

**LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND SMALL
ISLANDS DEVELOPING STATES (LDC SIDS)
TARGETED PORTFOLIO APPROACH FOR CAPACITY
DEVELOPMENT AND MAINSTREAMING OF
SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT PROJECT
(PIMS 3130; GEFID 2441)**

TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

FINAL

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Resilient nations.*

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While I acknowledge the contributions of all the people I mention above, I retain full responsibility for the contents of this report and all interpretations and conclusions therein.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Table 1: Project Summary Table

Project Title:	LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management Project					
UNDAF Outcome/Indicator	MYFF Goal: Managing Energy and Environment for Sustainable Development					
Expected Outcome	3.4: Sustainable land management to combat desertification and land degradation					
Expected Output	Capacity development for policy and governance: Promotion and implementation of National Action Programmes to Combat Desertification					
GEF Project ID:	2441		At endorsement Amount (US\$)	Type	At completion Amount (US\$)	
UNDP Project ID:	3130	GEF financing:	2,400,000	GSU UNOPS Managed	2,400,000	
			29,000,000	MSPs UNDP COs	29,000,000	
Country:	Global	IA/EA own:	1,000,000	UNDP grant/in-kind (50/50)	1,000,000	
			726,500	UNCCD /GM (DIFS)	726,500	
Region:	Global	Government:	5,000,000	In-kind and cash	5,000,000	
Focal Area:	Land Degradation	Bilateral	23,285,822	EU parallel through GM/ACP	23,673,500	
		Other:	387,678	CIDA grant	387,678	
		Other		350,000	Regional Orgs. in-kind	350,000
				200,000	Global Advisory Committee in-kind	200,000
FA Objectives (OP/SP):	OP 15 SP1 (GEF 3)	Total co-financing:	30,949,500		31,337,678	
Executing Agency:	UNOPS – GCU	Total Project Cost:	62,349,500		62,737,678	
Other Partners involved:	UNCCD/GM	ProDoc Signature (date project began):			18 Nov 2004	
			(Operational) Closing Date:		Proposed: 17 Nov 2007 Actual: TBD	

The Project

Land degradation has been recognised as a major driver of poverty among rural populations in most Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Land degradation also has far reaching implications for losses in the integrity, stability as well as the functioning of ecological systems at a global scale. The impacts of land degradation can however be mitigated through the adoption and institutionalisation of sustainable land management (SLM) practices. There are however critical barriers to the adoption of SLM in LDCs and SIDS. Primary among these barriers are limited individual, institutional and systemic capacities for SLM. The continued sectoral approaches to national development planning in most developing countries also contributes to the perpetuation of the process of land degradation as there is limited innovation across sectors in addressing this phenomenon. The implications of land degradation for national development are typically not taken into account in national development decision making processes. Major national development planning documents such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), National Environmental Action Plans (NEAP) and National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSD) are generally silent on the issue of land degradation, resulting in low budgetary allocations for addressing this issue. Under these circumstances economic development policies are usually developed in conflict with the principles of sustainable development.

Despite the existence of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as a funding mechanism for environment and sustainable development initiatives, most LDCs and SIDS had consistently failed to access the funding that was available through this mechanism due to the capacity limitations alluded to above.

In response to these pervasive issues, the GEF was designated as a financial mechanism of the UNCCD in 2003 (Decision of UNCCD COP 6) with land degradation added as a new GEF Focal Area. Through the GEF Operational Programme 15 (OP15), UNCCD member countries could now access financial support to address land degradation as a means to promoting the mainstreaming of ecosystem integrity into the overall sustainable development discourse. However, despite the use of various approaches by UNDP to promote increased access by LDCs and SIDS to GEF funding, the level of participation of these countries in the initiative remained low due to, among other constraints:

- lack of understanding among eligible countries of the types of proposals that they could submit for funding with a lot of them misinterpreting the GEF mandate to include funding of operational activities such as the finalisation of the National Action Plans (NAP) and the finalisation of National reports;
- general lack of capacity for developing SLM activities in most LDCs and SIDS; and
- lack of mainstreaming of land degradation into national development policy formulation and planning processes.

To address these constraints, UNDP in partnership with the GEF Secretariat, the UNCCD Secretariat, and the Global Mechanism, developed a global project of targeted capacity building for SLM at the individual, institutional and systemic levels in LDCs and SIDS, known as *LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management Project* (referred to hereafter as the SLM-TPA project).

The project was also developed to promote the mainstreaming of SLM and land degradation into national level development planning processes. Due to the commonality of characteristics such as poor capacity and resource limitations among LDCs and SIDS UNDP developed the SLM-TPA project as the appropriate vehicle for supporting eligible LDCs and SIDS with developing proposals for capacity building and mainstreaming of SLM into their national planning processes.

The Project was designed to target up to 48 LDCs and SIDS that had not finalised the development of their National Action Plans under the UNCCD (NAPS), which implied that there was limited capacity for the institutionalisation of SLM. The Project was developed with a focus on two distinct levels of intervention: a global coordination level through which umbrella support mechanisms were developed for application in the various countries; and the national level support systems to the development of individual country level Medium Sized Projects (MSPs) for capacity development and mainstreaming of SLM at national level.

Due to the large number of countries that required support, the UNDP introduced an innovative approach to the Project through which an “umbrella approach” would be used for the development of project

documents instead of the conventional country/project by country approach. This approach was expected to reduce transaction costs and expedite the process of approving the proposals.

A Global Coordinating Unit (GCU) which was headed by a Global Project Coordinator was established to provide technical assistance and services to participating countries. The GCU was also expected to promote partnerships between the project and those that were promoting similar goals with support from other global initiatives such as the World Bank and NEPAD. Regional Centres of Excellence were also identified to provide technical input into project development and implementation. The utility of this approach was however found wanting as most of these centres did not maintain meaningful engagement with the project after it was initiated. The project was originally planned to be implemented over a four year period between 2004 and 2008, but ended up being implemented until December 2012.

The total project cost was US\$ 62,737,678. The GEF allocated US\$ 29 million for the development of national level MSPs and US\$ 2.4 million for the GCU. An additional US\$ 31 million was expected to be realised from co-financing.

The Evaluation

This report documents the findings of a portfolio level Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the Global Coordination component of SLM-TPA project.

The evaluation was conducted in line with the GEF guidelines for terminal evaluations as well as in response to the Terms of Reference, which is appended to this report as Annex 1.

Like all GEF Terminal Evaluations the TE was carried out to:

- Promote accountability and transparency, and to assess and disclose levels of project accomplishments;
- Synthesize lessons learnt from the implementation of the project for possible use in the selection, design and implementation of future GEF projects; and
- Aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

The evaluation is structured to respond to the following questions:

- Did the project achieve its objectives?
- How well was the project implemented?
- Are the outcomes from project implementation likely to be sustainable?

The evaluation was conducted through a desk review since it was a portfolio level evaluation. The review of relevant project documents – including the individual Terminal Evaluations of the MSPs – was supplemented by telephone interviews with stakeholders who were involved in the design, management and implementation of the project. No field visits were conducted as the evaluation was targeted at the global component of the project.

The critical attributes of the Project have been assessed according to the standard UNDP-GEF evaluation guidelines. The results of this assessment are presented in the Table below:

Table 2: **Evaluation Ratings**

1. Monitoring and Evaluation	Rating	2. IA& EA Execution	Rating
M&E design at entry	HS	Implementation Agency Execution	MS
M&E Plan Implementation	MS	Executing Agency Execution	MS
Overall quality of M&E	S	Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	MS
3. Assessment of Outcomes	Rating	4. Sustainability	Rating
Relevance	R	Financial resources:	L
Effectiveness	MS	Socio-political:	L
Efficiency	S	Institutional framework and governance:	L
Overall Project Outcome Rating	S	Environmental :	L
5.Impact	Rating	Overall likelihood of sustainability:	L
Environmental Status Improvement	M		
Environmental Stress Reduction	M		
Progress towards stress/status reduction	M		
Overall Project Impact	M		

Conclusions

The GCU proved to be an effective vehicle for the development and approval of the 46 MSPs. As a global coordinating mechanism, GCU produced training materials and SLM guidelines that proved useful in the awareness creation activities that were implemented at the beginning of the project thereby priming participating country institutions for the uptake of SLM approaches.

