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**Malawi Ministry of Environment &**

 **Climate Change Management**

**Private Public Sector Partnership on Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in the Shire River Basin Project**

**Mid-Term Evaluation**

**Final Report**

**Submitted by**

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Country: Malawi

UNDP ID: 00073331 GEF ID: 3376 PIMS #: 2085

GEF Operational Programme: Land Degradation Focal Area

GEF Strategic Priority: The GEF -4Strategy LD Oct 2007, Strategic Objectives One and Two.

Implementing Partner: UNDP

Executing Partner: Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Management

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**List of Abbreviations**

AFA Administrative and Financial Assistant

APR Annual Project Review

AWP Annual Work Plan

BAT Best Available Techniques

BEP Best Environmental Practices

BWB Blantyre Water Board

CBNRM Community-Based Natural Resources Management

CBO Community-Based Organisation

CO2 Carbon Dioxide

COVAMS Community Vitalisation and Afforestation in Middle Shire

CTA Chief Technical Advisor

CURE Co-ordination Union for the Rehabilitation of the Environment

DCC&MS Department of Climate Change & Meteorology Services

DoE Department of Energy

DoF Department of Forestry

DWA Department of Water Affairs

EAD Environmental Affairs Department

EAM Evangelical Association of Malawi

ESCOM Electricity Supply Commission of Malawi

EU European Union

GEF Global Environmental Facility

GIS Geographical Information System

GOM Government of Malawi

GWC Green Water Credits

GWCS Green Water Credit Scheme

ID Irrigation Department

IFAD International Fund for Agricultural Development

JICA Japan International Cooperation Agency

LD Land Degradation

LEAD Leadership for Environment & Development

LULUCF Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry

LRD Land Resources Department

MCA Millennium Challenge Account

MCC Millennium Challenge Corporation

MKW Malawian Kwacha

MTE Mid-Term Evaluation

MTR Mid-Term Review

NEX National Execution

NGO Non-governmental Organisation

NRM Natural Resources Management

PA Personal Assistant

PES Payment for Ecosystem Services

PIR Project Implementation Review

PMU Project Management Unit

PRA Participatory Rural Appraisal

PRODOC Project Document

PS Principal Secretary

PSC Project Steering Committee

PWS Payment for Watershed Services

SLM Sustainable Land Management

SRB Shire River Basin

SRBA Shire River Basin Authority

SRDA Shire River Development Authority

SRWB Southern Region Water Board

SWAT Soil and Water Assessment Tool

RUSLE Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation

UNCBD United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

UNCCD United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification

UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNDPCO United Nations Development Programme Country Office

VDC Village Development Committee

VNRMC Village Natural Resource Management Committee

WB World Bank

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

***Project start and synopsis:***

**Project Summary Table1**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Project Title: | Private Public Sector Partnership on Capacity Building in the Shire River Basin  |
| UNDP Project ID:00073331 | PIMS 2085 | **Project financing** | *at endorsement (US$)* | *Balance at MTR (US$)* |
| GEF ID: | 3376 | GEF financing: | 2,072,940.00 | 1,201,757 |
| Country: | MALAWI  | UNDP: | 600,000.00 | 158,541 |
| Region: | Africa  | Government: | 400,000.00 | 200, 000 |
| Focal Area: |  Land Degradation | Other: Government in Kind indicated in 2012 Work Plan |  | 100, 000 |
| GEF Focal Area Strategic Program: |  SLM | Total co-financing: | 21,144,940.00 | 11, 000, 000  |
| Japanese Government | JICA COVAMS project Implementing project in same UNDP SLM project area | JICA COVAMS 2013/2014 Work plans |  | 2,446,205 |
| Executing Agency: | Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC) | Total Project Cost | 24,216,940.00 | **15,126,503** |
| Other Partners involved: |  | PRODOC Signature (date project began): | 13 July 2010 |
|  | Planned closing date:30 June 2014  | Revised closing date:30 June 2015 with a proposed further extension to31 December 2015(pending approval) |

**Source: MTR Terms of Reference for consultant& JICA Input**

1. This report presents the findings, lessons learnt and recommendations of the Mid-Term Evaluation of the (UNDP)/(GEF)-funded project, “Private Public Sector Partnership on Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in the Shire River Basinsigned off on 13July 2010. It was planned to close on 30 June 2014,but has been extended to 30 June 2015. Further extension to 31 December 2015 has been requested pending approval. This project has been financed as follows: GEF resources of US$2,072,940, UNDP US$600,000, Government US$400,000 and planned co-funding from Public Sector(a total co-financing of US$21,144,940).
2. The evaluation methodology used involved a single independent expert undertaking two mission trips to Malawi - running from December 2013 to January 2014. The first one was for field visits and information gathering, including presentation of an inception report (15 working days), while the second was to present the findings of the field visits and inputs into the MTR draft report (five working days). In addition, the consultant reviewed more than 24 documents.

Project Description

1. This four-year project is being implemented and coordinated by the Environmental Affairs Department (EAD) of the Ministry of Environment and Natural resources, with actual implementation done through the relevant ministries and departments, including agriculture, forestry, energy, local government and rural development. It also involves local leadership and communities through their representatives.
2. The overall goal of the project is: “Sustainable Land Management” to provide the basis for economic development, food security and sustainable livelihoods while restoring the ecological integrity of the River Shire Basin; an objective is to reduce land degradation in the Shire River Basin through improved institutional, policy and PES arrangements and improved food security. Key milestones related to project initiation and implementation are listed below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Milestone** | **Date** |
| Concept note approval, PDFB approval | June 2007 |
| Local Project Appraisal Committee metProc Doc signed  | 14 December 2009July2010 |
| PMU established National Steering Committee meetings | July 201014 December 2010, 23 February 2012, 17 April 2012, etc |
| Inception report formally endorsed  Tripartite Committee meeting | October 201025 August 2011 |
| Tripartite Review Meeting | 8 June 2012 |
| This evaluation | December 2013/January2014 |

1. As a GEF/UNDP requirement, every project funded under this arrangement has to undergo MTR. The main objective of the MTR is to gain an independent analysis of the progress of the project so far, with specific focus on identifying potential project design problems, assessing progress towards the achievement of the project's objective, identifying and documenting lessons learnt(including lessons that might improve design and implementation of other UNDP-GEF projects), and making recommendations regarding specific actions that should be taken to improve the project.
2. The Mid-Term Evaluation results support the prevailing assertion that the importance of this project to Malawi's economy needs not be overemphasized. The project is relevant to Malawi’s development because its economy is based primarily on agriculture, dominated by subsistence and rain-fed food production systems that are greatly challenged by land degradation and declining soil fertility. Undoubtedly, the Shire River Basin is of critical economic importance to Malawi; it is the source of over 98% of the country’s power-generating capacity, supplies water to major urban centres such as Blantyre and Limbe, supports a locally significant artisanal fishery, and supplies irrigation water for valuable crops.
3. The Mid-Term Evaluation has established that there has been good progress in most outcomes and outputs of the project. Therefore, no need has arisen for major structural changes to the original Logframe, except for minor changes with regards to activities of Outcomes 2 and 3 (whose details are given in Part 3 on findings). The other minor change to the Logframe is the inclusion of Output 4.4 (IncreasedSocio-economic demographic income in the project area)to Outcomes 4: Knowledge and skills for SLM provided to resource managers at all levels.The changes have been made to accommodate the results of the socio-economic survey undertaken by the UNDP country office. The ratings of SLM project outcomes are given in the table below.

**Table 2: Review Rating table for the MTR of the SLM Malawi project: GEF co-ordinator version with performance rating by evaluation[[1]](#footnote-1)**

| MEASURE | REVIEW RATING | COMMENTS |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Progress towards results  | Satisfactory( **[S]** | Outcome 1: Highly Satisfactory**[HS]**Outcome2: Moderately satisfactory**[MS]**Outcome3:Unsatisfactory**[U]**Outcome4:Highly satisfactory**[HS]**Outcome 5:Moderately satisfactory**[MS]** |
| Management arrangements | Moderately satisfactory**[MS]** | Overall, the project management has been moderately satisfactory. Even though most outputs have been met, the aspects of efficiency and effectiveness have been compromised due to current location of the PMU and lack of support staff. These need to be reviewed and relocated to a closer station where operational activities take place. This view was expressed by many partners implementing partners, including the donor fraternity**[MS]** |
| Adaptive management | Moderately satisfactory**[MS]** | The project has had challenges in getting reports from the implementing partners, particularly with regard to data in the M & E Framework. There have been several attempts to train the implementing partners (both districts and government staff) in reporting for this project; however, the project team has not been very successful. The IPs have mostly focused on reporting the outputs emanating from the activities they have undertaken. Meanwhile, they have reported very little on the outcome and impacts on the beneficiaries from the various activities. This meant that most of the indicators in the results framework were not being reported properly. There were gaps in terms of the amount of data that could be generated for project reporting**[MS]** |

1. As already alluded to in the preceding paragraph, progress against targets for the scorecards is on track. Table 2 above underscores this fact that progress is on track for most of the outcomes, except for Outcome 3. For example, this table shows that the trend is very impressive for Outcome 1,whose target is already achieved(the scorecard target for policy revision to mainstream SLM stands at 100%). Similarly, the scorecard target for outcome 4 is also in good progress (the scorecard stands at 80%).Outcome 2 progress stands at moderately impressive because some of its targets lag behind (Score cards on farmers participating in the GWCS and money being earned by communities from sustainable charcoal). For Outcome 5, the progress is moderately impressive. The reason being despite the development of appropriate templates for Monthly and Quarterly reporting by PMU, the Districts and IPs still report more on outputs than result-based outcomes.Outcome3 presents a progress scenario of **not** being satisfactory. It has experienced some major challenges with regards to meeting its targets. For example, critical targets that have seriously lagged behind schedule includethe consultancy on weather data generation and use and the design for weather index crop insurance (report recommendations and design not completed to date).The only notable progress on targets made under this Outcome are the preparation of initial recommendations on crops such as cotton and some selected food crops (maize)) and the installation of the automated weather station at Neno, which was done in January 2014.
2. The financial expenditures evaluation has been done for the project's period as up to December 2013.The data used for this evaluation has been extracted from Table 7. From this data, the total 2013 financial year expenditure for GEF funds was US$ 695, 751.15, out of the allocated annual budget allocation of US$748, 250.00. This represents a percentage of 92.98 % expenditure and is on target taking into account the deliverables that have been achieved. Similarly, the total 2012 financial year expenditure for GEF was close to that of 2013, at 92.97% (i.e. US$ 571, 649.07 expenditure out of the allocated cash of US$614, 873.53). However, the total 2011 GEF expenditure was very low, at 53.73% (i.e. expenditure of US$ 386, 878.93 out of the provided budget of US$ 720, 001.00). This signifies that the project started at a very slow pace( also exemplified by the 2010 zero budget and expenditure for GEF funds). Likewise, the trend for UNDP expenditure shows similar trends as those of the GEF annual expenditures. The total 2013 expenditure for the UNDP funds shows that out of the allocated US$ 204,500.00, the expenditure was 158, 388.08 (representing 77.45%). This is also on target taking into account the deliverables achieved, though slowed down as compared to 2012 expenditure which was at 95.60%. The 2011 UNDP expenditure at 72.54% was the lowest of all the UNDP annual expenditures. This also signifies the slow start of the project. The overall expenditure as of December 2013 stood at 79.41% for GEF budget and 83.81 for UNDP budget. A combination expenditure for both the GEF and UNDP budget lines stood at 80.07%. This is indicative of on track good progress. Likewise, co-financing expenditure from the government contribution was also on track.

***1. The project's importance to Malawi's economy cannot be overemphasized.***

***2. The SLM interventions have displayed an excellent way of how to address challenges of real causes of natural resources degradation and poverty.***

***3. MTR process has shown that the SLM project gained unstoppable momentum& it poses potential for great impact.***

***4.Thus, it is highly recommended that the project be extended to June 2015 and further extension to December 2015***

Summary of Findings: Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learnt

The summary of the project's MTR review findings are detailed below.

1. The MTR exercise concludes that, undoubtedly, the importance of SLM project to Malawi's economy cannot be overemphasized. It is the basis for economic development as it addresses issues that are of critical importance to the power generation of the country whilst also preserving the livelihoods of many millions of peopled in the country. The project is generally on track with regards to progress towards meeting its targets and financial expenditures. To-date, the major achievements of the project have been catalyzing the technological aspects of arresting deforestation and soil erosion, supporting the reviews of relevant policies and legislative frameworks, training of SLM cadres at all levels including the Lead farmers, besides the drumming up of the much needed support that is required for its success. It can be summarized as documented in the reports and the findings of the field visits to communities that there has been some good progress with respect to most outcomes and outputs. especially with respect to afforestation, conservation agriculture, ridge alignment, planting of vetiver grass and natural regeneration of trees (under naturally recovering forest patches), particularly within the forest reserves. For example, more than 60% of technical personnel have updated their knowledge and skills in various aspects of SLM practices such as ridge alignment, gully control, manure making and conservation agriculture (This has been done in collaboration with the JICA-COVAMS project the practice acceptable for programme approach). Besides, more than 70% of lead farmers in hotspots have been trained in SLM and over 220 farmers (120 female-headed; 100 male-headed) have received training on bee keeping as a means of not only income generation but also to enable communities to appreciate the value of standing trees.
2. In an execution of any project, there are successes and also some constraints that are encountered and these need to be addressed. In this context, the success of the project can be drawn from the impacts it has made on participating communities as expressed by community members during the MTR mission field visit. The community members expressed their appreciation for the project because it has improved their livelihoods and to this effect, they had recommended for the project's extension and continuity. On the other hand, the same community members expressed lack of knowledge for two Outcomes: Outcome 2:Private Public Partnerships (PPP) - providing financial incentives for SLM (through Green Water Credits and Sustainable Charcoal) and Outcome 3**:**Crop Insurance providing the basis for increased access to credits as well as increased use of up to date weather information in decision making. This fact correlates with the lagging behind in the activities of these Outcomes, especially Outcome2. It is therefore recommended that for the remaining period of the project, extra focus and attention must be paid to the activities pertaining to these outcomes in order to enhance the gains the project has made so far.

***The project has made good progress despite lagging behind in :***

***1. Legalization of sustainable charcoal production, crop insurance, green water scheme, and the establishment of SRBA.***

***2. Influencing the enactment of EMA, taking cognizance of project's team limitations.***

***3. Measurements of soil loss and soil fertility.***

***4. Accurate measurements of ha coverage for afforestation required by PRODOC***

1. Taking into account the above, the MTE makes the following recommendations: i) enhancing the management arrangements, effectiveness and efficiency; ii) priorities for implementation of key Outcomes/targets; iii) priorities for technological testing and demonstration on sites; and iv)priorities for sustainability of the achievements after project ends.
2. Enhancing the management arrangements, effectiveness and efficiency: The MTE recommends that during the remaining period of the project, the PMU should further strengthen its relationship with beneficiary ministries, especially the IPS and EDOs, including holding more frequent meetings with the Steering Committee in order to track the project's targets against the plan.
3. The long term sustainability of the project's achievement depends on, to a large extent, the existence of the SRBA. The PRODOC target for SRBA establishment was the second year of the project's inception. But to-date, only the enabling Water Act 2013 and the Road Map for its establishment are in place. Hence the MTE recommends that, in conjunction with its partners (the World Bank, JICA and Department of Water Affairs),the PMU should put in extra effort to fast track the process of driving the establishment of the SRBA.
4. Linked to project's efficiency and effectiveness is the enabling environment with respect to support staff availability, location of the PMU and timely transfer of funds to project implementers. Due to government's directive of restricting hiring of project staff, support staff was expected to be provided by the EAD but this has been a challenge. Furthermore, IPs and EDOs expressed the need for bringing PMU closer to project areas and speeding up the process of funds release. The MTE therefore recommends as follows: urgent recruitment of a Admin and Financial Assistant(AFA), relocation of the PMU to Balaka district and UNDP CO's fast tracking the process of timely release of funds to EAD subsequently to IPs and EDOs.
5. Priorities for implementation of key Outcomes/targets: There are reasonable indications that many main project targets/activities as planned in the PRODOC will be achieved by the end of the project. However, there some risks emerging, which may jeopardize the record of highest achievement unless concerted efforts are made by the project team. The analysis of data from Table 5 (A) shows that there is a significant difference in the level of targets achieved when comparing between Outcomes. For example, Outcomes 1 and 4 show that the proportion of Targets either achieved or on track is 60.0% and 80.0% respectively. Meanwhile for Outcome 3 displays a 0% progress, a cause for concern. Therefore, the targets/activities concerning Outcome 3 (Crop Insurance Index) and to some extent, Outcome 2 (the Green Water Credit Scheme) need special attention. For crop insurance component, the PRODOC stipulates that 30% of farmers access the crop insurance for 3 crops by MTR. So far, only the review of the government's piloted national maize insurance baseline has was done in March/April 2012 and the proposed choice of crops were cotton and maize. Meanwhile, for the GWCS component, the PRODOC stipulates this would be agreed upon first year of the project and operational by third year. So far, only the strategy and preliminary survey of partial weather stations have been prepared and conducted. The MTE therefore recommends that the SLM PMU and project team should be highly productive and focused towards targets and activities of these components in order to achieve significant progress and meet the objectives of the project.
6. Priorities for implementation of technologies and best practices: The project has met the development objective which is to reduce land degradation. This developmental objective relates to the UNCCD, the GF4 strategy LD Oct 2007 Strategy. Specifically, to the following: *i) Strategic Program 2: Supporting Sustainable Forest Management in Production Landscapes***;** *ii) Strategic Program 3: Investing in New and Innovative Approaches in Sustainable Land Management.* So many activities have been implemented concerning this development objective. These include; afforestation, re-afforestation, food security (food crop diversification, fruit trees, irrigation agriculture, fish farming), bee keeping, conservation agriculture etc. All these are meant either to decrease land degradation or detract communities from activities that degrade land. However, key technological aspects that would signify and drum the project's success and achievements still need more attention. Specifically the following aspects: a) *piloting/testing the efficient charcoaling techniques, b) measurement of soil erosion/siltation, c) measurements of soil fertility and d) measurements of hectare coverage by SLM afforestation activities.*
7. In terms of efficient charcoaling techniques, the GEF (2010) document on "Project Identification Form (PIF), Sustainable Charcoal Program" emphasizes that the conversion of wood into charcoal is probably the step in the charcoal value chain with the highest potential for reducing GHG emissions. This document gives an example of how a community producing 10 tons of sustainable charcoal could earn US$450,000 selling carbon credits, in addition to the sale value of the charcoal, if efficient charcoaling techniques were introduced. This fact is supported by the SLM PRODOC, which re-iterates that the PPG studies for SLM in Shire River Basin established that given the prevailing practices (especially kiln efficiencies) in Malawi, adoption of improved practices such as of improved efficiency kilns, improved conversion techniques, drying of raw materials used for charcoal, combined with use of improved and more efficient cook-stoves would result in net avoided emissions of 9.1 tons of CO2 per ton of charcoal (CAMCO, 2009). Given the importance attached to the attaining of efficient charcoaling techniques for utilization in the project area, the MTE therefore recommends that the piloting of efficient kilns in Chikangawa and other selected pilot sites including the use of Casamance technology should be speeded up with a sense of urgency. The MTE further recommends that the steps to legalize sustainable charcoaling be fast tracked since the review of charcoal policy has been finalized.
8. The theory that " unless measured, you cannot contain or correctly account for it" applies in the case of measurement of soil erosion/siltation and soil fertility in this SLM project. These two parameters form part of key flagship show pieces for the success of this project. The MTE therefore recommends that soil erosion/siltation measurements be undertaken by Land Use and Water departments - Land Use department has a Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation ( RUSLE) model that could be utilized at minimal costs. On soil fertility, Chitedze Research Station, through Land Use department be engaged to measure this parameter. The MTE further recommends that these studies be focused on the gaps the JICA Community Vitalisation and Afforestation in Middle Shire (COVAMS) project has not covered, hence liaison with JICA in this aspect has to be intensified. Doing so will enhance integration and the programmatic approach.
9. The MTR Evaluation revealed the discrepancy in reporting by the EDOs and IPs for the hectare coverage through afforestation of degraded land in the SLM project area (range of between 300 - 500ha by EDOs and between 3000 to 4500ha by IPs). Another anomaly observed by the MTR Evaluation was the targets for ha coverage (600,000ha at MTR and 1,000,000ha at project end) set by the PRODOC. Both the APR and PIR of June 2012 and June 2013 reported these target to be very high and unattainable. The MTE therefore recommends the following: i) The PMU should ensure that both the EDOs and IPs report correct figures of ha coverage as per stipulated template; ii) The management should consider adjusting the ha coverage downwards, closer to those other projects that started prior to the UNDP SLM project, e.g. the MCA has a target of 140,000ha target over five years and another project undertaken by the Department of Forestry has 125,000ha over the same period (five years***). This must be approved by the project's Steering Committee.***
10. priorities for sustainability of the achievements after project ends: The SLM project has now fully taken off despite its delays in starting. All the consultancies which were planned to be undertaken by the project have been finalized (including MTR, almost near completion), except for one the weather index crops insurance. From the PIR reports of 2012 and 2013, the project's long term goal is to pilot 3 innovative SLM technologies – the Green Water Credits, Sustainable Charcoal and Index-Based Insurance Scheme. These are fairly new tools for SLM, even from a global perspective, which need careful planning in order to achieve their long-term sustainability. To this effect, the MTE recommends the PMU to prepare an "Exit Plan" besides the existing 2014 "work plan. The Exit Plan should address issues pertaining to the *Urban woodlands and ecosystems rehabilitation component, programmatic approach, policies requirement for long-term sustainability and gender integration.*
11. The MTR Evaluation observed that no activity was undertaken under the Urban woodlands and ecosystems rehabilitation component. This is an important aspect of the project that deserves attention in the future project/programme undertaken despite it not being achieved in the current project. It is therefore recommended to be undertaken in any future project/programmes that would be formulated or it could be formulated as a stand-alone project because its potential impact would be high.
12. The MTR Evaluation recommends driving the activities of the project towards a programmatic approach as the final part of this project implementation is being made (i.e. there is room to be part of the Environmental Natural Resource Management programme currently supported by UNDP). Therefore the senior managers of the project, both PMU and UNDP CO should start the process of linking the project to the programme. This is for the sustainability of the key components of this project.
13. Key policies have been reviewed, but for future sustainability of the project achievements the MTE recommends fast tracking the harmonization of River Bank cultivation policy and legalizing the sustainable charcoal production.
14. The SRB has great potential for socio-economic and financial sustainability. This would be greatly enhanced by the enabling environment of good gender balance participation in the project area***. For example, it has been documented in the MTR site visit mission report that project participation by gender in Mwanza and Neno districts was 80% female and 20% male and 70% female and 30 male respectively.*** It was ***only Balaka that reported slight different trend, that of 60% male and 40% female.*** Blantyre indicated trends of gender participation was similar to those of Mwanza and Neno
15. Lessons Learnt: One of the key lessons learnt by the project relates to the need for a seamless integration and excellent coordination and communications with the project’s main executing partners – and other partners, as well as involving all stakeholders in the design and adaptive management of the new approaches being tested and piloted. Linking to this is the lesson that In order to achieve maximum forest protection, there is need to strengthen local forest governance and community based management systems to ensure that the communities become an important player in the protection of their own forest resources - a concept of individual woodlots is emerging from this story. The MTR process also brought to the fore an important aspect for the success of pilot projects like SLM that "Study tours" to witness successful approaches being piloted on the ground are a valuable tool.
16. INTRODUCTION
17. Malawi, like many other SADC countries, depends on rain-fed food production systems that are greatly challenged by issues of climate change, land degradation and declining soil fertility. The land degradation situation in the Shire Basin presents a good example for Malawi. This sudden land degradation in the Shire basin has been driven by poor agricultural practices and deforestation. The major contributing factors are the negative interrelationship of high dependence on natural resources coupled with poor resource management, poverty, rapid population growth, ineffective policy implementation, and poor economic development. For example, it has been recorded in the PPG preparatory survey reports **(2008)** that extensive land use, coupled with wanton tree felling and bushfires have resulted in severe deforestation, land degradation and soil erosion in the basin. It is recorded that up to 13% of the total forest cover was lost between 1990 and 2005, while 35% of the primary forest cover was lost in the period 2000 – 2005 in the Shire River Basin area. Extensive land use has resulted in severe land degradation and soil erosion, which have led to siltation of the Shire River and its tributaries, consequently affecting hydro-electric power generation, human health and fisheries. These have further been exacerbated by the use of biomass (including charcoal)as a source of energy (causing heavy deforestation) and more recently, climate change.
18. Meanwhile, the importance of this basin cannot be overemphasized. This fact is substantiated in the PRODOC (Project Document): Private Public Sector Partnership on Capacity Building for Sustainable Land management (SLM) in the Shire River Basin**.** It has been stated in this document that the Shire River Basin which covers more than 3.1 million hectares (almost 16% of Malawi) hosts about 22% of the country's population. Therefore this basin serves as a good example of a critical source of socio-economic importance in the country ̶ being a source of more than 98% of the country’s power generating capacity and supplies water to major urban centres such as Blantyre and Limbe, besides supporting a locally significant artisanal fishery, and supplying irrigation water for valuable crops in the basin.
19. Thus, to conserve this important basin and address the above mentioned challenges, the Malawi government with financial assistance from the UNDP developed the full-size project on SLM “Private Public Sector Partnership on Capacity Building in the Shire River Basin”.
20. The SLM global aim was to contribute to the reduction of carbon dioxide (CO2) greenhouse gas emissions by catalyzing the development of afforestation, natural forests regeneration and piloting of technologies on Sustainable Charcoal production. This was to be accomplished by the implementation of five components designed to address the key barriers identified during the project development phase. Table 3 below presents these components.

