and so on. The evaluation finds this to be a critical gap or weakness in the project, which underlies many of the problems with drift and changing goal posts that the project experienced during its implementation.</p>

182. Drawing conclusions from the table above, the evaluation finds that the MSP concept did have its origin in relevant agency plans and programs and priorities. However, crucially, the MSP did not go further than this initial analysis and really identify the key elements of one or more organization's baseline (now called the "baseline project") that the project would seek to complement or modify. Stakeholder feedback to this evaluation indicates that perhaps this was not even possible to do at the time, with the significant program changes beginning at the GEF. This is likely fairly close to the mark. However there were other baseline programs with which the project could have also been aligned more closely, for example UNDP's knowledge management services, but was not.

183. The table below analyzes evidence of stakeholder ownership throughout project implementation period.

Questions	Evidence of Stakeholder Ownership Post-project
Were the relevant representatives from the agencies involved in project implementation, including as part of the project steering committee?	<p>The project was designed to be an inter-agency initiative. This is evident in the composition of the Inter-Agency Working Group, which acted as the Steering Committee, and was essentially the Land Degradation Task Force for the GEF.</p> <p>This multi-agency involvement in project implementation started strongly at the Inception Workshop in July 2007 with six agencies attending in person or by teleconference (UNDP, the GEF Secretariat, STAP, and World Bank attending in person & UNEP and IADB joining via teleconference). Six months later in Bonn, Jan 2008, participation was still high with 6 agencies attending (GEF Sec, UNDP, World Bank, UNEP, and FAO).</p> <p>One year into the project's work, as the minutes of the October 2008 meeting in Washington DC note, the size of the steering committee was considerably reduced, comprising only of UNDP, UNU-INWEH and GEF-STAP. The multi-agency character of the project was diminished. GEF Sec was an "observer" to this slimmed down SC and the GEF Sec became the "interface" between the MSP and the LD Task Force.</p>

	<p>Ownership of the project was centered on the LD-TF, consisting of representatives of all the GEF agencies. UNDP, on behalf of the Task Force, took on the lead IA role for the project. However, when the LD-TF personalities changed, through permanent moves or simply because different people attended different meetings, ownership was diluted. The level of ownership was also diluted because there were no clear specific responsibilities given to the different agencies within the LD-TF with respect to this project's work in the form of budgeted activities and outputs.</p>
Evidence of other project collaboration with relevant organizations in the sector?	<p>There is evidence of solid collaboration by the project with other agencies and projects in the relevant sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Inception Workshop in July 2007 identified 10 projects (UNEP, UNDP, World Bank, ADB and UNEP/FAO) whose managers would comprise a working group that would take part in the project's first Expert Workshop. <p>Other good examples of this include FAO/UNEP through the LADA project and the UNCCD as a result of its then increasing interest in elaborating its own indicators for LD/SLM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project interacted formally with FAO/UNEP-LADA beginning even before the project officially started with organization of two planning workshops in Rome at FAO and continued through the project, with several meetings organized in Rome at the FAO offices, including the final SC meeting held in FAO-Rome in October 2010. - The UNCCD became more and more active in the project, inviting the team to share the project's work and findings on indicators and piloting of indicators with UNCCD stakeholders (see impact section below). - Although it was as paid consulting form of collaboration, the project collaborated with WOCAT and CIESIN, both institutions whose work and names appear in LD and SLM documents and studies frequently.
Has the project's work been mainstreamed into existing stakeholder practices & and or programs	<p>Under Section 3.3.A above the evaluation finds that it is likely the project "informed" the elaboration and finalization of the GEF-5's LD Strategy Indicators fairly early on in the project.</p> <p>Towards the end of the project, UNDP adopted the project's "Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally-relevant SLM Impact Indicators for Project-level Monitoring, posting it on the UNDP-GEF website (http://www.undp.org/biodiversity) and is circulating the guidelines to project teams and country offices worldwide. It is also being distributed to UNCCD and its stakeholders through workshops and meetings such as the COP. Given this fact, it is reasonable for the evaluation to conclude that the Guidelines will be "mainstreamed" into project designs as well.</p>

184. **Gender issues:** Gender issues are receiving increased, specific attention across UNDP's network and within GEF. This project was elaborated before gender issues began to receive more attention and consequently, gender issues were not integrated into or emphasized in the project's design, the project's indicator work. Efforts were made by the project team to include the gender aspect into the project's work on LD/SLM indicators.

D. Sustainability (and replication approach)

185. This evaluation considers the risks that are likely to affect the continuation of project outcomes post-project. The GEF Guidelines establish four areas for considering risks to sustainability: Financial, Socio-economic, Institutional/governance, and Environmental. Each one is evaluated separately and then rated on the likelihood and extent that risks will impede sustainability.

186. **Financial risks:** This project's unique global/strategic focus puts this question in a different light than a "traditional" project working in a certain sector or place in one or more countries. Overall,

on a strategic level, this evaluation sees few financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of what this project helped to push forward: improved knowledge management, improved monitoring and measurement of SLM success (reduced land degradation) and improved impact assessment. This is because clearly the momentum of international development assistance is moving more and more towards results-oriented investments. This is highly unlikely to change and thus there will be more and more financing going towards the ongoing improvement of knowledge management and monitoring and measuring of success (or lack thereof).

187. This is evidenced most immediately by the UNCCD's encouraging moves to build upon this and other initiatives' work as they elaborate their own national indicators for Parties to the CCD to report against. In addition, the fact that the project implementation unit was hosted by UNU-INWEH, which has an independent source of financing for its operations, makes it likely that the project's work and some of the as yet to be adopted elements of it (the Learning Network web-based platform) will eventually find a home or a means of support moving forward.