The multi-country capacity building approach has been useful in promoting the mainstreaming of SLM into national and local level development planning processes.

Although the project was adversely affected by the early closure of the GCU, UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisors took on the additional responsibility of providing programmatic oversight over the SLM-TPA project. They have continued to provide guidance and monitoring and evaluation support to the MSPs.

In a number of cases UNDP managed to fit the individual MSPs into their country programme frameworks. Greater success in capacity building and mainstreaming of SLM was achieved in such situations as the SLM-TPA project was synchronised with on-going national projects and country programmes and therefore did not constitute an additional administrative burden to Country Offices

Mainstreaming of SLM has also occurred at various levels including policy levels. Governments in all the targeted regions have demonstrated their increased commitment to SLM by amending land management

and natural resources management policies to incorporate SLM principles. Governments in all the regions have also gone further and promoted the mainstreaming of SLM approaches and principles into their national development planning processes. This is an important development as it will ensure the long term sustainability of the results of the project.

The use of a portfolio approach introduced greater efficiencies in the development of the individual country MSPs, which resulted in all 46 being developed within the first two years of project mobilisation. Given the fact that it takes on average twenty-two (22) months for a MSP to move from PDF-A approval to project start-up, it would have been impossible to have all these MSP developed and approved had UNDP developed these projects on a country by country basis. The innovation to have a pre-agreed project approval template and the delegation of the approval process to GEF Secretariat by Council also assisted with this process. Expedited project development resulted in quicker mobilisation for project implementation. The development of the MSPs could have been even more efficient had the regional institutions originally identified as Centres of Excellency to support project implementation been better engaged.

The project failed to build strong partnerships with projects funded by institutions such as the World Bank/TerrAfrica and NEPAD that were proposed in the ProDoc. This was despite the project having supported and delivered eight sub-regional workshops with collaboration of the Global Mechanism. This was mainly the result of the early closure of the Global Coordination Unit. The RTAs who took over project management after the closure of the GCU focussed mainly on monitoring the implementation of the project.

The overall conclusion of the evaluation is that the SLM-TPA project has achieved its objectives especially given the fact that there is now increased SLM awareness and mainstreaming at country level which reflects increased capacity among planners and decision makers. There is also evidence of increase financial flows to support SLM even though the bulk of these funds are still being sourced from external sources.

Lessons Learnt

The development and implementation of the SLM-TPA project has yielded a number of lessons which will be useful for future programming of similar activities. These are summarised below:

1. Projects targeting the introduction of new concepts need to be presented in ways that make them relevant to intended beneficiaries. It was only after SLM was linked to critical concerns such as poverty, hunger and food security that governments, NGO representatives and the community members started paying attention to the issue.
2. The management and consolidation of experiences from UNDP Country Offices, RTAs and 46 MSPs was a huge task. In the absence of the GCU, the SLM-TPA project's objective—of developing sub-regional programmatic synergies, advancing SLM through networking, information exchange and development of joint knowledge products—would have been lost had it not been for the fact that UNDP-

GEF assumed global coordination of the initiative through the RTA based in Bangkok, Thailand. The assumption of this responsibility by UNDP-GEF was also at a cost, as UNDP had to allocate its own resources to fund this additional project management responsibility. In the end, the MSPs were managed as extensions of CO programmes and were affected by the usual “hands off” approach to management of such projects by COs. Future global or portfolio programmes will need to provide for dedicated effective long term programme management.

3. Projects targeting national level policy changes should be developed with appropriate levels of participation by the ultimate beneficiaries. The delays experienced with the development of MSPs by the GCU were due to stakeholder perceptions that the Portfolio Approach was handed to national stakeholders as a *fait accompli* with little or no consultation. Top down approaches to project development are not sustainable. There is need to identify national and/or sub-regional priorities and build upon these.

4. The inefficiencies experienced with the development and roll out of the MSPs could have been avoided by adopting different approaches to the “let a thousand flowers bloom” approach to rolling out the MSPs. The project could have piloted on a regional basis with lessons learned disseminated to the other countries. The choice of countries for piloting could have been done on the basis of the results of national capacity audits.

5. The SLM-TPA project provided opportunities for learning, knowledge generation and experience sharing among stakeholders. These aspects require dedicated management capacity over the long term. This should have been provided for longer than the three years the Global Coordinating Unit was in place.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed for use in the programming of similar activities by UNDP, GEF and any other stakeholder working with national governments in the field on capacity enhancement.

Recommendations for Immediate Action

Finding 1: The SLM-TPA project has generated significant interest for SLM among participating countries as well as within the institutions charged with the responsibility to implement related projects and programmes in these countries. This interest has resulted in an increasing number of countries adopting plans aimed at mainstreaming of SLM into local and national level planning processes.

Recommendation 1: UNDP-GEF should ensure that the momentum that has been generated by the SLM-TPA project is not lost by introducing a mechanism that will ensure that there is continued engagement among stakeholders to share experiences in promoting capacity building and the mainstreaming of SLM principles into national development planning processes. The recommended mechanism could take the form of a community of practice to popularise SLM related capacity building and mainstreaming at national level.

Finding 2: The terminal evaluation has established that all the countries which participated in the implementation of the SLM-TPA project have had different experiences with respect to capacity building and SLM mainstreaming. These lessons need to be documented and packaged for global dissemination as knowledge products.

Recommendation 2: *UNDP-GEF should commission a study to synthesise the lessons learnt from the implementation of the SLM-TPA project for use in future programming. The terminal evaluation reports conducted on each MSP are a useful starting point for such an exercise.*

Recommendations for the medium to long term

Finding 3: Capacity development and mainstreaming are by their nature long drawn out processes as they usually involve the changing of people's attitudes and practices. The SLM-TPA project was originally designed to be implemented over a four year period from 2004 to 2008, but was still being implemented four years beyond this planned close out date.

Recommendation 3: *Future design of programmes such as the portfolio approach should provide for implementation timeframes that are long enough to allow for consolidation of lessons and experiences.*

Finding 4: The portfolio approach project has created "economies of scale" through which globally significant environmental problems like land degradation can be addressed using a multi-country approach. This approach is more efficient and cost effective than the traditional country by country project approach that UNDP-GEF has used in the past to address similar issues. With this approach, more meaningful engagement and collaboration with regional and sub-regional entities such as NEPAD could be developed. Lessons could be learned from the International Waters portfolio, which has been using this approach so some time now.

Recommendation 4: *UNDP-GEF should continue refining the portfolio approach to addressing development issues that affect more than one country.*

Finding 5: The SLM-TPA project produced its most visible outputs when it was coordinated by the GCU. These included SLM awareness publications, MSP development guidelines and tool kits for project development and monitoring. This role was to have been continued through the engagement of regional centres of excellence in project management and implementation. Engagement with these centres was however uneven across the regions where the project was implemented. No clear focussed programmes were developed together with the regional centres of excellence beyond the closure of the GCU in Africa, for example, which detracted from the effectiveness of project implementation.

Recommendation 5: *Future projects of a similar nature should identify, strengthen and empower regional "champions" to be tasked with advancing global project objectives. These champions should be supported to operate as vehicles or communities of practice for advancing the goals of these global projects.*

Finding 6: The adoption and mainstreaming of SLM into national development planning processes by policy makers in participating countries was generally slow. This was ascribed to low levels of capacity at systemic levels. The evaluation also identified the failure by project implementation agencies to demonstrate the economic value of SLM to participating countries as an additional cause for the slow uptake of the practices. SLM was therefore viewed as an externality to mainstream development planning.

