

UNDP/GEF Medium Size Project

Terminal Evaluation

PIMS No. 3694: Enhancing Global Environmental Management in Bhutan's
Local Governance System

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8/14/2012

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Acronyms

APR	—	Annual Progress Report
BT FEC	-	Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation
DANIDA	-	Danish International Development Assistance
DEC	-	District Environment Committee
DEO	-	District Environment Officer
DE	-	District Engineer
DMD	-	Disaster Management Division
DoA	-	Department of Agriculture
DoF	-	Department of Forests
DT	-	<i>Dzongkhag Tshogde</i> (or District Development Committee)
EA	-	Environmental Assessment
EAA	-	Environmental Assessment Act
ECS	-	Environmental Clearance Services
EFRC	-	Environment Friendly Road Construction
EGEM	-	Enhancing Global Environmental Management
EIMS	-	Environment Information Management System
EMS	-	Environmental Management Systems
ERM	-	Environmental Regulation and Management at national and local level
EUSPS	-	Environment and Urban Sector Programme Support (DANIDA)
GAO	—	Gewog Administrative Officer
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product

GEF	-	Global Environment Facility
GNHC	-	Gross National Happiness Commission
GT	-	Gewog Tshogde
LG	-	Local Government
MDP	-	Millennium Development Goals
MEA	-	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MEAP/GEAP	-	Micro Environment Action Plan/ Geog Environment Action Plan
MoAF	-	Ministry of Agriculture and Forests
MOEA	-	Ministry of Economic Affairs
MoHCA	-	Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs
MOWHS	-	Ministry of Works and Human Settlements
NBC	-	National Biodiversity Centre
NCSA	-	National Capacity Support Assessment
NEC	-	National Environment Commission
NECS	-	National Environment Commission Secretariat
NPD	-	National Project Director
NCSA	—	National Capacity Self Assessment
PB	-	Project Board
PIR	—	Project Implementation Report
RGOB	-	Royal Government of Bhutan
RGoB	-	Royal Government of Bhutan
RSPN	-	Royal Society for Protection of Nature
SLMP	-	Sustainable Land Management Programme

ToT	-	Training of Trainers
TWG	-	Technical Working Group
UNCBD	-	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	-	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	-	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Glossary of Terms

Dzongkhag Tshogde	:	District Development Committee
Dzongkhag	:	District
Gewog Tshogde	:	Block Development Committee
Gewog	:	Block
Gup	:	Head of the Block

Executive Summary:

A. Brief description of project

The project 'Enhancing Global Environmental Management in Bhutan's Local Governance System' (NCSA) is a Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded Project implemented through the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The project was implemented by the National Environment Commission Secretariat of the Royal Government of Bhutan from June 2008-June 2012.

Through a broad-based consultative and participatory process, the Bhutan National Capacity Self Assessment first identified priority capacity development needs in the biodiversity, climate change and land degradation thematic areas. It then identified 22 capacity development needs, either common to or cutting across these three thematic areas. Based on this analysis, the RGoB prepared an Action Plan with seven specific outputs to address the prioritized capacity needs to fulfill Bhutan's responsibilities and commitments under the 3 Rio Conventions. Subsequent to consultations with stakeholders, and based on in-country opportunities, the Royal Government of Bhutan packaged the seven action plan outputs into three priority project concepts for immediate action. One of the three project concepts included the project titled – "Enhancing Global Environmental Management in Local Governance System," which took shape for implementation after availing GEF Funds through UNDP.

The Royal Government of Bhutan's effort to decentralize power to the 20 Dzongkhags (districts) and 205 Gewogs (blocks of villages) with the objective to promote local socio-economic development strategies and initiatives by empowering the people to participate in and make decisions on their own plans and programmes prompted the project objectives to support the decentralization process through mainstreaming cross-cutting environmental management concerns into the planning and capacity development initiatives as per the provisions of Rio Conventions.

The following were the project outcomes set to achieve the objective of Enhancing Global Environmental Management Systems through decentralization process. Detailed outputs per outcome are expounded in the main report.

- Outcome1: Enabled central-level framework to enhance decentralized capacity for environmental management and implementation of the provisions of the 3 Rio Conventions;*
- Outcome 2: Enabled decentralized institutional framework and personnel to enhance local environmental management, which include implementation of the Rio Conventions' provision;*
- Outcome 3: Existing Environmental Information Management System enhanced to backstop national policy and decision making in response to global environmental management needs as per the provisions of the Rio Conventions.*

B. Project Context and purpose of the evaluation

Bhutan being part of one of the top ten hotspots in biodiversity, the government aims to maintain at least sixty percent of the forest cover for all times to come. As the country has maintained its pristine environment, many international agencies have shown keen interests in investing in Bhutan's environmental conservation efforts. A large section of the Bhutanese population make their living from natural resources, such as non wood forest products (NWFPs). Slight changes in climate might affect the services provided through natural resources and leave the communities dependent on these without the main sources of income. Geographical conditions and the land terrain also always called for expert interventions in order to be able to make the optimum use of the meager 2-3% arable land. Along these lines, the objectives of the 3 Rio Conventions had the most promising approaches and in order to have a platform for the three to collaborate, the NCSA Project was implemented.

Likewise, there are also numerous development activities ongoing throughout the country ranging from individual rural house construction to construction of farm roads, highways, hydroelectric power stations. As most of the said activities encroach rural areas and general reserve forests, capacity development of the officials working in the Dzongkhag in order to monitor such constructions and be able to wisely decide on whether or not any project merits environmental clearance, monitoring of such projects/activities to ensure compliance per the environmental rules and guidelines are part and parcel of the duties of the Dzongkhag environmental officers (DEOs). At the same time, it was also necessary to build the capacities of the line agencies like Ministry of Works and Human Settlements, , Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Economic Affairs and sector officials in the districts. As the linkage was observed to be cross-cutting, the need was felt to bring all the sectors to work in a common platform and work complementarily rather than duplicate interventions or unnecessarily become burdensome on the target beneficiaries like the farmers and the contractors.

At the global level, the 3 Rio Conventions has the same ultimate objective of managing environment from the perspectives of climate change, biodiversity conservation and combating desertification. All the three conventions, if worked with synergy, would result to a holistic effort of addressing environmental issues at both national and global levels.

Based on the nature of cross-cutting linkages between the Conventions, efforts were required to match those with the socio-economic priorities identified by the Government of Bhutan. As a result, the NCSA Project was conceived with the objective to promote follow-up proposals, where national, district and local policies would accommodate principles of the 3 Rio Conventions, to reverse the current practice of treating global environmental issues as a stand-alone agenda.

Consultations with NCSA stakeholders stressed the importance of Bhutan's decentralization process and the significant and unique opportunities that this process offers for mainstreaming cross-cutting environmental management concerns into ongoing planning and capacity development initiatives. As part of the decentralization process in Bhutan, RGOB has been striving to translate its policy of environmentally sustainable development into "on-the-ground actions." This led to bringing the districts and the Gewogs in the forefront of this project. So far, key implementation responsibilities relate to the implementation of the *Environmental Assessment Act (EAA)* in the District and Geog levels. Key elements of Bhutan's national environmental management response to its environmental challenges are environmental assessment (EA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The country is faced with a growing amount of projects, which are likely to have significant adverse environmental impacts. EA is an overarching process, involving all the three areas of global environmental management – biodiversity, climate change and land degradation – while cutting across various sectors and agencies. Moreover, the Local Government Act, 2000 which was later revised in 2009 includes several provisions for environmental management at the local level. Many of these provisions are both directly related to the implementation of the EAA and of high relevance to the Conventions. (Source: Project Document, NCSA, 2008)

While the systemic capacity in support of this transfer of responsibilities was strong in terms of legislative framework, the lack of local individual capacities in terms of knowledge, skills, experience and institutional support remained a major impediment for the newly mandated implementation, compliance, and monitoring of environmental management. Accordingly, a concerted effort to develop local capacity for cross-cutting, effective and sustainable environmental management is one of the highest priorities for the country in the coming decade. Hence, the UNDP-GEF Project was initiated to enhance environmental management in Bhutan's local environmental governance system.

The Enhancing Global Environmental Management in Bhutan's Local Governance (NCSA) Project having completed its period of implementation in June 2012, UNDP called for the

Terminal Evaluation in accordance with UNDP/GEF M&E policies and procedures. The evaluation covered the entire project including non-GEF financed components like the EUSPS through DANIDA.

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policy at the project level in UNDP/GEF had four objectives: i) to monitor and evaluate results and impacts, ii) to provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvement; iii) to promote accountability for resource use; and iv) to document, provide feedback on, and disseminate lessons learned.

This Terminal Evaluations (TE) intends to provide an objective and independent assessment of project implementation and impact, including achievement of global environmental benefits and lessons learned to guide future conservation efforts including the design and implementation of other UNDP and GEF projects. Specifically, the TE assessed the extent to which planned project outcomes and outputs have been achieved, as well assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the project using a simple online questionnaire to rate the project in a six scale satisfactory levels as per the ToR and as defined in the GEF guidelines for terminal evaluations. The evaluation also covered the analysis on strengths and weaknesses of project design, implementation, monitoring and adaptive management and sustainability of project outcomes based on the Project Document, Annual Progress Reports, and manuals and publications that the project made as part of the project requirements and the interviews and meetings with the line ministries and the stakeholders. In the recommendations part, the consultant has furnished the project exit strategy.

In summary, The Terminal Evaluation covered the following areas:

- i. Appropriateness of the project concept and design
- ii. Project relevance and consistency with country priorities;
- iii. Ownership of the project at the national and local levels;
- iv. Stakeholder participation at national and local levels;
- v. Effectiveness in realizing project immediate objectives, planned outcomes and outputs, and the extent to which these have contributed towards strengthening the institutional, organizational and technical capability of the Government in achieving its long-term sustainable development objectives (including environmental management goals).
- vi. Sustainability of project achievements and impacts, including financial and institutional sustainability, and an assessment of planned replication and exit strategies
- vii. Management arrangements and the Project Monitoring and Evaluation System, including the quality and timeliness of inputs, activities, responsiveness of project management to changes in the project environment and other monitoring feedback.
- viii. Evaluation of project design on whether or not it allowed for flexibility in responding to changes in the project environment.

- ix. Financial planning and sustainability, including the timely delivery and use of committed co-financing.
- x. Implementing Agency's supervision and backstopping
- xi. Cost-effectiveness: whether or not the project outputs and outcomes achieved in the most cost-effective manner. Whether or not there were any delays that affected efficiency.
- xii. Monitoring, evaluation and the application of adaptive management principles (including effective use of log frame, UNDP risk management system, the annual Project Implementation Reviews, and other monitoring tools and mechanisms as appropriate).

C. Main conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

The main conclusion of this evaluation is that the implementation of the targeted activities were carried out as per the objectives with some changes in the timeline of implementation. Quality of the trainings provided for capacity building of stakeholders, project management team and the DEC members with DEOs as the focal persons were assured by fielding in resource persons with adequate qualification and experience. Trainings (in & ex-country) were conducted in the institutions which has relevant experience in the subject matter/content of the training modules.

Findings against each of the outcomes outlined in the project include:

Outcome1: Enabled central-level framework to enhance decentralized capacity for environmental management and implementation of the provisions of the 3 Rio Conventions;

1. UNCBD emphasizes on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. The treaty recognizes – for the first time – that the conservation of biological diversity is a common concern of humankind and is an integral part of the development process. Importantly, the Convention is legally binding; signatory countries are obliged to implement its provisions.
2. *UNFCCC*: This Convention on Climate Change sets an overall framework for intergovernmental efforts to tackle the challenges posed by climate change. It recognizes that the climate system is a shared resource, the stability of which can be affected by industrial and other emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.
3. *UNCCD*, with its mandate to support and promote community level sustainable development through a new, integrated approach to the problems, emphasizing action to mitigating the problems, especially that of desertification.