188. One financial risk does challenge the sustainability of using indicators to demonstrate LD impact: cost. The resource requirements for tracking indicators are a key concern for project teams and agency partners (Report on Pilot Testing Global Indicators, p. 79). While the project's work did not offer any easy solutions to this challenge, the project's work does contribute to enabling project teams to design data collection in a proactive and strategic way, which will be critical to ensuring value for money. Given these considerations above, this evaluation ranks financial sustainability "Highly Likely".¹⁶

189. **Socio-economic risks:** Social and political risks that may threaten the sustainability of project outcomes. There is moderate risk for instance 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. For example, there is the risk that LD indicators will simply be too expensive to monitor, too difficult to target the socio-economic effects of LD, and/or just too difficult to show impact from an LD project, hampering improved KM in LD initiatives. However, this project's work helped to reduce this risk, particularly the project's work to pilot the indicators at the project level in four different countries. Stakeholder feedback highlighted this work as one of the most useful outcomes of the project. In addition, for the reasons enunciated under the financial risk section above, this evaluation finds socio-economic risk to be low. Instead the socio-economic pressures facing the world today will likely result in even more demand for improved effectiveness and efficiency of international development investments, and this bodes well for ongoing investment in knowledge management.

190. The evaluation ranks socio-economic risk to sustainability as negligible and socio-economic sustainability as "**Likely**."

191. **Institutional framework and governance risks:** Do the programmatic frameworks, policies, and governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project benefits?

192. This project did not do an institutional scorecard assessment to show improvement over the baseline levels of institutional capacity. As a result, this evaluation is unable to point to any kind of

¹⁶ Ratings for Sustainability are based upon the following:

- **Likely (L):** negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes expected to continue into the foreseeable future.
- **Moderately Likely (ML):** moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained.
- **Moderately Unlikely (MU):** substantial risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on.
- **Unlikely (U):** severe risk that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained.
- **Highly Unlikely (HU):** expectation that **few** if any outputs/activities will continue after project closure.
- Not Applicable (N/A)
- Unable to Assess (U/A)

quantitative evidence of a positive trend of reduced institutional and governance risk to the sustainability of improved KM and improved measuring of impacts from SLM.

193. There are institutional and governance risks to sustainability of some of the project's work to be sure. For example, the learning network (LN) has yet to be adopted by any organization and there is the risk that it will languish as a website in limbo until it becomes irrelevant. This risk is mitigated somewhat by the fact that the LN is kept by UNU-INWEH, which has resources of its own and ongoing programs and contacts with many organizations who are likely hosts or partners in launching the LN in the future (UNCCD, FAO, UNDP, etc.).

194. In addition, at least two key elements products of the project's work have likely helped to strengthen some important elements that are critical to the long-term sustainability of an emerging global LD/SLM system for monitoring. Those are: 1) the project's input on global indicator profiles near the beginning of the project that contributed the GEF-5's discussions on programmatic indicators and; 2) the *Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally-relevant SLM Impact Indicators for Project-level Monitoring* generated by the project towards the end of its life.

195. The project's work on indicators as well as piloting that work with real projects on the ground was new and different. The fact that UNCCD has consulted and drawn upon this work in its efforts to pilot its own indicators to improve the ability of the Parties to the UNCCD to report on LD and SLM in their countries increases the likelihood of institutional and governance sustainability going forward. These guidelines, perhaps more than anything else the project has put forward will contribute to a strengthened framework for LD monitoring will be a critical for enhanced sustainability going forward.

196. Given this evidence of emerging sustainability, the evaluation ranks programmatic and institutional risk as moderate and the likelihood of programmatic and institutional sustainability as "**Likely**."

197. **Environmental risks:** Climate change poses perhaps the most significant environmental risk to SLM, but the risk varies geographically: in some places, CC may help to improve land condition; in others, it will likely worsen it. The project's work sought to help stakeholders think more clearly about how to measure SLM impact and thus improve the project's focus and attention on the local environmental and human factors that may reduce this impact. In this way, the project's work will help project teams to better define success for their SLM efforts, measure its impacts, and better focus on addressing factors that threaten that success. This will only help stakeholders to reduce environmental risks affecting SLM outcomes. (Rating on Environmental Sustainability: **Likely**)

E. Catalytic Role.

198. Demonstration. The project's demonstration work was originally planned to focus on designing and piloting a "Learning Network." This Outcome however, was ultimately stopped (See Table 6). However, the most important "demonstration" of the project involved its work piloting impact indicators at the project level in four countries.

199. The project's work to pilot the global/project level indicators had a catalytic effect on stakeholders' views of indicators and more importantly of the ability of LD projects to target, monitor and deliver SLM benefits. The piloting of indicators and the results included in the report on the piloting of indicators provided some newfound confidence to some stakeholders. As one stakeholder put it: "*the project's work to pilot project-level SLM indicators gave me confidence that our projects could actually demonstrate impact in the LD area.*"

200. Replication and Scaling Up. An important element of the project's catalytic role is the potential replication effects of the project's work. The potential for replication and scaling up of the project's

work is strong. For evidence to support this assertion, the evaluation once again points to distribution of the Guidelines globally by UNDP. If the work done by this project on the GPR-GII-PM is foundational for replication and scaling up of improved indicator use across more LD projects, then this will contribute significantly to the project's overall sustainability and impact.

201. As for the prototype Learning Network web-based platform, the UNU-INWEH has held consultations with DesertNet International, UNCCD and the European Science Foundation regarding their possible use of the Learning Network. UNDP has indicated an interest in discussing how the Learning Network might complement their KM work. And UNU-INWEH holds open the possibility of operationalizing the Learning Network platform in-house. This is all to say the catalytic role of the project's work on the Learning Network web platform is still unfolding and remains to be seen.

202. This evaluation finds it difficult to measure the increased capacity for scaling up since the project did not incorporate the means to measure improved knowledge or familiarity with key concepts as part of its M&E program. Based upon the input provided to this evaluator by a range of stakeholders, the project may well have created new "kernels of capacity" or "seeds of change" that, with the right follow on work will enable stakeholders to scale-up.

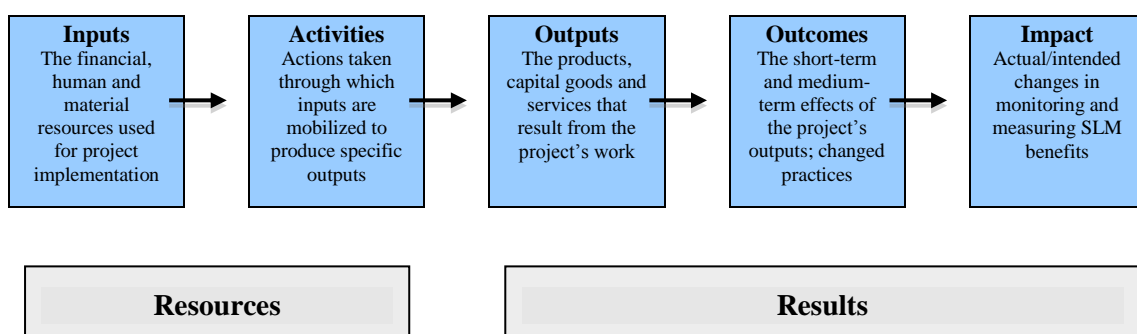
F. Impact: Transforming Resources into Results.