**Table 3: Project components/Outcomes versus Barriers(per PRODOC)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PROJECT COMPONENTS/OUTCOMES** | **BARRIERS ADDRESSED** |
| **PROJECT OUTCOME 1**: The policy, regulatory and institutional arrangement support sustainable land management in the Shire River Basin. | Institutional barriers,Technical barriersand weakness in policies |
| **PROJECT OUTCOME 2:** Private Public Partnerships (PPP) providing financial incentives for SLM, through green water credits and sustainable charcoal . | NormativeWeak incentives in adoption of SLM and Weak capacities and lack of skills |
| **PROJECT OUTCOME 3:** Crop insurance providing the basis for increased access to credits as well as increased use of up-to-date weather information in decision making. | Financial and weak capacities and skills |
| **OUTCOME 4:** Knowledge and skills for SLM provided to resource managers at all levels. | Information and the availability of cadres to impart skills  |
| **\* PROJECT OUTCOME 5:** Project Management Learning, Adaptive Management, Monitoring & Evaluation. | Outcome not originally included in PRODOC |

***\*****Note: Project Outcome 5 was not originally included as an Outcome in the PRODOC, it has been included as the project progressed in order to account for project management learning, adaptive management, monitoring & evaluation aspects; thus has been excluded for real assessments of targets and indicators performance, it will feature only as and when necessary.*

1. In accordance with the UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, a mid-term review of the full-size project SLM “Private Public Sector Partnership on Capacity Building in the Shire River Basin” implemented through the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change was undertaken in 2013. This Terms of Reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for this mid-term review.
2. Purpose of the Review
3. This project has been operational for three (3) years. Therefore, as a requirement for the UNDP/GEF projects, this full-Sized project has to have a Mid-Term Review(MTR) in order to assess its progress achievements based on its projected targets. To this effect, the government of Malawi with financial assistance from the UNDP has called for the services of the consultant to undertake this review. This mid-term evaluation aims to assess and document the progress to date with the design, implementation, impact and potential for success. The objective of the MTR is to gain an independent analysis of the progress of the project so far, through identifying potential project design problems, assessing progress towards the achievement of the project objective, identifying and documenting lessons learned (including lessons that might improve design and implementation of other UNDP-GEF projects), and making recommendations regarding specific actions that should be taken to improve the project. The MTR will assess early signs of project success or failure and identify the necessary changes to be made through performance measured based on the indicators of the project’s logical framework and various tracking tools.
4. Some additional requirements have been included. The UNDP Country Office and the Project Management Unit also raised particular requests during the evaluation mission; these relate primarily to:
	* The decision taken at the last Tripartite Review Meeting to extend the project by one year, ending June 2015, with a possibility of further extension to December 2015.
	* The relevance of the project – taking into account Malawi’s broader development context and policies as well as the Millennium Development Goals.

## Scope & Methodology

1. The focus of the assignment was to review and formulate a responsive MTR project report on SLM “Private Public Sector Partnership on Capacity Building in the Shire River Basin”. The Terms of References (TOR) contained in the UNDP job advertisement (Duties and Responsibilities[[2]](#footnote-2)) were found to be sufficiently comprehensive and adequate for the execution of this assignment, with a view to produce target focused and implementable recommendations.
2. The data-gathering component of the mid-term evaluation work was carried out during a three-week Mission to Malawi (see Annexure 6.2.3). The evaluation team was supposed to comprise one international consultant and one national consultant but the work was done by only one expert. The expert adopted an important part of the MTR methodology by undertaking the review of the project in terms of the ***goals and objectives, the outcomes and outputs including indicators as shown in the Logframe*** of the project. Therefore, the desktop study entailed undertaking tasks such as reviewing primary and secondary literature and search of websites/databases, including relevant official reports on this project. To this effect, the expert reviewed an extensive range of documents related to the project (more than 24 documents; see list in Annexure 6.1.2).
3. The expert met with project management and UNDP senior management staff at the beginning and end of the mission. In the process of information gathering through personal interviews, the consultant undertook site field visits to Balaka, Mwanza, Neno and Blantyre districts (meetings with district officials and community members, see Annexure 6.2.2). Thereafter, the consultant held meetings with government Focal Point members in the line Ministries (see Annexure 6.2.2) and the partners (relevant donor community, see Annexure 6.2.2).
4. Where possible, the consultant has attempted to focus on a result -based evaluation approach. However, as input to the next phase of the project, the consultant has also dealt from time to time with process-based issues.

## Other monitoring and evaluation activities integral to the project

1. There are several monitoring processes integral to the project that have also been used by the consultant as well as the project Management team, the EAD, and the UNDP. These include, among others:
* Tri-partite Review Meetings (EAD, UNDP,GEF regional co-coordinator, key stakeholders)
* IP Reports
* Annual Project Progress Reports (APR)
* Progress Report-SLM: December-March 2013 Vers-2
* Monthly financial reports
* Quarterly financial and technical reports with budget draw down requests
* Annual audited financial reports
* Project Steering Committee meetings (not held as often as intended).
1. In addition several reports on specific project activities were prepared by the project management unit and workshops and interactions were held with the development partners (World Bank, MCA, JICA, EU, etc.).
2. Given the level of the project's financial monitoring, the consultant for this mid-term evaluation did not specifically look for audit issues related to project financial management, but has relied on the project's monitoring to track and highlight potential problem areas.

## Structure of the Review Report

1. The structure of the review report is summarized as project started as follows:
2. Opening page:
3. Executive Summary
4. Acronyms and Abbreviations
5. Introduction
6. Project description and development context
7. Findings:
	1. Progress toward Results
	2. Adaptive Management
	3. Management Arrangements
8. Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons
9. Annexes .
10. PROJECT DESCRIPTION & DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT
11. The SLM project started as a concept document and was approved as GEF Work Programme in June 2007. It was approved as a Full Scale Project (FSP) by GEF Council in December 2008. According to PIF, The implementation of the project was supposed to start in February 2009 with a Mid-term review December 2010 and completion of the project in March 2013. However, the project implementation was markedly delayed; the start date was moved to April 2010, with an end date of March 2014. Even then, this did not materialize, as the project was only signed in July 2010, therefore with an end date of June 2014. The funds were eventually disbursed in October 2010***. This project is planned to end 30 June 2015, with a possible extension to December 2015 due to its importance of creating an enabling environment for communities to be actively involved in the main national economic development arena.*** *This echoes the assertion of the Malawi government representative during the 8 June 2012 Tripartite Review Meeting who, on behalf of the Ministry of Finance reiterated the importance the government attaches to this project as it addresses issues that impact on the country's economic growth".*

1. This four-year project is being coordinated by the Environmental Affairs Department (EAD) of the Ministry of Environment and Natural resources. Actual implementation has been done through the relevant ministries and departments such as agriculture, forestry, energy, local government and rural development, and also involves local leadership and communities through their representatives. The project’s immediate focus is the middle and lower Shire River basin (See Map 1).

Map1 B: SLM project sites

Source: Progress Report-SLM December-March 2013 Vers-2

1. Lessons learnt from this pilot would be up scaled to the entire basin through the River Shire Development Authority which is to be established through the project. The project total budget was over US $24 million of which GEF contributed US $ 2,072,940 (9%).
2. Implementing Entity/Responsible Partners: Department of Environmental Affairs, Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development, Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment, Ministry of Development Planning and Cooperation, Department of Energy, Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services, ESCOM, Blantyre Water Board, Southern Region Water Board, NGOs.

Agreed by (Government):

Date/Month/Year ……………..July 2010

Agreed by (Executing Entity/Implementing Partner):

Date/Month/Year ................July 2010

Agreed by (UNDP):

Date/Month/Year ……………………………......July 2010

1. SLM was designed to have the normal project implementation, reporting, monitoring and evaluation tools that were to include monthly financial reports, ad hoc UNDP-DEA-PMU technical meetings, annual progress project reports, financial audit reports, PSC meetings, tripartite review meetings, project implementation reports, mid-term review and end of project evaluations.

## 2.1 Project Start and Duration

1. According to the PRODOC, the UNDP-Global Environmental Facility GEF has funded this project: “**Private Public Sector Partnership on Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in the Shire River Basin.** According to the PRODOC, the Project Inception Workshop was supposed be held within the first two months of project-start with those with assigned roles in the project organization structure, the UNDP country office and where appropriate/feasible, regional technical policy and programme advisors as well as other stakeholders.
2. As already highlighted in Part 1 (Introduction), the SLM project started as a concept document and was approved as a GEF Work Programme in June 2007, and consequently approved as a Full Scale Project (FSP) by GEF Council in December 2008. According to PIF, the implementation of the project was supposed to start in February 2009 with a mid-term review December 2010 and completion of the project in March 2013. However, the project implementation was markedly delayed; the start date was moved to April 2010, with an end date of March 2014.
3. The project was finally signed on 13July 2010, and was intended to run until the planned closing date of 30 June 2014 but is now extended to close on 30June 2015. Utilizing GEF resources of US $2,072,940, UNDP US$600,000, Government US $400,000 (in-kind) and planned co-funding from public Sector (a total co-financing of US $21,144,940).

## 2.2 Problems that project sought to address

1. The land degradation situation in the Shire Basin presents a good example typical community dependence natural resources - this sudden land degradation in the Shire Basin has been driven by poor agricultural practices and deforestation. The major contributing factors are the negative interrelationship of high dependence on natural resources coupled with poor resource management, poverty, rapid population growth, ineffective policy implementation, and poor economic development.
2. Extensive land use has resulted in severe land degradation and soil erosion, which have led to siltation of the Shire River and its tributaries, consequently affecting hydro-electric power generation, human health and fisheries. These have been further exacerbated by the use of biomass.
3. Therefore the SLM project was aimed at contributing towards “Sustainable Land Management” thereby providing the basis for economic development, food security and sustainable livelihoods while restoring the ecological integrity of the Shire River Basin”. The objective is: “To reduce land degradation in the Shire River Basin through improved institutional, policy and payment for ecosystems services (PES) arrangements and improved food security.

## 2.3 Immediate and Developmental Objective of Project

1. The overall goal of the project is to provide the basis for economic development, food security and sustainable livelihoods while restoring the ecological integrity of the Shire River Basin which would ultimately contribute and promote sustainable use of natural resources in the Zambezi basin. This will result in achieving global benefits in international waters, biodiversity conservation, climate change and combating desertification while also contributing to national benefits. The main outcome is thus: an integrated participatory strategy and enhanced capacity of the communities in the Shire Basin for the sustainable use of natural resources. This will lead to increased carbon sink, leading to decreased climate change and greenhouse-effects, alternative and more efficient use of energy, less flooding in the lower Shire; enhanced and more efficient electricity generation and water abstraction, better monitoring of the natural resources and water management, reduced bio-diversity loss and increased agricultural production.
2. Specifically, the objective is: “To reduce land degradation in the Shire River Basin (SBR) through improved institutional, policy and PES arrangements.” Table 4 below presents the outcomes and outputs.

**Table 4 SLM Outcomes &Outputs for the Immediate Objective: To reduce land degradation in the SBR**

| **Outcome** | **Outputs** |
| --- | --- |
| Outcome 1: The policy, regulatory and institutional arrangement support sustainable land management in the SRB | Output 1.1: Alignment of sector policies improved:  |
| Output1.2: SRB Development Authority formed improve coordination of SLM, environmental management &development in Basin |
|  |
| Outcome 2: Private Public Partnerships (PPP) providing financial incentives for SLM  | Output 2.1: Green Water Credits Scheme operationalized to provide financial incentive for SLM: |
| Output 2.2: Sustainable charcoal providing additional income as an incentive for sustainable woodlands management:  |
|  |
| Outcome 3: Crop insurance providing the basis for increased access to credits and use of weather information in decision making:  | Output 3.1: Index-based crop insurance piloted using lessons learnt during the initial pilot to refine the scheme:  |
| Output 3.2: Improving weather data generation and use in decision making:  |
|  |
| Outcome 4: Knowledge and skills for SLM provided to resource managers at all levels: | Output 4.1: Application of knowledge to support SLM implementation by farmers and rehabilitation of specifically degraded communal lands.  |
| Output 4.2: Support to increase forest and plantation forest productivity  |
| Output 4.3: A participatory M&E system designed and used to monitor ecosystem health and improvements in livelihoods\*Output 4.4 Increased Socio-economic demographic income in the project area |
|  |
| **\* \***Outcomes 5 Project Managed effectively to deliver results and impacts within time and budget | Project Management Unit |
| Project M&E learning, and adaptive management |

*\*Note: The changes have been made to accommodate the results of the socio-economic survey undertaken by the UNDP country office. For more details on the performance towards achieving these outcomes and Outputs, please refer to Part 3.1:* Progress towards Results(Objectives, Outcomes and Outputs).

**\* \***Note: Secondly, p*roject Outcome 5 was not originally included as an Outcome in the PRODOC, it has been included as the project progressed in order to account for project management learning, adaptive management, monitoring & evaluation aspects; thus has been excluded for real assessments of targets and indicators performance, it will feature only as and when necessary.*

1. As already highlighted in an introductory Part 1(Introduction) above, the project is fully aligned to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) outcome of 2008 to 2011 which was in itself aligned to the country’s overall National Development Strategy, the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy which advocates for improved life of all Malawians through sustainable economic growth while preserving the environment.

### 2.3.1 Development objective and its indicators:

**To reduce land degradation in the Shire River Basin through improved institutional, policy and PES arrangements.”**

***Indicators:***

* Over 800,000 ha under direct SLM (project pilot area) and 1,000,000 ha impacted by up-scaling in next four years ( It has also been observed that the hectare coverage as set in the PRODOC was an over estimation because the total land area of the four SLM districts is less than one million hectares, then how could this have been thought to be achievable)
* Reduction in the rates of deforestation
* Improvement in the conditions of woodlands
* Carbon mitigated from sustainable charcoaling
* Reduction in soil erosion.

## 2.4 Baseline Outcomes indicators established

**Outcome 1:** The policy, regulatory and institutional arrangement support sustainable land management in the Shire River Basin.

***Indicators:***

* Number of functional institutions leading/participating in SLM in the SRB
* Number of policies mainstreaming SLM
* Number of policies with legislation and institutional arrangement for effective implementation
* Legal status of charcoal
* Revenue from charcoal going to District and national revenue.

**Outcome 2:** Private Public Partnerships (PPP) providing financial incentives for SLM (through green water credits and sustainable charcoal):

***Indicators:***

* Percentage of eligible farmers participating in the green water credit scheme
* Amounts of money being earned by communities from sustainable charcoal
* Number of groups with operational sustainable charcoal processes
* Number of functional charcoal associations
* Adoption of improved kilns in carbonization.