The 3 Rio Conventions, as outlined above are relevant to Bhutan and the RGOB have ratified all the three conventions. Activities under each of them have been implemented but not in a coordinated manner that this Project desired to have. Of the three Rio focal persons, the focal persons of the UNFCCC and the UNCBD are based in the NECS providing better opportunities

for close coordination. The National Environment Protection Act of Bhutan 2007 mandates any reports for submission to the conventions be endorsed by National Environment Commission which is chaired by the Prime Minister.

A fully functional DEC focal point system has been established at the NECS to oversee the functioning of the DEC/DEOs mechanism at the local level. Three senior level officials from NECS were trained to enhance their capacity in line with project objectives. One of the major and most notable outcomes is the proposal on the establishment of regional environment offices (REOs). The proposal on REOs has been endorsed by the Commission (NEC) and has been incorporated in the 11th FYP for implementation.

Outcome 2: Enabled decentralized institutional framework and personnel to enhance local environmental management, which include implementation of the Rio Conventions' provision;

Under this output, the District Environment Committee (DEC) was set up in all the 20 districts not only to enhance environmental management but also to mainstream environmental concerns into developmental plans, programs & projects and ensure compliance to the environmental laws.

In line with the increasing capacity building needs, formal institutional linkages has been established with two environmental agencies mainly in the field of technology transfer, knowledge sharing, capacity building and other areas of environmental research & assistance. The two institutes/agencies with formal linkages are (i) the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), New Delhi, India and (ii) the Office of Air, Water, Energy & Land in the Canton of Zurich, Switzerland. The NECS through support from CSE, New Delhi has trained over 32 officials in various environmental fields such as EIA, Social Impact Assessment, Compliance Monitoring & Enforcement and Waste Management.

Several capacity development activities were carried out under the project such as the development of training manuals, awareness booklets, ex-country and in-country training & exposure programs which are reported in the following sections.

Outcome 3: Existing Environmental Information Management System enhanced to backstop national policy and decision making in response to global environmental management needs as per the provisions of the Rio Conventions.

Under this outcome, a web-based Environmental Information management System (EIMS) was developed and launched in 2009. The EIMS was based on the pressure, state and response (PSR) model. In order to validate the EIMS data on regular basis, relevant stakeholders were trained to input data into the system. In addition, the existing Environmental Clearance System (ECS) was

also expanded to accommodate district level data management which can be monitored online. The information from the ECS is one of the primary sources feeding data into the EIMS.

Several rounds of in-country and ex-country trainings were organized for District Environment Committees, District Environment Officers along with thematic working group members. Trainings included study visit to Bangkok along with a week-long training in the Philippines on environment management. Several rounds of in-country trainings were also conducted involving DEOs and relevant sectoral agencies to enhance their capacity in validating the data for the ECS and the EIMS. .

Box 1: Positive feedback on the relevance of the trainings on EIMS

1. *It opened our window of knowledge on environmental management system both technically and also gave lot of functional knowledge as an environmentalist.*
2. *It was a great opportunity for all DEO's for having got to visit other countries and develop technical capacity on EIMS. However, we need to have further similar trainings in future...*
3. *The training was really intensive and satisfactorily related to our concept of environmental mainstreaming. however i feel the application and relevance to our duties back here has been quite minimum.*
4. *The training was carried out and there was no follow up which didn't make much difference.*
5. *The training at Paibari focused mainly on land mgt systems, economics of ecology, EIA, Ecological sanitation, Climate Change, Environment Management Systems and Sustainable Development. Waste management systems and gender and environment. Some of the lessons in the training curriculum could not be put to much use in our context. Nevertheless, it provided basic knowledge on general environmental management, water resource management and climate change mitigation*

Capacity Development

The capacity development component in this project was found to have contributed to the UNDAF Outcome 5 which states “By 2012, National Capacity for Environmental Sustainability and Disaster Management Strengthened with the expected cCPAP Outcome of enhancing the National Capacity to mainstream environmental policies, plans and programs”. The only remaining next step is for the concerned agencies to make optimum use of the capacities so built.

Output-wise, the project produced seven publications on environmental management (A Handbook on Environmental Management Tools and Techniques, environmental education awareness booklets covering the three thematic areas of climate change, land degradation and biodiversity including an awareness brochure on emerging environmental issues, a local level training manual on environmental management and a reference guide for the three Rio Conventions). The documents have been distributed for use to the Dzongkhag and line agencies.

Ex-country training on environmental management for 35 participants comprising of officials from line agencies, focal persons of the three Rio Conventions, thematic working group members and district environment officers was conducted in Manila, the Philippines. In addition, 4 target group members were also trained on environmental management and environment assessment (EA) in Bangkok and 3 senior government officials also availed support through the project for a training cum exposure visit to Bangkok, Thailand on sustainable development and green infrastructure. The project also co-financed 4 DEOs to undergo a comprehensive training on social impact assessment, compliance monitoring and enforcement in New Delhi, India. In total, 42 individuals (11 women & 31 men) obtained ex-country training program through the project support.

Several rounds of in-country training were also conducted towards capacity development as listed below:

- A 14 days training program for 27 participants (7 women & 20 men) NECS and the DEOs on the integration of geographic information system (GIS) and environmental impact assessment
- A week-long training program for 25 participants (6 women & 19 men) on environmental management focusing on the three thematic areas of climate change, land degradation and biodiversity. The program also covered a short training on the proposal development with resource persons from the UNDP and the Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation. Participants for the program included DEOs, local government officials and line agencies
- A three day training program for 26 participants (5 women & 21 men) on environment information management system to the DEOs and representatives from all relevant sectors which resulted in the launching of the EIMS with validated data
- Co-financed sector specific trainings on EIA, compliance monitoring & enforcement and hands-on training on environmentally friendly road construction methods

The advantageous position of NECS for managing this project was that it was housing two focal points from the 3 Rio Conventions (UNCBD and UNFCCC). The NECS is also the responsible for the functioning of the DEOs. This evaluation found that this advantageous position had helped the smooth implementation of the project activities.

Recommendations

Delegation of more proactive responsibilities for the local government is recommended for more ownership from the DEC members and it will also help the Central Level Management to determine the level of capacity built/enhanced and accordingly give necessary guidance and backstopping. Participatory approach to local level environment management will see better implementation and faster results as compared to an “upstream approach.”

Project Management/Manager should be someone with lesser responsibilities to ensure that s/he can dedicate more time and be available for meetings and enquiries with the target groups and line agencies. However, the relevance of the project manager is found to be most appropriate being the head of the Environment Services Division with the overall mandate to foresee the functions of the DEOs.

Decentralized funding schemes to manage the Gewog-based projects with monitoring and technical backstopping from the National Executing Agency and TWG might help future projects save time and resources.

More coordination among the Rio Convention Focal Points is needed in the future as there was weak coordination among the focal persons in the implementation of this project.

Lessons Learned

At the end of the project, it was learned that the project should have been more active to avoid long gaps in between the activities. National Executing Agency, NECS in this case, should have kept post of a project manager open to any relevant ministry/organization as the in house officials of NECS remain busy carrying out other hard pressed responsibilities especially when such projects come in addition to their regular jobs. The other alternative is to allow project managers to manage only one project at a time.

The readings showed that monitoring and guidance from the project board members was less in frequency although all the activities under the outcomes and outputs were implemented. It is a bit early to see the impacts of the project as this evaluation was carried right after the end of the project term.

Other main lessons learned were in the following sectors/components:

i. Country Ownership

Ownership of the project by the country/government was commendable. GNHC coordinated from the side of RGOB and the project board consisted of members who were senior government officers.

ii. Strengthening stakeholder participation

While discussing with the project manager, it was observed that stakeholder participation was weak due to the high staff turnover and transfer in the government. There were some changes in representation in the board and taskforce, which led to weak stakeholder involvement and contribution in project implementation. However this did not impact the projects implementation due to strong participation from National Environment Commission,

Gross National Happiness commission, Bhutan Trust Fund for Environment Conservation and the United National Development Programme Country Office.

iii. Application of adaptive management strategies

One of the best adaptive management strategies of this project was reinforcement of the environmental rules and regulation and enhanced compliance and monitoring of developmental activities. In addition, involvement of local government officials in the training programs led to increased awareness on environmental issues and helped them understand the need for carrying out environmental impact assessment or environmental screening process for developmental plans, programs and projects.

In order to promote joint programming, efforts were made to carry out training/workshops targeting the same participants. One such example was the training on environmental management when the training for water inventory was conducted in December 2011. In a similar manner, several co-financing options, especially for training programs and other consultation workshops were undertaken like the 21 days training cum consultation workshop held in May 2012.

iv. Efforts to secure sustainability

For sustainability of the project activities, efforts made were to decentralize and train the district officials in line with the project activities. A TWG was set up to further train the district officials without having to send them for ex-country trainings in the future. Environmental Management Training Manual for Local Level in Bhutan has been formulated, published and distributed to the Dzongkhags for reference as a curriculum for environmental trainings in the future.

v. Knowledge transfer

In order to transfer knowledge gained by the district officials, they were trained as ToTs to be able to act as trainers whenever needs arise in the future.

vi. Role of M & E in project implementation and its effectiveness

A fairly good monitoring and evaluation mechanism was established under the project. However, the project could have implemented a better M&E mechanism for its activities and guide the project management team in delivering the outcomes beyond the project scope. The Board members could have played a more active role in fulfilling their duties as per the ToR in the project document.

In terms of its effectiveness, the satisfaction rate as per the survey was 41.8% and some of the good comments were - “Through this training I am capable enough to train and convince the local government on environmental management and conservation.” “The Dzongkhag environment officers have enhanced their competency in different fields of environmental management as a result of numerous trainings received through these projects including the use of GIS, ECS and EIMS”.

1. Introduction:

A. Purpose of evaluation

For the last decade, Bhutan has been increasingly becoming aware of the environmental impacts and has ratified the three Rio Conventions, namely UNCBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD.

In order to better understand the dynamics behind the threats to Bhutan's environment vis-à-vis global environment management, the RGoB, with support from UNDP-GEF, undertook a capacity self-assessment to implement the 3 Rio Conventions. Through a broad-based consultative and participatory process, the Bhutan NCSA first identified priority capacity development needs in biodiversity, climate change and land degradation thematic areas. It then identified 22 capacity development needs, either common to or cutting across these three thematic areas. Based on this analysis, the RGoB prepared an Action Plan based on seven specific outputs to address the prioritized capacity needs to fulfill Bhutan's responsibilities and commitments having ratified the 3 Rio Conventions.

Subsequent to consultations with concerned stakeholders, and based on in-country opportunities, the RGoB packaged the seven action plan outputs into three priority project concepts for immediate action. One of the 3 project concepts included the currently implemented project titled "Enhancing Global Environmental Management in Local Governance System." As the Project was the outcome of one of the three projects identified in the Action Plan, Local Government was given the centre-stage in the implementation of the Project. The implementation phase of the Project in Bhutan was from June 2008 to June 2012.

The Project, having completed its implementation phase required a Terminal Evaluation as per the GEF guidelines of managing and implementing Projects for which the Consultancy Services was hired to do the evaluation from 11th July to 25th July 2012. (Refer Annex 8.1)

The main purpose of this Terminal Evaluation (TE) is to provide an objective assessment of the project implementation and impact, including achievement of global environmental benefits and lessons learned to guide future conservation efforts including the design and implementation of other UNDP and GEF projects. Specifically, the TE assessed the extent to which planned project outcomes and outputs have been achieved, as well as assessed the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the project. In the Recommendations part, the Consultant has furnished the project exit strategy.

B. Key issues addressed

This Evaluation addressed the following key/special issues of the Project:

- i. Achievements of the project and assess their effectiveness in solving/mitigating problems associated with meeting obligations under the 3 Rio Conventions;
- ii. Determine the effect of the project on target groups or institutions (The national level stakeholders, Dzongkhag and Gewog functionaries etc);
- iii. Determine the degree of support given by the government in integrating the project objectives and goals into the national development programme and other related projects. Also how well the project fitted into the national development policy(ies);
- iv. Risk analysis and management of the project as per the UNDP Risk Management System within ATLAS and guidance on using this system, which was incorporated in the annual PIRs. The evaluation determined how effectively the risk management system was used as an adaptive management tool. Risks may be of a financial, socio-political, institutional, operational, environmental or any other type;
- v. Cross cutting issues in the Local Government like the promotion of gender equity and inclusiveness and the support for decentralization through involvement of 20 districts;
- vi. Capacity Development: Assessed the extent to which national project implementers have been adequately trained and enhanced capacity to take over technical and professional responsibilities as envisaged in the project design.