Recommendation 6: Future projects targeting SLM should demonstrate the economic value and contribution of SLM and other environmental management projects to national development in order to capture the attention of policy makers at the highest levels in government.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CAPNET	Capacity Development for Water Governance Network
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CILSS	Comite permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte Contre la Secheresse dans le Sahel
CO	(UNDP) Country Office
CoP	Conference of the Parties
CRIC	Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (UNCCD)
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GSU	Global Service Unit
GCU	Global Coordination Unit
IT	Information Technology
LADA	Land Degradation Assessment Project (FAO-UNDP)
LDC	Least Developed Country
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSP	Medium-Size Project
NAP	National Action Plan
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NSSD	National Strategy for Sustainable Development
OP	Operational Programme
ProDoc	Project Document
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SIDS	Small Island Developing
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SLM-TPA	Sustainable Land Management Targeted Portfolio Approach (project)
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TPA	Targeted Portfolio Approach
TPN	Thematic Programme Network
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the evaluation

In accordance with UNDP and GEF Monitoring and Evaluation policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP supported GEF financed projects are required to undergo an independent terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. This report documents the findings and recommendations of the Terminal Evaluation of the SLM-TPA project that was conducted between June 2013 and January 2014.

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the achievement of project results and to draw lessons for use in improving the sustainability of the benefits realised from the implementation of the project. The lessons will also contribute to UNDP's knowledge management processes and be used to enhance future programming.

The evaluation was structured to respond to the following questions:

- Did the project achieve its objectives?
- How well was the project implemented?
- Are the outcomes from project implementation likely to be sustainable?

1.2 Scope and Methodology of the evaluation

The LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach Project (SLM-TPA) was implemented at the global level. The project supported a coordinating mechanism that provided administrative and technical support to the development of MSPs for building individual, institutional and systemic capacity for SLM at the national level, which were independently implemented through the Country Offices. The terminal evaluation of the SLM-TPA focuses on the globally harmonized support services provided by the GCU. Project relevance, effectiveness and implementation efficiency was assessed at this global level by the evaluator. Through the review of the Terminal Evaluation reports of the individual country-level MSPs, the evaluator assessed the relevance of these interventions to national development priorities as well as the potential for sustainability of the results achieved.

The approach used for the evaluation included the review of relevant project documents including the Project Document and implementation progress reports (APR/PIRs) so as to obtain an understanding of the project structure and the progress that had been achieved at the time of the evaluation. Due to the global spread of the project and budgetary limitations the evaluation was conducted as a desk top exercise with the evaluator conducting telephone and Skype interviews with stakeholders who were involved with the design and implementation of the project where these were identified. Included among these were the Global Project Coordinator, former GEF Secretariat personnel, staff at the UNCCD Secretariat and Global Mechanism, staff who worked at the Regional Centres of Excellence, UNOPS and UNDP-GEF staff at the Regional Offices in Pretoria, Bangkok and Panama.

The assessment of the results of the capacity building initiatives and the extent of mainstreaming of SLM into national development planning processes was conducted through the review of the Terminal Evaluation reports on the individual MSPs supplemented by interviews with UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisors who had management oversight over these national initiatives. These interviews assisted with the collection of evidence based information for use in assessing the impact of the SLM-TPA project.

1.3 Structure of the report

This evaluation report is organised in four substantive parts, in adherence to instructions given in the Terms of Reference, as follows:

- An executive summary that summaries the findings and recommendations of the evaluation;
- A section that provides a description of the project and its development context. This section provides an overview of the problems the project was designed to address, the principal stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of the project as well as a description of the results that were expected from the implementation of the project;
- A section on findings of the evaluation exercise covering the basic project concept and design, its implementation, administration and management, its achievements and limitations, and the potential for sustainability of the products and services that it produced; and
- A section that provides conclusions, recommendations for future actions and lessons learned from the implementation of the project.

The TE commenced in June 2013 and has a completion date of September 30, 2013. The report was finalized in early 2014.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

2.1. Project Start and Duration

The LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach Project (SLM-TPA) was developed by UNDP and endorsed by the GEF Secretariat in September 2004 in close consultation and cooperation with the UNCCD Secretariat and Global Mechanism of the UNCCD.

The project officially began in November 2004, with a projected close out date of 2008. However, due to low capacities for project development at country level, there were delays in the finalisation of the development of MSPs, which resulted in implementation time over-runs. The SLM-TPA was thus still under implementation four years after the original close out date when the decision was taken by UNDP to close all MSPs by June 30th 2012.

2.2 The Problems that the Project sought to Address

According to the Project Document, the SLM-TPA Project was developed to address two sets of needs. At the Global Portfolio level the project was intended to address the need for greater project effectiveness and impact, as well as the need for reduction in administrative burdens associated with the development of up to forty-eight individual MSPs in participating LDC and SIDS (see Annex 2).

At the national level the project promoted the building of capacities to effectively mainstream SLM into Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSD), and to develop integrated financing strategies and investment plans aimed at motivating national and international development partners to invest in SLM in the countries.

The majority of LDCs and SIDS experience pervasive land degradation and losses of biodiversity due to limited human and institutional capacity and low budgetary allocations to address these issues. Sustainable land management (SLM) is not incorporated into national development policies and strategies such as PRSPs and NSDSs in most of these countries. As a consequence of this, national development planning processes are usually in conflict with sustainable development objective.

Countries that are party to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) have an obligation to prepare a National Action Programme (NAP) for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention. Nearly 200 countries representing many different climates and geographic and terrestrial conditions have signed or ratified this convention—evidence that the issues of land degradation transcend deserts and drylands, and are of importance globally to a wide spectrum of countries. Due to capacity constraints and limited access to resources, LDCs and SIDS have been unable to adequately address critical barriers to realizing SLM. In response to this situation, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Third Assembly approved a new focal area of Land Degradation focusing on desertification and deforestation. Following this, GEF Operational Programme 15 was approved by the GEF Council in May 2003 with a total funding of US\$ 250 million to support Land Degradation interventions. A third of this money was set aside to support targeted capacity building activities especially in LDCs and SIDS.

Within a year of the establishment of this fund many non-LDC and SIDS countries had submitted proposals for accessing support while LDC and SIDS countries continued to struggle with limited capacity to develop proposals. To address this issue in September 2004 the GEF endorsed the UNDP supported project “*LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management*” (SLM-TPA). The project was conceived as a vehicle for promoting global linkages and sharing experiences through a Global Coordination Unit (GCU) and for the expeditious development of national level projects to assist LDCs and SIDS that had not yet initiated elaboration of their National Action Plans (NAPs) to combat land degradation and desertification. Each national-level project under the SLM-TPA “umbrella” was to be developed as a medium-size project (MSP) with a stipulated cost norm of approximately US\$ 500,000 with a matching requirement of US\$ 500,000 from co-financing. Slightly higher funding was approved for some larger countries provided that there was satisfactory justification on the basis of project coverage.

2.3 Development Objectives and Outcomes of the project

According to the ProDoc, the overall goal and objective of the SLM-TPA project, respectively, were:

- *To promote the institutionalisation of SLM policies and practices through the strengthening of national and local level capacity for developing and mainstreaming SLM strategies into national development strategies and policies.*
- *To strengthen domestic (national and local level) capacity development and mainstreaming into national development strategies and policies, focus on the needs of 48 LDCs and SIDS, while improving the quality of project design, implementation, outputs & impact; and ensuring broad-based political and participatory support for the process.*

The Objective was to be met through the achievement of the following four Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Cost-effective and timely delivery of GEF resources to target countries

Outcome 2: Individual and institutional capacities for SLM will be enhanced

Outcome 3: Systemic capacity building and mainstreaming of SLM principles

Outcome 4: Enhanced technical support at the global and regional levels to improve the quality of project design, implementation, outputs and impacts and ensure broad-based political support for the process

This capacity building and mainstreaming of SLM was to be delivered through the development of a series of GEF financed MSPs that were designed and implemented at the national level through UNDP COs in LDCs and SIDS in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

2.4 Baseline Indicators established

A set of objectively verifiable indicators at both Outcome and Output levels with traceable targets was established and included in the Project Logframe (see Annex 2). In addition to these indicators, the GCU also developed a Monitoring and Evaluation Resource Kit with compulsory indicators which were to be used in the development of individual country MSPs. This was to ensure that there was alignment between the objectives of the SLM-TPA project and country level objectives as articulated in the MSPs.

An additional indicator that provided evidence of increased integration of SLM into government planning processes was with respect to the number of NAPs developed and submitted to the UNCCD Secretariat.