**Outcome 3:** Crop insurance providing the basis for increased access to credits as well as increased use of up to date weather information in decision making:

***Indicators:***

* Number of farmers participating in the crop insurance crops and number of crops (and crop mixes) involved
* Number of farmers using up-to-date weather information in decision making.

**Outcome 4:** Knowledge and skills for SLM provided to resource managers at all levels:

***Indicators:***

* Percentage of land and resource users adopting improved practices
* Change in soil fertility
* Number of people with relevant skills for SLM
* Lessons generated
* Change in agricultural productivity
* Percentage increase in demographic income changes of communities.

**Outcome 5:** Project Managed effectively to deliver results and impacts within time and budget

***Indicator:***

* M&E tool that captures socio-economic and ecological data.

For more details on how these indicators and targets have been achieved, refer to summary Tables 5 & 8,and Appendix A.

## 2.5 Main Stakeholders

1. The main stakeholders are signified by the implementation arrangement of the project, which is multi-sectoral in nature, involving the Department of Energy, Department of Forestry, Environment Affairs Department, Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services and CURE. Other implementing partners are the Ministry of Tourism, National Parks and Wild Life; Ministry of Industry and Trade; Ministry of Women, Child Development and Community Services; District Assemblies; Ministry of Economic Planning and Development; ESCOM; and Blantyre and Southern Region Water Boards. The Environmental Affairs Department takes the lead in coordinating the project. Many other non-state actors were also expected to participate in the project implementation when new products like Sustainable Charcoal, Green Water Credit and Crop Insurance Schemes were developed. From the donor partner fraternity, the major ones are the World Bank, MCA, JICA, the EU, etc.

## 2.6 Expected Results

1. The expected results of the SLM project were to introduce interventions that would help communities to address real causes of land and water resources degradation in the Shire River Basin while building the community resilience to adverse effects by creating sustainable food production systems that also help raise the income of the communities. These interventions include such interventions as conservation agriculture, fruit tree production integrated with overall re-afforestation programmes, fish farming, bee keeping and chicken rearing. Besides these, the project's expected results were supposed to from piloting the three innovative and fairly new technologies for SLM, even from a global perspective – the Green Water Credits, Sustainable charcoal and Index Based Insurance Scheme*.*

# 3. FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNT

1. From the MTR process, the mid-term evaluation consultant has not specifically looked for audit issues related to project financial management, but has relied on the above monitoring, and the financial audits to track and highlight potential problem areas and identify lessons learnt. In terms of technical issues related to implementation of the project, the consultant has also looked at the issues highlighted in PPG, the PRODOC and the APR/PIR reports of 2012 and 2013 respectively**.**

## 3.1 Progress towards Results

1. The importance of the project to the country’s economy cannot be overemphasized. It is the basis for economic development as it addresses issues that are of critical importance to the power generation of the country whilst also preserving the livelihoods of many millions of peopled in the country.
2. The SLM interventions so far introduced in the communities show great potential in addressing the real causes of land and water resources degradation in the region while building the community resilience to its adverse effects by creating sustainable food production systems that also help raise the income of the communities. Such interventions as conservation agriculture and fruit tree production integrated with the overall re-afforestation programme is proving a ‘win-win’ situation by not only addressing food security issues but also helping to increase resilience of the land to further adverse effects of land degradation.
3. These efforts need to be scaled up and consolidated, taking into account lessons learnt at every stage of project implementation (including learning from each other and with other projects). Some of the lessons learnt so far include the need to involve local leaders at every stage of project implementation to solicit for support and local ownership; the need to integrate alternative livelihoods for communities as incentives to engage in conservation activities; and the need for co-management of some of the forestry reserves to encourage regeneration as well as afforestation. Similarly, there is a need to put in place a mechanism to reduce rampant bushfires in the hotspots which are eroding the gains made in afforestation activities by communities. The project needs to scale up participatory approaches with the communities in order to create space for talking with everyone in the communities as a platform for constructive dialogue.

*1.The project implementation at MTE stage has been rated Satisfactory.*

*2. Meanwhile, the project intends to pilot three innovative SLM technologies (GCS, Index-Based Insurance Scheme and Sustainable Production), all being fairly new tools to SLM.*

*3. However, challenges exist, which slow down the good progress gained so far.*

*4. Therefore, the SLM MTR consultant has made recommendation to assist project Team where to focus - These are mainly outlined in Tables 5 (A&B) and 10.*

*5. Meanwhile, the overall performance of the project is outlined in Table 8 and Appendix A. Please refer to this Table and Appendix for more detailed performance of the project.*

1. The project implementation at MTE has been rated satisfactory. Meanwhile, the project intends to pilot innovative SLM technologies – the Green Water Credit Scheme, Sustainable Charcoal Production and Index-Based Insurance Scheme, all being fairly new tools for SLM, even from a global perspective.
2. Therefore the MTR consultant has made recommendations to give direction of where to focus. The main features of these are given in Tables 5 (A&B) and 10, and Appendix A.
3. However, challenges still remain which continue to slow down implementation of the project activities. One of the challenges revolves around fund flow constraints. There is a need to critically review fund flow constraints in order to maintain the momentum raised in the communities while at the same time strengthening the capacity to manage, account and report on the use of funds being provided under the project. There is also a need to resolve the issue of reporting results for the project so that it demonstrates the on-the- ground result based, rather than reporting more on the processes as is the case now.
4. Therefore the report gives recommendations on inclusion of result- based specifics, such as land

hectare coverage when so many seedlings are planted and so much percentage survived.. Such reporting would enable the project to attain the requirements of CDM.

|  |
| --- |
| **Table 5(A) Status of SLM Targets at Mid-Term Evaluation - December 2013** |
| Target @ December 2013 | Objective | Outcome 1 | Outcome 2 | Outcome 3 | Outcome4 | Total |
| No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Target Achieved | 0 | - | 1 | 20.0 | 1 | 20.0 | 0 | - | 3 | 60.0 | 5 | 21.7 |
| On Track to achieveTarget | 3 | 50.0 | 2 | 40.0 | 1 | 20.0 | 0 | - | 1 | 20.0 | 7 | 30.4 |
| Behind Target – needsattention | 1 | 16.7 | 1 | 20.0 | 1 | 20.0 | 2 | 100 | 1 | 20.0 | 6 | 26.2 |
| Target at high risk ofnot being achieved | 2 | 33.3 | 1 | 20.0 | 2 | 40.0 | 0 | - | 0 | - | 5 | 21.7 |
| Total | 6 |  | 5 |  | 5 |  | 2 |  | 5 |  | 23 |  |

1. It is hoped that the pace of project implementation will continue to improve particularly now that the consultancies on the review of policies on SLM alignment and Sustainable Charcoal, development of Green Water Credit and weather-based Crop Insurance have been completed. These studies represent new opportunities to direct the project on how it can engage with both communities and stakeholders for joint implementation of these initiatives in the pilot districts.
2. Therefore, to give direction on how best to address the above- mentioned challenges, the MTR consultant has given comments in the tabulated progress towards achieving the PRODOC targets and indicators. This will assist in an easy way of reporting on results-based progress towards achieving the key impact and outcome indicators of the project which are crucial to demonstrating how it has impacted on the communities. Tables 5 (A) and (B) highlight the progress towards achieving the project's indicators and targets, including comments on the way forward.
3. Table 5(A) above provides a high level assessment of the progress the project has made against the 23 targets that are defined from the indicators in the project Logframe. This assessment has been prepared by the MTR Evaluation consultant. The sources of information for this analysis were the PIR/APR reports 2012/2013, the updated scorecards, as well as interactions with the Project Manager, the Adviser and UNDPCO officials. The evaluation assessment for each target probed on whether: a) the target had already been achieved; b) the target was on track to be achieved by the end of the project; c) the target was behind schedule and needed attention; or d) the target was at high risk of not being achieved by the end of the project. It must be clarified that this assessment is however very subjective, but does create a reasonable picture of the general progress with respect to the targets set in the PRODOC. The p*roject's Outcome 5 has been generated to account for project management learning, adaptive management, monitoring and evaluation. To this effect, it has been excluded specifically from this analysis.* This does not demean this Outcome; on the contrary. For example, Table 5B outlines the performance of this Outcome.
4. The analysis shows that on the overall, 21.7% of the project targets have been met, while 30.4% are on track towards being achieved by the end of project(giving a picture of assurance that at least 52.1% of the targets would be achieved at the end of the project). However, the analysis also points out that a lot more needs to be done as a considerable percentage of the targets, 26.2% are behind schedule, while 21.7% are at a high risk of not being achieved at all (painting a picture of about 47.9% "at risk"). The consultant is of the opinion that the observed high risk could be attributed to the over ambitious targets originally set in the PRODOC. For example, the Ha coverage of 1 million target at end of a project was on the higher side. If the whole Shire River Basin is 3.1million Ha, the 4 SLM districts appear to be about 25% to 30% of the SRB. The target of 1 million Ha at the end of the project looks like 100% or over that of the SRB. This targeting was indeed on the higher side. On the overall, the consultant considers the Evaluation to be a satisfactory progress, even though much will need to be done for the remaining period of the project. There is little room for so many targets not to be achieved because the project has picked up much moment to meet these targets.
5. On the other hand, Table 5 (A) shows that there is a significant difference in the level of targets achieved when comparing between Outcomes. For example, Outcomes 1 and 4 show that the proportion of Targets either achieved or on track is 60.0% and 80.0% respectively. Meanwhile Outcome 3 displays a 0% progress, a cause for concern. Table 5 (B) below highlights the overall performance including the indicators and comments on the progress. In addition, Appendix A, gives a summary of overall performance and this may give an indicative direction of what activities the project needs to focus on for the remaining period of one and half years.

**Table 5 (B) Comments on Project Performance towards Outcomes, Indicators and Targets at MTR Evaluation(Ratings: HS: Highly satisfactory/ S: Satisfactory / MS: marginally satisfactory / U: Unsatisfactory)**

| **Strategy** | **Indicator** | **Target** |  **Midterm level & Assessment** | **Achievement Rating** | **Justification for Rating** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome 1: Provide Policy, Institutional & Financial Enabling Environment for Sustained Adoption of SLM in Shire River Basin** |
|  | Indicator 1.1: Carbon mitigated from sustainable charcoaling | At least 0.5 million tons of carbon dioxide mitigated from sustainable charcoal in the districts by mid-term | No progress to report on quantification of carbon mitigated from charcoaling, but the efficient kilns to be piloted have been identified and being tested, besides, he policy on piloting sustainable charcoal production is finalized- which will assist indirectly in estimating the amount of carbon. | **[S]** | Good foundational work has been covered so far, with 11 Charcoal Associations established and the kiln technologies being piloted currently  |
|  | Indicator 1.2: Reduction in soil erosion | At least half of land under improved SLM registers at least 15% reduction in soil erosion by mid-term | There is no measurement yet of the reduction in soil erosion in the wider basin. The Green Water Credits system, under which farmers in the wider basin are expected to be compensated by water users in order to manage the land better and reduce soil erosion, has not yet started, but the strategy has been finalized | **[S]** | A lot of work has been done in areas of CA, gully control, vertiver grass planting, afforestation, etc., what remains is actual measurements to be done |
|  | Indicator 1.3: Improvement in the conditions of woodlands | At least 50% increase in woody vegetation in urban areas and currently degraded areas as measured through increased density of tree species, increased species index in revegetated/naturally recovering patches | Instead of urban areas, the project has planted in the Buffer zone along the river banks of Nkasi (19km) and Mpale (8km) in the Balaka district – where communities have been supported to plant elephant grass and reed inter-planted with a variety of trees species along the 15 meter buffer zones | **[u]** | No activity was undertaken under this component..This should be a project of its own or should be incorporated in other similar future projects, taking into account its importance to the Malawi's urban environment challenges |
|  | Indicator 1.4: Change in household wellbeing | At least 25% improvement in household welfare for a minimum of 75% of the households in pilot districts, as measured by percentage increase in household income, percentage reduction in number of food insecure | A socio-economic assessment has just been concluded and is currently being analyzed. However, preliminary results indicate a significant increase in the number of Income Generating Activities (IGAs) being practiced by the beneficiaries | **[S]** | Good work has been done by UNDPCO, the results that signify improved income by gender - hence A template table to measure this has been included as Output 4.4 under Outcome 4 and this needs to be added to the PRODOC Logframe and further approval by PSC |
| **Outcome 2: The Policy, Regulatory & Institutional Arrangement Support SLM in Shire River Basin** |
|  | Indicator 2.1: Number of functional institutions leading/participating in SLM in the SRB | The Shire River Basin Authority established by the end of the 2nd year, has adequate governance mechanisms to allow participatory decision making; charcoal associations established with by-laws and capacity to organise sustainable charcoal production by the Malawi Earth Carbon Trust Fund | The Water Act 2013 is in place and the road map for the formation of the Shire River Basin Authority is finalized. In addition, 11 sustainable charcoal production associations have been formed in Mwanza and Neno, which are the major charcoal producing areas of the country | **[MS]** | Although necessary ground work has been laid, but what remains to be done is the fast tacking of the SBRA establishment and legalization of sustainable charcoaling. |
|  | Indicator 2.2: Number of policies with legislation and institutional arrangement for effective implementation | Discussions for legislation and institutional arrangement for policy implementation for at least four key policies held by mid-term and recommendations provided adopted by end of the project | As at Mid-Term, four policies have been reviewed, which include the Fisheries and Forestry Policies | **[HS]** | There has been 100% achievement, what would need to be done for future exit is the harmonizing the River Bank cultivation to ensure all partners activities do adhere to the same practice  |
|  | Indicator 2.3: Legal status of charcoal | Recommendations for policy changes needed to legalize charcoal provided by mid-term | Strategy policy for sustainable charcoal has been finalized  | **[S]** | Great strides have been undertaken, what remains is legalizing sustainable charcoal production and this should take into consideration the informal community charcoal producers. |
|  | Indicator 2.4: Revenue from charcoal going to district and national revenue | Collection of revenue by districts and Malawi Revenue Authority from charcoal processes increase by 25% by mid-term | Currently, the practice is getting revenue from charcoal by the district assemblies through confiscation as charcoal productions is still considered an illegal business | **[MS]** | Though SLM project has done a lot work on awareness raising, there still needs more to be done this should be tied to activities on indicator 2.3 above |
| **Outcome3:Private Public Partnerships (PPP) Providing Financial Incentives for SLM (through Green Water Credits & Sustainable Charcoal)** |
|  | Indicator3.1: Percentage of eligible farmers participating in the Green Water Credit Scheme, hectares covered and extent of its functioning | A Green Water Credits Scheme agreed by end of the first year and full implementation started by end of year 3; at least 75% of eligible farmers involved covering at least 75% of the watershed. The scheme has clear operational guidelines, clearly spelling out roles and responsibilities as well as benefit sharing mechanisms | A strategy for the development of the Green Water Credits Scheme based on international best practices has been finalized. A specific scheme focusing on poorest segments of communities who may have limited opportunities to participate will now be built, bearing in mind that rules need to be devised to allow for informal land tenure and small land holdings, while simultaneously holding down transaction costs. This takes cognisance of the fact that the legal and governance context does not pose important obstacles for the introduction of GWC schemes | **[MS]** | A strategy for the development of the green water credits scheme has been finalized, and this is based on International Best Practices, but a lot more needs to be done |
|  | Indicator 3.2: Amounts of money being earned by communities from sustainable charcoal | Income from sustainable charcoal increase profitability of charcoal by at least 25% | Communities have not started earning money from sustainable charcoal yet, but as stated in indicator 2.1 above, more than 11 sustainable charcoal producer associations have been formed and are being supported with initial preparations for switching from unsustainable to sustainable charcoal production | **[MS]** | The project has done great work to establish the Associations, but needs to put in more effort to legalize sustainable charcoaling  |
|  | Indicator 3.3: Number of groups with operational sustainable charcoal processes | At least 10 groups with sustainable charcoal production operations and earning money from carbon finance | No group earns money from carbon finance. Though this indicator has been exceeded since 11 sustainable charcoal producer associations have been initiated across the four pilot districts and provided with capacity to switch from unsustainable to sustainable charcoaling, a lot more needs to be done. Each group has 15-30 members; the groups include Tulonkhondo, Mulindi, Kunthembwe, Muotcha, Kanduku, Magareta, Lundu, Mdunga, Govati, Chirombo and Simbota | **[MS]** | The same justification as in Indicator 3.2 above |
|  | Indicator 3:4 Number of functional charcoal associations | At least 10 charcoal associations have rules and regulations for sustainable charcoal and are actively enforcing them | No charcoal association has rules and regulations for sustainable charcoal so far | **[MS]** | The same justification as in Indicator, 3.2 & 3.3 above; however, these groups need support through bylaws, rules and regulations governing their operations and their legalization |
|  | Indicator 3:5 Adoption of improved kilns in carbonization | Number of charcoal producers using improved kiln in carbonization in pilot districts increase by at least 30% by mid-term | The strategy has been prepared, which stipulates the piloting of efficient kilns in the project sites, such as sedentary charcoal burning technologies in those areas with a steady supply of wood and make-shift ones in those areas with short supply of wood. For example, the Adam Retort was chosen for piloting in Chikangawa and Zomba Plantations while the Orange kiln was chosen for Blantyre Fuelwood Area. Meanwhile, the Casamance retort was chosen for Dedza Plantation. An additional one or two kilns will be allocated for Neno and Balaka depending on the outcome of an forest resource assessment exercise | **[MS]** | The technologies are still in piloting stages |
| **Outcome 4: Crop Insurance providing the Basis for Increased Access to Credits as well as Increased Use of Up-to-Date Weather Information in Decision Making** |
|  | Indicator 4.1: Number of farmers participating in the crop insurance crops and number of crops (and crop mixes) involved | At least 30% of the farmers in the SRB accessing crop insurance for at least three important crops (and crop mixes of maize/groundnuts/cotton/tobacco) by mid-term and 45% by end of the project | Not much progress has been made under this target. There are no farmers yet in the SRB who are accessing crop insurance for at least three important crops. The only task that has been undertaken is the preparation of the strategy that has recommended to pilot and which will cover 200 farmers in the four districts for the first season with a crop mix of at least 2 crops (Cotton and Maize). | **[MS]** | This component has some challenges. What would be feasible is to concentrate on the two preliminary recommended crops mix of maize and cotton |
|  | Indicator 4.2: Number of farmers using up-to-date weather information in decision making | At least 50% of farmers using up-to-date information from weather stations to determine planting/harvesting dates by mid-term | There is no progress under this target, the project has not yet started implementing a weather-based crop insurance scheme. No recommendations have been made since the report is not finalized. | **[U]** | Hardly any work has been done, no recommendations to-date |
| **Outcome 5: Knowledge and Skills for SLM provided to Resource Managers at all Levels** |
|  | Indicator 5.1 Percentage of land and resource users adopting improved practices | At least 25% of farmers adopting three to five forms of improved practices by Mid-term | Preliminary data assessment shows that more than 75% of the farmers have adopted more than two SLM technologies(a combination of soil fertility and soil erosion control technologies with manure making and conservation agriculture technologies) | **[HS]** | More than 75% land users have been adopted this technique - a good progress under this target and needs to be enhanced.  |
|  | Indicator 5.2 Change in soil fertility | At least 10% increase in soil fertility from baselines for land users consistently engaging in three to five improved practices by mid-term | There has been good progress under this target (in the soil structure, increased water retention and increased soil nutrients in the SLM project sites ) as evidenced in areas that adopted soil fertility improving technologies e.g. CA in Balaka and Blantyre, compost manure making and application in Mwanza (342 ha was applied with compost manure), use of agro-forestry technique, e.g. inter-cropping of gliricidiasepium and Tephrosiavogelli in Balaka | **[S]** | Great work done, but soil fertility measurement, just like soil erosion, is a critical parameter and a necessity because it will demonstrate the impacts of the project - has to be measured.  |
|  | Indicator 5.3 Number of people with relevant skills for SLM | At least 40% of land users and 30% of technical officers requiring to update skills have done so by mid-term | This has been one of the best targets achieved. Currently more than 80% of the technical personnel have been trained and updated their knowledge and skills in various aspects of SLM practices(included, mulching, compost making, Agroforestry practices, minimum tillage etc.). Similarly, 75% of lead farmers have been trained in SLM who in turn have trained between6,000and7,000 other farmers | **[HS]** | More than 80% of land users have been trained in modern methods of farming and afforestation |
|  | Indicator 5.4 Lessons generated | Lessons on Green Water Credits, Sustainable Charcoal, Crop Insurance, and other important project initiatives available for dissemination through the SRB and SLM National Dialogue process | Lessons drawn through the Improved Forest Management Programme: a livelihood approach to natural resources management is viable as it offers alternative sources of income for the communities | **[S]** | Though little has been done on Green Water Credits, Sustainable Charcoal, Crop Insurance, the project has covered a lot of ground concerning establishing alternative sources of livelihoods, such as fish farming and bee keeping |
|  | Indicator 5.5 Change in agricultural productivity | At least 20% increase in agricultural produce for key crops for those adopting three to five improved practices consistently by mid-term | There have been indicative figures from the socio-economic survey undertaken by UNDP CO on changes in productivity of the land as a result of uptake of SLM practices. These preliminary findings indicate that farmers adopting conservation agriculture have registered a 50-100% increase in maize, ground nuts and other crops. In addition, those farmers adopting other forms of SLM technologies such as ridge alignment and compost manure have had productivity increase of at least 30% from the previous production. | **[HS]** | The project has covered a lot of ground concerning introduction of new techniques to boost agricultural produce for key crops |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

## 3.2 Project Design

1. The project design and funding mechanism was based on the assumption that several different parties would commit funding and other resources: the GEF, UNDP and government.
2. As already alluded to above, the SLM project started as a concept document and was approved as GEF Work Programme in June 2007, and consequently approved as a Full Scale Project (FSP) by GEF Council in December 2008. According to PIF. The implementation of the project was supposed to start in February 2009 with a Mid-term Review in December 2010 and completion of the project in March 2014. However, the project implementation was markedly delayed. The start date was moved to April 2010, then finally signed off on 13 July 2010, but finally implementation started in October 2010 with an end date of March 2014. The project has now planned for an extension to June 2015 (approved), with a possible further extension to December, 2015(not yet approved).