C. Methodology and Structure of the evaluation

Desk reviews of past documents, Minutes of Project Board Meetings, Quarterly Reports of NECS to UNDP and Annual Reports, Project Progress Ratings and measures taken to strategically move forward to mitigate the gaps in the implementation were all done in the first few days of the 14 day assignment.

In order to triangulate the ideas for rating the Project, an online questionnaire, which consisted of mostly close ended questions was developed and was transmitted through email to the DEOs and the DEC members. However, due to challenges of availing email addresses of the GYT heads, who are the Gups, they could not be reached for this survey. A six point scale of satisfactory levels (HS, S, MS, MUS, U and HUS) as per the ToR and as defined in the GEF guidelines for Terminal Evaluations was used to get the satisfactory levels of the respondents under various outcomes and output levels. The evaluation also covered the analysis on strengths and

weaknesses of project design, implementation, monitoring and adaptive management and sustainability of project outcomes based on the Project Document, Annual Progress Reports, and manuals and publications that the project produced.

Face to face interviews and meetings with the Unit Head of Environment in UNDP, Project Manager at NECS, the 3 Rio Conventions Focal Persons, and stakeholders were also conducted to arrive at an objective conclusion and rating of the project.

2. The project and its development context:

A. Project start and its duration

The Project had its initial date of start as June 2008 and was scheduled to end by June 2011 but because of reasons cited like, staff shortage in NEC, change in project manager, identifying a new Project Manager and that fact that the Project Manager was faced with many other duties and tasks other than the project duties, led to delay in the implementation by about ten months in the first year of its implementation. Then the Project Manager was changed in 2009. Activities were delayed mainly due to the local government elections process and other major events like the Royal wedding of his Majesty the King. Different reporting procedures to the UNDP and also difference in RGoB and UNDP financial years caused delays in implementation.

Relevance of the project to the development context

Sustainable socio-economic development through conservation of the environment forms two of the four GNH Pillars for development in Bhutan. Due to the rapid socio-economic development in Bhutan, the negative effects on environment from development activities is inevitable and therefore, the interventions of NCSA Project was very timely. The main focus of this project being at the Local government level fulfils the requirement of not only building capacities for environmental conservation but also ensures sustainability beyond the project phase by enhancing the capacities of the Local Governments to which power has been decentralized for autonomous decision making to development works costing less than two million and also to ensure that they decide on the relevant environmental protection interventions as they know their locality the best. (LG Act 2009).

It is at the grassroots where most of the developmental activities happen and need close monitoring in Bhutan. Building capacities of the DEC Members through in-country and ex-country trainings for the implementation and monitoring of the environmental activities through the lenses of the global environmental objectives was really a participatory approach to development.

Fast changes caused by erratic climatic conditions were observed many times in Bhutan, few of them being the sudden swollen rivers like Phochu and Mochu in 1994 which caused a huge loss along the catchment areas that prompted Bhutanese government to stay prepared for the unforeseen disasters. Along this line, the development of EIMS which would give ready information to the decision makers for timely intervention was necessary. Many new projects requiring infrastructure development like roads, hydropower dams and power houses, buildings, telecom towers and cables, development of eco-tourism in the villages have become common development initiatives in Bhutan. For all these interventions, whenever any construction is to be carried out, careful environmental studies or following of environmental rules and guidelines has to be carried out and monitored respectively. Therefore, capacity to endorse and monitor all these works are needed all around the country, for which the NCSA objective to build capacity of the district level officials was very necessary and timely. Even though 100% level of competency may not have been possible, the project with its support has initiated the process and has led to advancements in the area beyond the project scope.

B. Problems that the project sought to address

1. Insufficient Project Staff

Although the accounts personnel and other support staff of the National Environment Commission Secretariat were also given some responsibilities in project management, tasks mainly included fund release and administrative support, such as organizing trainings and workshops. There was a need for an additional personnel in project management, who could have provided back up support to the project manager, whenever he was out of office on official travel and long leave.

2. Reporting Formats

When the government required the project management to report as per the Planning and Management Systems (PLaMS), GEF-UNDP Project required them to report in the HACT system. The Annual Progress Reports also had to be provided twice, namely one for the RGOB and the other for UNDP-GEF submission. It was reported that reporting requirements to UNDP kept on changing making it inconvenient and lengthy. (Refer Annex 8.3B for the opinion of the project manager on reporting formats).

However in 2010 with efforts to harmonize reporting procedures with the Government, UNDP adopted the RGOB's PLAMS reporting format, reducing partners work in double reporting.

3. Audit/Fiscal year

The other challenge that the project management was faced with was the fiscal year system of the two organizations. When RGOB followed the July-June Fiscal Year, UNDP followed January-December calendar timeline. This non uniformity in the fiscal years was a challenge in managing many of the UN-Projects. The 18 month Annual Work Plan came as bit of a relief for both partners, however, discussions for improvement and options of managing and harmonizing the Fiscal Years is still under way.

C. Immediate development objectives of the project

The Development Objective of the Project was to mainstream and enhance global environmental management systems by mainstreaming the provisions of the Rio Conventions. In order to achieve this objective, support to the decentralization process by working and involving the 20 districts was actively carried out. Mainstreaming of the cross-cutting environmental management concerns into the planning and capacity development initiatives per the provisions of Rio Conventions was ensured through monitoring practices of the GEF-UNDP through Quarterly and Annual Reporting Systems. DEC members in the Dzongkhag, who formed the front door implementers of the environmental initiatives were trained in the various environmental training workshop both in-country and abroad. This ensured the capacity development of the implementers which was found a prerequisite for quality service delivery, continuity and sustainability of the Project in the future.

Along the objectives set and as per the NCSA report, capacity of the DEOs and relevant line agencies were enhanced by conducting ex-country training on environmental management to act as ToTs. Several in-country training aimed at building capacity and awareness on environmental management in sync with the objectives of the 3 Rio Conventions were carried out as reported in the sections above including production and publication of training manuals and awareness materials. Further, the EIMS was enhanced and launched as part of this project with the objective of providing updated version of the environmental data with standard indicators to help in decision-making and promulgating plans and policies in environmentally sustainable manner. As part of improving the EIMS data, the existing web-based environment clearance system (ECS) was expanded by creating additional components for the DEOs and Competent Authorities (CAs) to help them monitor and maintain environmental clearance data. GPS handsets and training on integration of geographic information system (GIS) with environmental impact assessment were also carried to further strengthen the environment assessment process.

D. Planned outputs and sub-outputs

The Project worked under the umbrella of three (3) main outcome areas consisting of several sub outputs. The planned outputs in the Project Document can be seen in the Outcomes and the Outputs in the table below: The achievement levels as per the findings in the evaluation are given in the “Achievement Level ” column in the extreme right of the same table:

Table 1: Expected Results of the Project with achievement levels after the implementation.

Project Objective	Outcomes	Outputs	Achievement Levels/ Satisfaction Rate ¹
Enhance global environmental management by mainstreaming the provisions of the Rio Conventions into enhanced decentralized environmental management.	1. Enabled central-level framework to enhance decentralized capacity for environmental management and implementation of the provisions of the 3 Rio Conventions.	<u>1.1:</u> A functional and sustainable Dzongkhag (District) Environmental Committee (DEC) Focal Point Secretariat established within the NECS ² with the capacity to manage and coordinate the DEC environmental management tasks and responsibilities.	Satisfactory; Satisfaction Rate: 70
		<u>1.2:</u> An approved and funded Training Curriculum and related Action Plan for DEC's on how to implement comply to and monitor Bhutanese commitments to EAs and other provisions of the Rio Conventions. Streamlined reporting system to the MEAs as provisioned in the NEPA 2007. (check on the rating)	Moderately Satisfactory,; Satisfaction Rate: 50
		<u>1.3:</u> Training-of-trainers learning materials for environmental management awareness and training workshops for DEC members developed.	Satisfactory; Satisfaction Rate: 70
		<u>1.4:</u> Enhanced capacity of key staff from NECS and concerned line ministries to conduct/lead Training-of Trainers initiatives as part of their regular activities related to	Moderately Satisfactory; Satisfaction Rate:

¹ The levels of achievement and satisfaction was derived from the GEF evaluation scale of projects and the calculation here were derived by making an average from the online survey response and interviews with focal persons.

Project Objective	Outcomes	Outputs	Achievement Levels/ Satisfaction Rate ¹
		decentralized development planning, implementation and monitoring. - This exercise has led to the formation of a new division at NECS thus separating the environmental assessment task from the compliance monitoring part leading to better and faster public services and effective compliance monitoring.	65
	2. Enabled decentralized institutional framework and personnel to enhance local environmental management, which include implementation of the Rio Conventions provisions	<u>2.1:</u> Supportive institutional structure of DEC's established in all Districts. However the project supported equipment supply (printers, cameras, GPS sets, extension kits) to all 20 District Environment Officer	Not Applicable: The DEC institutions existed prior to this project-.
		<u>2.2:</u> Technical environmental management manpower capacity in DEC's established in all Districts.	Moderately satisfactory; Satisfaction Rate: 60
		<u>2.3:</u> Increased capacity and knowledge base amongst the DEC members to carry out decentralized environmental management and compliance in line with global environmental requirements.	Moderately satisfactory; Satisfaction Rate: 65
		<u>2.4:</u> Increased capacity of the DEC's to fund decentralized environmental management activities addressing Bhutan's commitments to implement the 3 Rio Conventions.	Moderately Unsatisfactory; Satisfaction Rate: 55

Project Objective	Outcomes	Outputs	Achievement Levels/ Satisfaction Rate ¹
	3. Existing Environmental Information Management System (EIMS) enhanced to back stop and accommodate national policy and decision making in response to global environmental management needs as per the provisions of the Rio Conventions.	<u>3.1:</u> Set of uniform indicators and guidance for application are established for measuring the contribution of decentralized environmental management towards meeting global environmental objectives.	Moderately Satisfied; Satisfaction Rate: 50

Note: This table was derived from the NCSA Project Document, pg 6 and was modified to include the findings of the achievement levels from the evaluation against each output under the outcome areas.

E. Main stakeholders

NECS being the National Executing Agency, stakeholders of the project included the environmental units of line ministries namely the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests and Ministry of Works & Human Settlement. Gross National Happiness Commission being the partner organization from the government ensured the UNDP-GEF project to align environmental activities and issues with the National Policies. The Royal Civil Service Commission's role was to identify and implement training programmes for the civil servants (DEC members).

The Department of Disaster Management was also one of the stakeholders with the role of involving all decentralized projects from the central level. As a commendable partnership, the project also had an NGO, Royal Society for Protection of Nature involved as a partner in this project. The environmental financing institute, BTFEC was in the technical working group contributing in the technical and knowledge management of the project.

F. Results expected

The expected results of the project were as laid down in the project document under the three main outcome areas and the outputs mentioned in table 1. By achieving all the outcome areas which were further sub divided into outputs, the project aspired to build the institutional arrangement of the DEC's. With EIMS set up, the project targeted to have a uniform set of data and indicators for standardization of information. This data bank was intended to serve the purposes of decision making for the policy makers and researchers, or anyone interested to avail the data as such.

One of the main objectives was to bring about synergy amongst the 3 Rio Conventions at the end of the project. Interviews with the focal persons revealed that much could have been done for more effective synergy and coordination. However 3 publications mainly focusing on creating awareness on the issues such as the climate change, land degradation and biodiversity were published and distributed in addition to the publication of a more comprehensive reference guide on the 3 RIO Conventions.

Despite the hurdles, the project was successful in building the capacity and raising technical knowledge of the district environment officers who are mostly competent to monitor the compliance of environmental rules and regulations and align them with the international objectives. A training manual on environmental management for local level was produced as part of this project, EIMS was developed and launched, enhancement of capacities for EFRC rules and regulations was done and above all, the target beneficiaries were exposed to ex-country practices of EMS which have to be contextualized to our home grounds.