The evaluation concluded that the planning process for the development of both the SLM-TPA project and national MSPs paid adequate attention to the development of baseline indicators for use in tracking progress towards the achievement of the objectives of the SLM-TPA project.

2.5 Main Stakeholders

The design and implementation of the SLM-TPA Project required the engagement of a variety of stakeholders at global, regional and national level to ensure sustainability of the project results. The design of the project involved the following stakeholders: representatives of countries that had submitted

requests for funding for preparation of project proposals to UNDP-GEF; the UNCCD Secretariat senior management and staff who provided information and advice on baseline activities and coordination arrangements; senior management at the Global Mechanism who provided information on baseline activities and co-financing, GEF Secretariat staff who provided guidance on project components that would qualify for support. Preparatory work also involved the Facilitation Committee of the Global Mechanism and the Inter-Agency Task Force on Land Degradation. Consultations were also held with continental initiatives such as NEPAD to ensure that the proposed activities under the programme will be fully incorporated into the NEPAD framework of action.

Project implementation was coordinated by the GCU which operated in consultation with regional institutions in the three geographic regions where the project was focused. In the Caribbean, the GCU coordinated its efforts with those of the Task Force on Sustainable Land Partnerships, while in Africa the plan was for the GCU to work with NEPAD and sub-regional entities such as CILSS and SADC. In the Pacific, the GCU worked with SPREP and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. Finally each MSP was expected to develop a stakeholder involvement plan involving local and national government officials, NGOs, community based organizations, private sector, donor partners and multilateral partners.

2.6 Expected Results

The expected results of the SLM-TPA Project are described as follows in the ProDoc: *“At the end of the project, each participating country will have begun a process of capacity development and mainstreaming, elaborated their NAP through co-financing in a timely manner, and produced a Medium-Term National Investment Plan for SLM and its Coordinated Resource Mobilization Plan...”* (page 1).

The project was set up to address the limitations in individual, institutional and systemic capacity for addressing problems of land degradation in participating LDCs and SIDS. Enhanced capacity at national level was expected to improve the integration of SLM principles and land degradation mitigation strategies into policy formulation processes. This would result in the mainstreaming of SLM into national planning strategy documents such as PRSPs, NEAPs, and NSSDs. Although the SLM-TPA project was not meant to support the formulation of the NAP, the strengthening of capacities for planning was expected to promote the expedited development of NAPs. Support was also to be provided for the formulation of Integrated Financing Strategies for SLM which donors were expected to pick up and fund SLM initiatives.

These results were to be achieved through the realisation of the following outcomes and their associated outputs:

Outcome 1: Cost-effective and timely delivery of GEF resources to target countries

Output 1.1: At least 48 MSPs, under an expedited approval cycle, are under implementation

Outcome 2: Individual and institutional capacities for SLM will be enhanced.

Output 2.1: Training workshops, and exchange visits held, for local and national stakeholder

Output 2.2: Awareness raising activities organized around relevant regional, national, sub-national environmental events

Output 2.3: Enhanced institutional structures and functions to better address SLM, at local and national levels

Outcome 3: Systemic capacity building and mainstreaming of SLM principles

Output 3.1: Timely completion of high quality NAPs

Output 3.2: SLM principles and NAP priorities integrated into national development strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals

Output 3.3: Countries will have developed a Medium-term Investment Plan

Outcome 4: Enhanced technical support at the global and regional levels to improve the quality of project design, implementation, outputs and impacts and ensure broad-based political support for the process

Output 4.1: Tools, guidelines and manuals for capacity development and mainstreaming on selected topics in SLM

Output 4.2: Global and regional knowledge networks and communities of practice, linked to existing networks, such as CAPNET, CPF, etc.

Output 4.3: Effective monitoring and evaluation system

Output 4.4: Project Coordination Unit

3.0 EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.1. Project Design/Formulation

3.1.1 Analysis of the Project Results Framework

Project design made full use of the Results Framework which detailed the project logic, strategy for implementation as well as indicators of progress. A comprehensive aggregated set of baseline indicators was developed at both Outcome and Output levels to track project implementation.

The evaluation established a strong correlation between the indicators developed for the portfolio level initiative and those developed for the individual MSPs especially with respect to Outcomes 2 (*Individual and institutional capacities for SLM will be enhanced at the national level*) and 3 (*Systemic capacity building and mainstreaming of SLM principles into development planning*). The Project Implementation Reports for 2009, 2010 and 2012 that were reviewed as part of this Terminal Evaluation used these indicators to track progress towards the achievement of the SLM-TPA Project Objectives.

A major project design flaw identified by the evaluation was that of the time allocated for the operation of the GCU for the development of the individual MSPs. The expectation that all MSPs would be developed within two years by a “one man” operation was overly ambitious especially given the acknowledged capacity limitations in the participating countries. This resulted in the GCU using consultants to develop MSPs on behalf of beneficiary countries, which did little for capacity building and the intended integration of these processes into national planning processes. This coordinating entity was closed before

most MSPs had effectively mobilised for implementation. Without the guidance of this global entity, the MSPs faced the threat of poor implementation. The adaptive management adopted by UNDP to assume overall management of this global initiative through the RTA in Bangkok filled this gap even though it meant that the project ended up requiring more time for its implementation.

The Portfolio-level LFA was also adjudged to have two weaknesses, namely:

- the mixing of process outcomes (Outcome 1 – timely delivery of GEF resources, and Outcome 4 – providing technical support) with substantive outcomes (Outcome 2 – capacity building, and Outcome 3 – mainstreaming SLM) does not particularly facilitate a results-based approach; and
- the synergies and expected results of the SLM-TPA project (multi-country exchange and coincidental implementation of MSPs, which have regional effects on SLM practices) are not fully conveyed by the LFA (primarily related to Output 2: ‘Global and regional knowledge network and communities of practice’).

3.1.2 Project Planning – Assumptions and Risks

Project planning in this evaluation relates to the assumptions and risks to the achievement of project objective that were identified at design stage. The assumptions listed below were identified in the ProDoc and in the project Mid-term Review report as underpinning project implementation with the inference being that any negative changes or failure to hold under these assumptions would adversely affect the potential of the project realising results.

- Political and security conditions allow target countries to work with UNDP to design and implement projects targeting capacity building for SLM;
- Eligible countries honour their commitment to UNCCD;
- Tools and mechanisms for mainstreaming have been adopted and adapted to the countries;
- Global Mechanism commitment to resource mobilization in these countries is stable or increases;
- Donor commitment to mitigation of land degradation is stable or increasing;
- Government budgetary commitments promote the achievement of the goals of SLM-TPA project; and
- Global Advisory Committee of the SLM-TPA Project meets regularly, provides strategic guidance and resolves coordination-related issues in a timely manner

Most of the assumption have held true with the project having achieved significant results over the period it has been under implementation. There have not been widespread political and security concerns during the period of implementation of the SLM-TPA Project with the exception of Central African Republic and Guinea where new administrations took over the running of the countries through military coups resulting in shifts in project focus. This has resulted in failure to implement planned projects on the ground in both countries due to the political instability. In a number of LDCs and SIDS the processes leading to general elections usually cause serious disruptions to project implementation.

Risk assessment was not adequately addressed in the ProDoc with only two principal risks identified at project design stage. These were in relation to the dangers of operating in post conflict countries or countries with potential for conflict, as has happened in Central Africa Republic and the likelihood that some critical stakeholders would be by-passed resulting in NAPs not addressing important capacity building needs. These risks were assessed and the results are as indicated in Table 3 below.

Other risk factors that had implications for the success of the SLM-TPA project which appear to have been missed at project design included:

- Limitations in capacity to develop and manage projects at national level;
- Lack of commitment of national governments to SLM as a central issue of concern; and
- Failure to maintain donor commitment to funding SLM initiatives.

These unidentified risks have played out and affected the implementation of the SLM-TPA Project. The delays experienced with the implementation of national MSPs were largely due to the fact that there was limited capacity at national level. The quick turnaround in the development of national level MSPs alluded to earlier was largely due to the input provided by consultants engaged through the GCU to assist national governments with project development. National governments have continued to consider SLM as a peripheral issue to development planning hence the low levels of financial commitments to the programme. This has resulted in weak mobilisation of co-financing which was expected at design stage. Donor commitment to SLM has also not been as high as has occurred in areas such as climate change and management of biodiversity due in part to the fact that most countries have not as yet developed the financing strategies.