## 3.3 Progress towards Objectives, Outcomes and Outputs

#### 3.3.1 Developmental Objective

**To reduce land degradation in the Shire River Basin through improved institutional, policy and PES arrangements.**

1. In terms of the UNCCD, the global objective, the GF4 strategy LD Oct 2007 Strategic Objective One: An enabling environment will place SLM in the main stream of development policy and practice at regional, national, and local levels. This would be with a target of overall decrease in trend and/or severity of land degradation and the indicator(i.e., the % Increase in carbon stocks - soil and plant biomass). Meanwhile, the SLM PRODOC stipulated the hectare coverage of 600,000ha in the SLM project area by mid-term and 1 million ha at the end of the project. This is yet again an overestimation. Another challenge is a contradiction in reporting of the hectare coverage figures by the District Focal Point members (300ha - 500ha) and those by the IPs(300,000ha to 450,000ha). The implication of these differences in figures is that proper data capturing is not being done, hence the requirement of adhering to the reporting according to an all-inclusive template which the PMU M&E team has prepared. Furthermore, the projected PRODOC target of 600,000ha by mid-term to 1,000,000ha end of the project are still on the higher side. The MTR Evaluation has recommended that the PMU with the approval of the PSC adjust these targets down wards closer to those stipulated by partner projects (MCA and Forestry department). See recommendation C.7 in Table 10.
2. Luckily enough, the **Project Implementation Review** (**PIR-2013-GEFID3376-PIMS2085) report of the UNDP Supported GEF Financed Projects** presents a more accurate data on hectare coverage. This PIR report states that as at 30 June 2013, a total of 10,349 hectares had been under direct achievement of SLM coverage by all the four districts of Neno, Blantyre, Balaka and Mwanza due to conservation agriculture (CA) practices, afforestation, Ridge Alignment, Vetiver and Natural Regeneration. Besides this data, it has also been documented in reports from the four districts, hat between July and December 2013, Mwanza had covered 80 ha, Neno 287 ha, Balaka 2 ha, with no feedback from Blantyre district. These districts therefore contributed a total of 369 ha coverage between July and December 2013. *Hence the total hectare coverage contributed by SLM activities so far by Mid-term (over a period of three (3) years) is 10,718 ha*.
3. In this PIR-2013-GEFID3376-PIMS2085 report, it is documented that to address the objective's indicator: *"Improvement in the conditions of woodlands in Urban degraded areas*", the project had instead of urban areas, opted for the following particularly degraded areas: i) Buffer zone along the river banks of Nkasi (19km) and Mpale (8km) in Balaka district – where communities have been supported to plant elephant grass and reed inter-planted with a variety of species along the 15 meter buffer zones.

### 3.3.2 Outcome 1: The policy, regulatory and institutional arrangement support sustainable land management in the Shire River Basin

1. This has two outputs as outlined below.

***Output 1.1: Alignment of sector policies improved***

* The study on policies has looked at environment, water, fisheries, forestry, wildlife, energy, agriculture, irrigation, construction and planning and mining; all have already in them some relevance to the activities of SLM. However, recommendations have been made for alignment of Sustainable Land Management principles where applicable.
* Meanwhile, Fisheries and Forestry Policies have already been revised and have made provisions for SLM.
* The Water Act, 2013, under which the SRBA could be established, has been enacted and this presents the best basis for SRBA establishment through the IWRM processes.
* Draft strategy for sustainable charcoal been drafted.
* However, one constraint in the legal area is the lack of enactment of the New EMA in the last eight years, hence the use of the 1996 Environmental Management Act despite it having been revised several times.
* Institutionally, SLM is currently coordinated by DEA and has been acknowledged by all Focal Point members as the right arrangement which is supported by the legal framework.

***Output 1.2:  SRB Development Authority formed and supported to improve coordination of SLM,* environmental management and development:**

* There has been generally a good increase in the level of awareness through a network of focal points.
* There have been three donor coordination meetings for World Bank, SLM, EU, JICA& MCC.
* The road map for its establishment is in place, including the legal options for its establishment.
* The Water Act 2013 has made provision for establishing the SRBA.
* The donor partners consulted so far(World Bank, MCA and JICA) expressed the desire for UNDP to take a leading role together with the World Bank in championing the establishment of the SRBA. Unfortunately, the consultant did not have an opportunity to visit the EU because they had declined the appointment due to other commitments.

### 3.3.3 Outcome 2: Private Public Partnerships (PPP) providing financial incentives for SLM (through Green Water Credits and Sustainable Charcoal)

1. This outcome has two outputs and these are outlined below.

***Output 2.1 Green Water Credits Scheme (GWCS) operationalized to provide financial incentive for SLM***

* The strategy for the GWCS scheme is finalized and implementation but there is still some challenges with implementation. To put mechanisms in place to facilitate the process is a daunting task that requires concerted efforts. Tables 5, 8 and 10 give proper guidance on how to proceed with this component.
* Among recommendations that have been made by the consultant for GWCS are to pilot either one of the following: one buyer ̶ one seller model; one buyer ̶ multiple sellers, and multiple buyers ̶ multiple sellers models. The one-buyer-one seller is preferred by all the stakeholders( as reported in PIR-2013-GEFID3376-PIMS2085).
* The point still remains that for this to be achieved within the remaining timeframe of one and half years shall require extra energy, dedication and focus from the PMU and the project implementation team. Tables 5, 8 and 10 give directions on this.
* It is also documented in the same PIR report that in the absence of the SRBA an independent organization will need to be appointed to take up the negotiation between the sellers and buyers. This has to be done as urgently as possible, noting that it may take a little longer to have the SRBA established.

***Output 2.2 Sustainable charcoal providing additional income as an incentive for sustainable woodlands management***

* The strategy for sustainable charcoal has been finalised.
* The project to pilot efficient kilns is due to start in forest plantations in Chikangawa, Mulanje, Zomba as well as in customary lands in at least two districts. This is an encouraging development.
* Notably, there has been at least 11 groups initiated with functional charcoal activities going on in their areas. These groups include Tulonkhondo, Mulindi, Kunthembwe, Muotcha, Kanduku, Magareta, Lundu, Mdunga, Govati, Chirombo, Simbota. Each group has 15-30 members.
* Another critical initiative to consider alternatives of livelihoods in the interim, such as linking it with cash for work aspects of the Public Works programme. when people stop producing charcoal

### 3.3.4 Outcome 3: Crop insurance providing the basis for increased access to credits as well as increased use of up to date weather information in decision making.

1. This outcome also has two outputs and these are outlined below.

***Output 3.1 Weather-based index insurance for crop mixes piloted***

* Strategy for an implementable weather index-based insurance scheme has been finalized and the recommendations are for cotton and selected food crops (maize).
* This component has lagged behind due to lack of weather data collection finalization.
* However, it is planned that the pilot will cover 50 farmers per district, which will give a total of about 200 farmers for the first season with a crop mix of at least two crops (cotton and maize).
* To this effect, consultation with other key players such as Ministry of Agriculture has already started and service provider to support micro-weather insurance programme are being sought.
* The consultancy on the design for weather index crop insurance is behind schedule (issues with consultants) report and design not completed to date.
* To capitalise on the season at hand, after agreement between the project management and consultants, a dry-run pilot is being concurrently run with EARS (a Dutch company) using an alternative methodology using satellite data superimposed on the areas with automated weather stations. This will give a comparison of which farmers would have been paid using either method.
* Dry-run pilot results are expected to be available end of season, i.e. end April 2014 for maize (nationwide) and cotton in the project area (SRB).

***Output 3.2:Weather data generation and use***

* This output has lagged behind. It may be necessary to consider only what is achievable for inclusion in the 2013 Work Plan, such as concentrating on awareness (See Tables 5,8 and 10)
* Under this output only the inventory of existing national weather stations has been done but need to focus on hotspots.
* Initial inventory of existing national weather stations needs to be revisited because not much was done in the initial attempt. There was a proposition that the model of data collection should emulate that of LEAD Southern Africa being practiced in Lake Chirwa basin which utilizes traditional authorities to help managing the stations (for security and safety of the equipment).This would be highly recommendable because it utilizes the established existing village management systems such as VGH and Chiefs.
* It was also reported by the PMU that an automated weather station would be installed in Neno by mid-Jan 2014. This would be a welcome development

### 3.3.5Outcome 4: Knowledge and skills for SLM provided to resource managers at all level

1. This outcome had three outputs but a fourth one has been added to take into account the socio-economic study that UNDP country office has done. These outputs are outlined below.

**Output 4.1: Application of knowledge to support SLM implementation by farmers and rehabilitation of specifically degraded communal lands.**

* There has been an increase in agricultural produce for key crops as a result of improved SLM practices increasing soil fertility and soil-water use by crops; and water conservation by realigned ridges
* This has a high satisfactory rate because the percentage of people with relevant skills for SLM by gender is more than 80 % in the project areas.
* The percentage change in soil fertility has improved but needs scientific evidence. This need engaging the Chitedze Agricultural Research Station.

**Output 4.2: Support to increase forest and plantation forest productivity**

* There is an observed high rate of percentage increase in the extent of forests under protected areas because a lot of work is done on this component due to the forest regeneration and anti- bushfire campaigns.
* Similarly, there is also a high rate of percentage improvement in production for plantation forests though the negative impacts of bushfires during the dry seasons significantly reduces this effort.

**Output 4.3: A participatory M&E system designed and used to monitor ecosystem health and improvements in livelihoods:**

* Though it is acknowledged that good progress has been made on M&E system up and running under various SLM activities, there is still a need to develop a harmonized reporting template. This is evidenced by the lack of agreement between figures reported by various sectors and departs on the same thing.

***Output 4.4 Increased Socio-economic demographic incomes in the project area***

1. The changes have been made to accommodate the results of the socio-economic survey undertaken by the UNDP country office. The changes to this component in terms of Indicator, output, target level at end of the project, target and expected results as at December 2013 and status of achievement to date are indicated in the table6 below. This inclusion will need the steering committee's approval. It must be noted that this inclusion enhances what the project document had planned to be done. For example, indicator: "Change in household wellbeing" for the Objective: “To provide policy, institutional and financial enabling environment for the sustained adoption of SLM in the Shire River Basin".

**Table 6: Output 4.4 of Outcome 4 contents**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome/Indicator** | **Output** | **Target level at end of the project** | **Target and Expected results as at December 2013** | **Status of achievement to date** |
| IndicatorImprovement in Income changes by gender of communities | Output 4.4 Increased socio-economic demographic income in the project area | % increase in demographic income changes | At least 40 male-headed h/holds and 20 female h/holds registering 50% increase in income changes | !00% by the end of the project |

***The targets for the Output 4.4 according to the survey findings are as follows:***

* 31 male headed h/hold registering 50% increase in income changes (78% at Mid-term)
* 16 Female headed h/holds registering 50% increase in income changes(80% at Mid-term).

### 3.3.6 Outcome 5: Project Management

1. This outcome also has two outputs.

***Output 5.1: Learning, Adaptive Management, Monitoring & Evaluation***

* It has been documented that systems for financial and technical reporting have been strengthened and are being used in the districts – though challenges still remains on reporting, no dedicated or assigned personnel are available to look at the project issues.
* It has been recorded that draft IEC materials have to be produced following completion of consultancies. This has to be implemented.
* Though the project has deliberately introduced IGP like bee keeping and fish farming in the project sites in order to enhance catchment management as well as improve the welfare of the beneficiaries, there is a need to diversify more, especially in the area of utilizing firebreak clearing as a source of extra income (a possibility of linking this with the Public Works programme of cash-for-work). Sustainability of this approach remains in the way it is designed.
* Limited documentation of best practices and lessons learnt so far by the project.
* Notably, there has been good development in the area of Monthly and Quarterly Reporting Formats -though district and IP reporting more of output than result-based.

***Output 5.2: Project Management Unit***

* It has been documented that one Focal Point project review meeting was held in April 2013 and a Steering Committee meeting was held in July 2013.
* From the Mid-term review outcomes there is a strong consideration to reallocate the PMU to a district suitable for coordination and implementation where either the Project Manager and Adviser or, either the Project Manager or Adviser could move to Balaka District (preferably), or Mwanza(alternatively).
1. However, one constraint the consultant has noted is that there is only the Project Manager and the Adviser in the project management unit; without the services of the much-needed Personal Assistant (Preferably, an Administrative and Finance Assistant would be suitable). This has to be rectified in the extended period of the project (to June 2015, with a further possible extension to December 2015). Failure to do may render great strides achieved by the project to be drastically hampered, especially if the PMU moves to a new location.

## 3.4 Adaptive Management

1. It has been documented in the April-July 2013 Progress Report that the project has had challenges in getting reports from the implementing partners particularly with regards to data in the M & E Framework. Yet there have had been several attempts to train the implementing partners (both districts and government staff) in reporting for this project but this has not yet yielded the desired results The IPs have mostly dwelt on reporting the outputs emanating from the activities they have undertaken and have reported very little on the outcome and impacts on the beneficiaries from the various activities. This meant most indicators in the results framework not being reported properly. Needless to say, there are gaps in terms of the amount of data the project could have generated to report on. It has been documented in the same April-July Progress report that to resolve this, the project team decided to come up with project monthly and quarterly reporting formats that actually reflect the indicators that are in the M & E Framework (Results Framework) for this project. In addition, districts were trained in the indicators that have to be reported on each of the four outcomes of the project as well as on the information required for the PIR. Since this is an important aspect of the project, the MTR consultant proposes that the template should be re-circulated with an reiterating message that reports not adhering to the supplied Template will have to be returned to the owner.

### 3.4.1 Work planning

1. This component has been done very well. The Work Plan for both project PMU and the districts have been prepared on time. The challenge, though, has been the implementation. In addition, the submission of financial reports by districts needs improvement

### 3.4.2 Finance and co-finance

1. Currently, the project is mainly co-financed by the government of Malawi personnel(in-kind) and UNDP, in addition tithe GEF funding. It is expected that this would be the norm for the remaining year, including the proposed extension of the project to December 2015. It must be noted that the Financial management procedures follow standard UNDP guidelines/manual for NEX projects, with the NPD having authority to approve and disburse payments. Interaction with senior management of the project and discussions with different stakeholders showed that there was every indication of tight financial management to seek the highest possible cost-effectiveness in the use of the project’s resources. Table7 below presents the summary of how the budget of this project has been disbursed.

**Table 7: SLM Budget and Expenditure Summary for GEF and UNDP funds (US$/Year)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **Totals** |
| **\***GEF Budget | - | 720, 001.00 | 614, 873.53 | 748, 250.00 | 2, 083, 124.53 |
| **\*\***GEF Expenditure | - | 386, 878.93 | 571, 649.07 | 695, 751.15 | 1,654,279.15 |
| **\***UNDP Budget | 29,388.27 | 31, 516.73 | 100, 000.00 | 204, 500.00 | 365, 405.00 |
| **\*\***UNDP Expenditure | 29,388.27 | 22,860.64 | 95, 601.54 | 158, 388.08 | 306, 238.53 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total Budget | 29,388.27 | 751,517.73 | 714,873.53 | 952,750.00 | 2, 448, 529.53 |
| Total Expenses | 29,388.27 | 409,739.57 | 667,250.61 | 854,139.23 | 1, 960, 517.68 |

***\*****Note: Source: from Project Manager's database of project budget and expenditure for 2011, 2012 and 2013.* ***\*\*****Note: Source: from UNDPCO Programme officer's data base of project's expenditure 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013*.

1. From the PIR report (PIR-2013-GEFID3376-PIMS2085), it was highlighted that the cumulative disbursement (and delivery) for this project as at June 2013 was just over 50% (US$1,275,466 disbursed against the total budget of US$2,197,940). There seems to be a discrepancy in reporting because from the Table 7 above, shows that as of December 2013, US$1, 232, 020.90 was disbursed against total budget of US$ 2, 449, 144.26 and this needs to be corrected despite it being in line with implementation time). The same PIR report highlighted that by 30 June2013, out of the US$ 5,200,000 co-finance pledged at the planning stage, US$5,189,994.00 had already been delivered as the sum of USD 262,992 from UNDP and US$4,927,000 from government (US$200,000 in cash and US$4,727,000 in kind).The report further highlighted that the estimated cumulative leveraged resources as of 30 June 2013 was US$10000.00.
2. However, in terms of the December 2013 Mid-Term evaluation process for financial expenditures, Table 7 above has been the source of information and data. The Evaluation consultant was provided with financial expenditure reports for 2010, 2011, 2012 and that of 2013( Budget extracted from the provided Project Manager's database of project, while expenditure details have been extracted from the provided UNDPCO Programme officer's data base).From this data, the total 2013 financial year expenditure for GEF funds was US$ 695, 751.15, out of the allocated annual budget allocation of US$748, 250.00. This represents a percentage of 92.98 % expenditure and is on target taking into account the deliverables that have been achieved. Similarly, the total 2012 financial year expenditure for GEF was close to that of 2013, at 92.97% (i.e. US$ 571, 649.07 expenditure out of the allocated cash of US$614, 873.53). However, the total 2011 GEF expenditure was very low, at 53.73% (i.e. expenditure of US$ 386, 878.93 out of the provided budget of US$ 720, 001.00). This signifies that the project started at a very slow pace( also exemplified by the 2010 zero budget and expenditure for GEF funds). Likewise, the trend for UNDP expenditure shows similar trends as those of the GEF annual expenditures. The total 2013 expenditure for the UNDP funds shows that out of the allocated US$ 204,500.00, the expenditure was 158, 388.08 (representing 77.45%). This is also on target taking into account the deliverables achieved, though slowed down as compared to 2012 expenditure which was at 95.60%. The 2011 UNDP expenditure at 72.54% was the lowest of all the UNDP annual expenditures. This also signifies the slow start of the project. The overall expenditure as of December 2013 stood at 79.41% for GEF budget and 83.81 for UNDP budget. A combination expenditure for both the GEF and UNDP budget lines stood at 80.07%. This is indicative of on track good progress. Likewise, co-financing expenditure from the government contribution was also on track.