3. Implementation

A. Financial Planning

In terms of Financial Planning of the project, there was partnership amongst the donor agencies like DANIDA through EUSPS (US\$ 317,690) and GEF-UNDP (US\$ 500,000) and in-kind contribution from the RGOB (US\$ 168,846).

B. Monitoring and evaluation

For M&E component of the Project, the quarterly reporting system acted as one of the M&E tools followed by the Annual Performance Reviews. Mid-year and annual review for the project were also carried out alongside other projects under the environment portfolio. Capacity Development Monitoring Score Card formed part of the framework for monitoring the progress and achievements at the end of the Project. The score cards which were supposed to be filled in

the “staged indicators” and the “next stage” indicators were satisfactorily undertaken. Project Board and the working group committee had the mandate to give advisory services and technical assistance respectively.

C. Execution and implementation modalities

The overall execution of the project activities was with the NECS as the Implementing Partner and the responsible organizations were the UNDP and the GNHC. The activities were based on the outputs charted under each outcome area. When the national level activity of managing the technical part of EIMS and diagnosing the needs of Capacity Development of the implementers at the Dzongkhags and stakeholders rested with the NECS at the Central Level, the practical implementation of environmental services at the field level was the DEC members who got necessary guidance to be provided from the NECS and the Technical Working Group.

D. Management by UNDP country office

The UNDP Country Office based in Thimphu had the role of disbursing the budget through GNHC each fiscal year for the activities planned according to the Annual Work Plans. The UNCO also played the monitoring role of ensuring that there was timely and quality reports (quarterly, annual and project implementation) submitted by the NECS. The head of the Environment and Disaster Management Unit at the Country Office ensured the effective management of the technical part when the Deputy Resident Representative was a board member in the project board giving necessary guidance in the implementation cycle and managerial aspects of the Project.

The ultimate role of UN-Country Office was its accountability to GEF for project delivery and responsible for supervising project development, guiding project activities and contracting staff whenever requested by NECS.

The role played by UNDP country office as the coordinator of the GEF funds was much appreciated by the government counterpart for its commendable job of monitoring.

E. Coordination and operational issues

Inter-agency stakeholders

The project had a very good inter-agency partners functioning as the TWG. Some of the roles played by the TWG were in giving feedback on relevant documents or products like the consultancy reports and training manuals developed as part of the project outputs, an example of which is the environmental management training manual.

Implementation Delays

The project implemented its activities despite problems like the ten month delay in the first year which led to subsequent delays like the training of the local government officials at the grassroots which had to be deferred because of the delayed LG elections process.

Project Staff

The office bearers of the project were the Project Director within the Secretariat established at the NECS to implement the project activities. However, it was the Project Manager who was involved in implementing all the activities and reported back to the project steering committee within the NEC on the achievements and status of the project apart from the reporting requirements to the Project Board and UNDP.

4. Findings and Conclusion:

A. Project formulation

The Project was formulated after the NCSA Study by NECS as part of the DANIDA EUSPS Project in 2004-2006. The NCSA had identified 22 capacity needs and proposed 3 project priorities to carry out the capacity development initiatives. NCSA qualified for GEF funding as it met the requirements of the provisions of 3 Rio Conventions and also its own Operational Programs (OPs). The Project was in line with the GEF Strategic Priority CB-2 (Cross Cutting Capacity Building). Main focus of the capacity building was concentrated at the Local Government/Dzongkhags levels with the inclusion of relevant line agencies.

NECS was to take the lead in the implementation of the project as it is the apex environment body mandated with the task of framing relevant environmental policies and legislations and the enforcement of the same. The National Environment Commission members constituted of highest level government officials comprising of Minister of Agriculture & Forest, Minister of Works and Human Settlement, Minister of Economic Affairs, Executive Director of RSPN, Director of Bhutan Trust Fund for Environment Conservation and Chairman of the Environment Committee of the Parliament and the Prime Minister as the chairman of the Commission.

B. Implementation approach

I. NECS and the UNDP-Country Office

At the Central Level at Thimphu, NECS had the focal point established within the Secretariat and worked closely with the UNDP-Country Office in terms of monitoring and guiding the project implementation. GNHC and the RCSC were the two government organizations involved as main stakeholders ensuring the project activities were in line with the national policies and

RCSC had the role to identify the necessary trainings for capacity building within the civil service.

II. Line Ministries, Dzongkhags and DEC members

For effectiveness in the implementation, the project had its line ministry stakeholders like the MoEA, MoAF, MoHCA, and RSPN, the only Environmental NGO in the country. BTFEC was in the TWG and the DEC members with the DYT heads (dzongdags) as their chairpersons implemented the environmental activities in the districts. At the Gewog (block) level, it was the GYT head, the Gup who was the chair of the environmental committee.

III. Implementation Approach of the Project

Over all, from the management perspective, the project activities were carried out in consultation with the target groups and prioritizing the activities to attain maximum benefit from the limited resources at disposal. Dzongkhag and local level capacity constraints are better understood at the NEC level as there exists annual reporting requirements in addition to the annual conference with the DEOs. In general, district level institutional capacity was strengthened to handle more complex projects in line with the decentralization process.

C. Country ownership/drivenness

RGOB being signatory to all the three Rio Conventions was eligible for the GEF-UNDP funds for a project of this nature. This project was the outcome of the RGoB's seven action plan in the National Capacity for Self Assessment (2006) which had come up with the three priority project concepts for immediate action.

Over the last decade, Bhutan has shown increasingly robust interest both within the country and in the global environmental management arena. In the country's steady effort to decentralize power away from the capital to the 20 Dzongkhags (districts) and 205 Gewogs (blocks of villages), the objective to promote local socio-economic development strategies and initiatives by empowering the people to participate to make decisions on their own for their local level plans and programmes. In this light, the GEF-UNDP MSP Project could not have come in better and more opportune time than this.

D. Stakeholder participation

Going by the stakeholder participation, there were very relevant agencies and government organizations like the GNHC, RCSC, Ministries like the MoEA and MoAF with technical backstopping from RSPN, BTF and SDS. Combination of the ministries and agencies cited here itself assures one of the commitments that RGOB has put to this project. NECS taking the

driver's seat to implement the project have assured the standards of the environmental rules and regulations.

E. Replication approach

Nation-wide implementation of the project in 2008-2012 merits continuity of the project rather than replication. Continuation of the activities already put in place will be convenient given the fact that RGOB structure along with the DEC institutions will be intact even beyond the project period. Cost incurred in the continuity will be much lesser than the first phase as capacity building components in the same areas will not be necessary in the next round.

Regional replication could be done by working towards mitigating the short comings and the lessons learned in Bhutan. The Political and Social Risk of implementing such a project in Bhutan has never been an issue given the stable government system and the peaceful society.

F. Cost-effectiveness

The Project was very cost effective in that it had the component of managing the cross cutting issues of the 3 Rio Conventions in one package and also ensured all the socio economic issues and capacity building components under one umbrella.

The UNDP-RGOB procurement rules were stringently used while procuring services and equipment under this project enabling the project to give value to each ngultrum/dollar spent.

The opportunity to partner up with other agencies like DANIDA, and RGOB contributed in kind in the form of office space, staff salaries and utility bills. Almost all the stakeholders, especially the DEOs and the line agencies technical working group's capacities were developed as part of the project within the specified over-all budget ceiling of USD 1,040,382 per the Project Agreement document.

G. UNDP comparative advantage

UNDP as an International Organization known for its initiative for peace, equity, justice and gender empowerment, is also known for its links and network around the world. It plays a good role in mobilizing funds for activities and projects for development. With access to the resource pool around the world, UNDP has made its mark in development. In this line, Bhutan has been fortunate to have its presence in the country and bring about a lot of changes and contributed to projects ranging from poverty reduction programmes to capacity building of the institutions and individuals alike. It also played its role as the intermediary/link between the funding agencies and RGOB.

For this Project, UNDP ensured monitoring the progress of the project as well as providing the required guidance to the processes concerning the administrative UNDP-GEF requirements. It had the advantage of doing this as it had a Country Office located in Thimphu, the same city where NECS is located.

H. Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector

NECS with the mandate of formulating and implementing Environmental Rules and Regulations and as a keeper of the EA Act 2000, NEPA-2007, the Water Act-2011, and as a regulatory authority of the E/SIA Rules and Regulations has the opportunity to manage at least one or two projects related to environmental management. Joint support Programme, being one of them, it also has the UNFCCC Project and UNCBD Projects running parallel with this GEF-NCSA. Because all the said projects are related to one another, sharing of ideas and outsourcing knowledge or complementing the projects by one another was one of the plus points of NECS managing a project like NCSA.

I. Indicators (EIMS)

The project aimed to have a common set of indicators for the EIMS for uniformity in the knowledge base of resource utilization and pressure on the land and biodiversity. It was found that there were fragmented data among the ministries and agencies in the past. EIMS would ensure that the line ministries would contribute the data information and NECS would make the data available through internet to the districts and all those in need of data for specific decision making on environmental issues and activities. Such a databank was supposed to help the policy makers and researchers to have access to readily available local environmental data from the context of 3 Rio Conventions.

Findings from the evaluation were that the EIMS is now fully functioning making it more reliable by the integration of the ECS and expanding the ECS database to districts and other line agencies. However, the NECS has plans to further upgrade the EIMS and make it more user friendly so that regular validation of the data can be carried out with reliability. The survey question for EIMS showed quite a good satisfaction rate of 56.36.

J. Management arrangements

UNDP: The Project was implemented according to UNDP procedures for National Execution (NEX) in Bhutan with the administrative support of the UNDP Bhutan Country Office (CO). UNDP was accountable to GEF for project delivery and responsible for supervising project development, guiding project activities and contracting staff whenever requested by NECS. UNDP also provided technical backstopping and monitoring to adherence to the work plans.

Location of UN-CO in Thimphu is best for the coordination of the GEF funds. However, from the Executing Agency's side, the requirements were too stringent, especially the reporting formats.

UNDP also carried out onsite reviews for the project twice a year ensuring all financial management and procurement was in line with the RGOB rules and regulations

GNHC: The Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC) as the National Coordinating Authority, was signatory to the Project Document and all the revisions, thereafter, on behalf of the RGoB. The UNDP funds for the project were disbursed to NECS through GNHC. The funds disbursed were subject to regular audits by the Royal Audit Authority. The audit by RAA in 2010 for this project came up with no major issues in the fund management of the project.

GNHC acted as a coordinator between NECS and UNDP-GEF. However with the delays in project implementation and change in representation of project board member it was felt that GNHC should have had some monitoring roles in place for more effective delivery of project activities.

NECS: Project activities were executed by NECS which had the mandate for procurement and payment of all services, subcontracts and equipment in accordance with RGOB rules and procedures. It was responsible for project coordination and management, in addition to compliance monitoring of the work plan, which formed the basis for project execution. It was also responsible for technical and financial reporting to GEF through the UNDP CO. The Project Management Office (PMO) was established at NECS and was responsible for implementation of all project activities including direct supervision of the activities that were contracted to consultants.

The PMO staffing: NECS appointed an appropriate official to serve as a part-time National Project Director (NPD) from the Policy and Planning Services within NECS. The NPD assumed accountability for the achievement of project objectives on behalf of the designated institution. The NPD was responsible for coordinating the delivery of all inputs to the Project and for ensuring that they were delivered on time utilising project resources judiciously.

While the PMO was to be headed by the NPD, day-to-day activities was managed by a full-time National Project Manager. He had many other responsibilities in his capacity as the Chief Environmental Officer in NECS and had other primary duties to his calling as a Civil Servant and the Head of one of divisions during the project implementation phase. Although he was assisted by financial personnel and administrative assistant, he was the lone Manager for the Project.

TWG: The project established an **inter-agency Technical Working Group (TWG)** that provided technical inputs to the NECS. It also provided assistance or other resource inputs during programme implementation. The TWG provided the technical guidance, review, and evaluated the performance and output of the project and recommended measures to improve the design and implementation of the project. The responsibility of the TWG was carried out in line with the terms of reference agree upon at the start of the project implementation.