Table 3: Risk Assessment

Risk Identified	Rating	Proposed Mitigation	Status at TE
Working in post-conflict countries or in countries where “desertification” is not a priority issue	S	This risk has been factored into the project design, through the extra support being provided by the Global Coordination Unit targeted at a set of countries with similar and well-defined needs	The risk of working in post-conflict countries has adversely affected project implementation in some countries.
Working in countries where desertification is not a priority issue	M	Unpacking desertification to include deforestation and land degradation	Most countries in the Caribbean and the Pacific regions have also not performed well because desertification is not a central issue of concern. Lack of reporting by countries coordinated from Barbados is a reflection of this.
By passing some key national actors resulting in duplications or insufficient policy integration, or that the development of the NAPs (and equivalent instruments) will be dissociated from the capacity building processes.	M	Ensuring coordination between all GEF capacity development related activities (both in the countries as well as through the Global Advisory Committee), mainstreaming into UNDP-supported MDG reporting, PRSPs and other national development exercises, and by ensuring the medium-term investment plans use a cross-sectoral approach to enhancing NAP implementation and sustainable land management.	The linking of these initiatives to UNDP Country Framework Programmes has ensured that the MSPs have been streamlined into national development planning processes. Developing linkages with other capacity development activities has also helped mitigate this risk.

Risk rating – H (High Risk), S (Substantial Risk), M (Modest Risk), and L (Low Risk).

3.1.3 Lessons from other relevant projects

There was general recognition at the project design stage that the SLM-TPA project was relevant to a number of already on-going initiatives targeting capacity building. The lessons from these initiatives were therefore incorporated into the design of this new project. Principal initiatives from which the design of the Targeted Portfolio Approach project benefited included UNDP’s priorities which included initiatives targeting the achievement of relevant Millennium Development Goals, the enhancement of governance and capacity building activities in the areas of poverty alleviation and initiatives aimed at integrating environment as a cross cutting issue. UNDP was also supporting Public Sector Investment Programmes especially in the Caribbean. The Integrated Dryland Development Programme of the Dryland Development Centre also provided lessons from which the Portfolio Approach project benefited. At the time of the design of the project a number of qualifying countries were already developing National Strategies for Sustainable Development most of which addressed the development of NAPs.

3.1.4 Planned stakeholder participation

The SLM-TPA was developed through an extensive stakeholder consultative process which involved representatives of government and NGOs from countries that had already submitted requests for funding to produce proposals for funding under OP 15, UNCCD Secretariat and GEF Secretariat staff as well as

senior management of the Global Mechanism. Original project Concept Notes were also shared with relevant working groups including the inter-agency Task Force on Land Degradation. In addition, information on the project was shared with regional organisations such as NEPAD with a view to having the project included in their strategic frameworks and to seek agreement that the activities proposed under it directly address issues that were relevant to the UNCCD Convention.

During project implementation, the GEF Council and the UNCCD COP would be regularly updated on progress while regional bodies such as NEPAD, SADC and CILSS would also be informed of progress. In this context, regional centres of excellence were to be identified to enable participating countries to access technical support services. Finally, stakeholder involvement plans would be developed at national level through the individual MSPs. Stakeholders at this level included national government officials, NGOs, community based organizations, private sector, donor partners and multilateral partners.

The assessment of the evaluation was that the stakeholder involvement plan was comprehensive as it covered a wide spectrum of institutions which had potential roles to play in project implementation. In practice however, the experience with stakeholders involved at regional level was not as strong with institutions such as NEPAD and SADC not engaging in the implementation of the project as had been envisaged. The regional centres of excellence which were identified at project formulation also did not stay engaged throughout the implementation of the project. This low level of stakeholder engagement was probably due to the fact that the GCU was disbanded three years into project implementation. Stakeholder engagement was most effective at national level especially in situations where the MSPs that were developed were in line with national development priorities.

3.1.5 Replication Approach

Project replication was to be advanced through the development and dissemination of globally replicable tools, guidelines and manuals on capacity building and mainstreaming of sustainable land management.

The sharing of lessons and experiences from the project's knowledge management activities was also expected to promote project replication. These activities were to be disseminated through the regional centres of excellence which were expected to continue promoting capacity building activities in the various countries and regions even after project close out. The experience with the engagement of regional centres of excellence in the project was however not consistent across all regions.

3.1.6 UNDP Comparative advantage

UNDP had a comparative advantage over most of the agencies involved in the design of this project because the organization's mandate of poverty alleviation, capacity building and promotion of good resource governance was in synch with the primary objectives of the SLM-TPA project of capacity building and mainstreaming SLM into the national decision making processes for poverty alleviation. UNDP Country Offices in all the three regions also assimilated the SLM-TPA Project into their respective Country Programme Action Plans. The only exceptions to this were in post conflict countries like Central African Republic in Africa and countries like Jamaica in the Caribbean where SLM was not considered to be critical. Finally, UNDP's extensive representation at national level through its network of Country Offices placed them in a good position to promote the institutionalisation of SLM principles in almost all the target countries for this project.

3.1.7 Linkages between the project and other interventions within the sector

Most of the countries eligible for capacity building support under this initiative were already conducting National Capacity Self Assessments to establish the extent to which they were capable of implementing activities under the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Lessons from the implementation of enabling activities under these conventions—such as the development of the Second National Communication, the development of National Adaptation Plans of Action and actions under the Persistent Organic Pollutants—were all used in the design of the SLM-TPA project. In addition project design was also informed by experiences gained from the implementation of the Land Degradation Assessment Project (LADA) that was supported by the FAO and UNEP. Further linkages were also to be developed between the SLM-TPA project and mechanisms such as the Global Mechanism of UNCCD, World Bank/TerrAfrica and NEPAD.

Almost all countries that were eligible for support under the SLM-TPA project had GEF supported portfolios of projects. Projects such as the Integrated Watershed and Coastal Area Management in the Caribbean and the Coast to Reef initiative under the International Waters portfolio of GEF also provided useful learning experiences that the SLM-TPA project learned from. The lessons learnt from the implementation of these projects were also used in the development of the SLM-TPA project.

Closely related to the comparative advantage that UNDP had in implementing the SLM-TPA Project, there were also linkages between the project and UNDP's core priority activities aimed at the realisation of Millennium Development Goals 1 (enhanced capacity for poverty alleviation) and 7 (integration of environment as a cross cutting issue). It was for this reason that the SLM-TPA Project actively worked to secure co-financing for the implementation of the MSPs. UNDP is also supporting the development of National Strategies for Sustainable Development which have a strong theme of capacity building.

Strong linkages also existed between the SLM-TPA project and the programmes supported by the Drylands Development Centre such as the Dryland Development Programme which promotes mainstreaming of sustainable land management principles into dryland management initiatives.

The concept of SLM is broad and covers issues such as agricultural sustainability, forest land management and other similar activity areas. Design lessons were also gleaned from the projects and initiatives promoting organic farming practices in rice farming in Cambodia, and rehabilitation of degraded lands in Belize, both of which are intended to improve agricultural productivity.

3.1.8 Management Arrangements

The SLM-TPA project was developed with an unusual management structure due to the fact that it had two components made up of a technical support and monitoring function at the global level and a series of individual MSPs at the country level.

A Global Advisory Committee (GAC) comprising the GEF Secretariat as Chair, UNDP, the World Bank, UNEP, UNCCD Secretariat and the Global Mechanism was set up at global level to promote regional and interregional collaboration and exchanges, and advice on new development synergies. Regional entities such as SADC, NEPAD, Pacific Islands Forum, CILSS and CARICOM would also sit as members of this Global Advisory Committee as needed. Specifically, the GAC had the following responsibilities:

- review the progress at the portfolio level to ensure conformity with GEF and UNCCD strategies and priorities
- enhance inter-agency cooperation and coordination in all the participating countries
- promote sub-regional and regional coordination
- promote cross-regional knowledge management
- review annual progress reports and monitor portfolio level impacts
- advise on new developments, and new opportunities for synergies between the Portfolio and regional programmes and strategies

The GAC was primarily an advisory body with no executive authority over project implementation.