203. This section of the evaluation seeks to explore the question of impact more fully with an examination of how the project transformed resources into results apart from the indicators analyzed above in Part A of Section 3.3. The evaluation elaborated this to generate additional evidence of progress towards results and to provide the reader with as complete of a picture as possible of the project's accomplishments.

204. This evaluation sought evidence of impact with respect to these "things" – these outputs produced as part of the project's work under each outcome. The evaluation asked the simple questions: "What did stakeholders *do* with these documents? Were they simply put on the shelf or were specific and significant actions taken with them and in response to their recommendations?" The answers vary with each product and varying levels of impact were achieved with the project's outputs. The evidence points to a relatively low level of impact derived by the project and its stakeholders from most of the project's technical outputs. A small number of outputs did result in out-size impact and this is the project's most impressive result.

205. Figure 2 illustrates the RBM chain, beginning with inputs on the left and ending with impact on the far right. The project's work seems to have rarely stopped at the activity stage (organizing activities for activities' sake), but went further to producing quality outputs, outcomes, and ultimately, impact. The second column in the table below Figure 2 seeks to summarize this information for each output.

Figure 2. The Results-based Management (RBM) results chain



206. The project's effectiveness in translating project inputs, activities and outputs into outcomes and in some cases impact varied considerably. Tables 8, 9 and 10 and accompanying narrative below seek to summarize this. Note that only what the evaluation deemed to be the primary outputs are listed below. The project produced other reports and documents, but these were deemed to be more support documentation, not final products for use by key stakeholders.

Table 8: Outputs generated under Outcome 1 (Indicators demonstrate global environmental and livelihood-related impact derived from actions on combating land degradation) **and their related impact.**

Primary Outputs Available on Project Website	Impact – what did stakeholders DO with the output?
1. Global Indicator Profiles for the GEF LD Focal Area	Uncertain. Unable to Assess. Likely informed the GEF-5 LD Strategy Indicator Choices.
2. Project Indicator Profiles for the GEF Land Degradation Focal Area	<p>Was also one of the primary outputs available from the project website, as these formed the basis for the pilot testing exercise and the guidelines.</p> <p>UNCCD consulted this body of work during their impact indicators refinement process, as clearly indicated in UNCCD's White Paper entitled <i>Scientific review of the UNCCD provisionally accepted set of impact indicators to measure the implementation of strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3</i> (B. Orr, February 4, 2011). The report acknowledges UNU-INWEH staff for their contributions and, in paragraph 14 clearly states that it "makes use of the relevant work of several parallel, synergistic activities" including "indicator development work of ... the GEF-UNDP KM:Land "Ensuring Impacts from SLM - Development of a Global Indicator System" medium scale project (MSP)."</p>
3. Report on Pilot Testing KM:Land Global Indicators of Impacts from Sustainable Land Management	<p>Significant. UNCCD reviewed it and asked KM:Land staff to share lessons learned with its own indicator pilot testing initiative.</p> <p>UNCCD's "PRAIS Briefing Document" cites KM:Land project as a contribution to this effort to develop a better reporting system from countries to the UNCCD.</p> <p>UNDP found it to be very informative and enlightening about the prospects for projects to demonstrate SLM impact.</p>
4. Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally-relevant SLM Indicators for Project-level Monitoring	<p>UNDP has put it on its own website and distributed it by email to country offices and project teams worldwide.</p> <p>www.undp/gef.org/biodiversity</p> <p>EU Project "DESIRE", a scientific research project designed to elaborate new ways to use and protect degraded lands. DESIRE references KM:Land project's guidelines and provides a link to them on its website:</p> <p>http://www.desire-project.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=203&Itemid=1</p>

207. Considering the evidence above of impact achieved by stakeholders, the OCP rating (outcomes and changes practices) under Outcome 1 is: **Significant**¹⁷.

¹⁷ Rating of impact is done on a simple scale of:

HS: Highly Significant – Output has been used by stakeholders to build capacity or adopted as official policy;

S: Significant: Has been useful to stakeholders/produced by stakeholders but not yet officially adopted;

Table 9: Outputs generated under Outcome 2 (A framework for Knowledge Management and Capacity Building for SLM) **and their related impact.**

Primary Outputs/Documents	Impact – what was done with these?
5. A Proposal for a Learning Network for the GEF LD Focal Area	None. The proposal was not adopted or incorporated into any existing KM program in the GEF arena.
6. KM:Land Learning Network Website http://comap.ca/kmland/	None yet, reasonably good potential. No agency or organization has taken this up to date. It is in the public domain, however and UNU-INWEH is seeking partners for its operation. Discussions are ongoing with a range of institutions and impact remains to be seen.

208. While the both outputs under this Outcome have not yet been adopted, stakeholders have reviewed them, including the UNDP. A significant amount of work was dedicated to designing and populating the website with materials and in making it operational. One can go to the site now and create an account, download many tens of documents and so on. It is ready to become operational immediately. In the final SC meeting in Rome October 2010, UNDP stated that it was willing to enter into discussions with UNU-INWEH regarding the possible future use of all or part of the KM:Land Learning Network website. But this is potential. As indicated in the replication discussion above, there are also other organizations with which UNU-INWEH has had discussions regarding the Learning Network. Considering the evidence of impact achieved by stakeholders, the OCP rating (outcomes and changes practices) under Outcome 2 is: **Insignificant** with the opportunity to become **Significant**.

Table 10: Output generated under Outcome 3 (A process is defined to establish a monitoring and evaluation system that supports result based management for SLM projects) **and its related impact.**

Primary Output/Document	Impact – what was done with these?
7. Impact Pathways Analysis: A Framework for Enhanced Sustainable Land Management Project Design	None. The evaluation finds no evidence of impact from this report.