Project Board (PB): PB was established during the PDF-A phase and continued for the GEF-UNDP MSP with representatives from: (i) NECS; (ii) DMD (now DDM) ; (iii) MoAF; (iv) GNHC; (v) MoHCA; (v) Royal Civil Service Commission; (vi) a Representative from the DEC; and UNDP. PB targeted to have representation from the three Rio Convention as Focal Points for CBD and UNFCCC which were within NECS, and MoAF represented UNCCD. The PB bore overall responsibility for coordination and provided policy directions in the implementation of the project. A terms of reference for the PB is also in place and was agreed by the members.

5. Results

A. Attainment of planned objectives & outcomes

As per the PB Minutes of the Meeting in August 2011, and the APR 2012, it was found that the Project had met all its outputs and objectives. The last activity of training the stakeholders as part of this project was carried out in May 2012 for 18 days and was also co-financed by other projects to save resources and time. The training was divided into 4 day session each on particular subjects like EFRC, Guidelines on Construction of Roads and Highways, Guide to EMP for Hydropower, and familiarization to EA Act, 2000, and Stakeholder Consultation for the Revision of EA Guidelines. The resource personnel were TA hired from both in and ex-country across relevant agencies and the participants from all over 20 Dzongkhags.

B. Sustainability of impacts

In terms of sustainability of the impacts that the Project brought, institutionally, the activities in place could be carried on without the need for much budgetary contribution after the project period as the RGOB institution will remain intact even beyond the project phase. The majority of the project staff who were involved in managing the project were mid-level officials who will be there as Civil Servants at least another 10-15 years. If the said officials and implementers carry on with the environmental initiatives with dedication and commitment, Bhutan is blessed with the Political Will of conserving our environment with the national goal of maintaining at least 60 percent forest cover for all times to come.

Wildlife Conservation Division, National Biodiversity Center in Serbithang and Sustainable Development Secretariat, whose head offices are all located in Thimphu would have no challenge to coordinate and work together in fulfilling the mandates of the Global Environmental Management from the perspective of the Rio Conventions. Since the themes of the said organizations are all in line with the Rio Conventions and the National Environment Protection Act of Bhutan (2007), sustainability of the impacts rests assured within the Civil Service System of RGOB.

C. Contribution to national capacity development

The very nature of this Project being Capacity Development of the implementers with special focus to districts/local government, all the capacities that were built by this project will not go waste but rather it will contribute to the capacity asset of RGOB. When functional capacities were developed for the managerial/support staff of the Project like the finance personnel and administrative assistants, greater chunk of the project members/implementers had its technical capacity enhanced by being part of this project.

6. Recommendations:

A. Corrective actions

1. Project Design

The project design met the requirements of the funding agency. However, the project could have made a much far reaching affect had it supplemented further on the decentralization process of environmental management not just from the capacity development point. The NECS has carried out a gap analysis study within the current institutional setup and found that establishment of regional environment offices would not only improve the national level environmental management but would also have a greater impact in dealing with the global environmental issues.

2. Implementation

A full time project manager was appointed for the implementation of the project. In addition, the project manager is being assisted by the project steering committee (PSC) within the NECS apart from the TWG members and the Project Board. Managing the project activities of 20 Dzongkhags was found challenging but nonetheless, with the support from UNDP CO, TWG members, PB and the PSC, all the targeted and expected outputs of the project were delivered and it is worth mentioning here that some of the activities started by the project have progressed and advanced beyond the project scope.

However, in future, such projects merit an alternate project manager to ensure the smooth flow of activities without delays. This will not only reduce the burden of the only project manager but also ensure timely delivery of services.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation

There was effective monitoring and evaluation tools in place but still gaps were found in the compliance part. Strict monitoring from all angles like the Project Board along with the UNDP-CO would ensure better implementation. If the evaluation at the end of each year was not found satisfactory, strategies for change should have been framed strictly and implementers instructed to comply.

B. Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project

Activities which are happening in the districts like the practice of building EFRC roads, compliance of EA Act, 2000 and NEPA 2007 are recommended to be followed up and reinforced for better achievement of the targets set to ensure the environmental safeguard. Monitoring on whether or not the capacities built at the national level/ex-country are relevant for the local context may be given a follow up action. In cases where some participants may have forgotten, or if they are found challenged to put the new knowledge into practice, they should be given in-country refreshment courses and guidance from the national project management unit.

C. Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

The main objectives of the project, albeit environmental in nature could be achieved better if there was more coordination with other Multilateral Environment Agreement focal agencies such as the Basel Convention, CITIES, Ramsar Convention, etc. as the issues are cross-cutting.

7. Lessons learned

This table below explains the good and bad practices relating to relevance, performance and success of the project.

Lessons learned in terms of 3 parameters	Best Practices	Lessons learned	Remarks
Relevance	1. All DEOs trained on the EMS, EIA and SEA. 2. Training manuals on	Taking all line ministerial and agency stakeholders for EMS	Taking the average satisfaction rate from the questions in online survey, it revealed that

Lessons learned in terms of 3 parameters	Best Practices	Lessons learned	Remarks
	Environment Management and other documents produced were awareness brochures on climate, land and biodiversity.	training.	there was approximately 50% satisfaction rate for the relevance of the project. It is to be noted that the number of respondents were only 12 out of the 42 who were randomly selected. Therefore the satisfaction rate given for this project based on the survey may stand subject to change had there been more respondents.
Performance	Stringent rules of UNDP-GEF to submit quarterly and Annual Progress Reports and Project Implementation Reports ensured movement of the project per the AWP.	Appointing project manager needs a study beyond the competency; over tasking a technical person with managerial issues resulted to delays and poor documentation.	Satisfaction Rate: 50 Moderately Satisfactory.
Success	Coordination success between the stakeholders; Some opined that this project offered them the platform to share and learn from people of various disciplines.	Very less coordination among the 3 focal points of UNCBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD.	Satisfaction Rate: 50 Moderately satisfactory

The project scoring being done in percentages, and 100 being the highest for perfect implementation, the overall rating of the Project may be concluded at 60percent satisfaction rate.

8. Annexes:

Annexure 8.1: ToR

Terms of Reference

Terminal Evaluation of the Project - Enhancing Global Environmental Management in Bhutan's Local Governance System

(June 2008 - June 2012)

1. BACKGROUND:

The project 'Enhancing Global Environmental Management in Bhutan's Local Governance System' (NCSA) is a Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded Project implemented through the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The project is implemented by the National Environment Commission Secretariat of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

In order to better understand the dynamics behind the threats to Bhutan's environment vis-à-vis global environment management, the RGoB, with support from UNDP-GEF, undertook a capacity self-assessment to implement the Rio Conventions. Through a broad-based consultative and participatory process, the Bhutan NCSA first identified priority capacity development needs in the biodiversity, climate change and land degradation thematic areas. It then identified 22 capacity development needs, either common to or cutting across these three thematic areas. Based on this analysis, the RGoB prepared an Action Plan based on seven specific outputs to address the prioritized capacity needs to fulfill Bhutan's responsibilities and commitments having ratified the 3 Rio Conventions. Further to subsequent consultations with concerned stakeholders, and based on in-country opportunities, the RGoB packaged the seven action plan outputs into three priority project concepts for immediate action. One of the 3 project concepts included the currently implemented project titled – "Enhancing Environmental Management in Local Governance System."

Over the last decade, Bhutan has increasingly become an active player in the global environmental management arena. The country has become Party to all the three Rio Conventions – along with other international environment and sustainable development conventions and agreements. Together, the three Rio Conventions and their instruments

collectively set the overall context for Bhutan's global environmental management. The Royal Government of Bhutan has steadily been trying to decentralize power away from the capital, moving parts of its administration to the 20 Dzongkhags (districts) and 205 geogs (bloks of villages) with the objective to promote local socio-economic development strategies and initiatives by empowering the people to participate in and make decisions on their own plans and programmes. The Project supports the ongoing decentralization process through mainstreaming cross-cutting environmental management concerns into ongoing planning and capacity development initiatives.

The Project Objective is to enhance global environmental management by mainstreaming the provisions of the Rio Conventions into enhanced decentralized environmental management.

The project objective is being achieved through the following outcomes and outputs:

Outcome1: Enabled central-level framework to enhance decentralized capacity for environmental management and implementation of the provisions of the 3 Rio Conventions

- Output 1.1: A functional and sustainable District Environmental Committee (DEC) Focal Point Secretariat established within the NECS with the capacity to manage and coordinate the DEC environmental management tasks and responsibilities
- Output 1.2: Training-of-trainers learning materials for environmental management awareness and training workshops for DEC members developed
- Output 1.3: Enhanced capacity of key staff from NECS and concerned line ministries³ to conduct/lead Training-of Trainers initiatives as part of their regular activities related to decentralized development planning, implementation and monitoring

Outcome 2: Enabled decentralized institutional framework and personnel to enhance local environmental management, which include implementation of the Rio Conventions' provisions.

- Output 2.1: Supportive institutional structure of DEC's established in all Districts
- Output 2.2: Technical environmental management manpower capacity in DEC's in all Districts established
- Output 2.3: Increased capacity and knowledge base amongst the DEC members to carry out decentralized environmental management and compliance in line with global environmental requirements
- Output 2.4: Increased capacity of the DEC's to fund decentralized environmental management activities addressing Bhutan's commitments to implement the 3 Rio Convention

Outcome 3: Existing Environmental Information Management System enhanced to backstop national policy and decision making in response to global environmental management needs as per the provisions of the Rio Conventions.

- Output 3.1: Set of uniform indicators and guidance for application are established for measuring the contribution of decentralized environmental management towards meeting global environmental objectives
- Output 3.2: The Rio Convention Focal Points are enabled to take into account the decentralized environmental management activities in their reporting on Bhutan's commitments to implement the 3 Rio Conventions

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

In accordance with UNDP/GEF M&E policies and procedures, all projects must undergo terminal evaluation at the end of the project. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policy at the project level in UNDP/GEF has four objectives: i) to monitor and evaluate results and impacts, ii) to provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvement; iii) to promote accountability for resource use; and iv) to document, provide feedback on, and disseminate lessons learned.

Terminal Evaluations (TE) are intended to provide an objective and independent assessment of project implementation and impact, including achievement of global environmental benefits and lessons learned to guide future conservation efforts including the design and implementation of other UNDP and GEF projects. Specifically, the TE will assess the extent to which planned project outcomes and outputs have been achieved, as well assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the project as defined in the GEF Evaluation Office guidelines for Terminal Evaluations. The evaluation will also evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of project design, implementation, monitoring and adaptive management and sustainability of project outcomes, including the project exit strategy. The evaluation covers the entire project including non-GEF financed components.

3. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The Terminal Evaluation should cover the following areas:

- i.** Appropriateness of the project concept and design
- ii.** Project relevance and consistency with country priorities
- iii.** Ownership of the project at the national and local levels
- iv.** Stakeholder participation at national and local levels.
- v.** Effectiveness in realizing project immediate objectives, planned outcomes and outputs, and the extent to which these have contributed towards strengthening the institutional, organizational and technical capability of the Government in achieving its long-term sustainable development objectives (including environmental management goals).

- vi. Sustainability of project achievements and impacts, including financial and institutional sustainability, and an assessment of planned replication and exit strategies
- vii. Review management arrangements and the Project Monitoring and Evaluation System, including the quality and timeliness of inputs, activities, responsiveness of project management to changes in the project environment and other monitoring feedback. Evaluate whether project design allowed for flexibility in responding to changes in the project environment.
- viii. Financial planning and sustainability, including the timely delivery and use of committed co-financing.
- ix. Implementing Agency's Supervision and Backstopping
- x. Cost-effectiveness: were project outputs and outcomes achieved in the most cost-effective manner? Were there any delays that affected efficiency?
- xi. Monitoring and evaluation and the application of adaptive management principles (including effective use of log-frame, UNDP risk management system, the annual Project Implementation Reviews, and other monitoring tools and mechanisms as appropriate)

Special Issues to be considered:

- i. Review the achievements of the project and assess their effectiveness in solving/mitigating problems associated with meeting obligations under the 3 Rio Conventions ;
- ii. Determine the effect of the project on target groups or institutions (The national level stakeholders, Dzongkhags and Gewog functionaries etc.)
- iii. Determine the degree of support given by the government in integrating the project objectives and goals into the national development programme and other related projects. Also how well the project fits into the national development policy;
- iv. The GEF, UNDP and other donors are paying particular attention to risk analysis and management. UNDP has developed a risk management system within ATLAS and guidance on using this system, which is also now incorporated in the annual PIR. The evaluation should determine how effectively the risk management system is being used as an adaptive management tool. Risks may be of a financial, socio-political, institutional, operational, environmental (or other) type.
- v. Considering that UNDP is concerned about local governance and promotion of gender equity, the review will be required to look at these cross cutting issues.
 - Governance: How has the project supported the decentralization process and involvement of the government stakeholders from the 20 districts in the decision making process?
 - Promotion of gender equity: Has the project considered gender sensitivity or equal participation of men and women in decision making processes?