The SLM-TPA project was managed by the UNDP PTA and the Global Project Coordinator both of whom worked in close collaboration with the UNDP RTAs in the various regions. The Global Project Coordinator was based at the Global Coordination Unit (GCU), which was located in Pretoria, South Africa. The Global Project Coordinator's role was primarily to promote the development of 'knowledge products' and promote experience-sharing and global synergies across MSPs. This role was particularly important at the time the MSPs were being developed as experiences from one country could be availed to other countries with similar circumstances. The GCU also played the role of facilitating the involvement of regional centres of excellence in project development at national level.

A Project Execution Committee, comprising UNOPS as the Project Execution Agency and UNDP-GEF, was set up with the following mandate:

- Review and report on progress and developments under major subcontracts, specifically, (1) review of progress of activities and current financial position/situation under subcontracts (2) identify any bottlenecks or potential problems and propose recommendations for resolving these. The committee was to convene on an urgent ad hoc basis should major alterations to a subcontract workplan be requested by the subcontracted regional/international organization, particularly if the proposal has significant financial implications;
- Assess status of day-to-day operations and project execution effectiveness, specifically, the functioning of the Global Coordination Unit, communications among GCU, UNOPS, UNDP/GEF and subcontracted regional/international organizations;
- Conduct yearly evaluation of performance/delivery of the Project Coordinator and Operations Assistant (using the UNOPS Performance Review and further to consult with the Global Advisory Committee);
- Evaluate UNOPS execution of the regional/global component, including review of financial and administrative performance, reporting delivery rates, timely reporting, and where necessary specifically request audits and evaluations;

- Conduct joint supervision missions to monitor progress as and when requested by UNDP; and
- Make recommendations to Global Advisory Committee if relevant (e.g., if there are any potential deviations from annual workplan or strategic direction of the Project).

Secretarial services for this committee were also provided by the GCU.

The finding of the Terminal Evaluation was that there were different levels of success with these management arrangements. As noted in the project Mid Term Evaluation report, the GCA met only twice during the life of the project. Given its advisory role, the committee was not engaged at the project coal face resulting in it having limited effectiveness in project implementation. Overall the GCA has had little influence in two areas where it was uniquely positioned to assist the project, namely in establishing a global profile for the SLM-TPA project in SLM, and facilitating cooperative linkages with UNCCD and related SLM structures. This could have been promoted more effectively had the GCA been allocated more than just an advisory function in the project especially given the fact that the project design did not provide for the establishment of a formal project steering committee.

The GCU was involved in the day to day operations of the project but was only operational for the first two years of the project life span during which time all the 46 MSPs in participating countries were mobilised and made operational. Procedures for monitoring project implementation and tools for the promotion of mainstreaming of SLM into the planning systems of participating countries were also developed over this period. However two years was too short a time for the GCU to have developed knowledge products and promote experience sharing across the regions as was detailed in its mandate.

Although the functions of the GCU were passed on to the UNDP PTA and RTAs in the various regions when it was closed, these stakeholders already had their own predetermined work schedules which meant that they could not fully assume the role(s) of the GCU in a substantive manner. The assignment of the role of the GCU on a fulltime basis to the RTA in the Bangkok Regional Office covered for this shortcoming, but at the time of the Terminal Evaluation the RTA was only working part time on the project and was frequently on duty travel to attend to his UN-REDD duties.

The lesson that was gleaned from this was that the design of similar projects in future should ensure that there is continued coordination of project activities at global level by a dedicated entity similar to the GCU through the project life span. This will facilitate the development of knowledge management products and sharing of experiences across the regions.

3.2 Project Implementation

3.2.1 Adaptive Management

The terminal evaluation did not identify any changes to project design and project outputs that were made during the implementation of the SLM-TPA project. The major change that occurred was with respect to the management arrangements of the project following the closure of the GCU. The project would have experienced a management and implementation hiatus had UNDP-GEF not stepped in to take over

management responsibility following the closure of the GCU. The RTA in Bangkok assumed most of the roles of the GCU.

The GCU was closed at a time when most MSPs were beginning to mobilise for implementation. Although the management of the SLM-TPA Project was transferred to the UNDP-GEF RTA in Bangkok, the transition was not seamless resulting in a slowing down in development and implementation of those MSPs. The mid-term review of 2007 made a number of recommendations which could have guided the implementation of the SLM-TPA Project had they been adopted. These included the extension of the GCU with funding from sources such as the co-financing from CIDA and the establishment of a special fund to support the engagement of the regional centres of excellence in the implementation of the MSPs. The evaluator did not have access to the management response to the MTR and therefore could not confirm that any of these recommendations were adopted and influenced the manner in which the project was implemented following the closure of the GCU. UNDP-GEF however continued monitoring project implementation and producing annual project progress and impact reports, which informed the decisions that were made regarding the direction the project was taking.

A major issue of concern following the closure of the GCU was the slow pace of implementation of most MSPs due to general lack of national interest and capacity. To address this issue, a management decision was made by UNDP-GEF in 2009 to implement a global operational closure deadline of June 2012 on all MSPs under the SLM-TPA Project in order to prevent severely troubled MSPs from continuing indefinitely, while assisting the others in completing their planned activities as swiftly as possible by that date through focusing on strategic outputs that could be delivered realistically within the remaining timeframe. As a result of this decision, more than two-thirds of the MSPs were able to deliver on their intended objectives and financial disbursements increased considerably.

3.2.2 Partnership arrangements

The design of the SLM-TPA project emphasised the use of partnerships in advancing the goals of SLM. According to the ProDoc, consultation and collaboration were to be promoted among various SLM implementing and executing agencies at global, regional and national level. At the global level, project implementation was to be effected through arrangements with UNDP, World Bank, UNEP, UNCCD Sec and GM. At regional and sub-regional level, project design recognised the potential role of the various development planning organisations such as NEPAD and also identified a number of Centres of Excellence for the provision of technical and programmatic backstopping to the implementing agency. The design also recognised the existence of on-going national level planning processes that included SLM as a theme. These included the formulation of PSRPs, the NCSA programmes, the SLM Country Pilot Partnerships and the climate change adaptation programmes being developed in the various regions.

The evaluation assessed the effectiveness of these partnerships in advancing the objectives of the SLM-TPA project and came up with the following overall findings:

There were generally good working relationships at the global level as evidenced by the participation by UNCCD Secretariat in all the project mobilisation workshops, the funding of regional workshops by the

Global Mechanism, the contributions to the development of guidelines for mainstreaming SLM by UNEP, and the co-funding of project capacity building activities by CIDA.

Regional partnerships in the Latin America and Caribbean, Asia and Pacific, and some parts of Africa were generally functional, with the Centres of Excellence making contributions to the design and implementation of MSPs. The Caribbean Centre for Environment and Health (CEHI) provided support for the implementation of up to six MSPs in the region. In the Pacific region, the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) provided support to member nations in the development and implementation of MSPs. In Francophone Africa, CILSS (Comité Permanent Inter-États de Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel) assisted member nations with the identification of their requirements for support through a needs assessment workshop. The same level of engagement was however not achieved in Anglophone Africa, where the institutions such as NEPAD that were identified as potential collaborating partners were not responsive to overtures made to them by the project. NEPAD did not attend the GAC meetings resulting in lack of representation of the African continent in this important project management entity. The evaluator is of the opinion that the opportunity for Africa to address issues relating to SLM through strategic continent-wide policy and programmatic interventions was lost due to this lack of participation in the SLM-TPA processes by NEPAD.

Partnerships at the national level have been developed around national programmes such as the World Bank supported Africa-wide SLM initiative (TerrAfrica); the UNDP funded National Capacity Self Assessment. Numerous additional opportunities for collaborative planning and implementation of SLM initiatives exist at national level especially when the linkages between SLM and biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation and food security are considered. The processes of mainstreaming SLM into national planning processes that have been initiated at national level across all three regions provide the venue for developing these linkages.