**Table 8: Budget and GEF versus Co-financing by outcomes and outputs**

| **Outcome** | **Outputs** | GEF Budget | Co-finance | Total |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Outcome 1: The policy, regulatory and institutional arrangement support sustainable land management in the SRB | Output 1.1: Alignment of sector policies improved:  | 50,000 | 650,000 | 700,000 |
| Output1.2: SRB Development Authority formed improve coordination of SLM, environmental management &development in Basin | 35,0000 | 2,650,000 | 3,000,000 |
| Outcome total | 400,000 | 905,000 | 3,300,000 |
| Outcome 2: Private Public Partnerships (PPP) providing financial incentives for SLM  | Output 2.1: Green Water Credits Scheme operationalized to provide financial incentive for SLM: | 300000 | 2,200,000 | 2,500,000 |
| Output 2.2: Sustainable charcoal providing additional income as an incentive for sustainable woodlands management:  | 469,940 | 2,320,000 | 2,789,940 |
| Outcome total | 769,940 | 1,100,000 | 4,520,000 |
| Outcome 3: Crop insurance providing the basis for increased access to credits and use of weather information in decision making | Output 3.1: Index-based crop insurance piloted using lessons learnt during the initial pilot to refine the scheme:  | 310,000 | 4,500,000 | 4,810,000 |
| Output 3.2: Improving weather data generation and use in decision making:  | 50,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,050,000 |
| Outcome total | 360,000 | 700,000 | 5,500,000 |
| Outcome 4: Knowledge and skills for SLM provided to resource managers at all levels: | Output 4.1: Application of knowledge to support SLM implementation by farmers and rehabilitation of specifically degraded communal lands.  | 100,000 | 4,000,000 | 4,100,000 |
| Output 4.2: Support to increase forest and plantation forest productivity  | 160,000 | 2,500,000 | 2,660,000 |
| Output 4.3: A participatory M&E system designed and used to monitor ecosystem health and improvements in livelihoods: | 73,000 | 541,000 | 614,000 |
| Output4.4: Socio-economic demographic income changes in the project area | To adjust budget accordingly |  |  |
| Outcome Total | 333,000 | 1,600,000 | 7,*041,000* |
| Outcomes 5: Project managed effectively to deliver results and impacts within time and budget | Project Management Unit | 72,000 | 783,000 | 855,000 |
| Project M&E learning, and adaptive management | 138,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,138,000 |
| Outcome Total | 210,000 | 295,000 | 1,783,000 |
| Project Total |  | 2,072,940 | 22,144,000 | 24,216,940 |

1. This table outlines how each Outcome and Output was planned. It may be difficult to assess the difference between the planned budget and actual by comparing figures in Tables 7 and 8, because Table 7 gives the whole annual figure allocated and expenditure per organization. Meanwhile, Table 8 gives the holistic picture of budget allocated per Outcome and Output.
2. Table 7gives specific breakdown of how much budget was given per annum per an organization and how much of this was spent on the deliverables. However, both Tables 7 and 8 are important to give a fair view of a picture in totality in terms of financial management.

### 3.4.3 Monitoring systems

1. Monitoring systems are to be in place but a little more needs to be done. For example, quarterly progress reports from the districts come in different forms of templates, which makes it difficult to synthesize the information. There is an urgent need to concretely harmonize the reporting by creating a uniform reporting template consistent with the indicators and targets, though first step has been undertaken as stated in Part 3.2.5 above.
2. The consultant has noted a good starting point by the PMU which held a working session with all the districts and implementing partners. The aim was to come up with priority indicators to be incorporated in the monitoring and evaluation system for the project to enhance ownership and empowerment of beneficiaries; building accountability and transparency systems in the process; and taking corrective actions to improve performance and outcomes.
3. It has been noted also the PMU officials struggle to monitor progress on the ground due to the location of the PMU in Lilongwe. The consultant strongly suggests moving the PMU to a closer station.

### 3.4.4 Risk Management

1. Before going into details of risks, the consultant would like to comment on the risks as given in the PRODOC. This would be important for designing of future GEF/UNDP proposals. The consultant has observed the following:
* High (H) rating should have been included in risks ratings;
* Availability of Sustainable Charcoal production, forests should have included as a risk and given a rate ‘H’.;
* Legalization of charcoal creates an incentive for more rapid woodlands clearance (Rate ‘H’ than ‘M’);
* Inadequate cooperation among the various state departments that address land and water issues in SRB (Rate ‘H’ than ‘M’);
* Co-finance by government may not be forthcoming (Rate ‘M’ than ‘L’).
1. There was a risk that the splitting of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy and combining of the Ministry of Water and of Agriculture could affect the performance and dedication of project personnel. This was overcome through concerted follow up with the officers on the task which they were expected to perform under the project.
2. New Water Act 2013 which has not made provision for establishment of Shire River Basin Authorities as of June 2013.
3. The sudden resignation of the first project manager was a threat to the smooth running of the project. This was overcome by replacing the project manager within a three-month period and the Adviser doubling up as Project Manager as well in the interim.
4. The non-completion of the consultancy on the Crop Insurance index has left no recommendation on this output. The PIR report suggests utilizing local consultants with the support of the IPs; this is a welcome idea and needs to be pursued.
5. The 20 May 2014 General Elections in Malawi could divert the attention from the environmental issues - the government that comes into power may not priorities Environment.

### 3.4.5 Reporting

1. Operational reports by district and government department Focal Points are on time, except for the financial reports which are usually behind schedule. In order to ensure that the project objectives are achieved and are fully tracked, a working session was organized with all the districts and implementing partners to come up with priority indicators to be incorporated in the monitoring and evaluation system for the project to enhance ownership and empowerment of beneficiaries; building accountability and transparency systems in the process; and taking corrective actions to improve performance and outcomes. The project team met staff from the districts comprising monitoring and evaluation officers, DESC (district environment sub-committee) members from the four project/pilot districts (Mwanza, Balaka, Neno and Blantyre), and other key stakeholders.
2. Assessments made at district level showed that that there was no effective and comprehensive collection of data using the M&E tool developed above by the councils because the office responsible, (monitoring and evaluation office)was overwhelmed with work and not adequately skilled and funded to undertake data collection and reporting exercises. It was also observed that this office is faced with lack of capacity since there are no data entry clerks in most of the districts. Information and data management is a challenge.
3. To counteract these shortfalls, the project deliberately organized training sessions on the developed M&E tool for staff in order to assist them in planning and reporting cumulative achievements the project has made since its inception in 2010. This information reflected the targets that were set for each of the project indicators as well as the achievements that have been made on each outcome based on the set targets. The new reporting format has already been shared with the district desk officers and there was a commitment to start using the format for reporting in the coming December2013-March 2014 quarter.

## 3.5 Management Arrangements

### 3.5.1 Overall project management

1. The Department of Environmental Affairs is implementing the project in the four districts of Blantyre, Balaka, Mwanza and Neno, where the department has environment district officers who act as liaison officers with the rest of the technical teams at the district level in the implementation of the SLM project.
2. On the overall, the project management has been moderately satisfactory. Even though most outputs have been met, the aspects of efficiency and effectiveness have been compromised due to the current location of the PMU. This needs to be reviewed and relocated to a closer station where operational activities take place. This view was expressed by many partners implementing partners (districts and IPs), including the donor fraternity.

### 3.5.2 Quality of Executive of Implementing Partners

1. It is gratifying to note that the project continued to enjoy good working relationship with the World Bank and JICA, EU, MCA who also have programmes similar to SLM in the Middle Shire River Basin. The main objective of the collaboration is the sharing of information about the projects so as to avoid duplication of efforts but also share best practices and lessons learnt. Representatives meet on average every two months. In addition, SLM and JICA-COVAMS II which are now operating in the same for district and are complementary in nature starting 2013/14 rain season have already had a total of two collaboration meetings within one quarter. It is planned to have meetings on a monthly basis in the districts on a rotational basis.
2. In addition, the project has been working in partnership with private sector organizations like ESCOM and Blantyre Water Boards who have shown willingness to partner with the project on any future endeavors related to the Green Water Credit and Sustainable Charcoal Production. Both institutions have shown interest in the approaches and have been members of the Project Steering Committee right from the beginning of the project. They have further lent their support by being part of the national consultative workshops on Green Water Credit and Sustainable Charcoal to review the consultants reports the consultant reports have shaped the finalization of the strategies for implementation. Furthermore representatives of the two organizations graced the MTR workshop held at Lilongwe hotel with their presence.
3. Furthermore, the COVAMS phase two project has incorporated an Action Research component which will be implemented in collaboration with multiple partners including the SLM Project. According to the JICA team, the action research component is embodied in Output 3 of the Project Document which states that “Effectiveness of the Catchment Management techniques of COVAMS is quantitatively verified by an action research”. According to the team, they have adopted this action research as a tool to help evaluate quantitatively the effects of COVAMS techniques at the field level as well as provide results for a cost/benefit analysis of the catchment management activities. This will be used to lobby for more public and donor funds so contribute to the institutionalization of the COVAMS approach. The action research will be implemented in the COVAMS implementation districts of Mwanza, Blantyre, Balaka and Neno. This would be a good entry point for SLM to start proper documentation of data on soil fertility, soil erosion/siltation rates; hectare covered during afforestation and CA activities, and carbon dioxide emission reduction due the SLM activities Merge this (yellow highlighted) with the first paragraph above.

### 3.5.3 Quality of support provided by UNDP

1. **HS) Highly Satisfactory.** The UNDP programme officer in the UNDP country office provides oversight and supervision support to the project. There is now greater understanding of the project goals among the implementing partners and clarity on what is expected of them in implementation and on reporting. Further there is substantial interest from the participating communities, and when this is coupled with the capacity to do the various tasks by both the villagers and the implementing partners, the level of commitment has increased. In some cases communities can see the benefits and this is encouraging more to participate. The visitations or monitoring increased, thus giving encouragement to the communities as they are able to express their concerns and thoughts directly to the teams from central government. The reaction/response time has shortened further assisting in the achievement of the objectives.

## 3.6 Lessons Learnt

**L1.** One of the key lessons learnt by the project relates to how a seamless integration and excellent coordination and communications with the project’s main executing partners greatly enhances the attainment of the project's objectives.

**L2.** The impact of how planning helped the IPS to leverage their project's milestones is a great lesson to draw from because before the project inception, most IPS did not plan and strategize, one outstanding example is the department of Land Resources, which previously just hastened into implementation without planning and this cost the department a lot of resources due many of the activities and processes had to be redone.

**L3.** The MTR process also brought to the fore an important aspect for the success of pilot projects like SLM that "Study tours" to witness successful approaches being piloted on the ground are a valuable tool. As illustrated by Neno and Mwanza visit.

**L4.** Usually, it is rarely realized that slight delays in disbursement of funds could have a ripple effect in service delivery. A lesson has been drawn from this SLM project in which most IPS could not execute their seasonal or time specific tasks on time as per their work plan due to delays in release of finances by UNDP.

**L5.** In order to achieve maximum forest protection, there is need to strengthen local forest governance and community based management systems to ensure that the communities become an important player in the protection of their own forest resources.

**L6.** Bush fire control enhances the forest regeneration and afforestation programme by maintaining a high survival rate of planted seedlings. Currently bushfires destroy more than half of what is planted each season.

**L7.** Indigenous forest regeneration or coppice management is a more resilient approach to reverse deforestation since coppices are dependent on an established root system as opposed to seedlings having to establish a root system within a season. In addition, there is a need to encourage use of indigenous knowledge to manage pest and diseases affecting trees in some districts. For instance, use of cow dung can help to keep goats away from citrus fruit trees in Mwanza could help to increase production.

# 4. CONCLUSIONS

1. Undoubtedly, SLM’s importance to Malawi's economy cannot be overemphasized. It is the basis for economic development as it addresses issues that are of critical importance to the power generation of the country whilst also preserving the livelihoods of many millions of peopled in the country.
2. To-date, the project has drummed up the much needed support that is required for its success. It can be summarized as documented in the reports and the findings of the field visits to communities that there has been some good progress with respect to most outcomes and outputs. The summary in Table 8 below highlights this progress and also records some constraints that need to be addressed.
3. The MTR Evaluation gives an indication that the remaining project period (to the extension to June 2015, with a possibility to extend December 2015) is necessary for the team to achieve satisfactory consolidate current successes or better performance for those immediate objectives/outcomes/outputs where current ratings are marginally satisfactory or unsatisfactory. It will be a challenge to do so, but with careful planning and active use of the range of resources available, it should be possible to achieve significant progress.

## 4.1 Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

1. In conclusion, the consultant has the following overall ratings of the project to date. More specific performance ratings are given in Appendix A. Obviously more detailed comments are presented in the main report and recommendations sections.

**Table 9: Ratings as per the GEF guidelines:[[3]](#footnote-3):[[4]](#footnote-4)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Item | Rate |
| Efficiency | **Moderately Satisfactory.** Most of the objectives have been met and greater strides have been gained, though the project has had mixed efficiency in delivery due to lack of support and location of the PMU away from project areas |
| Effectiveness | **Moderately Satisfactory**. The project has been effective in achieving outputs in a number of key areas. Currently good progress has been made is a reflection of mainly the contribution and commitment by the Project Manager and the Adviser who have gone out of their way to undertake important activities. However, this could improve further if the project actively documenting and publicizing its successes  |
| Sustainability | **Satisfactory**. However, Crop Insurance and Green Water Credit Scheme would be hampered if the activities of these components are not focused for the remaining one and a half years (2014 - 2015) |
| Outcome/achievement of objectives (the extent to which the project's environmental and development objectives were achieved) | **Marginally satisfactory** (with reference to design objectives);satisfactory if external factors beyond immediate control of PMU are taken into account |
| Implementation Approach | **Satisfactory** |
| Stakeholder Participation/Public Involvement | **Highly satisfactory** |
| Performance in achieving Objectives 1  | **Satisfactory**: there has been concerted efforts by the PMU and IPs/Districts towards afforestation, CA, but the bushfire control has to be intensified to increase the areas under protection/conservation |
| Performance in achieving outputs | **Satisfactory** – qualified: all except **marginal satisfactory** for output 3.1 and unsatisfactory for output 3.2 |
| Monitoring & Evaluation | **Marginally satisfactory** need for adherence to reporting template that has been designed by PMU |

1. In summary, the project needs to gather all necessary resources and energy to focus on the intended 3 innovative SLM technologies – the Green Water Credits, Sustainable charcoal and Index Based Insurance Scheme. These are fairly new tools for SLM, even from a global perspective. The project has had to rely on a small pool of consultants that have developed expertise in these areas. This challenge is exacerbated by the fact that procuring consultants through either UNDP or the government tends to be very slow. But as highlighted above, there is potential for the project to meet its objectives and goal. The issues raised in the proceeding paragraphs on relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability point to the fact that the project would achieve most of its targets. Besides, there has been commendable progress at community level, and this momentum provides a basis for speedier implementation of the project in the latter part project implementation.

## 4.2 Important practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success

***Project Relevance:***

1. The importance of this project to Malawi's economy need not be overemphasized. The project is relevant to Malawi's development because Malawi’s economy is based primarily on agriculture, dominated by subsistence and rain-fed food production systems that are greatly challenged by land degradation and declining soil fertility. In addition the Shire River Basin is of critical economic importance: it is the source of over 98% of the country’s power generating capacity, supplies water to major urban centers such as Blantyre and Limbe, supports a locally significant artisanal fishery, and supplies irrigation water for valuable crops. Electricity generation from this area is negatively impacted by the degradation.

**Project Efficiency:**

1. Though most of the objectives have been met and greater strides have been undertaken, the project has had mixed efficiency in delivery.The contributing factors to this mixed efficiency could be attributed to the nature of the project. It is, to some extent, a complex project, with a range of different implementing partners such as District Assemblies and line Departments. Besides, there have been, at times, delays in decision making at government departments level and also delays in transfer of funds by UNDP office. At PMU level, the mixed efficiency in delivery has been exacerbated by lack of support staff (Accountant and PA who were originally planned in the PRODOC to be part of the PMU). This could be corrected by bringing in an Administrative Financial Assistant (AFA) on apart-time basis if the project has to enhance and maintain the dramatic headways it has made- this is a critical point. This fact was also acknowledged by EAD senior Managers. On the use of finances, as already indicated in paragraph 9 above, there was a slow cash flow in 2011 financial year (with GEF expenditure at 53.73%). However, this was fast tracked in the 2012 financial year(with GEF expenditure at 92.97% GEF), and it maintained the momentum in the year 2013 (at 92.98% expenditure). It must be noted that all EDOs and IPS expressed that these expenditures could have greatly improved and enhanced the project's efficiency much more than has been achieved, but this has been hampered by delays in disbursement of these funds. (Full details are given in the main text under section 3 and under the recommendations).

**Project Effectiveness:**

1. The project has been effective in achieving outputs in a number of key areas. Currently good progress has been made, which is a reflection of mainly the contribution and commitment by the Project Manager and the Adviser who have gone out of their way to undertake important activities. However, there is a dire need to document and publicize the project's successes, interventions such as conservation agriculture, reduction in both soil erosion and deforestation, fruit tree production integrated with overall re-afforestation programme which has proved to be a win-win strategy that addresses both food security issues and providing plat-foam for communities to increase their resilience to adverse effects of land degradation. To this effect, there is, as indicated in the recommendations, dire need to host a workshop on the outcomes/results of the project and funds have to be identified.

**Sustainability:**

1. There are reasonable indications for sustainability of the many main project activities as planned in the project document, although in some cases there seem to be risks emerging, which may jeopardize their sustainability. More specifically, the activities concerning Outcome 3 (Crop Insurance Index) and to some extent, Outcome 2 (the Green Water Credit Scheme).The sustainability for these components would be hampered if their activities are not focused for the remaining one and half years ( up to June 2015). This risk may continue even when the project is further extended to December 2015 should special attention not given to these components. On the other hand, the sustainability for activities concerning the **urban wood afforestation** cannot be achieved in this project's remaining phase (2014 - 2015) because so far, absolutely no action or activity has been undertaken by any implementing partner (neither EDOs nor IPs) to address it.
2. Consideration should be made in terms of re-addressing the socio-economic Sustainability of the local communities in the SRB. The PRODOC Outcome 2 had put forth the Green Water Credits and Sustainable Charcoal as mechanisms for the provision of final incentives for communities in the SLM project area. But these have not yet materialized at MTR stage. Similarly, the PRODOC Outcome 3 would have ensured increased access to crop insurance scheme but this has not been attained to-date. Undoubtedly, socio-economic sustainability would be compromised in the project area since the PRODOC had put the lessons learnt from the crop insurance scheme as one of the key foundations for making clubs and groups even more effective in enhancing the socio-economic welfare of the communities. Therefore, there is a need to re-target and focus on the activities of these outcomes in order to meet the objectives of the project and also ensuring that the communities financially benefit from the project. Meanwhile, drawing from the results of socio-economic data gathered by UNDP Country Office, the SRB has great potential for economic/financial sustainability. This would be greatly enhanced by the enabling environment of good gender balance participation in the project area***. For example, it has been documented in the MTR site visit mission report that project participation by gender in Mwanza and Neno districts was 80% female and 20% male and 70% female and 30 male respectively.*** It was ***only Balaka that reported slightly a different trend, that of 60% male and 40% female.*** Blantyre indicated trends of gender participation was similar to those of Mwanza and Neno.
3. For the ecological sustainability, the SRB has high potential due to SLM technological advances it has made. However, to enhance this potential for long term sustainability, requires that deliberate effort should be made to formally link this project to the programmatic arrangements. This will ensure that the technological achievements the project has made are carried forward and replicated; not die a natural death when the project is phased off. Hence, the project should be linked with the current programme on "Environment and Natural Resources Management", which is managed by the same Malawi UNDP Country Office. This arrangement would go a long way in implementing best environmental practices (BEP) and best available technologies/techniques (BAT) that SLM has developed or enhanced.

# 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Table 10 below further summarizes the 21 MTR Evaluation recommendations presented in the Executive Summary section of this report. This summary will go a long way to guide the PMU and the project team to prepare a response to the evaluation process for approval by the project's Steering Committee. The recommendations are presented as follows: i) enhancing the management arrangements, effectiveness and efficiency; ii) priorities for implementation of key Outcomes/targets; iii) priorities for technological testing and demonstration on sites; and iv) priorities for sustainability of the achievements after project ends.