- vi. Describe the main lessons that have emerged in terms of:
 - strengthening country ownership;
 - strengthening stakeholder participation;
 - application of adaptive management strategies;
 - efforts to secure sustainability;
 - knowledge transfer; and
 - role of M & E in project implementation and its effectiveness.
- vii. Capacity Development: Assess the extent to which national project implementers have been adequately trained and enhanced capacity to take over technical and professional responsibilities as envisaged in the project design.

Ratings of Key Review Criteria

In accordance with GEF Guidelines for Terminal Evaluations, the evaluation will provide ratings for the following as indicated broadly below:

Rate the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of different Project Outcomes as:

HS:	Highly Satisfactory
S:	Satisfactory
MS:	Moderately Satisfactory
MU:	Moderately Unsatisfactory
US:	Unsatisfactory
HS:	Highly Unsatisfactory

Rate the sustainability of project outcomes along 4 key dimensions, **Financial Resources, Socio-political, Institutional framework & governance and Environmental** using the following scale:

- Likely (L)
- Moderately Likely (ML)
- Moderately Unlikely (MU)

Unlikely (U)

Rate the Project's M&E system as follows:

HS:	Highly Satisfactory
S:	Satisfactory
MS:	Moderately Satisfactory
MU:	Moderately Unsatisfactory
US:	Unsatisfactory
HS:	Highly Unsatisfactory

Additionally, the evaluation will examine the following questions:

- Did this project contribute to the establishment of a long term monitoring system? If it did not, should the project have included such a component?
- If it did, what were the accomplishments and short comings in establishment of this system?
- Is the system sustainable, i.e. is it embedded in a proper institutional structure and has financing?
- Is the information generated by this M&E system being used as originally intended?

1. PRODUCTS EXPECTD FROM THE EVALUATION:

The main products expected from the evaluation are:

- i. presentation(s) on findings of the evaluation to key stakeholders;
- ii. an interim draft report;
- iii. a final comprehensive terminal evaluation report;
- iv. Reporting: The main final output of the evaluation will be an independent and comprehensive Terminal Evaluation report with annexes as needed. The minimum requirements for the content of the final TE report are given below:

Summary:

- Brief description of project

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

Introduction

- i. Purpose of evaluation
- ii. Key issues addressed
- iii. Methodology of the evaluation
- iv. Structure of the evaluation

The project and its development context:

- i. Project start and its duration
- ii. Problems that the project seek to address
- iii. Immediate and development objectives of the project=
- iv. Planned outputs and sub-outputs
- v. Main stakeholders
- vi. Results expected

Findings and Conclusions:

- i. Project formulation
- ii. Implementation approach
- iii. Country ownership/Driveness
- iv. Stakeholder participation
- v. Replication approach
- vi. Cost-effectiveness
- vii. UNDP comparative advantage
- viii. Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
- ix. Indicators
- x. Management arrangements

Implementation:

- i. Financial planning
- ii. Monitoring and evaluation
- iii. Execution and implementation modalities
- iv. Management by UNDP country office
- v. Coordination and operational issues

Results:

- i. Attainment of planned objectives & outcomes
- ii. Sustainability of impacts (including policy impact and evidence of mainstreaming biodiversity conservation approaches into sustainable development strategies and programmes)
- iii. Contribution to national capacity development

Recommendations:

- i. Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project
- ii. Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project
- iii. Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

Lessons learned:

- i. Best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success

Annexes:

- i. TOR
- ii. Itinerary
- iii. List of persons interviewed
- iv. Summary of field visits
- v. List of documents reviewed
- vi. Questionnaires used and summary of results
- vii. Co-financing and Leverages Resources (see Table 1 attached)

1. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Terminal Evaluation will be conducted by a local consultant, who will have in depth understanding of UNDP and GEF projects including evaluation experience. The local consultant will be responsible for developing the evaluation methodology, conducting the evaluation and delivering the key products expected from the evaluation, including coordinating the inputs from national and district level stakeholders.

Under the guidance and close consultations with NEC Secretariat and UNDP, the consultant will be responsible for conducting desk research of existing documentation, surveys/research/evaluation reports and database, as well as consult all partners and institutions and gather information and opinions on implementation processes like management and coordination; fund release mechanism and project management capacity and see whether each of them has been supportive to the project delivery. If necessary, the consultant will visit the Dzongkhag administrations and consult with local government functionaries and communities and directly record issues, benefits and gaps and relate them to the project achievements. Finally, the consultant will prepare a report highlighting both constraints and opportunities suggesting recommendations and lessons learnt for future directions of both the donor and implementer.

The consultant will sign an agreement with UNDP Bhutan and will be bound by the terms and conditions set in the agreement.

2. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology will be determined by the consultant, guided by the requirements of GEF and UNDP as articulated in various guidelines, policies and manuals on the conduct of evaluations for GEF projects as well as key project documents such as the the final UNDP project document, the inception workshop report, the project log-frame and annual budgets and work plans, the annual Project Implementation Review, PB, and PMT meeting minutes as available, and other technical reports and documents as relevant. A list of key documents is given in Annex 1.

The evaluation methodology should be clearly documented in the final evaluation report including comprehensive details of the following:

- i. Documents reviewed
- ii. Interviews conducted
- iii. Consultations held with all key stakeholders
- iv. Project sites visited
- v. Techniques and approaches used for data gathering, verification and analysis

3. CONDUCT OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation consultant will work independently but will liaise closely with UNDP CO, and NEC Secretariat. The consultant will visit national and local level partners to ensure adequate consultation with all key stakeholders. Towards the end of the evaluation, presentation will be made to all key stakeholders in Thimphu. After the presentation the consultant will take note of verbal and/or written responses to the presentation and consider these in preparing an interim

draft evaluation report that will be provided to NEC/UNDP CO. NEC/UNDP CO will circulate the draft report to all stakeholders requesting written feedback which would in turn be sent to the consultant within 7 days of receipt of the draft. The TE report including all annexes should be finalized within another 7 days of the deadline for receiving comments on the first draft.

While the evaluation team is free to determine the actual layout of the final evaluation report, this must include the minimum content requirements mentioned earlier. The consultant will forward the final report by e-mail to UNDP CO and the NEC for onward distribution to all stakeholders. The evaluation consultant will be responsible for the contents, quality and veracity of the report.

4. QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS:

- i. Bachelors in Environment, Natural Resources Management, and related fields with a minimum of 5 years of relevant experience (applicants with Masters degree will be given preference).
- ii. Experience in monitoring and evaluations and preparing reports
- iii. Experience in working with organizations like the UN and National Environment commission
- iv. Excellent interpersonal skills, team oriented work style
- v. Good written and oral communication skills
- vi. Strong organizational skills
- vii. Self-motivated, ability to work with minimum supervision
- viii. Fluency in English
- ix. Proficiency in using computer applications (word processing, spreadsheet, e-mail etc)

5. TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR THE EVALUATION:

The consultant's input will be required for 2 weeks with the terminal evaluation tentatively scheduled to begin from 11 July – 25 July. The tentative program is given below.

Dates	Program	Remarks
11July	Meet with UNDP team and discuss on the programme –desk review	
12-13-14 July	Meeting with NEC and stakeholders	NEC, GNHC,MOA,BTF

		etc
16 July	Filed visit- to Punakha or Wangdue	(consultation meeting with Dzongkhag and sector staff)
17 July	Return to Thimphu	
20 July	Submission and presentation of draft report to UNDP, NEC and stakeholders	
23 July	Revise and share report based on comments from stakeholders	
25 July	Submit final report	

Focal Persons:

UNDP Country Office, Bhutan

Karma Rapten, Head- Energy, Environment and Disaster Management Unit karma.rapten@undp.org

Sonam Rabgye, Program Associate, Energy, Environment and Disaster Management Unit
sonam.rabgye@undp.org

National Environment Commission Secretariat

Thinley Dorji, Project Manager - thinleydorji@nec.gov.bt

Annexure 8.2: Itinerary of the Consultant for the interviews and local travel

Dates	Program	Remarks
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11July	Meet with UNDP team and discuss on the programme –desk review	
12-13-14 July	Meeting with NEC and stakeholders	NEC, GNHC,MOA,BTF etc
16 July	Field visit- to Punakha	(consultation meeting with Dzongkhag and sector staff)
17 July	Return to Thimphu	
24 th July	Submission and presentation of draft report to UNDP, NEC and stakeholders	
14 th August	Revise and share report based on comments from UNDP.	The duration of the project was given a no-cost extension owing to the absence of the Project Manager who was on leave.

Annexure 8.3: Table showing list of persons interviewed

Serial No.	Names of persons interviewed	Designation	Department/Agency
1.	Chencho Norbu	Director/UNCCD Focal Person	Department of Forest
2.	Cheki Wangchuk	TWG Member (BTF)	Bhutan Trust Fund
3.	Karma C. Ngedup	UNCBD Focal Person/Specialist	NEC
4.	Kumbu Dukpa	UNCBD Focal Person	NEC
5.	Thinley Namgyel	UNFCCC Focal Person	NEC
6.	Karma Tshering	Senior Research Officer	NEC
7.	Thinley Dorji	Project Manager	NEC
8.	Tandin Dorji	District Engineer	Punakha Dzongkhag Administration
9.	Rinchen Penjore	District Environment Officer	Punakha Dzongkhag

10.	Ugyen Tshomo	Planning Officer	Punakha Dzonghag
11.	Tshewang Dorji	GAO	Talo Gewog, Punakha
12.	Yenten Jamcho	GAO	Dzomi Gewog, Punakha
13.	Sonam Phuntsho	GAO	Genshari Gewog, Punakha
14.	Dawa Zam	Environment Focal Person	MoWHS
15.	Tandin Lhamo	GEF Focal Person	GNHC, Thimphu
16.	Chencho Tshering ⁴	Program Officer	DDM, MoHCA
17-28	Online respondents in the survey (see Annex 8.6)	DEC members and DEOs	Only 12 responded out of the randomly selected 42 respondents throughout the 20 Dzongkhags

⁴ To be interviewed after his return from Thorthormi Lake.

Annexure 8.3B: Transcription of minutes of meeting with the project manager

Date: 12th November 2012⁵

Venue: NECS Office

Members present: 1. Thinley Dorji, Project Manager

Excerpts from the meeting with the project manager are captured in the following lines:

The project manager was very positive about the impact of the outcome and the outputs of this project. It was reported that awareness brochures on issues ranging from climate change and land degradation and bio diversity were printed and the team from the NECS office went to the grassroot levels (Dzongkhags and Gewogs) raising awareness on the matters aforementioned. Environment Management Training Manual was another milestone achieved as part of this project.

The Environmental Information Management System was developed and launched as part of this project. Validation of the data in EIMS and the responsibility of doing it remained unclear although NECS should have taken the responsibility. There are arrangements going around to upgrade and validate the data. Needs for budget to convert the present static website to a dynamic one was expressed. The Environment Clearance System which is more up-to-date and collects and maintains the latest data.

⁵ Meeting the project manager almost two months after the evaluation was because of his unavailability due to many official engagements and also he was on paternity leave for a month in the month of August.

