

STREEM Terminal Evaluation

I. Opening Page

Title of UNDP Supported Project	Strengthening Coordination for Effective Environmental Management (STREEM)
UNDP Project ID	3627
GEF Project ID	
Evaluation Time Frame	Three (3) Months
Date of Evaluation Report	27 December 2013
Region and Countries Included in the Project	Asia/Philippines
GEF Operational Program/ Strategic Program	Capacity-Building
Implementing Partner and Other Partners	Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)
Evaluation Team Members	Ronaldo R. Gutierrez

II. Executive Summary

As a developing country, the Philippines is dependent on its abundant natural resources for its economic growth. However, instead of prosperity, varying intensities of poverty are experienced throughout the country. To partly address these problems, the Philippine Government signed on to the UNCBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC. However, coordination among the agencies tasked to implement these MEAs was deemed problematic. In a National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) study, institutional/organizational barriers to the effective delivery of the country's obligations in the cross-cutting thematic areas of the MEAs were identified.

The STREEM Project ("Project") was designed to address these problems. It rested on two pillars. First was the phasing of national and local activities by developing mechanisms so that the FPAs and their national level constituents can coordinate. This was to be followed by the development of tools that can support coordination at the local level. The coordination aimed for was operational, i.e., geared towards the delivery of MEA tasks.

The second pillar involved the testing of these tools in a pilot site, i.e., the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park (PPSRNP). The pilot-testing was expected to generate lessons and best practices for replication and dissemination in other sites, locally and internationally.

The key stakeholders of the Project were the various government agencies, both national and local, that have significant roles in the implementation of the MEAs throughout the country. By end of 2009, a new major stakeholder to the Project has emerged, i.e., the Climate Change Commission (CCC) created by virtue of R.A. 9729.

There were three (3) project outcomes and ten (10) expected outputs to be evaluated:

Outcome 1: National Rio Convention Stakeholders are effectively coordinating the preparation and implementation of related policies, program and project activities.

Expected Outputs:

1. A National Technical Coordinating Committee and Office
2. A Business Plan for the NTCC
3. Initial Incentive System
4. Potential tools to promote local level coordination

Outcome 2: Local and National Stakeholders are addressing key global environmental issues in and around the PPSRNP in a coordinated manner.

Expected Outputs:

1. Priorities and sequences of activities for MEA implementation are identified in the LGU pilot site
2. Application/pilot testing of tools for enhanced MEA implementation at the local level
3. Increased understanding on incentive system and the potential tools

Outcome 3: International, national and local partners have adopted the tools prepared under the project.

Expected Outputs:

1. Finalized tools for promoting local level coordination
2. Institutionalized Incentive System
3. Tools, incentive systems, and all Project outputs disseminated to local, national and international partners

Based on the expected outputs, the Project is given an overall SATISFACTORY rating. For Outcome 1, the revival of the CCMRD complied with the requirement for a NTCC. The Project scored its major achievement in its integration of the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in the barangay development plans (BDPs) of the four (4) communities comprising the pilot site. Although the Project largely met the expected outputs, the operational coordination envisioned remains a work in progress, having reeled from major changes that drastically revised the institutional landscape from its baseline scenario—the creation of the CCC.

LogFrame Analysis. The Evaluation found that the LogFrame leaned towards an organizational approach by focusing on institutional indicators, rather than those that demonstrated reduced inefficiencies or coordination problems solved. As regards Outcome 3, the LogFrame design was overly optimistic in the success of the tools and incentives developed under the Project and may have unreasonably demanded the institutional adoption of said tools.

Assumptions and Risks. Although the Project Document mentions several assumptions, a significant one overlooked was the impending creation of the CCC. Considering that it was intended to be another interagency body, it begged the question of whether or not the creation of a similar entity can work as a solution to coordination problems. In other words, there was simply one too many. Outcome 3 also had an unwritten assumption—that the tools and incentives developed for the Project are ready for replication. This Evaluation took a more cautious view of the current success of the tools developed given the unique circumstances of PPSRNP as the chosen pilot site.