209. Considering the lack of any evidence of impact achieved by stakeholders using this output, the OCP rating (outcomes and changes practices) under Outcome 3 is: **Insignificant** or I.

I: Insignificant: Was produced by the project as an informational report with no specific actions taken in response (shelved)

NA: Not applicable.

4. Lessons Learned and Recommendations

A. Lessons Learned

1. UNDP could improve its project assurance support in facilitating the RBM of future project teams.

This project holds a lesson in this respect. None of the project's outcome indicators were SMART and/or found to be useful to inform adaptive management. UNDP needs to be sure that project results indicator targets are clear to all within the management team to facilitate monitoring and reporting and results-based work planning. Of particular importance is that the logframe indicators and their targets be reconfirmed at project inception to be SMART so that all project resources can be focused on activities and outputs producing outcomes and impact that meet the pre-determined indicator targets. Otherwise, the indicators serve no purpose and ambiguity bedevils project implementation and evaluations alike.

2. The challenge to UNDP of managing a global project not based in any country or city where UNDP has a presence.

Normally, UNDP projects are implemented in countries or groups of countries where UNDP has local offices whose staff are primarily responsible for day-to-day project assurance. This project did not have this. There is no UNDP office in Hamilton, Ontario or Canada. This created a fair amount of distance between UNDP and the project.

Online, participatory reporting and monitoring mechanisms may help keep future projects like this stay on track or modify their course sooner. There are models to draw upon within UNDP's own portfolio that demonstrate how to transform routine reports into useful and efficient monitoring tools. A simple yet sophisticated monitoring approach, tied into the power of the worldwide web may very well help to improve monitoring and reporting for future projects, particularly projects like this, with two year time frames (originally) that leave little leeway for delays in implementation, are global in their scope and are based in a place where no UNDP presence is located. One model can be found at the following website: www.protectedareas.org.

This particular model uses familiar software like MS Word, Excel and basic web programming. The mechanism links numeric progress ratings (from the quarterly reports) to an at-a-glance bar graph view showing progress by country. A similar approach is done to show expenditures to date. In just these simple strokes, a project team can create a snapshot view, with background material available for those wanting to dig deeper.

In a global project such as KM:Land, with the UNDP programme leader in Bangkok, the Project Manager in Hamilton, and other key stakeholders worldwide, this would enable all project stakeholders to see at a glance, where the project is in its work without having to find the email or document with this information. Another strength of this approach is that such a reporting process can involve project partners themselves as active rather than passive recipients of reports. Synthesizing the essential information and summarizing it on a publicly available web site sheds more sunlight on the whole process and transforms the reporting process into a much more dynamic, transparent, and accountable monitoring mechanism.

B. Recommendations.

I. Project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Recommendation #1: Strengthen links between work planning (informal or formal), monitoring and reporting and strategic results indicator targets.

The evaluation finds that project work planning in the future could better link project work to project results as reflected in *the* project's results framework. For example, to strengthen the link between monitoring and reporting and the indicator targets would require a fairly straightforward, minor tweaking of the quarterly report format. The link will enable the Project Board to focus more on strategic questions such as, "Are we realizing our outcomes and achieving our objective?" rather than, "Have we held this workshop or hired that expert or produced that output?"

Recommendation #2: Risk mitigation strategy.

Establish simple milestones for implementation that if missed will trigger two things: first, more frequent communication for the purpose of understanding why; and second, more intensive project support (moral, process, administrative, technical) via PB, UNDP-CO, NGO partner, or individual consultant as needed).

Recommendation #3: Increase the level of participatory monitoring in project implementation.

The evaluation recommends that the future projects make more project implementation progress updates information available on a website in "at a glance" easy access format. This approach can increase the project's monitoring efficacy and make its monitoring and reporting approach even more transparent and impactful.

Recommendation #4: This project is a good candidate for a short review 12-18 months post-project.

Much of the near-term impact that this project might have remains to be seen, depending upon actions taken by stakeholders in the coming months with respect to two primary outputs of the project: 1) the Guidelines for the Preparation and Reporting on Globally relevant SLM Impact Indicators for Project-level Monitoring (GPR-GII-PM); and 2) the Learning Network web platform.

With respect to the first output, UNDP is distributing the GPR-GII-PM to staff and project experts worldwide and UNU-INWEH is distributing these publications internationally via large conferences such as the UNCCCD COP10. An inexpensive web-based "Survey Monkey" survey could be conducted 12 months from now to assess the usefulness of these guidelines to UNDP (and other agencies' programs). With respect to the second output, if UNU-INWEH successfully finds a partner for launching the Learning Network web platform, there could be much-improved results/impact to be found in 12-18 months.

Indeed, UNDP and GEF should consider making small, targeted post-project follow-ups a standard part of their M&E approach. Without them, UNDP and GEF likely are under-capturing the real impact of these investments. This could be done through a no-cost partnership with a university or other center of learning, for example.

Recommendation #5: Utilize the web to begin creating a low-cost, 21st century web-based network of LD stakeholders that is not so much a web-based repository of documents but more of a social network site for LD practitioners.

As a fallback lower-cost first step to operationalizing the “Land Learning Network” prototype web-based platform could consider this recommendation in its discussions to operationalize the learning network going forward. UNU-INWEH and partners may want to consider a smaller “network” that could be more of a social network initially, located on a new Facebook or Google+ page, where this project’s reference materials and lessons learned can be posted, blogs can be started on priority issues and opportunities, interest generating activities such as photo contests could be held on different LD or SLM issues.

II. Proposals for future directions & relevance to the bigger picture.

Recommendation #6: Future challenges facing LD/SLM.

Perhaps the most significant trend in the environmental sector is the growing importance of and emphasis on climate change as the over-arching issue of the day. Making the Land Degradation/SLM agenda more relevant to climate change, adaptation, and economic development will be critical in the years to come. Some questions, among many, that may be worthwhile considering:

- How can REDD+ and SLM initiatives work effectively together/be complementary?
- What does SLM have to do with bolstering ecosystem resilience and what are the measurable indicators of this?
- How does LD translate into economic losses for local communities through reduced domestic animal health and how can this knowledge be applied most easily at the project development level?
- How can SLM translate into cost-effective CC adaptation measures? How does this tie in with the question above on ecosystem resilience?