Maintaining upto-date data in the EIMS also requires coordination with various departments like the DHMS for hydromet and weather data, RSTA for transport sector, DGM for the geology and seismic data, DDM for the disaster management strategies, MoH for the health status reports, epidemics and ways to contain them, in gist, the State of the Environment Report can be termed as the outcome of the inputs from the sectors mentioned here.

Delay in the implementation of the project activities was mainly due to the delay in the LG elections in 2011; owing to the limited educational qualification of the gups, the trainings were imparted mainly to the GAOs who are university graduates and civil servants.

Most of the times, trainings from this project had to be tied up with other trainings from other sectors. One such training was Environment Management Training that was tied up with Water Inventory Training in December 2011 at Punakha.

Little knowledge about the Project by the DEC members who were the respondents of the survey was because much focus was made on the objectives of the training rather than the funding sources and the project background. Participants also tend to take any capacity building trainings from NECS as its mandate and do not get much interested to know about the project background and funding sources.

In terms of capacity building proportions, about 70 percent of the input was from the NCSA project and about 30 percent came from other projects implemented by NECS.

Some of the best practices of the NCSA Project was the institutional linkage that was set up with CSE, New Delhi, India and OAWEL, Switzerland to which 26 officers were sent for trainings. And for capacity that was built, the project management attributes about 80 percent of the capacities being built from 2008 till date to the objectives and activities of NCSA.

Annexure 8.4: Summary of Field Visit

There was only one field visit taken by the consultant for this work owing to the limitation of time as the assignment was due its deadline within two weeks from the date of its beginning on July 11, 2012. Punakha Dzongkhag Administration was chosen for the field visit as Wangdue Dzongkhag was still under the trauma of relocating its offices after the dzong was razed by fire on June 24, 2012.

Findings from the visit:

The Focus Group of Punakha Dzongkhag Administration which consisted of the DEC members along with the Environment Officer were met by the Consultant in the Dzong on the 16th of July 2012. The main finding was that many that were present for the meeting were not aware of this project (especially the GAOs). Even the officers themselves were not very well informed about the project activities. However, the DEO informed the group that there was an ex-country training organized by NEC sometime in 2009 to build the capacity of the Dzongkhag officers.

Some members in the Group reported that all the trainings are Thimphu-centered without many efforts into decentralizing the activities. The DEO was also the recipient of the EUSPS-Danida funded scholarship for a two year masters degree in Australia in 2007-2008. Similarly, there were three others who also availed this scholarship serving in different Dzongkhags.

Regarding the implementation of this project, some of them said that there should be heavy awareness raising at the local government level. As for the TOT component, they had the stand that ToT was conducted only for disaster management and not for any other environmental nature of initiatives.

Annexure 8.5: List of documents reviewed

UNDP Documents:

UNDP/GEF.2012. Annual Progress Report/Project Implementation Report, NCSA
UNDP/GEF. 2011. Annual Progress Report/Project Implementation Report, NCSA
UNDP/GEF, 2010. Annual Progress Report/Project Implementation Report, NCSA
UNDP/GEF. 2009. Annual Progress Report/Project Implementation Report, NCSA
UNDP/GEF. 2008. Annual Progress Report/Project Implementation Report, NCSA
UNDP. 2008. Project Document, UNDP-GEF Medium Size Project, NCSA

Royal Government of Bhutan (RGOB):

RGOB.NEC-2011. Second National communication to the UNFCCC
RGOB. 2010. Human Resource Development Policy
RGOB. 2010. 10th Five Year Plan
RGOB.2010. Civil Service Act
RGOB. Bhutan Vision-2020
RGOB. 2010. HRD Master Plan
RGOB. 2010. Terminal Evaluation-Sustainable Land Management Project
RGOB. 2009. Environmental Management Training Manual for Local Level in Bhutan
RGOB. 2009. Local Governance Act

Minutes of the Meetings:

RGOB. 2009. Second Project Board Meeting Minutes.

RGOB. 2010. Third Project Board Meeting Minutes

RGOB. 2011. Minutes of the 3rd Project Board Meeting.

Annexure 8.6: Questionnaire used and results summary

Page 1

1. What is your name? (Optional)			
		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	5
1	24/7/12 12:03PM 4372481		
2	26/7/12 6:12AM 4376162		
3	26/7/12 10:48AM 4381594		
4	27/7/12 8:56AM 4385363		
5	10/8/12 9:44AM 4421365		
		answered	5
		skipped	7

2. What is your gender? (Mandatory)							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Male						72.73%	8
2	Female						27.27%	3
Analysis	Mean:	1.273	Std. Deviation:	0.445	Satisfaction Rate:	27.27	answered	11
	Variance:	0.198	Std. Error:	0.134			skipped	1

3. Designation				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	9
	1	20/7/12 1:16PM 4347190	Dzongkhag Environment Officer, Mongar	
	2	24/7/12 12:03PM 4372481		
	3	26/7/12 6:04AM 4380621	PMO	
	4	26/7/12 6:12AM 4376162	DEO	

3. Designation					
				Response Percent	Response Total
5	26/7/12 10:48AM 4381594	DAO			
6	27/7/12 8:56AM 4385363	DEO			
7	27/7/12 11:52AM 4386754	District Environment Officer			
8	3/8/12 5:13AM 4413880	Dz. Environment Officer			
9	10/8/12 9:44AM 4421365	District Environment Officer			
				answered	8
				skipped	4

4. In which District do you work?					
				Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question			100.00%	9

4. In which District do you work?			Response Percent	Response Total
1	20/7/12 1:16PM 4347190			
2	21/7/12 8:33AM 4364132			
3	24/7/12 12:03PM 4372481			
4	26/7/12 6:04AM 4380621			
5	26/7/12 6:12AM 4376162			
6	26/7/12 10:48AM 4381594			
7	27/7/12 8:56AM 4385363			
8	27/7/12 11:52AM 4386754			
9	10/8/12 9:44AM 4421365			
			answered	8

4. In which District do you work?			
			Response Percent
			Response Total
			skipped
			4

5. How satisfactory was the capacity of the DEC Focal Person Secretariat established at NEC in managing and coordinating this (EGEM-LG) Project?						
					Response Percent	Response Total
1	Highly Satisfactory				8.33%	1
2	Satisfactory				16.67%	2
3	Moderately Satisfactory				50.00%	6
4	Moderately Unsatisfactory				0.00%	0
5	Unsatisfactory				16.67%	2
6	Highly Unsatisfactory				8.33%	1
Analysis	Mean:	3.25	Std. Deviation:	1.362	Satisfaction Rate:	45
	Variance:	1.854	Std. Error:	0.393		
					answered	12
					skipped	0

6. Comments for 5			
			Response Percent
			Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%
			9
1	20/7/12 1:16PM 4347190	Project Management over-burdened with responsibilities	
2	24/7/12 12:03PM 4372481	It was done in very good manner.	
3	26/7/12 6:04AM 4380621	No Idea of having such secretariat	
4	26/7/12 6:12AM 4376162	NECS has organized two abroad training/study tour for DEO's in 2009 & 2010.it has very useful	
5	26/7/12 10:48AM 4381594	I am not aware of this project. So, my opinion for Seril no. 5 may be ignored.	
6	27/7/12 8:56AM 4385363	we were not involved in managing or coordinating any such activity. everything was centrally controlled from NECS. they were involved in the planning and execution processes. all efforts and programs were from above.	
7	3/8/12 5:13AM 4413880	-no proper planning and coordination regarding the project. -although a few trainings were provided, most of them were irrelevant or unnecessary -More focus were given on training people of other irrelevant agencies from head quarters	
8	3/8/12 5:50AM 4413898	i have no idea what EGEM-LG project is	
9	10/8/12 9:44AM 4421365	Through this program, all issues at the Dzongkhag level could be discussed and appropriate actions taken accordingly, which otherwise could not be addressed adequately	

6. Comments for 5		
	Response Percent	Response Total
	answered	9
	skipped	3

7. How satisfactory was the Training-of-Trainers learning materials/curriculum developed for environmental management awareness?							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Highly Satisfactory						18.18%	2
2	Satisfactory						9.09%	1
3	Moderately Satisfactory						36.36%	4
4	Moderately Unsatisfactory						18.18%	2
5	Unsatisfactory						0.00%	0
6	Highly Unsatisfactory						18.18%	2
Analysis								
Mean:	3.273	Std. Deviation:	1.601	Satisfaction Rate:	45.45		answered	11

7. How satisfactory was the Training-of-Trainers learning materials/curriculum developed for environmental management awareness?						Response Percent	Response Total
	Variance:	2.562	Std. Error:	0.483		skipped	1

8. Comments for 7				Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question			100.00%	9
1	21/7/12 8:33AM 4364132	I am not in a position to comment on this subject as I'm not aware of ToT learning materials developed for environment management awareness			
2	24/7/12 12:03PM 4372481	The training of Trainers materials was very good and few were implemented.			
3	26/7/12 6:04AM 4380621	No such trainings has been provided for DEC members			
4	26/7/12 6:12AM 4376162	there is no fund to further train the other members at LD level to continue the work.However,the materials are useful for reference at local level			
5	26/7/12 10:48AM 4381594	Apologies, again i am not aware of this ToT.			
6	27/7/12 8:56AM 4385363	i assume that here you are relating to the environment mainstreaming tools training by NECS? the training was very much developed with facts and figures from ground. the tools developed in environment management systems were explicitly based on our ground reality-simple and effective. the involvement of relevant agencies like			

8. Comments for 7				
			Response Percent	Response Total
		local government (DLG) was seen delightul		
7	3/8/12 5:13AM 4413880	-document produced but never used and no proper training was given about it - a more systematic way of TOT would have immensely helped the local leaders from the project		
8	3/8/12 5:50AM 4413898	the ToT was carried out briefly with the environment officers and not with the DEC memebers. hence other than the environment officers the rest of the DEC members are unaware		
9	10/8/12 9:44AM 4421365			
			answered	9
			skipped	3

9. How satisfactory has your knowledge base become to implement 3 Rio Conventions at Local Government Level after attending the Training on EMS at Paibari, Manila?						
					Response Percent	Response Total
1	Highly Satisfactory				9.09%	1
2	Satisfactory				36.36%	4
3	Moderately Satisfactory				9.09%	1

9. How satisfactory has your knowledge base become to implement 3 Rio Conventions at Local Government Level after attending the Training on EMS at Paibari, Manila?							Response Percent	Response Total
4	Moderately Unsatisfactory						18.18%	2
5	Unsatisfactory						0.00%	0
6	Highly Unsatisfactory						27.27%	3
Analysis	Mean:	3.455	Std. Deviation:	1.777	Satisfaction Rate:	49.09	answered	11
	Variance:	3.157	Std. Error:	0.536			skipped	1

10. Please comment on your Technical and Functional Capacities developed through this project.				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	9
1	21/7/12 8:33AM 4364132	The Background statement says "the Project was implemented in Bhutan (June 2008- June 2012) to ensure the capacity building and institutional arrangement of the District Environment Committee (DEC) members of all 20 districts in the country". However, as a Dzongkhag Environment Committee (DEC) member since 2010 I have not availed any capacity building trainings -be it in-country or ex-country. I wonder why person like me with little or no technical knowledge on environment has been put as a member of DEC. It is quite ironical!		
2	24/7/12 12:03PM 4372481	it opened our window of knowledge on environmental management system both technically and also give lot of functional knowledge as an environmentalist.		