**Table 10: MTR Evaluation Recommendations**

| **Rec #** | **Recommendation[[5]](#footnote-5)** | **Entity Responsible** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A | *Enhancing the management arrangements, effectiveness and efficiency* |  |
| A.1 | Further strengthen relationship with beneficiary ministries, especially the IPS and EDOs, including holding more frequent meetings of the Steering Committees(minimum 3 per annum) both at national and District levels in order to track the project's targets against the plan; and ensure the participation of EAD members that seat on Steering Committee boards of MCA, World Bank, JICA COVAMS and EU SLM projects | PMU, UNDPCO, EAD, IPs, EDOs |
| A.2 | The PMU should put in extra effort to fast track the process of driving the establishment of the SRBA in conjunction with its partners (the World Bank, JICA and Department of Water Affairs), since the long term sustainability of SLM depends on existence of SRBA | PMU, UNDP CO, EAD, DWA, WB |
| A.3 | Strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the PMU by urgent recruitment of an Admin and Financial Assistant(AFA) to assist project and UNDPCO with the fast tracking of timely release of funds to EAD subsequently to IPs and EDOs, relocation of the PMU to Balaka district and UNDP CO's  | PMU, UNDPCO |
| A.4 | Add a new risk of the political will continuity on environment issues by the new government in power after the 20 May 2014 elections | PMU, UNDPCO |
| A.5 | Pay attention to cross-project learning and knowledge management, particularly with JICA COVAMS, MCA , WB, EU and NGOs working in the SLM project area such as CURE, WESM, EAM, etc | PMU, UNDPCO |
| A.6 | Address all the MTR Evaluation recommendations, including the preparation of the exit plan, the approval by the PSC of the new additional items: a) the Output 4.4 with its socio-economic improvement gender based indicators; and b) the new risk on political will after 20 May '14 General Elections | PMU, UNDPCO |
| B | *Priorities for implementation of key Outcomes/targets;* |  |
| B.1 | Pursue, with a sense of urgency, the completion of targets and activities of Output 3: 1 Index based Crop Insurance consultancy in order to get recommendations on way forward concerning this output, and Output 3.2 establishing more weather stations in the project area, adopting the current best practice used by LEAD International of weather data collection in Lake Chirwa area and also enhancing the arrangement of a dry-run pilot is being concurrently run with EARS (a Dutch company) using an alternative methodology using satellite data superimposed on the areas with automated weather stations.- these are crucial for the success of this project | PMU, IPs, EDOs |
| B.2 | Swiftly move towards accomplishing targets and activities of Outcome 2 (PPP), especially Output 2.1 (GWCS) and Output 2.2 (Sustainable Charcoal), also key to the success of this project | PMU, DCC&MS |
| B.3 | Urgently resolve the River Bank Cultivation issue by supporting a harmonized policy (formulating Land Use policy) that would reflect the relevancy mainly to Land Resources, Forestry, Agriculture, Irrigation and EAD | EAD, LRD, ID, PMU |
| C | *Priorities for technological testing and demonstration on sites* |   |
| C.1 | Given the importance attached to the attaining of efficient charcoaling techniques for utilization in the project area, the PMU and DoE are urged to fast track, with a sense of urgency the piloting of efficient kilns in Chikangawa and other selected pilot sites: Mulanje, Zomba as well as in customary lands in at least two districts, including the use of Casamance technology | PMU, DoE |
| C.2 | Urgently fast track the steps to legalize sustainable charcoaling , to give impetus to the charcoal policy  | PMU, FD, DoE |
| C.3 | With immediate effect, start measuring the soil *erosion/siltation* parameters by Land Use and Water departments - using Land Use department 's Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation ( RUSLE) model that could be utilized at minimal costs | PMU, LRD, DWA |
| C.4 | As a matter of urgency, start measuring the *soil fertility* parameter by engaging the know -how of the Chitedze Research Station | PMU, LRD |
| C.5 | The data collection on soil erosion and soil fertility must focus only on the gaps not covered by the JICA Community Vitalisation and Afforestation in Middle Shire (COVAMS) project, hence liaison with JICA on this aspect has to be intensified in order to enhance integration and synergies- this will promote the programmatic approach. | PMU, LRD |
| C.6 | Instill, in EDOs and IPs, the culture of correct reporting on important target data and information, such as hectare (ha) coverage through community afforestation activities, as stipulated in the PMU reporting template to ensure quality and accuracy and also meet the UNDP Result Based requirements | PMU,  |
| C.7 | The project management should, through the PSC, consider adjusting downwards the ha coverage target of 600, 000 ha at MTR and 1 million ha at project end, closer to those targets of other projects that started prior to the UNDP SLM project, e.g. the MCA has a target of 140,000ha target over five years and another undertaken by Forestry Department has a target of 125,000ha over the same period (five years***).*** | PMU, PSC, DoF |
| D | Priorities for sustainability of the achievements after project ends - Exit Strategy |  |
| D.1 | Prepare and implement an "Exit Plan" in addition to the existing 2014 work plan, which will address issues pertaining to the *Urban woodlands and ecosystems rehabilitation component, programmatic approach, policies requirement for long-term sustainability and gender integration.* | PMU, UNDPCO |
| D.2 | Strengthen the sustainability of the project's achievements driving the activities of the project towards a programmatic approach as the final part of this project implementation is being made (i.e. there is room to be part of the Environmental Natural Resource Management programme currently supported by UNDP). | PMU, UNDPCO, EAD |
| D.3 |  Add Output , its targets and indicators Enhance the SRB's great potential of socio-economic and financial sustainability by strengthening the enabling environment of good gender balance participation in the project area - to highlight the "Improvement in Income changes of communities by gender" | PMU, PSC |
| D.4 | Prepare a strategy on how the component of urban woodland and ecosystems rehabilitation would be made as a stand-alone project or incorporated in future programmes, taking into account its importance to Malawi's urban environment challenges despite its lack of being addressed in this SLM project. | PMU, UNDPCO |
| D.5 | Prepare a plan on communicating the outcomes and achievements of the project by hoisting an International conference - papers and report presentations on the project | PMU, UNDPCO |
|  |  |  |

# 6. ANNEXURES

## 6.1Annexure: Terms of reference



UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

**UNDP-GEF: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR MIDTERM REVIEW**

**PRIVATE PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERSHIP ON CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE SHIRE RIVER BASIN PROJECT**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

In accordance with the UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, a mid-term review of the full-size project SLM “Private Public Sector Partnership on Capacity Building in the Shire River Basin” implemented through the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change is to be undertaken in 2013. The project started on the 13th July, 2010 and is in its third year of implementation. This Terms of Reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for this mid-term review.

### PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OBJECTIVES

1. The Shire River basin covers over 3.1 million ha and directly or indirectly influences the livelihoods of over 5.5 million people in the southern region of Malawi. The basin is of critical economic importance: it is the source of over 98% of the country’s power generating capacity, supplies water to major urban centres such as Blantyre and Limbe, supports a locally significant artisanal fishery, and supplies irrigation water for valuable crops.
2. Malawi’s economy is based primarily on agriculture, dominated by subsistence and rain fed food production systems that are greatly challenged by land degradation and declining soil fertility. More than 90% of the people in the rural area comprises of resource-poor communities who predominantly engage in subsistence agriculture. Currently about 60% of the households in rural areas are food insecure for most of the year. Extensive land use including extensive tree felling in the Middle and Upper Shire have resulted in severe deforestation, land degradation and soil erosion, losing 13 percent of the total forest cover between 1990 and 2005 and 35 of the primary forest cover in the period 2000 – 2005. In addition, the country lost an estimated 13 tons of soil per hectare per year from the Upper Shire River, 29 tons/ha in Middle Shire and 17 tons/ha per year in the Lower Shire River basin. By 2003, the loss equated to 9.5-11% of annual gross domestic product (AGDP). The soil erosion has led to food shortages and siltation of the Shire River and its tributaries with serious negative effects on flooding, hydro-electric power generation, water purification, human health and fisheries. Data from the Southern Regional Water Board and ESCOM shows significant increase in cost of cleaning water and generating electricity. Frequent electricity outages add to the cost by rendering people unproductive and destroying electrical equipment.
3. The dramatic land degradation in the Shire basin has been driven by poor agricultural practices and deforestation. These are in turn driven by the negative interrelationship of high dependence on natural resources coupled with poor resource management, poverty, rapid population growth, ineffective policy implementation, and poor economic development, and more recently, climate change. In addition inadequate supply of energy for cooking and light has led to the use of charcoal as the main source of energy for both rural and urban areas resulting in charcoal making being the main drivers of deforestation. There are three key barriers to the adoption of sustainable land management systems in the Shire River Basin: weaknesses in the policy, planning and institutional environment that influence SLM; weak financial incentives for adoption of SLM; weak capacities and inadequate skills at all levels required for promoting and/or adopting SLM.:
4. The overall goal of the project is: “Sustainable Land Management” providing the basis for economic development, food security and sustainable livelihoods while restoring the ecological integrity of the River shire Basin”. The objective is: “To reduce land degradation in the Shire River Basin through improved institutional, policy and PES arrangements and improved food security. “The objectives will be achieved through four key outcomes: The first outcome will be on policy and institutional arrangement for basin-wide SLM; the second outcome will be on private public partnerships providing financial incentives for SLM (through green water credits and sustainable charcoal production); the third will be on improving knowledge and skills at all levels to support SLM; while the fourth will be on Weather index based Crop insurance providing the basis for increased access to credits as well as increased use of up to date weather information in decision making for food security. A fifth outcome deals with project management, monitoring/evaluation and lessons learning for adaptive management and up scaling.
5. This four year project is being implemented coordinated by the Environmental Affairs Department (AED) of the Ministry of Environment and Natural resources. Actual implementation will be through the relevant ministries and departments such as agriculture, forestry, energy, local government and rural development, and is also involving local leadership and communities through their representatives. The project’s immediate focus is the middle and lower Shire river basin. Lessons learnt from this pilot will be up scaled to the entire Basin through the River Shire Development Authority which is to be established through the project. The project total budget is over US $ 24 million of which GEF contributes US $ 2,072,940 (9%).

**Four outcomes will contribute to this objective:**

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| **Objective / Outcomes** | **Indicators:** | **Target by end of project with the baseline as 2009 (unless specified otherwise),**  |
| **Objective:** To reduce land degradation in the Shire River Basin through improved institutional, policy and PES arrangements.” | Over 800,000 ha under direct SLM (project pilot area) and 1,000,000 ha impacted by up-scaling in next 4 yrs | at least 600,000 ha under direct SLM (project pilot area) by mid-term and at least 1,000,000 ha impacted by up-scaling by the end of the project |
| Reduction in the rates of deforestation  | Rate of deforestation reduced by at least 50% by the end of the project |
| Improvement in the conditions of woodlands | At least 50% increase in woody vegetation in urban areas and currently degraded areas  |
| Carbon mitigated from sustainable charcoaling | At least half a million tons of carbon dioxide mitigated from sustainable charcoal in the districts by mid-term and a million cumulative at the end of the project  |
| Reduction in soil erosion | At least half of land under improved SLM registers at least 150% reduction in soil erosion by mid-term and 40% cumulative by end of project  |
| **Outcome 1:**Outcome 1: The policy, regulatory and institutional arrangement support sustainable land management in the Shire River Basin | Number of functional institutions leading/participating in SLM in the SRB  | The River Shire Basin Authority established by the end of the 2nd year. Charcoal associations established and have by-laws and capacity to organise sustainable charcoal production by the end of the first year;Malawi Earth Carbon Trust Fund’ formed by the end of the first year Local level associations for the implementation of green water credits operational by the end of the project |
| Number of policies mainstreaming SLM | At least 4 policies revised to mainstream SLM principles and so provide a better policy environment for SLM; |
| Number of policies with legislation and institutional arrangement for effective implementation | Discussions for legislation and institutional arrangement for policy implementation for at least 4 key policies held by mid-term and recommendations provided adopted by end of the project |
| Legal status of charcoal  | Recommendations for policy changes needed to legalize charcoal provided by mid-term  |
| Revenue from charcoal going to District and national revenue | Collection of revenue by Districts and Malawi Revenue Authority from charcoal processes increase by 25% by mid-term and 50% cumulatively be end of the project;  |
| **Outcome 2:**Outcome 2: Private Public Partnerships (PPP) providing financial incentives for SLM (through green water credits and sustainable charcoal): | Percentage of eligible farmers participating in the green water credit scheme, hectares covered and extent of its functioning | A Green Water Credits scheme agreed by end of the first year and full implementation started by end of year 3; at least 75% of eligible farmers involved covering at least 75% of the watershed. |
| Amounts of money being earned by communities from sustainable charcoal | Income from sustainable charcoal increase profitability of charcoal by at least 25% |
| Number of groups with operational sustainable charcoal processes | At least ten groups with sustainable charcoal production operations and earning money from carbon finance; |
| Number of functional charcoal associations  | At least 10 charcoal associations have rules and regulations for sustainable charcoal and are actively enforcing them; |
| Adoption of improved kilns in carbonization | Number of charcoal producers using improved kiln in carbonization in pilot districts increase by at least 30% by mid-term and a cumulative 50% by project end |
| **Outcome 3:**Crop insurance providing the basis for increased access to credits as well as increased use of up to date weather information in decision making | Number of farmers participating in the crop insurance crops and number of crops (and crop mixes) involved | At least 30% of the farmers in the SRB accessing crop insurance for at least 3 important crops (and crop mixes of maize/groundnuts/cotton/tobacco) by mid-term and 45% by end of the project; |
| Number of farmers using up-to-date weather information in decision making | At least 50% of farmers using up-to-date information from weather stations to determine planting/harvesting dates by mid-term and at least 75% by end of project; |
| **Outcome 4:** Knowledge and skills for SLM provided to resource managers at all levels: | Percentage of land and resource users adopting improved practices | At least 25% of farmers adopting 3-5 forms of improved practices by mid-term and 75% cumulatively by project end |
| Change in soil fertility | At least 10% increase in soil fertility from baselines for land users consistently engaging in 3-5 improved practices by mid-term and by 30% cumulatively by end of the project |
|  | Number of people with relevant skills for SLM | At least 40% of land users and 30% of technical officers requiring to update skills have done so by mid-term: by the end of project, at least 60% of land users and 75% of technical officers cumulatively have updated skills. |
| Lessons generated  | Lessons on green water credits, sustainable charcoal, crop insurance, and other important project initiatives available for dissemination through the SRB and SLM National Dialogue process |
| Change in agricultural productivity  | At least 20% increase in agricultural produce for key crops for those adopting 3-5 improved practices consistently by mid-term and 50% cumulative by project end |

1. **OBJECTIVES OF THIS MID-TERM REVIEW (MTR)**

The objective of the MTR is to gain an independent analysis of the progress of the project so far. The MTR will identify potential project design problems, assess progress towards the achievement of the project objective, identify and document lessons learned (including lessons that might improve design and implementation of other UNDP-GEF projects), and make recommendations regarding specific actions that should be taken to improve the project. The MTR will assess early signs of project success or failure and identify the necessary changes to be made. The project performance will be measured based on the indicators of the project’s logical framework (see Annex 1) and various Tracking Tools.

The MTR must provide evidence based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The review team is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the GEF operational focal point, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP GEF Technical Adviser based in the region and key stakeholders. The review team is expected to conduct field missions to Lilongwe, Malawi including the following project sites: Balaka, Mwanza, Neno and Blantyre Districts*.* Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at a minimum:

1. UNDP staff who have project responsibilities;
2. Executing agencies (including but not limited to senior officials and task team/ component leaders: MECC, focal points, district authorities, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board/Steering Committee members;
3. The Chair of Project Steering Committee
4. The national project manager and project advisor of SLM project
5. Project stakeholders, to be determined at the inception meeting; including academia, local government and CBOs

The team will review all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including Annual APR/PIR, project budget revisions, progress reports, GEF focal area tracking tools, project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review. A list of documents that the project team and UNDP Country Office will provide to the team for review is included in Annex 2 of this Terms of Reference.

# SCOPE OF THE MTR

The review team will assess the following three categories of project progress. For each category, the review team is required to rate overall progress using a six-point rating scale outlined in Annex 3:

* 1. **Progress towards Results**

Project design:

* Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions made by the project. Identify new assumptions.
* Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards results.
* Review how the project addresses country priorities.
* Review the baseline data included in the project results framework and GEF Tracking tool and suggest revisions as necessary.

Progress:

* Assess the outputs and progress toward outcomes achieve so far and the contribution to attaining the overall objective of the project.
* Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future lead to, beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women’s empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
* Examine whether progress so far has led to, or could in the future lead to, potentially adverse environmental and/or social impacts/risks that could threaten the sustainability of the project outcomes. Are these risks being managed, mitigated, minimized or offset? Suggest mitigation measures as needed.
* Review the extent to which the implementation of the project has been inclusive of relevant stakeholders and to which it has been able to create collaboration between different partners. Identify opportunities for stronger substantive partnerships.
	1. **Adaptive management**

Work Planning

1. Are work planning processes result-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results.
2. Examine the use of the project document logical/results framework as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start. Ensure any revisions meet UNDP-GEF requirements and assess the impact of the revised approach on project management?

Finance and co-finance:

1. Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
2. Complete the co-financing monitoring table (see Annex 4).
3. Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.

Monitoring Systems.

1. Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required?
2. Ensure that the monitoring system, including performance indicators, meet GEF minimum requirements. Apply SMART indicators as necessary.
3. Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop SMART indicators, including disaggregated gender indicators as necessary;
4. Review the mid-term GEF Tracking Tool (s) as appropriate and comment on progress made, quality of the submission, and overall value of the GEF Tracking Tool.
5. Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to M&E? Are these resources being allocated effectively?

Risk Management

1. Validate whether the risks identified in the project document, APR/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate. If not, explain why?
2. Describe any additional risks identified and suggest risk ratings and possible risk management strategies to be adopted.

Reporting

1. Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management, and shared with the Project Board.
2. Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.
	1. **Management arrangements**
3. Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the project document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
4. Review the quality of execution of the project Implementing Partners and recommend areas for improvement.
5. Review the quality of support provided by UNDP and recommend areas for improvement.
6. ***MID TERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES***

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| **Deliverable** | **Content** | **Timing** | **Responsibilities** |
| Inception Report | Review team clarifies timing and method of review | No later than 2 weeks before the review mission | Review team submits to UNDP Country Office |
| Presentation | Initial Findings | End of review mission | To project management and UNDP Country Office |
| Draft Final Report | Full report (as template in annex 5) with annexes | Within 3 weeks of the review mission | Sent to UNDP CO, reviewed by RTA, PCU, GEF OFP… |
| Final Report | Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comment have (and have not) been addressed in the final review report). | Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft | Sent to UNDP CO. |
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1. ***IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS***

The principal responsibility for managing this review resides with the UNDP Country Office (UNDP CO) in Malawi. The UNDP CO will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the review team. The SLM project team will be responsible for liaising with the review team to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits with missions to the Project sites in Balaka, Mwanza, Neno and Blantyre.

1. ***TIMEFRAME***

The total duration of the review will be 4 weeks starting 25 August 2013 according to the following plan:

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| **Activity** | **Timeframe**  |
| Preparation | 16 - 20 September ( 5 days) |
| Review mission and debriefing | 22 - 6 October ( 10 days) |
| Draft review report | 9- 13 October ( 5 days) |
| Finalisation of final report  | 13 - 21 October ( 7 days)  |

1. ***TEAM COMPOSITION***

A team of two independent reviewers will conduct the review - one international team leader and one national expert preferable and institutional /policy expert. The consultants will not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities. The team should have prior experience in reviewing or evaluating similar projects. Experience with GEF financed projects is an advantage.

The selection of consultants will be aimed at maximizing the overall “team” qualities in the following areas:

* Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies;
* Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
* Competence in Adaptive Management, as applied to conservation or natural resource management;
* Demonstrable analytical skills;
* Work experience in relevant technical areas for at least 10 years;
* Excellent English communication skills.
* Project evaluation experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset;
* Experience working in Africa region.

*Team Leader*: The Team Leader should have a post-graduate qualification sustainable land management, sustainable forestry management, sustainable range management. He/she shall have at least 10 years practical experience in implementing (promotion and replicating) and managing SLM-related programs, particularly in Southern Africa. He will also review the responsiveness of the different technologies to the needs of the market.

*National Expert:* The Expert will review the existing institutional linkages of SLM and their effectiveness to promote SLM service delivery. He/she will also review relationships, roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in implementing SLM, SFM activities; analyze commitment of stakeholders to project implementation; appropriateness of monitoring and evaluation systems to provide performance data for decision making; and recommend any modifications needed to make SLM work better.