Recommendation #7: UNDP could make it easier for LD projects to access lessons learned from UNDP’s extensive portfolio of LD related projects.

The difficulty of accessing “lessons learned” from different projects appears to be a barrier to new projects learning the lessons of previous and on-going projects. If each new project must search through the pile of previous project reports looking for lessons, then learning lessons will be hampered if not blocked. UNDP, with its large portfolio of LD projects, could create a simple, website where lessons learned could be elaborated and shared. This should be a well-organized website with lessons learned organized in practical sections, such as “How to quickly and effectively recruit individual experts and skilled organizations to fill unusual, niche-related tasks such as calculating carbon benefits from SLM actions. Another section could be: “How to modify non-SMART indicators in the early stages of project implementation.”

This, together with Recommendation #5 above are things that could be taken up by the KM:Land Learning Network website, as the capacity and structure are already built into the design of this.

V. Annexes.

- Annex 1: TE Terms of Reference
- Annex 2: List of documents reviewed
- Annex 3: List of people interviewed and mission itinerary
- Annex 4: Evaluation Code of Conduct

Annex 1: Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference.

**UNDP-GEF: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR TERMINAL EVALUATION
ENSURING IMPACTS FROM SLM - DEVELOPMENT OF A GLOBAL INDICATOR
SYSTEM (KM: LAND)
PROJECT**

Project Title:	Ensuring impacts from SLM - Development of a Global Indicator System (KM: Land)
GEF Project ID:	2863
UNDP Project ID:	PIMS: 3542
Focal Area:	Land Degradation
GEF Strategic Priority:	SLM: 1
Country:	Global
Duration:	14 May 2007 – May 2011 (47.5 months)
GEF Agency:	UNDP
Executing Agency:	UNOPS (UNU-INWEH subcontracted as a technical executing agency)
Implementing Agencies:	UNDP
Approval Date:	28 March 2007
Effective Date:	
Primary Beneficiaries:	
Secondary Beneficiaries:	
DCAS Sector/Subsector:	
ACC Sector/Sub-sector:	Natural resources

Project Summary**1. INTRODUCTION**

The Land Degradation Focal Area of the GEF had completed its first cycle (GEF-3) and was in a position to take lessons from this pilot phase to establish its strategic direction and policies for GEF-4 and beyond. At that time, projects promoting sustainable land management (SLM) usually stabilized and/or restored the integrity of ecosystems (enhanced services and functions) and help improve peoples' livelihoods. While most of the projects focused heavily on measuring results related to peoples livelihoods, they also reflected either win-win situations, or minimized tradeoffs between development-oriented and environmental benefits for the greater good of ensuring sustainable environment management and livelihoods. All this was part of the approach on environmental mainstreaming in development.

There was still a need for more clarity and exchange of experiences on the interaction between sustainable livelihoods, land use and ecosystem integrity. The baseline of Development Aid, while strong on promoting short term gains in poverty reduction and rural development, was still finding ways to reconcile the tradeoffs between long term environmental sustainability and short term economic growth. There was a need therefore to contribute to this wider global effort, with a learning network on sustainable land management that extrapolates and disseminates best practices generated by GEF and partner projects. As part of developing a robust learning network and in light of the GEF

Council focus on result based management, there was also a need to develop an array of objectively verifiable and measurable indicators for recording the performance, results and best practices of SLM projects.

STAP was at the time conducting three studies that would help understand the scientific – technical basis for the claim that sustainable land management in fact could achieve measurable results at the local, national and global levels. The three studies would:

- Compile emerging scientific evidence of the global impacts of LD;
- Provide guidance on how the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) approach can be operationalized in order to identify global benefits at the landscape level (assessing, for example whether it is possible to quantify regulating environmental services, or whether proxies generated from quantification of provisioning services is necessary);
- Quantify the added value of the “landscape approach”, which characterizes the LD focal area, in generating additional benefits beyond those accruing to the BD, CC, IW, POPs focal areas, and in the process provide greater clarity on how to address tradeoffs between thematic areas, as well as tradeoffs between local and global benefits.

The results of the three studies to a varying degree were to contribute to this MSP by enhancing the selection of indicators for SLM projects, the choice of best practices, and the development of tools for logical analysis, estimation of tradeoffs, etc. By disseminating results through international platforms such as the CoP and/or CRIC of the UNCCD or other appropriate communication channels, the MSP would also contribute to the harmonization of the use of indicators in SLM initiatives at the country level. As a result, countries would be able to better decide on a strategic and technically sound basis on national efforts to combat land degradation.

The GEF Council requested the GEF Secretariat and the IAs and EAs to ensure that projects in the LD Focal Area adhere to a coherent strategy and direction in the overall portfolio. The Council requested all Focal Areas of the GEF to have measurable and verifiable indicators by 2008. This MSP was to be the first phase (two years) of a three-phased process that would provide the scientific-technical basis for selecting such indicators, develop a community of practice for GEF projects in LD, develop Knowledge Management (KM) tools and guidelines as well as exchanges of experiences, and finally develop the suitable frameworks and mechanisms to monitor results from SLM projects. The results of this MSP were expected to contribute to the ongoing work of the GEF Family, including the GEF Council, in making a strategic choice on defining global benefits from the LD Focal Area, and agreeing on GEF-specific project and portfolio-level indicators for the LD Focal Area. While the MSP would focus on activities of relevance to the wider global community, any GEF-specific activity would, however, be done through a special initiative to be presented as part of the GEF Secretariat Corporate Budget for FY07 and FY08.

The results of the indicator development activities within this MSP would provide the technical basis for the selection of appropriate indicators at the local and global levels. At the global level, the CCD process and its efforts to develop benchmarks and indicators would greatly benefit from its results. Developing a comprehensive results management framework and harmonizing such indicators across aid agencies, while also incorporating state of the art expertise from the scientific community and practitioners, had proven difficult in the past. The GEF, with its network structure, catalytic role and partnership approach, was in a unique situation to bring together the international community and develop indicators that would reflect the multi-dimensional impact of SLM. Consequently, all the GEF Implementing and Executing Agencies had committed in-kind and cash contributions (estimated at a minimum of \$200,000) from their corporate budgets which were additional and above the GEF resources and showed their ownership and commitment to the process. Because of the catalytic nature of the proposed activities, full incremental costing was being requested from the GEF. Other interested parties, such as Canada and Iceland, however had already expressed interest to contribute

funding, which would be considered as leveraged co-financing during the implementation of the MSP. Other partners would be approached during the implementation of this MSP.