Lessons from Other Relevant Projects. Institutional sustainability was definitely in mind in the deliberate adoption of measures to ensure project continuity. However, in the sense that this Project is novel (addressing a more sophisticated aspect of natural resource conservation management—i.e., effective operational MEA coordination), this is very much uncharted territory and there is only so much that can be incorporated from other relevant projects.

Overall Results. Based on the ten expected outputs, the Project was given an overall SATISFACTORY rating. For Outcome 1, the revival of the CCMRD complied with the requirement for a NTCC and the passage of several resolutions and orders in furtherance thereof. A Business Plan was developed for the CCMRD and a system of incentives for local coordination was attempted although for now, this remained a major work in progress and far from being finalized. Lastly, the Project cites the following tools to promote local level coordination, namely, the development of a MEA web portal, a national and local IEC strategy,

a module on the Rio Conventions, a speakers' bureau on MEAs, a manual for the mainstreaming of MEAs in local development planning, and a facilitator's handbook for mainstreaming MEAs in BDPs.

For Outcome 2, three BDPs for Bgys. Marufinas, New Panggangan and Tagabenit, all from PPSRNP in Puerto Princesa Palawan, were evaluated. These *substantially complied* with the expected output to identify priorities and sequences of activities for MEA implementation in the pilot site. Lastly, for Outcome 3, the Project largely "failed" but this needs to be qualified.

Relevance. The Evaluation gave the Project a rating of SATISFACTORY for this criterion. The effective and efficient implementation of the country's obligations under the MEAs by way of better coordination among the MEA stakeholders, both national and local, is a highly relevant undertaking. Where it even excelled, not only did these outcomes become relevant to the MEAs, the MEAs themselves became relevant to their local constituents.

Effectiveness. The Evaluation rating varied over each of the project outcomes. Under Outcome 1, this was difficult to gauge. The creation of the CCC simply knocked the sail out of this outcome and there was no way at that time to determine how best to take advantage of, or ride-out this development. On the other hand, Outcome 2 was replete with superlatives. Several tools were developed and the MEAs found local relevance and even achieved institutional sustainability. If ever there is one caveat is that the pilot site chose was socio-politically less complex comprised of only four (4) barangays and encompassed by only one city (Puerto Princesa) and one province (Palawan). Furthermore, the MEA issues were also not as acute. Lastly, for Outcome 3, the Project would appear as a failure. However, this outcome was burdened by an unreasonable expectation that the tools were already ready for replication. Given that this outcome is relatively minor compared to the first two, the Evaluation gives a rating of SATISFACTORY on this aspect of the Project.

Efficiency. The Evaluation gave a rating of MODERATELY SATISFACTORY for this criterion. At the national level, horizontal coordination remained patchy and susceptible to changes in personnel composition. Coordination as a system, process or attitude has yet to gain a firm foothold in all three FPAs. For Outcome 2, its cost-effectiveness may be put into question when applied to other sites with more politically complex structures (i.e., more component LGUs) like Mt. Apo and Mt. Kanla-on. For Outcome 3, this has been delayed and as a result, its cost-effectiveness is beyond the reach of this Evaluation.

Financial Sustainability. There were several factors to consider on the likelihood of continued benefits even after project end. With the annual allocation by the DENR of P1.0 million for CCMRD meetings, this provided sufficient financial resources that could be further leveraged. As regards local level coordination, the PPSRNP experience will be difficult to sustain because the pilot site had the benefit of STREEM budgetary support. The incentive system developed under the Project also entailed significant costs although one incentive that could emerge over time are the socio-economic benefits that may accrue by incorporating MEAs values in their

development strategies. Overall, the sustainability of financial resources is given a rating of MODERATELY LIKELY.

Socio-Political Sustainability. At the national level, it is a matter of developing systems and processes to attain the full coordination envisioned. Locally, there was stakeholder ownership over the Project. However, the development plans prepared for the Project are tied to future financing. Whether or not this would materialize poses a slight risk to the Project. For this reason, this aspect of sustainability is given a rating of MODERATELY LIKELY.

Institutional Sustainability. The legal landscape has already settled. Accountability and transparency are not necessarily issues of this Project. It is therefore rated LIKELY.

Environmental Sustainability. This is the main goal of the Project so a rating of LIKELY is given.