3.2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation: Design at Entry and Implementation

Project monitoring and evaluation under the SLM-TPA project was designed to be implemented at the portfolio, or global, level. In line with this the GCU was expected to develop a methodology for monitoring the impact of the SLM-TPA, which was to be outlined in a comprehensive project Logical Framework with both performance and impact indicators with their requisite means of verification. With this system in place, the Global Project Coordinator was to assume responsibility for day to day tracking and monitoring of project implementation. The Coordinator was also expected to provide annual and biannual progress reports to the Project Execution Committee (UNOPS and UNDP-GEF).

In addition to the monitoring and evaluation that was to be conducted by the Global Project Coordinator, UNDP-GEF was also expected to conduct periodic monitoring of progress through the convening of quarterly meetings with the Project Coordinator. Lessons learnt were to be distilled from these monitoring processes for dissemination to all participating countries. The monitoring and evaluation design also recognised the need for involving project managers of the individual MSPs in communities of practice recommended by UNDP-GEF as a way of promoting exchanges of experiences among the countries.

Project design also provided for the classical portfolio level evaluation which included requirements for periodic reporting. The GCU was expected to produce a Project Inception Report, to be followed by Project Annual Reviews, which UNDP-GEF would use to produce the APR/PIRs for submission to the GEF. The other monitoring and evaluation related reports that were planned for in the project design included quarterly progress reports and independent mid-term and final evaluation reports.

The Terminal Evaluation established that an adequate monitoring and evaluation framework had been established at the design stage of the SLM-TPA project. A Logical Framework with measurable indicators and means of verification was developed for use in guiding project implementation. The GCU developed monitoring and evaluation guidelines and toolkits for use at the portfolio and project level. The UNDP PTA and RTAs who took over the management of the SLM-TPA project also continued to produce implementation review reports, which formed part of the basis upon which the assessment of project results was based. The project's MTE, which was conducted in 2006/2007, and the Terminal Evaluation, upon which this report is based, are clear evidence of monitoring and evaluation having been effectively conducted as part of the implementation of the SLM-TPA project. Monitoring and evaluation at both design and implementation was assessed to have been **Satisfactory (S)**.

3.2.4 Feedback from Monitoring and evaluation activities used for adaptive management

As stated earlier in this report, the only aspects of adaptive management that was effected under the SLM-TPA project were with respect to the decisions by UNDP-GEF to transfer management responsibilities for the project to the RTA in Bangkok, Thailand, and the agreement on the operational closure of all MSPs by June 2012. The decision to transfer the project management responsibilities to UNDP-GEF facilitated the continuation of the project and the development of the national level MSPs that had not been finalised following the closure of the GCU. The decision to close all the MSPs was taken by UNDP to avoid continuing with indefinite implementation of MSPs that were showing slow progress. This decision promoted the expedited implementation of priority activities under each MSP which also resulted in increased financial disbursements at the project level.

3.2.5 Project Finance

According to the Project Document, the SLM-TPA project had a total budget of US\$ 59,950,000. Of this total US\$ 2,400,000 was GEF funding for the GCU, and US\$ 29,000,000 was GEF funding for the MSPs. The balance was to be sourced from co-financing (see Tables 4 and 5 below). The budget for the SLM-TPA project, which is the subject of this Evaluation, was US\$ 2,400,000 with co-financing of US\$ 385,000 provided by Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). As stated in the *Management Arrangements* section of this evaluation report, the GCU, which was supported by this budget, was operational for a period of three years and then disbanded due to a shortage of funds.

As at May 2013, a total of US\$ 2,368,840 of the total budget of US\$ 2,400,000 for the SLM-TPA Project had been disbursed (see Annex 4). This equated to a delivery rate of 95%.

Table 4: Portfolio Approach - Total Project Budget

Component	GEF Grant (US\$ million)	Co-finance (US\$ million)		Total (US\$ million)
		Government Co-finance	Other co-finance	
Individual MSPs (48) - indicative averages and planning figures only				
Capacity Building	0.470	0.040	0.370	0.880
Mainstreaming	0.050	0.020	0.050	0.120
Completion of NAP	0.000	0.030	0.030	0.060
Medium Term Investment Plan and its Resource Mobilization	0.020	0.010	0.050	0.080
<i>SUB-TOTAL MSP</i>	<i>0.540</i>	<i>0.100</i>	<i>0.500</i>	<i>1.140</i>
SUB-TOTAL 48 MSPs	25.920	5.000	25.000	55.920
Regional/global activities				
Preparation of 48 MSPs (consultants, workshops)	0.680	0.000	0.000	0.680
Technical assistance for capacity building (subcontracts with relevant centers of excellence, workshops)	1.000	0.000	0.350	1.350
Knowledge Management, networking, and electronic exchanges	0.500	0.000	0.150	0.650
Monitoring and evaluation for impacts and lessons learnt	0.200	0.000	0.150	0.350
Global Advisory Committee meetings	0.000	0.000	0.200	0.200
Global Coordination Unit	0.700	0.000	0.100	0.800
SUB-TOTAL Regional	3.080	0.000	0.950	4.030
GRAND TOTAL	29.000	5.000	25.950	59.950

Source: SLM-TPA Project Document

To obtain a more comprehensive picture of financial management under the project the evaluation also assessed financial management performance including the support to the implementation of the individual MSPs. The project reflects a delivery rate of 84% on all the 45 MSPs funded and 92% on all the co-financing. This high rate of financial disbursement is largely attributable to the adoption of the portfolio approach, which helped expedite project development and quicker transition to implementation than would have been the case with conventional GEF project management approaches.

Table 5: Co-financing – Planned and Realised

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP own financing (US\$ million)		Government (US\$ million)		Partner Agency (US\$ million)		Total (US\$ million)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants	0.5	0.5			0.38	0.38	0.88	0.88
Loans/Concessions								
• In-kind support	0.5	0.5	5.0	5.0			5.5	5.5
• Other					23.28	23.67	23.28	23.67
					0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72
					0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35
					0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
Totals	1.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	24.93	25.32	30.93	31.32

3.2.6 UNDP and Implementing Partner implementation / execution coordination, and operational issues

The ProDoc states:

“UNDP Country Offices in participating countries will have a major role in ensuring integration of the various capacity building streams (NCSA, NAPA, SNC, BD) and mainstreaming activities (MDG, PRSP, NSSD, NEAP), in collaboration with country offices of other relevant agencies, such as World Bank and FAO. Furthermore, certain Country Offices that have technical capacities may be called upon to provide services by the countries, and those that cover regional institutions will also have a liaison role to play. UNDP-GEF’s Regional Coordination Units will ensure oversight and supervision of the technical quality of the MSP designs, their implementation, and monitoring of impacts and lessons learnt at the regional level. UNDP Country offices may be requested by the countries and/or by UNOPS and the Global Coordination Unit to assist with some execution services at the national level, such as fund disbursement, local recruitment and procurement.”¹

The contribution of UNDP has been critical to project development and implementation. The limited observations from this Evaluation suggest that the agency has been active and dedicated in the development of guidelines and tools that have been useful in the development and implementation of the MSPs in the face of local capacity constraints. However, following the closure of the GCU some of the momentum that had been gained towards the realisation of the global portfolio objective of developing sub-regional programmatic synergies, advancing SLM through networking, exchange and development of joint knowledge products was lost. UNDP salvaged this by transferring the management responsibility for the SLM-TAP to the RTA in Bangkok who together with the RTAs in all the regions steered the project through performing the requisite monitoring functions and ensuring that the MSPs were implemented. The RTAs in Africa and Asia and Pacific in particular were effectively engaged in this process because SLM was considered to be an important issue for national development in these regions. UNDP performance as an Implementing Agency was adjudged to have been **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

3.3 Project Results

3.3.1 Overall results (attainment of objective)

The point of departure in the measurement of the overall project results achieved is the assessment of the Project Logframe as presented in the ProDoc. The Logframe should at a minimum provide an overview of the project goal, objective, expected outcomes, indicators for use in measuring progress towards objectives, baselines and targets. The baseline data and indicators both constitute critical information for assessing whether the project is making progress or needs to be realigned. Project level evaluations would include an in-depth assessment of the indicators used to measure achievement of results.