### 6.1.1 Annex 1: SLM Project log frame

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| Project strategy  | Objectively Verifiable Indicators  |
| Indicator  | Baseline  | Target  | Source verification | Risks/assumptions  |
| Goal  | “Sustainable Land Management” provides the basis for economic development, food security and sustainable livelihoods while restoring the ecological integrity of the RSB ecosystem. |
| Objective: “To provide policy, institutional and financial enabling environment for the sustained adoption of SLM in the Shire River Basin | Over 800,000 ha under direct SLM (project pilot area) and 1,000,000 ha impacted by up-scaling in next 4 yrs | Minimal land being managed in accordance with principles of SLM or integrated water and land management | at least 600,000 ha under direct SLM (project pilot area) by mid-term and at least 1,000,000 ha impacted by up-scaling by the end of the project | Project M&E reports, observations, Extension agents reports | Current high levels of support for SLM by communities, government and development partners declines |
| Reduction in the rates of deforestation  | Currently 6% per annum in the SRB | Rate of deforestation reduced by at least 50% by the end of the project | Department of forests reports; project monitoring reports | Rent seekers might undermine project effort to reduce deforestation |
| Improvement in the conditions of woodlands | Currently seriously degraded with many bare patches | At least 50% increase in woody vegetation in urban areas and currently degraded areas as measured through increased density of tree species, increased species index in revegetated/naturally recovering patches and improved population structure of selected forests/woodlands sampled | Department of forests reports; project monitoring reports | Rent seekers might undermine project effort to reduce deforestation |
| Carbon mitigated from sustainable charcoaling | Currently no sustainable charcoaling – no carbon mitigated from it | At least half a million tons of carbon dioxide mitigated from sustainable charcoal in the districts by mid-term and a million cumulative at the end of the project  | Reports of the charcoal associations on extent of adoption of sustainable charcoal augmented by records of carbon credits ready for sale and/or sold  | Voluntary markets dry up due to the global financial crises. This would reduce the incentive for sustainable charcoal;Prolonged drought interferes with establishment and growth of woodlots |
| Reduction in soil erosion  | More than 85% of land experiencing serious forms of erosion | At least half of land under improved SLM registers at least 150% reduction in soil erosion by mid-term and 40% cumulative by end of project  | Soil erosion monitoring reports as part of the participatory ecological monitoring;  | Occurrence of El Nino or severe drought; |
|  | Change in household wellbeing | More than 95% of households below the UN defined poverty line  | At least 25% improvement in household welfare for a minimum of 75% of the households in pilot districts, as measured by percentage increase in household income, percentage reduction in number of food insecure days etc. | Socio-economic monitoring reports as part of the participatory monitoring system | Severe weather events such as drought or El Nino making SLM improved practices ineffectiveInflation rising at higher than the current trends, would reduce net benefits;A return to political instability would reduce effectiveness of SLM |
| The policy, regulatory and institutional arrangement support sustainable land management in the Shire River Basin | Number of functional institutions leading/participating in SLM in the SRB  | No regional institution with the systemic capacity and mandate to coordinate integrated water and resource management in the SRB; local level environment management institutions present, but have weak capacities and are poorly coordinated | The River Shire Basin Authority established by the end of the 2nd year and has adequate governance mechanisms to allow participatory decision making, enough autonomy for effective operations, liquidity and a realistic financing strategy, and adequate capacity to effectively coordinate development that mainstreams SLM in the Basin;Charcoal associations established and have by-laws and capacity to organise sustainable charcoal production by the end of the first year;Malawi Earth Carbon Trust Fund’ formed by the end of the first year and has systemic capacity to lead the trading in carbon finance from sustainable charcoal by the second year of the project.Local level associations for the implementation of green water credits operational by the end of the project | Project reports, Parliamentary recordings, Institutions offices, constitutions, work programmes and reports | Political interference might delay the formation of the RSB and the Malawi Earth Carbon Trust as well as the functioning of the charcoal associations |
| Number of policies mainstreaming SLM | All policy statements mention importance of SLM but don’t have details of how SLM will be ensured | At least 4 policies revised to mainstream SLM principles and so provide a better policy environment for SLM; | Policy discussion papers and briefs; project monitoring reports | Policy processes tend to be slow in developing countries. Speeding up the process, especially of formulating legislative frameworks will be necessary for achievement of this indicator |
| Number of policies with legislation and institutional arrangement for effective implementation | None of the policies have updated and effective frameworks well linked into the LCs  | Discussions for legislation and institutional arrangement for policy implementation for at least 4 key policies held by mid-term and recommendations provided adopted by end of the project | Policy discussion papers and briefs; project monitoring reports | Policy processes tend to be slow in developing countries. Speeding up the process, especially of formulating legislative frameworks will be necessary for achievement of this indicator |
| Legal status of charcoal  | No clarity on the legal status of the charcoaling chain. Some aspects are legal while others are not. Production is not legal, transporting is often banned but consumption is not regulated and therefore presumably not illegal  | Recommendations for policy changes needed to legalize charcoal provided by mid-term and have government support by end of the project (t is difficult for the project to commit to get the policy approved).  | Policy discussion papers and briefs; project monitoring reports | Slow speed of policy process Current political willingness and support to clean up charcoal industry declines |
| Revenue from charcoal going to District and national revenue | Minimal collection through licensing but none through taxation | Collection of revenue by Districts and Malawi Revenue Authority from charcoal processes increase by 25% by mid-term and 50% cumulatively be end of the project;  | BudgetsProject monitoring reports | Current levels of rent seeking could divert revenue collection if not changedSlow policy change processes might delay the legislation that allows taxation to start |
| Private Public Partnerships (PPP) providing financial incentives for SLM (through green water credits and sustainable charcoal) | Percentage of eligible farmers participating in the green water credit scheme, hectares covered and extent of its functioning | Currently no payments being made to farmers/land owners/land users for watershed management, although ESCOM supports a tree planting programme in Blantyre | A Green Water Credits scheme agreed by end of the first year and full implementation started by end of year 3; at least 75% of eligible farmers involved covering at least 75% of the watershed; the scheme has clear operational guidelines, clearly spelling out roles and responsibilities as well as benefit sharing mechanisms | Project implementation reports | Political interference might delay the implementation of the scheme;Unusual weather conditions such as flooding may distract farmers and policy makers from the importance of institutional reform |
| Amounts of money being earned by communities from sustainable charcoal | No sustainable charcoal being produced, so no money being earned from carbon finance through it | Income from sustainable charcoal increase profitability of charcoal by at least 25% | Charcoal production data captured in project reports | Political interference might delay the implementation of sustainable charcoal;Rent seekers might derail the functioning of the sustainable charcoal programmePrices of CER may fluctuate depending on international demand and supply situations |
|  | Number of groups with operational sustainable charcoal processes | No groups engaging in sustainable charcoal | At least ten groups with sustainable charcoal production operations and earning money from carbon finance; | Charcoal production data captured in project reports | Voluntary carbon markets recover from current slump occasioned by the global financial melt down |
|  | Number of functional charcoal associations  | 5 charcoal associations but without functional governance systems | At least 10 charcoal associations have rules and regulations for sustainable charcoal and are actively enforcing them; | Charcoal production data captured in project reports | Current willingness and support by government and people to clean up charcoaling processes declinesCurrent levels of rent seeking from charcoal persists |
|  | Adoption of improved kilns in carbonization | Less than 10% use improved kilns in carbonization  | Number of charcoal producers using improved kiln in carbonization in pilot districts increase by at least 30% by mid-term and a cumulative 50% by project end | Charcoal production data captured in project reports | Current willingness and support by government and people to clean up charcoaling processes declines |
| Crop insurance providing the basis for increased access to credits as well as increased use of up to date weather information in decision making | Number of farmers participating in the crop insurance crops and number of crops (and crop mixes) involved | National maize insurance piloted by the government; Regional level insurance piloted but now only covering cotton and tobacco (no food crops) | At least 30% of the farmers in the SRB accessing crop insurance for at least 3 important crops (and crop mixes of maize/groundnuts/cotton/tobacco) by mid-term and 45% by end of the project; | Project M&E reports | Current levels of willingness to engage in crop insurance pilots by the insurance industry declines |
| Number of farmers using up-to-date weather information in decision making | Malawi has relatively good weather data but very low rates of adoption by framers; less than 10% of farmers in the SRB use weather data for decision making | At least 50% of farmers using up-to-date information from weather stations to determine planting/harvesting dates by mid-term and at least 75% by end of project; | Project M&E reports | Farmers trust in weather prediction information from the Met department remains low (as it is today) |
| Knowledge and skills for SLM provided to resource managers at all levels | Percentage of land and resource users adopting improved practices | Less than 10% engaging in 1-2 improved practices consistently | At least 25% of farmers adopting 3-5 forms of improved practices by mid-term and 75% cumulatively by project end | Sampling captured in project monitoring reports | Prolonged droughtCurrent levels of political willingness and support for SLM by government and resource users declines |
| Change in soil fertility | Very low and declining, exact levels for pilot districts obtained during inception | At least 10% increase in soil fertility from baselines for land users consistently engaging in 3-5 improved practices by mid-term and by 30% cumulatively by end of the project | Sampling captured in project monitoring reports | Prolonged droughtCurrent levels of political willingness and support for SLM by government and resource users declines |
| Number of people with relevant skills for SLM | Less than 20% of land users and pastoralists have skills for improved management; less than 50% of technical officers have updated SLM skills | At least 40% of land users and 30% of technical officers requiring to update skills have done so by mid-term: by the end of project, at least 60% of land users and 75% of technical officers cumulatively have updated skills. | Project training reports as part M&E reports | Current levels of political willingness and support for SLM by government and resource users declines |
| Lessons generated  | Limited knowledge management happening now, no clear mechanism for generating and sharing lessons | Lessons on green water credits, sustainable charcoal, crop insurance, and other important project initiatives available for dissemination through the SRB and SLM National Dialogue process | Project M&E and technical reports | Project implementation is effective and generates lessons worth sharing |
| Change in agricultural productivity  | Current low and declining, exact levels of selected crops to be obtained during inception | At least 20% increase in agricultural produce for key crops for those adopting 3-5 improved practices consistently by mid-term and 50% cumulative by project end | Project monitoring reports | Unusual weather event such as prolonged drought or El NinoCurrent levels of political willingness and support for SLM by government and resource users declines |

### Annex 6.1.2 List of Documents

1. Project Document ID 0073331 of July 2010.
2. Project Document PPG and PIF including their preparatory Reports.
3. Report on Policy sector review project.
4. Report on Charcoal project.
5. Report on Green Water project.
6. Report on Crop Insurance (Not yet finalized but have a draft copy).
7. JICA Mission Visit to Community Vitalization & Afforestation and SLM project report.
8. District Reports/News.
9. IP Report.
10. UNDP gender and socio-economic data/Questionnaire.
11. Project implementation reports (APR/PIR’s - April 2013 - July 2013) of August 2013)
12. Quarterly progress reports and work plans of the various implementation task teams
13. Audit reports
14. METT Tools; GEF BD TT; Financial scorecards
15. The Mission Reports and Lessons learnt study
16. M & E Operational Guidelines, all monitoring reports prepared by the project; and
17. Financial and Administration guidelines.

The following documents will also be available:

1. Project operational guidelines, manuals and systems
2. Minutes SLM Meetings
3. Minutes of target DESC and SLM Meetings
4. Minutes of the SLM Project Board Meetings
5. Maps
6. The GEF Completion Report guidelines; and
7. UNDP Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks.

### Annex 6.1.3 Mid-term Review Rating Scale

**Progress towards results: use the following rating scale**

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| **Highly Satisfactory (HS)**  | Project is expected to achieve or exceed all its major global environmental objectives, and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The project can be presented as “good practice”. |
| **Satisfactory (S)** | ***Though the Project did not achieve most of its major global environmental objectives, and yield satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings, the progress and activities towards these objectives have been excellent, hence satisfactory (S)*** |
| **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)** | Project is expected to achieve most of its major relevant objectives but with either significant shortcomings or modest overall relevance. Project is expected not to achieve some of its major global environmental objectives or yield some of the expected global environment benefits. |
| **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)** | Project is expected to achieve its major global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to achieve only some of its major global environmental objectives.  |
| **Unsatisfactory (U)** | Project is expected not to achieve most of its major global environment objectives or to yield any satisfactory global environmental benefits. |
| **Highly Unsatisfactory (U)** | The project has failed to achieve, and is not expected to achieve, any of its major global environment objectives with no worthwhile benefits. |

**Adaptive Management and Management Arrangements: use the following rating scale**

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| **Highly Satisfactory (HS)**  | The project has no shortcomings and can be presented as “good practice”.  |
| **Satisfactory (S)** | ***Adaptive Management and Management Arrangements has been satisfactory (S)*** |
| **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)** | The project has moderate shortcomings. |
| **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)** | The project has significant shortcomings. |
| **Unsatisfactory (U)** | The project has major shortcomings. |
| **Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)** | The project has severe shortcomings. |

**Annex 6.1.4 Table of Contents for the Mid-term Review Report**

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| --- | --- |
| **i.** | Opening page:* Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project
* UNDP and GEF project ID#s.
* Review time frame and date of review report
* Region and countries included in the project
* GEF Operational Program/Strategic Program
* Implementing Partner and other project partners
* Review team members
* Acknowledgements
 |
| **ii.** | Executive Summary* Project Summary Table
* Project Description (brief)
* Review Rating Table
* Summary of conclusions, recommendations and lessons
 |
| **iii.** | Acronyms and Abbreviations |
| **1.** | Introduction* Purpose of the review
* Scope & Methodology
* Structure of the review report
 |
| **2.** | Project description and development context* Project start and duration
* Problems that the project sought to address
* Immediate and development objectives of the project
* Baseline Indicators established
* Main stakeholders
* Expected Results
 |
| **3.** | Findings  |
| **3.1** | Progress toward Results:* Project Design
* Progress
 |
| **3.2** | Adaptive Management:* Work planning
* Finance and co-finance
* Monitoring systems
* Risk management
* Reporting
 |
| **3.3** | Management Arrangements:* Overall project management
* Quality of executive of Implementing Partners
* Quality of support provided by UNDP
 |
| **4.**  | Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons* Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project
* Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project
* Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives
* Best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success
 |
|  | 6.2 Other Annexes*6.2.1 Itinerary*

| **Responsible person** | **Task/Activity** | **Milestone** | **Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  Godfrey | 1.0 | **Inception report** | 02 -06 Dec ‘13 |
|  | 1.1 | Briefing by UNDP Officials and Project Team | 02 -03 Dec ‘13 |
| 1.2 | Literature Collection and pre-liminary Review | 02 -05 Dec ‘13 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Godfrey | 2.0 | Literature Review | 03- 17 Dec ‘13 |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | 3.0 | **Field work** | 09- 17 Dec ‘13 |
|  | 3.1 | Balaka | 09 Dec ‘13 |
| 3.2 | Mwanza | 10 Dec ‘13 |
| 3.3 | Neno | 11Dec ‘13 |
| 3.4 | Blantyre | 12- 13 Dec ‘13 |
| 3.5 | Personal Focal Point Interviews in Lilongwe | 16- 19 Dec ‘13 |
| 3.6 | Report back to UNDP Officials and Project Team | 20 Dec ‘13 |
|  |  | **BREAK for FESTIVE SEASON** |  |
|  Godfrey | 4.0 | **Report Writing** | 06-16 Jan ‘13 |
|  | 4.1 | Field Report patch-up | 06-10 Jan ‘13 |
| 4.2 | First draft report writing and Workshop Preparations | 10-15 Jan ‘13 |
|   |  |  |  |
| Godfrey | 5.0 | **Workshop and Draft circulation** | 16- Jan ‘13 |
|  | 5.1 | Incorporation of Workshop comments | 18 Jan ‘13 |
| 5.2 | Draft circulation for comments and under review by UNDP/Project Team | 19- 24Jan ‘13 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Godfrey | 6.0 | **Finalization of Report with all concerned parties** | 25- 31 Jan‘13 |
|  | 6.1 | Incorporation of comments from UNDP & Project Team | 25- 29 Jan‘13 |
| 6.2 | Submission of report and Project Closure | 30-31 Jan‘13 |

6.2.2 List of persons interviewed***BALAKA DISTRICT OFFICERS LIST:***

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| --- | --- |
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| 1. *Kateka Besitala*
 | *V.H. Madolo* |
| 1. *Fulagesi Senanaleki*
 | *Zakhalango* |
| 1. *Mavuto Wilisoni*
 | *Zakhalango* |
| 1. *Brian Chalosi*
 | *V.E.H Kumaje* |
| 1. *Mackford BC Khoza*
 | *Rede farmer* |
| 1. *Winess Maunde*
 | *Zakhalango* |
| 1. *Yokonia Santen*
 | *Zankhalango* |
| 1. *Kagulo Mloiri*
 | *Zankhalango* |
| 1. *Kanankoti Wasiketi*
 | *Zankhalango* |
| 1. *Jonesi Mikael*
 | *Member* |
| 1. *Renavel Chilembe*
 | *Member* |
| 1. *Masache Machati*
 | *Member* |
| 1. *Eveleson Chisenga*
 | *Member* |
| 1. *Nastazia Willossi*
 | *Treasurer* |
| 1. *Winikesi Bindula*
 | *Member* |
| 1. *Pasculani Lackson*
 | *Member* |
| 1. *Iha Baton*
 | *Secretary* |
| 1. *Keneson Limiton*
 | *Member* |
| 1. *Maginess Ulissi*
 | *Secretary* |
| 1. *Jailoss Faison*
 | *Member* |
| 1. *Selina Bwalo*
 | *Chair* |
| 1. *Joice Magombo*
 | *Member* |
| 1. *Mdalitso Mandala*
 | *Member* |
| 1. *Lolelani Leniyasi*
 | *Member* |
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 | *Member* |

***NENO DISTRICT OFFICERS LIST:***

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| 1. *Aubrey Macheso*
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| 1. *S.G Chapasuka*
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***NENO DISTRICT TIKONDANE COMMUNITY/FARMERS PARTICIPANTS LIST:***