Overall, the Project is given a rating of MODERATELY LIKELY for sustainability.

Adaptive Management. There were a couple of management decisions that at first glance, would appear as adaptive. First was the decision to revive the CCMRD instead of creating a new body as NTCC. Second was tapping local development councils (LDCs) for the local level coordination rather than create new local joint management committees. These two management decisions took different paths. Only the latter served as an excellent example of adaptive management and stakeholder participation that is truly meaningful.

M&E Design. The Evaluation graded the M&E design as SATISFACTORY. The Project incorporated several tools for M&E, many of which are standard for UNDP-sponsored projects. However, there were also some that were unique to this Project, namely, the capacity-development scorecard taken before and after the Project is implemented; and a survey to be undertaken by an independent specialist to determine objectively the mutual appreciation of MEAs by the FPAs.

As stated in the *LogFrame Analysis* and *Assumptions and Risks* sections, the uneven formulation of indicators for the success of the Project vis-à-vis the desired outcomes created an odd situation from an M&E perspective where accomplishment of outputs did not necessarily reflect attainment of substantive goals. There was a lack of a reflexive assessment process wherein the adequacy of the M&E indicators could have been evaluated vis-à-vis overall project objectives.

M&E Budget. An amount of roughly \$50,000 was allocated for M&E activities and nothing in the Project indicated that this amount was insufficient or that a specialized form of M&E was needed that would justify a higher budgetary allocation. For these reasons, the M&E budget and funding was rated HIGHLY SATISFACTORY.

M&E implementation. The Evaluation rated this criterion as SATISFACTORY since all the prescribed M&E steps have been undertaken thus far except one—the independent survey.

- Project Summary Table

Goal: To generate global environmental benefits through improved coordination in the implementation of the MEAs in the Philippines.

Objectives/Outcomes	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification
<u>Objective</u> To strengthen cross-convention institutional and coordination structures and mechanisms.	National sectoral plans cover the coordinated implementation of the three Rio Conventions in the region on the use of the tools. ¹	National sectoral plans reflect the Rio conventions.
	The level of mutual appreciation of the conventions across the three stakeholder groups. ²	Survey reflecting increase by 100% by end of year 3 based on an independent specialist agency.
	Capacity development monitoring scorecard ratings.	Scorecard ratings.
<u>Outcome 1</u> National Rio Convention's key stakeholders are effectively coordinating the preparation and implementation of related policies, programmes, projects and activities.	Recommendations for Committee/s Reactivation approved by the PCSD.	Defined distinctive role of PCSD and DFA in MEA formulation, implementation and monitoring.
	One of DA/DENR performance indicators reflects the effective functioning of the Committee/Office. ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance indicator. • Established functional coordination mechanism functioning within 2 years.
	Level of budget allocated to the Committee at \$10,000/year by end of year 2.	Budget or memo
<u>Outcome 2</u> Local and national stakeholders are addressing a key global environmental issue in PPSRNP pilot site in a coordinated manner.	Water quality in the subterranean river fully in line with Philippines' standards for national park by project end.	Water sampling results in 4 sites. ⁴
	Signed agreements between FPAs and LGUs and other concerned agencies establishing coordination mechanisms.	Signed agreements; memorandums; LDC resolutions.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally established joint management committees, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations Manual for Local Coordination and

¹ All government Regional Offices have several (typically 5) KRA on which their performance is assessed by the national Department. These KRA are the regional equivalent of MFOs and drive the activities and agenda over the medium term.

² An independent, specialist agency in surveys will be hired to undertake an annual, sophisticated survey of mutual appreciation.

³ All government Departments have several (typically 5) Major Final Outputs, on which their performance will be assessed by Congress. These MFO drive the Department activities and agenda over the medium term. DENR currently has five MFOs, each of which has 2-3 Objectively Verifiable Indicators.

⁴ Site 1: Cabayugan River Bridge; Site 2: Inflow; Site 3: 1.5 km. from PPUR entrance; Site 4: PPUR cave entrance.