The MSP has been implemented on behalf of the members of the LD Task Force under the lead of UNDP. Execution services have been provided by UNU-INWEH, subcontracted through UNOPS. UNU-INWEH was collectively selected as the sub-executing agency for the project based on a comprehensive analysis of the comparative advantages of several potential institutions. The LD Task Force has constituted the Steering Committee of the MSP. In addition to the relevant GEF agencies, the other members of the Steering Committee have included: the GEF Evaluation Office and STAP. Both the CCDSEC and GM have been invited as observers.

Since its inception, this MSP has been affected by a number of developments within the GEF itself, not least of which is the development of the Focal Area Strategy for GEF-4 (and later, GEF-5 strategy) which was tasked with developing indicators for the Focal Area during a short timescale in early 2007. Since new requirements have arisen within the GEF, and given the strategic importance of this MSP to the GEF, these new requirements have had an impact on the originally-defined outcomes and outputs of the MSP. As a result, with the Inter-Agency Working Group's recommendation in 2008, the MSP underwent an Adaptive Management Review (AMR) to assess the MSP in light of these new GEF requirements and priorities.

The outcomes of the AMR were subsequently endorsed by the Inter-Agency Working Group and brought amendments to the project timeframe and oversight structure - a no-cost extension for the duration of the delays caused by the review process, and the Inter-Agency Working Group was reduced to a smaller Steering Committee comprising UNU-INWEH, UNDP, GEF STAP and GEF Secretariat as an observer; linkages have been made with the GEF LD Task Force via the GEF Secretariat.

2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project was mandated with the following goal and objectives:

The goal of the KM: Land initiative was to “contribute to enhancing ecosystem integrity, stability, functions and services through GEF-supported sustainable land management activities”. The overall objective of the KM: Land programme was to “strengthen the capacity for adaptive management of SLM projects in order to enhance their effectiveness and impact on ecosystem integrity, stability, functions and services in the context of national development priorities”.

The KM: Land programme encompasses three Specific Objectives:

- *Specific Objective I:* Develop global- and local-level indicators which inter alia demonstrate global environmental benefits and related local livelihood benefits derived from actions on combating land degradation;
- *Specific Objective II:* Exchange and disseminate knowledge and practices generated through sustainable land management projects and programs through a Learning Network; and
- *Specific Objective III:* Measure results and performance of SLM projects and programs through a coordinated and/or harmonized inter-agency monitoring and evaluation approach.

GEF objective and purpose of terminal evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation in the Global Environment Facility (GEF) projects have the following overarching objectives:

- To promote accountability for the achievement of GEF objectives through the assessment of results, effectiveness, processes, and performance of the partners involved in GEF activities.

GEF results are monitored and evaluated for their contribution to global environmental benefits.

- To promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing on results and lessons learned among the GEF and its partners, as a basis for decision-making on policies, strategies, program management, and projects, and to improve knowledge and performance.

The purposes of conducting evaluations includes the understanding of why and the extent to which intended and unintended results are achieved, and their impact on stakeholders. Evaluation is an important source of evidence of the achievement of results and institutional performance, and contributes to knowledge and to organizational learning. Evaluation should serve as an agent of change and play a critical role in supporting accountability.

In accordance, all full and medium-size projects supported by GEF are subject to a final evaluation upon completion of implementation. In addition to providing an independent in-depth review of implementation progress, this type of evaluation is responsive to GEF Councils' decisions on transparency and better access to information during implementation and on completion of a project.

Specifically, the Terminal Evaluation (TE) must provide a comprehensive and systematic account of the performance of a completed project by assessing its project design, process of implementation and results vis-à-vis project objectives endorsed by the GEF including the agreed changes in the objectives during project implementation. TEs have four complementary purposes as follows:

- 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 GEF activities;
- To provide feedback on issues that are recurrent across the portfolio and need attention, and on improvements regarding previously identified issues; and,
- To contribute to the GEF Evaluation Office databases for aggregation, analysis and reporting on effectiveness of GEF operations in achieving global environmental benefits and on quality of monitoring and evaluation across the GEF system.

A mix of tools is used to ensure effective project M&E. These can 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 independent evaluations.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THIS TERMINAL EVALUATION

This terminal evaluation (TE) is being carried out to provide a comprehensive and systematic account of the performance of the KM: Land project by assessing its project design, the process of implementation and results and outputs as they relate to project objectives endorsed by the GEF and other partners including the agreed changes (Adaptive Management Review results) in the objectives during project implementation. Specifically, the Terminal Evaluation will undertake the following tasks:

- Assess overall performance and review progress towards attaining the project's objectives and results including relevancy, efficiency and effectiveness of the actions taken given the available funding and capacities for implementation;
- Review and evaluate the extent to which the project outputs and outcomes have been achieved and provide rating employing the six-point rating scale (HS to HU (see page 16);

- Assess the project results and determine the extent to which the project objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, and assess if the project has led to any positive or negative consequences and provide a rating of project objective achievement on the six-point rating scale;
- Assess the extent to which the project impacts have reached or have the potential to reach the intended beneficiaries;
- Critically analyze the implementation arrangements and identify strengths and weaknesses in the project design and implementation and provide a rating of the project implementation, employing the six-point rating scale;

Describe the project's adaptive management strategy – how have project activities changed in response to new conditions and have the changes been appropriate;

- Review the clarity of roles and responsibilities of the various agencies and institutions and the level of coordination between relevant players;
- Assess the level of stakeholder involvement in the project from its target stakeholders and beneficiaries and recommend on whether this involvement has been appropriate to the goals of the project;

Describe and assess efforts of UNDP, UNOPS and UNU- INWEH in support of implementation;

Review donor partnership processes, and the contribution of co-finance;

- Describe key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects for sustainability of project results achieved; and,
- Identify and document the main successes, challenges and lessons that have emerged.

4. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Three main elements to be evaluated are Delivery, Implementation and Finances. Each component will be evaluated using three criteria: effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness

Project delivery: The TE will assess to what extent the KM: Land project has achieved its immediate objectives. It will also identify what outputs, impacts and results have been produced and how they have enabled the project to achieve its objectives. The consultant is required to make assessment of the following issues under each priority area outlined below:

Institutional arrangement

- Preparatory work and implementation strategies
- Consultative processes
- Technical support
- Capacity building initiatives
- Project outputs
- Assumptions and risks
- Project related complementary activities

Outcome, results and impacts

- Efficiency of all project activities under the three major components
- Progress in the achievement of the immediate objectives (include level of indicator achievement when available)

Partnerships

- Assessment of global, regional and local level involvement and perception
- Assessment of partnerships, and involvement of stakeholders
- Assessment of collaboration between UNCCD, GEF Secretariat, GEF STAP, LD Task Force, GEF Agencies, governments, experts, and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

Risk management

- Were problems/constraints, which impacted on successful delivery of the project, identified at the project design stage and subsequently as part of the Adaptive Management Review (AMR)?
- Were there new threats/risks to project success that emerged during project implementation?
- Were both kinds of risk appropriately dealt with?
- Were recommendations arising from the AMR addressed and implemented?

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Assess the extent, appropriateness and effectiveness of adaptive management at all levels of the project implementation
- Has there been a monitoring and evaluation framework for the project and how was this developed?
- Is the reporting framework effective/appropriate?
- Is this framework suitable for replication/continuation for any future project support?

Project Implementation

- Review the project management and implementation arrangements at all levels, in order to provide an opinion on its efficiency and cost effectiveness. This includes:
 - i. Processes and administration:
 - Project related administration procedures
 - Milestones(Log-frame matrix)
 - Key decisions and out puts,
 - Major project implementation documents prepared with an indication of how the documents and reports have been useful
 - ii. Project oversight and active engagement by: UNU-INWEH, UNOPS, UNDP, GEF STAP, and LD Task Force.
 - iii. Project execution: UNOPS as the Executing Agency, and UNU-INWEH subcontracted as a sub-executing/project management agency
 - iv. Project implementation: UNDP as the Implementing Agency

Project Finances

How well and cost effectively have financial arrangements of the project worked? This section will focus on the following three priority areas:

1. Project disbursements
 - Provide an overview of actual spending against budget expectations
 - Critically analyze disbursements to determine if funds have been applied effectively and efficiently.
2. Budget procedures
 - Did the Project Document provide adequate guidance on how to allocate the budget?
 - Review of audits and any issues raised in audits and subsequent adjustments to accommodate audit recommendations;
 - Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and provide an opinion on the appropriateness and relevancy of such revisions
3. Coordination mechanisms
 - Evaluate appropriateness and efficiency of coordinating mechanisms between the Implementing Agency, Executing Agency and sub-executing agency – UNDP, UNOPS and UNU-INWEH

- Does the KM: Land approach represent an effective means of achieving the objectives?
- How can the approach be improved?

5. EXPECTED OUTPUT

The TE evaluators will be expected to produce:

An evaluation report, of approximately 40-50 pages, structured along the outline indicated in Annex 1.

- A detailed record of consultations with stakeholders will need to be kept and provided (as part of the information gathered by the evaluators), as an annex to the main report.
- If there are any significant discrepancies between the impressions and findings of the evaluation team and stakeholders these should be explained in an Annex attached to the final report.

6. METHODOLOGY OF EVALUATION APPROACH

The evaluation will be conducted in a participatory manner through a combination of processes. It is anticipated that the methodology to be used for the TE will include the following:

A) Review of documentation including but not limited to:-

- Project Document and Project Appraisal Document;
- Project implementation reports (APR/PIR's);
- Project LogFrame and budget;
- Quarterly progress reports and workplans of the various implementation task teams;
- Audit and financial reports;
- Adaptive Management Review report;
- M & E Operational Guidelines, all monitoring reports prepared by the project; and
- Financial and Administration guidelines.

The following documents will also be available:

- Global Indicator Profiles for the GEF Land Degradation Focal Area;
- Project Indicator Profiles for the GEF Land Degradation Focal Area;
- A Proposal for a Learning Network for the GEF Land Degradation Focal Area;
- Report on the Findings of the Pilot Testing of KM:Land Project Indicators;
- Guidelines for the Measurement and Reporting of Project Indicators;
- Impact Pathways Analysis: A Framework for Enhanced Sustainable Land Management Project Design;
- Project operational guidelines, manuals and systems;
- Minutes of the Expert Advisory Group, Inter-Agency Working Group, Tri-Partite Review Committee and Steering Committee meetings and other expert meetings and workshops;
- Manuscripts prepared for the IDDC conference and for the journal *Land Degradation & Development* on global and project indicators, respectively;
- Other project background materials and documents;
- The GEF terminal evaluation guidelines; and

- The UNDP Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks.

B) Interviews with stakeholders shall include:

- UNU-INWEH staff who have project responsibilities;
- Implementing and Executing Agencies (including but not limited to senior officials and task manager/ account manager of UNDP and UNOPS)
- A Steering Committee - UNU-INWEH, UNDP, GEF STAP and GEF Secretariat as an observer - a reduced number of committee members as a result of AMR
- Project stakeholders and indented beneficiaries

7. ATTRIBUTES OF THE EVALUATION CONSULTANTS

An independent TE consultant will be responsible for the delivery, content, technical quality and accuracy of the evaluation, as well as the recommendations.

S/he should ideally have the following competencies and attributes:

Expertise in:

- Capacity building and strengthening institutions;
- Knowledge management;
- Sustainable land management impact monitoring;
- Integrated natural resource management;
- Community-based natural resource management; and
- Project evaluation, specifically undertaking complex programmatic reviews.

Some prior knowledge of the following would be ideal:

- GEF and UNDP reporting frameworks;
- GEF principles and expected impacts in terms of global benefits;
- GEF Land Degradation focal area objectives;
- Key global land degradation knowledge management, indicator and M&E frameworks (GLADA, WOCAT, etc.) ; and
- Knowledge to assess fit with UNCCD work programs and its 10-year Strategy.