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| 1. *Luta Malodza*
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| 1. *Samson Billy*
 | *Forest* |
| 1. *Gasten Kanalason*
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| 1. *Chiradzula Makande*
 | *Agriculture* |
| 1. *Liomba Moyo*
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| 1. *Alex Mbuzi*
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| 1. *Ruthness Chisagwa*
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| 1. *Lusca Gasten*
 | *Forest*  |
| 1. *Agness Rice*
 | *Agriculture* |
| 1. *Chimwa Black*
 | *Agriculture* |
| 1. *Lucy Mseula*
 | *Agriculture* |
| 1. *Stella Momba*
 | *Forest/ Agriculture* |
| 1. *Anne Isaac*
 | *Agriculture* |
| 1. *Fanisi Andrea*
 | *Agriculture* |
| 1. *Esther Kandiona*
 | *Agriculture* |
| 1. *Lisinea Stafford*
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 | *Forest* |
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***PARTICIPANTS OF SLM MID-TERM REVIEW REPORT WORKSHOP- LILONGWE HOTEL, 24 JANUARY, 2014.***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
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6.2.3 Summary of field visits**Balaka: *Outcomes:* i)** *Mkandabwako Afforestation Association (GVH Kuchambe): Done a lot of Mulching, CA and natural forest regeneration (40 ha for GVH and 45 ha for Lead Farmer. Even grows high value trees such Cashew Nuts that need assistance with marketing;* **ii)** *Silika Afforestation Association (GVH Silika): Done a lot natural forest regeneration (> 100 ha for community) Even the monkeys that had disappeared have come back (*(Gender 60% women, 40 % men)*; and iii) Ulongwe EPA has also done a lot CA.****Issues that arose:*** Include among others: Mobility of Extension Officers; Training for more Lead Farmers; Need for up-scaling Conservation Agriculture (CA) by use of herbicides for the communities; Promotion of Energy saving stoves ; Small scale live stock keeping (goats/pigs), using pass-on-system (from person to person) in reward to good natural resource management ; growing of high value crops such as Cashew nuts and ground nuts; Requirement of Associations and Co-operatives formation; Need Bee Hives for Bee keeping; Need establishment of markets for the agricultural products, especially the cashew nuts; Delays in transfer of funds; Funds for Public works type of activities; Visit by Minister, Principal Secretary (PS) or Director responsible for this portfolio. **Mwanza: *Outcomes:******i) Visit to****: a)* Tulonkhondo Charcoal Producers (31 Group members, including their Group Village Headman (Gender 80% women, 20 % men, the community expressed the need for alternative income generating activities as they wait for the sustainable charcoal forests to mature) ; b) Thambani EPA and Senior TA ; and c) Mwanza EPA (Extension Workers) .***Issues that arose:***Mobility is a challenge for personnel; Community feels not benefited from project due to lack of alternatives sources of income; Training for more Lead Farmers; Small scale live stock keeping (goats/cows); Need Bee Hives for Bee keeping; Release of funds on time; Cash for work type of work (especially when creating bushfire breaks); and Visit by Minister, Principal Secretary (PS) or Director responsible for this portfolio**.****Neno: *Outcomes: i) Visit to:*** *a)* Tikondane Project Group - *Magaleta* (40 Group members, including their Group Village Headman (Gender 70% women, 30 % men); b) Neno Fish Farming Group; and c) Neno (Extension Workers).***Issues that arose:*** Include: Mobility of Extension workers; Training for more Lead Farmers; Small scale live stock keeping; Requirement of Associations and Co-operatives formation; Need Bee Hives for Bee keeping (20 - 50 Hives); Delays in disbursement of funds; Form of loans other means of diversification such as cash for work (e.g. in activities of creating the Fire Breaks; Empowerment of community urgently need such as transfer of Deeds (Fish Pond) to community and exchange visits with Private Fish Farming (e.g. Mr Zyambo in Kasungu who has done extremely well); and Visit by High government officials (Minister, Principal Secretary (PS) or Director).**Blantyre: *Outcomes:*** i) ***Visit to:*** *a) Blantyre EDO and Extension Officer had collected information from communities*(Gender 60% women, 40 % men).***Issues that arose*** *-* were: Mobility for Extension workers and EDO; There is need for more Lead Farmers, including training them; Need support for house hold woodlots; Capacity building is required in the following areas: natural resource management; wood lot management; climate change disasters which should trickle down to frontline staff and farmers; forestry and land use planning; The hot spot areas selection for weather station was not inclusive; There is need to sensitise a Task Force (TF) on Weather Insurance in Malawi; and There is need for community engagement on the sustainable safety (security) of the weather station equipment.**Donor Community: MCA, World Bank and JICA:*****Issues that arose:*** i) Policy needs to be harmonized in relation to river bank/Dambo cultivation, Agric calls it green belt and this causes conflict; ii) provision of incentives (JICA could give incentives, while other partners would not);iii) SLM may need to adjust the project's target of covering 800,000 ha of land in four years(assumed over ambitious) because the area of coverage by MCA in 5 years was 140,000 ha; iv) UNDP needs an improvement on its Payment system on the SLM project; v)UNDP Should continue to take a lead on sustainable charcoal production; vi) on Sustainable energy, UNDP should undertake studies that present practical solutions; and vii) UNDP needs to document and publish the good work it is doing.6.2.4 Questionnaire used and summary of results

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Objective / Outcomes*** | ***Indicators:*** | ***Target by end of project with the baseline as 2009 (unless specified otherwise),***  | ***RESPONSES*** |
| ***Objective:*** *To reduce land degradation in the Shire River Basin through improved institutional, policy and PES arrangements.”* | *Over 800,000 ha under direct SLM (project pilot area) and 1,000,000 ha impacted by up-scaling in next 4 yrs* | * *ha covered under direct SLM (project pilot area) by mid-term*
 |  |
| *Reduction in the rates of deforestation*  | * *Rate of deforestation reduced to-date*
 |  |
| *Improvement in the conditions of woodlands* | * *% increase in woody vegetation in urban areas &currently degraded areas*
 |  |
| *Carbon mitigated from sustainable charcoaling* | * *Tonnage of carbon dioxide mitigated from sustainable charcoal in the districts*
 |  |
| *Reduction in soil erosion* | * *% reduction in soil erosion of land under improved SLM registers*
 |  |
| ***Outcome 1:*** *Outcome 1: The policy, regulatory and institutional arrangement support sustainable land management in the Shire River Basin* | *Number of functional institutions leading/participating in SLM in the SRB*  | * *The established of :*
* *River Shire Basin Authority ;*
* *Charcoal associations and their by-laws;*
* *Malawi Earth Carbon Trust Fund’*
 |  |
| *Number of policies mainstreaming SLM* | * *How many policies revised to mainstream SLM principles*
 |  |
| *Number of policies with legislation and institutional arrangement for effective implementation* | * *Discussions for legislation and institutional arrangement for policy implementation (how many key policy discussions held by mid-term)*
 |  |
| *Legal status of charcoal*  | * *Are there any recommendations made for policy changes needed to legalize charcoal ?*
 |  |
| *Revenue from charcoal going to District and national revenue* | * *Increase in collection of revenue by Districts and Malawi Revenue Authority from charcoal processes in project area?*
 |  |
| ***Outcome 2:*** *Private Public Partnerships (PPP) providing financial incentives for SLM (through green water credits and sustainable charcoal):* | *Percentage of eligible farmers participating in the green water credit scheme* | * *has there been a Green Water Credits scheme agreed by end of the first year and implemented fully?*
 |  |
| *Amounts of money being earned by communities from sustainable charcoal* | * *State Increase in % Income from sustainable charcoal production*
 |  |
| *Number of groups with operational sustainable charcoal processes* | * *State Number of groups with sustainable charcoal production operations and earning money from carbon finance*
 |  |
| *Number of functional charcoal associations*  | * *State the Number of charcoal associations having rules and regulations for sustainable*
 |  |
| *Adoption of improved kilns in carbonization* | * *What is the Increase in % of number of charcoal producers using improved kiln?*
 |  |
| ***Outcome 3:*** *Crop insurance providing the basis for increased access to credits as well as increased use of up to date weather information in decision making* | *Number of farmers participating in the crop insurance crops and number of crops (and crop mixes) involved* | * *What % of the farmers in the SRB are accessing crop insurance for at least 3 important crops (and crop mixes of maize/groundnuts /cotton/ tobacco) by mid-term*
 |  |
| *Number of farmers using up-to-date weather information in decision making* | * *What % of farmers are using up-to-date information from weather stations to determine planting/harvesting dates by mid-term*
 |  |
| ***Outcome 4:*** *Knowledge and skills for SLM provided to resource managers at all levels:* | *Percentage of land and resource users adopting improved practices* | * *What % of farmers are adopting 3-5 forms of improved practices by mid-term*
 |  |
| *Change in soil fertility* | * *What % increase in soil fertility is from baselines for land users consistently engaging in 3-5 improved practices by mid-term*
 |  |
|  | *Number of people with relevant skills for SLM* | * *What % of land users and % of technical officers requiring updating skills have done so by mid-term.*
 |  |
| *Lessons generated*  | * *State any Lessons on green water credits, sustainable charcoal, crop insurance, and other important project initiatives that you know of*
 |  |
| *Change in agricultural productivity*  | * *What % increase s in agricultural produce for key crops for those adopting 3-5 improved practices consistently by mid-term?*
 |  |

6.2.5 Relevant mid-term tracking tools (METT, FSC, Capacity scorecard)These are outlined as follows:1. EXPECTED Project Outcomes;
2. Expected output and indicators including annual targets;
3. Planned Activities (List all activities including M&E to be undertaken during the year towards stated CP outputs);
4. TIME-FRAME; v) Responsible Party-(ies);
5. Planned Budget; vii) Results Of Activities (For each activity, state the results of the activity);
6. Progress Towards Achieving CP Outputs(Using data on annual indicator targets, state progress towards achieving the CP outputs, where relevant, commenting on factors that facilitated and/or constrained achievement of results - management issues);
7. Data Source;
8. Frequency & Cost of Collection; ix) Responsibility for Collection;
9. Collection method; and
10. Use of Information

6.2.6 Co-financing table (US$)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Sources of Co-financing[[6]](#footnote-6)* | *Name of Co-financer* | *Type of Co-financing[[7]](#footnote-7)* | *Amount Confirmed at CEO endorsement / approval* | *Actual Amount Materialized at Midterm* | *Actual Amount Materialized at Closing* |
| *GEF* | *GEF* | *Funding* | *2,072,940* | *1,201,757* | *-* |
| *Malawi* | *UNDP CO* | *Funding* | *600,000* | *158,541* | *-* |
| *Malawi* | *Government* | *Funding* | *400,000* | *200,000* | *-* |
| *Malawi* | *SLM* | *In Kind* | *21,144,940* | *11,000,000* | *-* |
|  | *Other* | *Funding* | *-* | *100,000* | *-* |
| *Japanese government* | *JICA**COVAMS project* | *Implementing project in same UNDP SLM project area* | *-* | *2,446,205* | *-* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | ***TOTAL*** | *24,216,940* | *15,126,503* | *-* |

*Explain “Other Sources of Co-financing”:* |

**Estimated cumulative total disbursement as of 30 June 2013. (i.e. CDR information up to 20 June 2013) was US$** 1275466.00

**Comments on GEF Grant Funds:** The total cumulative expenditures includes a PDF A total of USD 24,496 a PPG total of 100,000.00. covering the project period from 2006 to date.

**Add any comments on co-financing including other types and amounts of additional co-financing such as in-kind, private sector, grants, credits and loans:** As at end of June, the co-financing was comprised of USD 262,992 from UNDP channelled through the project. USD 200,000 from government and about from USD 4,727,002.00 others (only those that have provided the data).

 **Japanese government (JICA)** through COVAMS project in SLM project area has spent USD 1,442,898 for the 2013 financial year and has earmarked to spend USD 1,003,307 for the 2014 financial year.

| 6.2.7: Summary Of PRODOC. Logframe Indicators Questionnaire for Government Focal Point Members |
| --- |
| **Question** | **Response** |  |  |  |  |
| DEPT | **FORESTRY****M. Kaunde& S. Gama** | **LAND RESOURCES****M. Phiri** | **WATER****L. Mseu****P. Kadewere****C. Mbemba** | **ENERGY****J. Kalowekamo& T. Sukasuka** | **ENVIRONMENT****M. Makonombera** | **Fisheries****M. Manase** | **Irrigation****W. Sataya** |
| 1. Area covered by SLM midterm 600 000 ha  | **450,000** | **90,000** | **300,000 - 400,000** | **400,000** | **450,000** | **450,000** | **-** |
| 2. Reduction rate of deforestation 50%? | 8-10% | Yes, but can't estimate | 15-20% |  Yes, long term | Yes, but can't estimate % Sensitization required | Yes, but can't estimate | Yes, but can't estimate |
| 3. Percentage increase in wood vegetation in urban areas | Yes, though without planting | - | - | No | Not started | No | No |
| 4.Tonnage of carbon dioxide mitigated | 250 tons/year for 500ha, or 225,000 tons /year for 450,000 ha | - | - | Not done | Forestry could have the figures | - | - |
| 5. Percentage soil erosion reduction (150%) | 15% (Refer to Land Resources Dept. | 20-25% | 40% | 20% | Yes, but could not give figures | Yes, but can't estimate | Yes, but can't estimate |
| 6. Percentage change in household well being | Yes, but cannot quantify | Yes, but can't estimate | Yes, but can't estimate | Yes, but can't estimate | Yes, but could not give figures | Yes, but can't estimate | Yes, but can't estimate |
| 7. Shire river basin authority, is it established? | No | No | No, but Road Map is in place | No | No | No | No |
| 8. Policies streamlined mid-term | Yes, Forestry policy | - | Yes, Water Act and policy | Yes, 4 | Yes, 4 | (3) FisheriesForestry & Energy (Charcoal)  | Yes |
| 9. Legal status of charcoal- legalization of charcoal | Sections 39 & 81 of Forestry Act(Funds managed by Director) | - | - | legal not supportive | Yes, strategy exist. Charcoal policy consultancy report | - | - |
| 10. Collection of revenue districts and MRA | Revenue from impounded Charcoal + revenues from Timber levies | - | - | will need a lot of planning and sensitization to avoid abuse | No | - | - |
| 7. Shire river basin authority, is it established? | No | No | No, but Road Map is in place | No | No | No | No |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| 6.2.8: Summary of Prodoc. Logframe Indicators Questionnaire For District Focal Point Members |
| **Question** | **Response** |  |
| DISTRICTS | **BALAKA** | **MWANZA** | **NENO** | **BLANTYRE** |
| 1. Area covered by SLM midterm 600 000 ha
 | **500 ha** | **400 ha** | **300 ha** | **450-500 ha** |
| 1. Reduction rate of deforestation 50%?
 | **10%** | **15%** | **10%** | **20%** |
| 1. Percentage increase in wood vegetation in urban areas
 | **-** | **-** | **-** | **-** |
| 1. Tonnage of carbon dioxide mitigated
 | **Not known** | **2.5 -3%** | **Not known** | **2%** |
| 1. Percentage soil erosion reduction (150%)
 | **15-40%** | **15%** | **15%** | **2%** |
| 1. Percentage change in household well being
 | **10%** | **10%** | **10%** | **2%** |
| 1. Shire river basin authority, is it established?
 | **No** | **No** | **No** | **No** |
| 1. Policies streamlined by mid-term
 | **4** | **4** | **4** | **4** |
| 1. Legal status of charcoal- legalization of charcoal
 | **No** | **Yes** | **No** | **No** |
| 1. Collection of revenue districts and MRA
 | **No** | **No** | **No** | **No** |
| 1. Green water credits scheme
 | **No** | **No** | **No** | **No** |
| 1. Amount of money earned by community on charcoal
 | **No** | **No, But in process** | **No** | **No** |
| 1. At least 10 charcoal products earn money from carbon finance
 | **None** | **None** | **None** | **None** |
| 1. 10 charcoal associations with rules and regulations
 | **None** | **1 (Tulonkhondo Assoc)** | **None** | **None** |
| 1. Charcoal producers using kiln
 | **None** | **None** | **None** | **None** |
| 1. 30% of farmers accessing crop insurance
 | **None** | **None** | **None** | **None (In process)** |
| 1. Farmers using up-to-date info from weather stations
 | **None** | **None** | **None** | **None( In process)** |
| 1. Percentage of farmers adopting form of improved practices
 | **50%** | **30%** | **40%** | **50%** |
| 1. Increase in land fertility (10%)
 | **10%** | **15%** | **25%** | **20%** |
| 1. Update of skills ( Land users and technical personnel) 40% Mid Term
 | **30%** | **35%** | **30%** | **35%** |
| 1. Lessons on green water, charcoal crop insurance available for dissemination?
 | **None** | **None** | **None** | **None** |
| 1. Percentage increase in key crops produced for adopting 3-5 improved practices
 | **20%** | **20%** | **15%** | **20%** |

1. Project Performance Matrices: (Rating: HS: Highly satisfactory/S: Satisfactory/MS: Marginally satisfactory/U:Unsatisfactory)
	1. Project performance matrix – GEF co-ordinator version with performance rating by evaluation[[8]](#footnote-8)

| **Summary** | **Objectively Verifiable Indicators** | **Means of** **Verification** | **Performance** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Development Objective:To reduce land degradation in the Shire River Basin through improved institutional, policy and PES arrangements.” | 600,000ha rehabilitated at MTR | * Reduction in the rates of deforestation
* Improvement in the conditions of woodlands
* Carbon mitigated from sustainable charcoaling
* Reduction in soil erosion
 | APR /PIR June 2013 & Districts reports indicate total land rehabilitation of ***10,718 ha.*****Though not close to the target, the progress has been good, the target was over ambitiously set and recommendation has been made to adjust to 70,000ha at Mid-Term and 100,000 at end of project.****[S]** |
| Output 1.1: Alignment of sector policies improved | Number of policies reviewed | At least 4 policies reviewed | More than 4 policies have been reviewed**[HS]** |
| Output1.2: SRB Development Authority formed improve coordination of SLM, environmental management &development in Basin | Number of functional institutions leading/participating in SLM in the SRB  | * The established of :
* River Shire Basin Authority ;
* Charcoal associations and their by-laws;
* Malawi Earth Carbon Trust Fund’
 | Road Map of establishment of SRB in place and Water Act 2013 has been passed [**MS]** |
| Output 2.1: Green Water Credits Scheme operationalized to provide financial incentive for SLM: | Percentage of eligible farmers participating in the green water credit scheme | Establishment of Green Water Credits scheme agreed by end of the first year and implemented fully | The strategy is in place**[MS]** |
| Output 2.2: Sustainable charcoal providing additional income as an incentive for sustainable woodlands management:  | *Amounts of money being earned by communities from sustainable charcoal and Legal status of sustainable charcoal production* | Strategy policy and legal in place including associations formation and revenue generated |  Strategy policy and Associations are in place but no revenues nor legally binding instruments**[MS]** |
| Output 3.1: Index based crop insurance piloted using lessons learnt during the initial pilot to refine the scheme:  | Number of farmers participating in the crop insurance crops and number of crops (and crop mixes) involved | * % of the farmers in the SRB are accessing crop insurance for at least 3 important crops (and crop mixes of maize/groundnuts /cotton/ tobacco) by mid-term
 |  Recommendation has been made on one buyer one seller and cotton and maize have been selected as the preferred crops to be piloted**[MS]** |
| Output 3.2: Improving weather data generation and use in decision making:  | Number of farmers using up-to-date weather information in decision making | * % of farmers are using up-to-date information from weather stations to determine planting/harvesting dates by mid-term
 | No work done **[U]** |
| Output 4.1: Application of knowledge to support SLM implementation by farmers and rehabilitation of specifically degraded communal lands.  | Percentage of land and resource users adopting improved practices | * % of farmers are adopting 3-5 forms of improved practices by mid-term
 |  Above 75% of farmers practice the technology**[HS]** |
| Output 4.2: Support to increase forest and plantation forest productivity  | *Number of people with relevant skills for SLM* | *% of land users and % of technical officers requiring updating skills have done so by mid-term.* | More than 80% of land users have been trained in modern methods of farming and afforestation**[HS]** |
| Out4.3: A participatory M&E system designed and used to monitor ecosystem health and improvements in livelihoods: | M&E system up running under various SLM activities | Quality of quarterly progress reports | A harmonised template of reporting is urgently needed**[MS]** |
| *Output 4.4 Socio-economic demographic income changes in the project area* | The number of male & female headed households with improved incomes | * 31 male headed h/hold registering 50% increase in income changes (78% at Midterm)
* 16 Female headed h/holds registering 50% increase in income changes(80% at Midterm)
 | The analysis of the UNDP CO socio-economic survey points out to good progress on this component **[S]** |
| *Output 5.1 : Learning, Adaptive Management, Monitoring & Evaluation* | Introduction of reporting system | Quality of reporting system | Notably, there has been good development in the area of Monthly and Quarterly Reporting Formats -though district and IP reporting more of output than result-based and there is need to have a harmonized template **[MS]** |
| *Output 5.2: Project Management Unit* | Efficiency and effectiveness of the PMU | Performance of the PMU | There has been good progress on the performance of the PM but this could improve with the procurement of a PA and relocating the PMU to a closer station where activities take place, say Balaka**[MS]** |
|  |  |  |  |

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1. **Ratings: HS: Highly satisfactory/ S: Satisfactory / MS: Moderately satisfactory / U: Unsatisfactory** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. (i) a mid-term review of the full-size project SLM “Private Public Sector Partnership on Capacity Building in the Shire River Basin” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Note: these ratings are specified in GEF: guidelines for Implementing Agencies to conduct Terminal Evaluations (dated 4 March 2005) – although they are being used here in a mid-term evaluation. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Note: these ratings are specified in GEF: guidelines for Implementing Agencies to conduct Terminal Evaluations (dated 4 March 2005) – although they are being used here in a mid-term evaluation. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Recommendations should be “SMART”: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound (giving a suggested time frame is not mandatory for recommendations from the MTRT) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Sources of Co-financing may include: Bilateral Aid Agency(ies), Foundation, GEF Agency, Local Government, National Government, Civil Society Organization, Other Multi-lateral Agency(ies), Private Sector, Other [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Type of Co-financing may include: Grant, Soft Loan, Hard Loan, Guarantee, In-Kind, Other [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. **Ratings: HS: Highly satisfactory/ S: Satisfactory / MS: marginally satisfactory / U: Unsatisfactory.** [↑](#footnote-ref-8)