Objectives/Outcomes	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification
	involving all three FPAs and all concerned LGUs (NO NEED) • MEA Concerns incorporated into existing committees by end of Year 2	Mainstreaming of MEAs in the Local Development • LDC environment committee resolutions • Barangay Development Plans
	Puerto Princesa LGU and other concerned agencies' allocate at least 3% of their environment budget to programmes related to all three Conventions and/or related to mainstreaming concerns of all three Conventions.	Puerto Princesa Budget
<u>Outcome 3</u> International, national and local partners have adopted the Tools prepared under the project.	Issuance of joint administrative order from DA/DENR and DILG to implement and replicate the tools developed.	Joint administrative order/memorandum circular from DA/DENR and DILG
	Issuance by the national agencies of an appropriate legal instrument (i.e. AO) to local level counterparts targeting the joint implementation of the three Conventions.	Administrative orders from DENR & DA.
	Tools are incorporated into the performance indicators system of key stakeholders. ⁵	Annual work plans of 3 agencies.
	Dissemination of tools developed and pilot tested nationwide.	IEC materials; proof of dissemination & pilot-testing

- Project Description (Brief)

The Project was an offshoot of the results of a National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) previously undertaken by MEA stakeholders and was designed to generate global environmental benefits through improved coordination with respect to the implementation of cross-cutting issues among the three Rio Conventions (i.e., UNCBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC). It involved an interconnected package of activities targeted at both national and local levels including the establishment of a national interagency coordination mechanism and the development of tools designed to support coordination and implementation activities at local levels, including a system of incentives for local stakeholders, and the means for further replication thereof. The Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park (PPSRNP) and surrounding areas was chosen as pilot site for these tools.

One important point which the Project emphasized is that the coordination aimed for is operational, i.e., geared towards the delivery of MEA tasks, specifically in the areas of: (a) information, education and communication, (b) research and development, (c) information

⁵ DILG monitors and evaluates performance of LGUs through a system of performance indicators, in part addressing sustainable development.

system networking, (d) monitoring and evaluation and reporting, (e) national communications and country papers' preparation, (f) policy and guidelines formulation and implementation, (g) enforcement of laws and regulations, (h) sustainable financing and financial mechanisms, and, (i) planning and investment programming.

- Evaluation Rating Table

PROJECT RESULTS	
Relevance	Satisfactory
Effectiveness	Satisfactory
Efficiency	Moderately Satisfactory
OVERALL	Satisfactory

SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES	
Financial Resources	Moderately Likely
Socio-Political	Moderately Likely
Institutional Framework & Governance	Likely
Environmental	Likely
OVERALL	Moderately Likely

MONITORING & EVALUATION	
Design	Satisfactory
Implementation	Satisfactory
Budget & Funding	Highly Satisfactory
OVERALL	Satisfactory

- Summary of Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons

Hindering Factors

1. Institutional challenges brought about by the creation of the Climate Change Commission (CCC)
2. Replication requirements for a mechanism that has been tested only once
3. PPSRNP as pilot site does not fully highlight all MEA issues

Contributing Factors

1. Receptiveness of local stakeholders in PPSRNP
2. Existing coordinative efforts of FPAs
3. Relatively less complex geopolitical status of PPSRNP

Lessons Learned

1. More adaptive management response is needed to institutional changes.

2. Coordination is a result of an inclusive and iterative process.
3. Coordination is a two-way street.
4. FPAs are the MEA champions.
5. Ensure success first before replication, and constantly test the tools and products developed.

Recommendations

1. Sit down and address the institutional problem that currently characterizes the existing set-up and then identify and discuss the possible common agenda for the MEAs.
2. Extend the Project to allow the production of tools and improve web portal content.
3. Consider a STREEM 2nd Phase but focus on MEA integration in local development plans of more sites. Choose sites where MEA issues/concerns are more pronounced (e.g. Occidental Mindoro, Mt. Kanla-on, Central Cebu, Samar-Leyte provinces) and attempt higher levels of local integration (i.e., provincial and city/municipal).
4. Engage more CSOs.
5. Exert more conscious effort at identifying the gender components of the project.

Future Direction: Pursue projects that portray MEA relevance to day-to-day lives of ordinary citizens.

Best Practice: Development of skills for local MEA integration.

Worst Practice: None.