10. Please comment on your Technical and Functional Capacities developed through this project.			Response Percent	Response Total
3	26/7/12 6:04AM 4380621	No capacity development from these projects has been initiated		
4	26/7/12 6:12AM 4376162	it was a great opportunities for all DEO's for having got to visit other countries and develop technical capacity on EMS.However,we need to have further similar training in future.the project has benefitted.		
5	26/7/12 10:48AM 4381594	Apologies. i ve no idea about Serial no. 9 and 10.		
6	27/7/12 8:56AM 4385363	rather implementers of laws, rules and regulations. the trainings was really intensive and satisfactorily related to our concept of environmental mainstreaming. however i feel the application and relevance to our duties back here has been quite minimum.		
7	3/8/12 5:13AM 4413880	-although a few trainings were given through the project, most of it were provided just for the sake of fulfilling project obligations. - not much of capacity enhancement was brought by the project		
8	3/8/12 5:50AM 4413898	the training was carried out and there was no follow up which didnt make much difference		
9	10/8/12 9:44AM 4421365	The training at Paibari focused mainly on ecosanitation aspects of environmental management systems, which could not be put to much use in our context. Nevertheless, it provided some basic knowledge on general environmental management, water resource management and climate change mitigation		
			answered	9
			skipped	3

11. How satisfactory was the capacity development initiatives to fund decentralized environmental management activities in your district?							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Highly Satisfactory						9.09%	1
2	Satisfactory						36.36%	4
3	Moderately Satisfactory						27.27%	3
4	Moderately Unsatisfactory						9.09%	1
5	Unsatisfactory						0.00%	0
6	Highly Unsatisfactory						18.18%	2
Analysis	Mean:	3.091	Std. Deviation:	1.564	Satisfaction Rate:	41.82	answered	11
	Variance:	2.446	Std. Error:	0.472			skipped	1

12. Comments for 11				Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question			100.00%	8

12. Comments for 11			Response Percent	Response Total
1	24/7/12 12:03PM 4372481	Through this training made me capable enough to train and convince the local government on environmental management and conservation.		
2	26/7/12 6:04AM 4380621	No such initiatives taken		
3	26/7/12 6:12AM 4376162	No fund were given at district level to implement any activities through this project...we need fund to develop other DEC members at district level in future and direct flow of fund could be a great help to develop other members at district level in future.		
4	26/7/12 10:48AM 4381594	i am not aware of such capacity development initiatives.		
5	27/7/12 8:56AM 4385363	i can't follow on what initiative you are talking about. i mean namely??		
6	3/8/12 5:13AM 4413880	- environmental management activities in my district has improved but not because of the project		
7	3/8/12 5:50AM 4413898	as mentioned earlier capacity development needs to be carried out to other members of the DEC too		
8	10/8/12 9:44AM 4421365	The Dzongkhag environment officers have enhanced their competency in different fields of environmental management as a result of numerous trainings received through these projects including the use of GIS, DevInfo softwares and EIMS.		
			answered	8
			skipped	4

13. How satisfactory is the enhanced existing Environmental Information Management System?							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Highly Satisfactory						9.09%	1
2	Satisfactory						18.18%	2
3	Moderately Satisfactory						27.27%	3
4	Moderately Unsatisfactory						9.09%	1
5	Unsatisfactory						0.00%	0
6	Highly Unsatisfactory						36.36%	4
Analysis	Mean:	3.818	Std. Deviation:	1.8	Satisfaction Rate:	56.36	answered	11
	Variance:	3.24	Std. Error:	0.543			skipped	1

14. Comments for 13				Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question			100.00%	8
1	24/7/12 12:03PM	it has helped in information sharing to the bhutanese society and other organization			

14. Comments for 13					
				Response Percent	Response Total
		4372481			
2	26/7/12 6:04AM 4380621	No information has been shared to DEC			
3	26/7/12 6:12AM 4376162	EIMS is very useful tools for any decision making.			
4	26/7/12 10:48AM 4381594	Sorry			
5	27/7/12 8:56AM 4385363	we just had a preliminary briefing on that. i guess even the NECS has not marched much upon on that. it would be very beneficial if such things be decentralized soon.			
6	3/8/12 5:13AM 4413880	- heard a few times about EIMS but still no proper trainings and guidance given on how to use EIMS			
7	3/8/12 5:50AM 4413898	as far as i know. it is not functioning the way it was advertised			
8	10/8/12 9:44AM 4421365	it has helped in the proper management of environmental information and especially eased the environmental clearance procedure			
				answered	8
				skipped	4

15. How satisfactory was the Monitoring and Evaluation system used for this Project?							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Highly Satisfactory						10.00%	1
2	Satisfactory						20.00%	2
3	Moderately satisfactory						30.00%	3
4	Moderately Unsatisfactory						10.00%	1
5	Unsatisfactory						10.00%	1
6	Highly Unsatisfactory						20.00%	2
Analysis	Mean:	3.5	Std. Deviation:	1.628	Satisfaction Rate:	50	answered	10
	Variance:	2.65	Std. Error:	0.515			skipped	2

16. Comments for 15				Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question			100.00%	8
1	21/7/12 8:33AM	No comments			

16. Comments for 15				Response Percent	Response Total
		4364132			
2	24/7/12 12:03PM 4372481	closely monitored and evaluated project.			
3	26/7/12 6:04AM 4380621	We are not at all involved			
4	26/7/12 6:12AM 4376162	we could implement what we have learn from training.and it was useful.			
5	26/7/12 10:48AM 4381594	I am sorry			
6	3/8/12 5:13AM 4413880	- i have never attended any monitoring and evaluation training from through this project			
7	3/8/12 5:50AM 4413898	i dont remmeber filling out other evaluation forms for this project			
8	10/8/12 9:44AM 4421365	it was highly useful as the capacities at both the NEC and Dzongkhag level has been significantly improved			
				answered	8
				skipped	4

17. Best Lessons you have learnt being part of this Project.			
		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	7
1	20/7/12 1:16PM 4347190	Got to learn many new concepts/principles	
2	21/7/12 8:33AM 4364132	Not applicable	
3	24/7/12 12:03PM 4372481	Exposure to third country and learn many good environmental management methods.	
4	26/7/12 6:04AM 4380621	Sorry, we have no idea at all about the project has the DEC, in LG has been left with no idea	
5	26/7/12 6:12AM 4376162	my capacity developed to certain level and got exposure on environmental issues.so i found it useful.	
6	26/7/12 10:48AM 4381594	sorry	
7	10/8/12 9:44AM 4421365	The experiences and knowledge gained through various trainings attended were indispensable.	
			answered 7
			skipped 5

18. Not so Good Lessons you have learnt being part of this Project.			
			Response Percent
			Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%
	1	20/7/12 1:16PM 4347190	Not well executed
	2	21/7/12 8:33AM 4364132	Not applicable
	3	24/7/12 12:03PM 4372481	None
	4	26/7/12 6:04AM 4380621	We just get to know only upon termination of project , that the project was there, so its very sad for LG to be ignored by the NEC
	5	26/7/12 6:12AM 4376162	
	6	26/7/12 10:48AM 4381594	sorry
	7	3/8/12 5:50AM 4413898	it could have been done much better and involving with participants more from DEC rather than central ministries
	8	10/8/12 9:44AM 4421365	Nothing
			answered
			8
			skipped
			4

19. Recommendations for such similar projects in the future.			
			Response Percent
			Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%
			8
1	20/7/12 1:16PM 4347190	There should be at least two Project Managers or s/he should have a full time Project Assistant	
2	21/7/12 8:33AM 4364132	In the future, such Project should build the technical and functional capacity of DEC members on overall environment management.	
3	24/7/12 12:03PM 4372481	more intensive ans specific environmental related projects recommended.	
4	26/7/12 6:04AM 4380621	The Project would have changed a lot the lives of people and their environment if the implementation was meant to be as designed. However, its sad to note that such projects where no made known to the LG and DEC and its sad and nothing has changed in Districts. As such there should not be project if things happen this way, but would love to have project if the implementation is to have a stake with LG. At the cost of LG, if such projects are being initiated, it will have bad image as such we need to very honest in executing and look forward for improvements from NEC	
5	26/7/12 6:12AM 4376162	i strongly recommend for similar project in future.it should be directly implemented by district itself for better transparency and accountability so that project implemented successfully at local level itself.	
6	26/7/12 10:48AM 4381594	sorry	
7	3/8/12 5:13AM 4413880	- more focus should be given to local government capacity building. - NEC handling this project may not be necessary, or project may be directly handled at Dzongkhag or Gewog level. local community best knows what kind of knowledge is best and applicable. Foreign trainings are not always applicable locally.	
8	10/8/12 9:44AM 4421365	More resources and activities for environmental conservation need to be implemented at the local levels. Focus should also be diverted for actual practical conservation activities and not only on capacity building	

19. Recommendations for such similar projects in the future.		
	Response Percent	Response Total
	answered	8
	skipped	4

20. Were the funds for implementing any environmental initiative always enough in your Dzongkhag?			
		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	10
1	20/7/12 1:16PM 4347190	No	
2	21/7/12 8:33AM 4364132	Yes of course through LoCAL and/or CCA project under DLG, MoHCA	
3	24/7/12 12:03PM 4372481	NO	
4	26/7/12 6:04AM 4380621	Not at all	
5	26/7/12 6:12AM 4376162	we have never received any funds at Dzongkhag level.we recommend for such fund at Dzongkhag level directly in future.	

20. Were the funds for implementing any environmental initiative always enough in your Dzongkhag?				Response Percent	Response Total
6	26/7/12 10:48AM 4381594	I am in Zhemgang from January 2011 and still continuing...However, i havent heard of any such project initiatives here. May be it was done ere i joined this administration. Kindly, check if my Dzongkhag was even in the target area list.			
7	27/7/12 8:56AM 4385363	no, we do not receive much of such funds as there is very less funding agencies available.			
8	3/8/12 5:13AM 4413880	- as such we don't get any fund to initiate environmental related activities.			
9	3/8/12 5:50AM 4413898	there is no funds in the district levels. hence environment officers have little weightage while turning down projects for EC			
10	10/8/12 9:44AM 4421365	AT the Dzongkhag level, funding for environmental activity is always a challenge, but any fund obtained from UNDP has been more than adequate			
				answered	10
				skipped	2

Annexure 8.7: Co-financing and Leverages Resources as per the Project Document

(A breakdown of the budget by funding source and outcome).

a.) Project Costs

Project Components/Outcomes	Co-financing (\$)	GEF (\$)	Total (\$)
<u>Outcome 1</u> : Enable central-level framework to enhance decentralization capacity for environmental management and implementation of the provisions of the 3 Rio Conventions	US\$40,000	US\$108,000	US\$148,000
<u>Outcome 2</u> : Enable decentralization institutional framework and personnel to enhance local environmental management which implementation of the Rio Conventions	US\$38,846	US\$169,000	US\$207,846
<u>Outcome 3</u> : Existing Environmental Information Management system enhanced to backstop and accommodate national policy and decision making in response to global environmental management needs as per the provisions of the Rio Conventions	US\$53,846	US\$125,500	US\$179,346
Monitoring & Evaluation, learning, adaptive feedback & evaluation	US\$30,000	US\$46,500	US\$76,500
Project Management budget	US\$ 60,000	US\$26,000	US\$86,000
TOTAL	US\$ 222,692	US\$ 475,000	US\$697,692

b) Project Management Budget/Cost

Component	Estimated Staff weeks	GEF (\$)	Other Sources (\$)	Project Total (\$)
Locally recruited personnel*			40,000	40,000
Internationally recruited consultants*				
Office facilities, equipment, vehicles and communications (see explanations below)		17,000	20,000	37,000
Travel		9,000		9,000
Total project management cost		26,000	60,000	86,000

*Local and international consultants in this table are those who are hired for functions related to the management of project. For those consultants who are hired to do a special task, they would be referred to as consultants providing technical assistance. For these consultants, details of their services are provided in table c below.

c) Consultants working for Technical Assistance Components:

Component	Estimated Staff weeks	GEF(\$)	Other Sources (\$)	Project Total (\$)
Personnel				
	16	32000		32,000

Local consultants				
	8	20,000		20,000
International consultants				
Total	24	52,000		52,000

d) The breakdown of project management costs being charged to the GEF budget is as follows:

Budget item and description	Total Cost
Hire of vehicle for the project management unit (3000 x 3 yrs)	9,000
Purchase of computers and printers	5,000
Communications including for internet, fax and telephone charges (1000 x 3 yrs)	3000
Travel	9,000
Total for project management	26,000

e) Co-Financing Sources

Co-financing Sources					
Name of co-financier (source)	Classification	Type	Amount (\$)	Status	
				Confirmed	unconfirmed
RGoB	Government	in-kind	168,846	✓	
DANIDA	Bilateral	in-kind	53,846	✓	
Sub-total co-financing (US\$)			222,692		