Competency in the following is also required:

- Demonstrated experience in institutional analysis;
- Excellent English writing and communication skills.
- Demonstrated ability to assess complex situations in order to succinctly and clearly distil critical issues and draw forward looking conclusions; and,
- Excellent facilitation skills.

Education: Master Degree in Environmental Science, Policy or International Development. At least 15 years of relevant work experience. Strong proven experience in field relevant to GEF and UNDP and in evaluation of UNDP /GEF Projects.

Annex 2: List of documents reviewed.

	Document	Binder
1.	KM:Land history document	(sent by email)
2.	KM:Land Project Document	Main Docs
3.	Memorandum of Agreement with UNOPS + 5 Amendments	Main Docs
4.	Project LogFrame (6 versions)	Main Docs
5.	Project Workplan (10 versions)	Main Docs
6.	Project Budget – Original + Modified Post-AMR	Main Docs
7.	Financial Reports submitted to UNOPS and UNDP	Main Docs
8.	Project Implementation Reports:	
	8.1. 2008	Main Docs
	8.2. 2009	(sent by email)
	8.3. 2010	(sent by email)
	8.4. 2011	(sent by email)
9.	Adaptive Management Review in 2008:	Main Docs
	9.1. Report	
	9.2. Management Response	
10.	KM:Land Meeting Reports:	Mtgs
	10.1. Pre-Inception Meeting Report (Rome, 2007)	
	10.2. Pre-Inception Working Group consultation report (Rome, 2007)	
	10.3. Inception Meeting (Hamilton, 2007)	
	10.4. Expert Workshop (Iceland, 2007)	
	10.5. Inter-Agency Working Group meeting (Iceland, 2007)	
	10.6. Expert Advisory Group meeting (Bonn, 2008)	
	10.7. Inter-Agency Working Group meeting (Bonn, 2008)	
	10.8. Inter-Agency Working Group meeting (Washington, 2008)	
	10.9. Tri-Partite Review Committee meeting (Washington, 2008)	
	10.10. Expert Advisory Group meeting (Rome, 2009)	
	10.11. Steering Committee meeting (Rome, 2009)	
	10.12. Expert Workshop (Rome, 2010)	
	10.13. Steering Committee meeting (Rome, 2010)	
11.	Global Indicators report	Outputs
12.	IDDC paper on global indicators	Outputs
13.	Project Indicator Profiles	Outputs
14.	LDD manuscript on project indicators	Outputs
15.	Pilot testing report	Outputs
16.	Pilot testing strategy	Outputs
17.	Report on “SLM Interventions Across Scales at Global– Programme- and Project-Levels: Case Studies on Indicators and Knowledge Generation from Existing SLM Projects”	Outputs
18.	Report on “Feasibility of a Core Set of Project-Level Indicators for Use Across the GEF SLM Portfolio”	Outputs
19.	Learning Network proposal	Outputs
20.	Impact Pathway Analysis	Outputs
21.	KM:Land Impact Indicators Guidelines + brochure	(hardcopy)
22.	Journal “Land Degradation & Development”	(hardcopy)
23.	UNCCD documents	(hardcopies)
	23.1. White Paper on the “Scientific review of the UNCCD provisionally accepted set of impact indicators to measure the implementation of strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3”	
	23.2. ICCD/COP(10)/CST2 document: “Report on the refinement of the set of impact indicators on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3”	

	23.3.	ICCD/COP(10)/CST/INF.1 document: “Report on the scientific peer review for the refinement of the set of impact indicators on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3”	
	23.4.	Invitation letters and emails to UNCCD workshops	
	23.5.	Document “Realising a paradigm shift in monitoring and assessment within the UNCCD”	(sent by email)
24.	KM:Land website		(website link provided by email)

Annex 3: Mission itinerary and List of people interviewed.

This evaluation mission took the evaluator to Hamilton, Ontario, CANADA where the United Nations University – Institute for Water Environment and Health is located. The evaluator spent three days in Hamilton, working from the UNU-INWEH’s offices.

26 September 2011 (Monday)

UNU-INWEH – Hamilton Ontario

- 09:30 – 12:30 Opening discussions with Zafar Adeel (Director, UNU-INWEH); Richard Thomas, Assistant Director –Drylands; and Harriet Bigas, Project Associate –Drylands.
- 2:00 – 4:00 Ongoing discussions with UNU-INWEH staff.
- 4:00 - 5:30 Document review and note taking.

27 September (Tuesday)

UNU-INWEH – Hamilton Ontario

- 09:30 – 12:30 Document review and note taking; emailing stakeholders to set up telephone interviews.
- 1:30 – 3:30 Meeting with Richard Thomas and Harriet Bigas to discuss PIR reports, results of project work, indicators.
- 3:30 - 5:00 Note taking, reading, preparation for round-table teleconference with stakeholders.

28 September 2011 (Wednesday)

- 8:30 – 10:00 Teleconference with Nikhil Sekhran, [Principal Technical Advisor, Ecosystems and Biodiversity – UNDP]; Mohammed Bakarr (GEF Secretariat – Land Degradation); Michael Stocking (GEF-STAP)
- 10:30 – 15:30 Note writing and review, document review.
- 15:30 – 17:00 Debriefing (Richard Thomas and Harriet Bigas)

Other people with whom telephone interviews were conducted:

Akihito Kono Regional Technical Advisor UNDP-GEF Asia-Pacific
Martha Mai UNOPS – Project Manager
Brigitte Schuster Drylands Project Officer at UNU-INWEH between 11/2007 and 01/2009
Maryam Niamir-Fuller UNDP Principal Technical Advisor on LD until 09/2007
Alex de Sherbinin CIESIN – Subcontractor on global indicator development
Victor M. Castillo Programme Officer- KMST Unit UNCCD

Annex 4: Evaluation Code of Conduct Form –**Evaluators:**

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 in the course of 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 limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

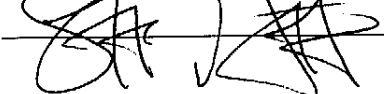
Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form**Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System**

Name of Consultant: Jeffrey Griffin

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 Billings, Montana, on 2 November 2011.

Signature:  _____