A comprehensive Logframe with both indicators and baseline data was developed for the SLM-TPA project at the design stage. This Evaluation of the project used this data as well as the annual PIRs to assess the achievement of results. Table 6 below summarises the results of the assessment of progress achieved through the implementation of the SLM-TPA project. In this connection it is important to mention that this assessment was conducted at the Outcome level where the effects of project outputs occur. These effects are expected to outlast the project.

¹ ProDoc, 2004, p. 22

The Evaluation also assessed the impacts that the project has or will have over the long term. Impacts are assessed through a review of “conventional drivers” which include project relevance, implementation efficiency, effectiveness and the potential for and likelihood of sustainability of project outcomes over the long term. In assessing these drivers, the evaluator had to conduct a review of the Terminal Evaluations of all the forty-six individual MSPs as this is where the impacts of the SLM-TPA activity will be realised.

The implementation of the MSPs has assisted participating LDCs and SIDS to promote various aspects of SLM, which have resulted in the realisation of both global and local benefits. The institutionalisation of SLM strategies into farming and environmental management systems in countries such as Angola, Fiji and Cambodia have yielded reduced land degradation which translates into direct benefits to local communities through increased productivity of their land resources and enhanced food security. The demonstration farms and land care groups established in Fiji and the engagement of farmer groups in most African countries in project activities clearly attest to the implications of SLM for food security.

The mainstreaming of SLM into agricultural and environmental management systems will ultimately result in sustainable and productive ecosystems. As lessons learned from the participating countries are disseminated to more countries the issue of land degradation in LDCs and SIDS, which prompted the development of the SLM-TPA project, will be addressed on a wider scale resulting in broader global environmental benefits.

The overall assessment of the Terminal Evaluation is that the SLM-TPA project has strengthened capacities for SLM at national level in all participating countries. SLM is now recognised as an important issue in most LDCs and SIDS and is receiving increased attention in national development planning with more countries demonstrating a trend towards increasing financial flows to support the process. The goal and objective of the project was expected to be realised through the achievement of four interrelated Outcomes.

Outcome 1: Cost-effective and timely delivery of GEF resources to target countries

This outcome was intended to assist LDC and SIDS countries with expeditious delivery of funding for the implementation of projects to advance the enhancement of capacity and institutionalisation of SLM into national planning processes. The target set at project design was to have 48 MSPs developed and approved within one year of project start, but this proved to be overly ambitious as the participating countries did not have the capacity to deliver as planned in such a short time frame. Further, even where there was capacity, some countries chose to develop the MSP after the development of the NAP, which delayed the process even further. As pointed out in the Mid-term Review, the gains in time achieved in developing MSPs through the SLM-TPA project were not significant as in the end it took three years to have the 46 MSPs developed and approved.

While the Evaluation could not confirm the estimate that there would be total savings of up to US\$15 million in project development costs through the use of the targeted portfolio approach, the project provided a framework for sharing of experiences with project development which facilitated the

mobilisation of UNDP Country Offices and Regional Centres of Excellence to support participating countries with the development of MSPs. On the basis of these results, Outcome 1 of the SLM-TPA Project was realised. Progress towards achieving this Outcome is rated **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

Outcome 2: Individual and institutional capacities for SLM will be enhanced at the national level

In order to assess the achievement of this outcome, the evaluator reviewed the available Terminal Evaluation reports on the individual MSPs funded under the Targeted Portfolio Approach; a total of 38 reports were reviewed (10 from Africa; 17 from Asia and the Pacific; and 11 from Latin America and the Caribbean), or 85% of all MSPs. Interviews were also conducted with RTAs in the Latin America and Caribbean, Africa, and Asia and Pacific regions to obtain their views on the extent to which SLM capacity had been enhanced in the countries that they are responsible for.

One of the problems that the SLM-TPA project was developed to address was the lack of individual and institutional capacity to address the effects of land degradation at the local level, which in most countries contributes to extensive soil loss and threatens food security especially among the poor. The initial actions taken by the SLM-TPA project to address this problem involved the raising of awareness about SLM among stakeholders at various levels in participating countries. The GCU produced briefing materials which were used to promote the concept of SLM at national workshops and international conferences. Following the dissolution of the GCU, UNDP-GEF supported eight sub-regional workshops for the promotion of SLM, which were attended by stakeholders from 43 participating countries.

At national level, awareness creation on SLM was followed by implementing agencies such as local NGOs and academic institutions providing targeted training of stakeholders at all levels including individual resource users, community groups, government and civil society extension services and decision makers. A number of countries across the regions as shown in the box also adopted the concept of SLM and integrated it into their educational curricula from primary school through to tertiary institutions such as colleges and universities. Institutional capacity enhancement was also advanced through the mainstreaming of SLM practices into the operations of farmer groups at local level as well as into the national development planning processes. Table 6 below presents an overview of the results of capacity building activities in a few select participating countries. Assessments of the awareness creation and capacity building activities supported the project are provided in the MSPs' TE reports.

Countries that Integrated SLM into Educational Curricula

Africa Region
Angola – Primary, Secondary and Tertiary levels
Liberia – Secondary school level
Sierra Leone – University

Asia and Pacific Region
Kiribati – Secondary school level
Solomon Islands – School curriculum at all levels

The Evaluation's conclusion on this Outcome is that extensive awareness raising and capacity building activities have been implemented at various levels in participating countries through the SLM-TPA project and the MSPs supported by that global project. More than 50% of the countries assessed had promoted the development of training modules for incorporation into their educational curricula at primary and secondary school as well as at tertiary levels. Individual and institutional capacities have therefore been built in LDCs and SIDS. Progress towards achieving this Outcome is rated **Satisfactory (S)**.

Table 6: Overview of SLM Training, Capacity Building and Mainstreaming Activities in Select Participating Countries

Country	Awareness Creation	Training Activities	Mainstreaming Activities
Africa			
Angola	Awareness of SLM developed among stakeholder groups including government extension workers, NGO officials and community groups with a special focus on women.	Up to 8,000 people trained in SLM related subjects like soil and water management, forest land management, grazing land management, agricultural land management and the implications of climate change.	The project contributed to the finalization of the NAP and its associated Medium Term Investment Plan.
Liberia	Different levels of stakeholders were involved in the project including those from the University of Liberia, Forestry Development Authority, EPA, and Development Superintendents.	Knowledge Management Networks have been established to facilitate the training of students, extension agents and farmers in SLM methods and principles. These will contribute to a cadre of people trained to replicate the project ideas in other countries.	Mainstreaming SLM into the development programs of the Government and the NGOs has been initiated.
Mauritius	Broad sensitization on SLM of senior government officials and private sector through workshops	Training of more than 180 personnel from various institutions including NGOs on SLM concepts.	Mainstreaming of SLM into national planning processes through the development of tools, including the introduction of a forestry information management system compatible with the broader LAVIMS at MOHL.
Asia & the Pacific			
Bangladesh	The project has created awareness for SLM among many stable holders involved in land management and land utilisation in general decision makers, professionals and general public through meetings, workshops, field trainings and national media presentations.	Local communities trained and are able to apply SLM practices to halt land and environmental degradation in several demonstrations sites	A Natural Resource Accounting project was developed to support SLM-based agriculture using economic instruments to influence input options.
Bhutan	The local community consultations which MoAF carried out is a well-grounded understanding of the range of land degradation problems and issues	Renewable Natural Resources (RNR) extension staffs in all 20 districts have been trained and are now able to plan, implement and monitor SLM activities in a participatory manner in their respective villages	Local government authorities and communities have now been enabled to integrate SLM into their district development plans and request funds from the centre (this is a spin-off result, as a result of the project support to skills building of extension agents to implement participatory resource management planning).
Fiji	Island by Island SLM Strategy developed Awareness creation implemented among community groups	Extension staff in government and civil society organisations trained in various aspects of SLM	Demonstration sites established in rural communities to showcase SLM practices Mainstreaming of SLM into the operations of LRPD
Latin America & the Caribbean			
Belize	The PMU carried out general outreach and public awareness activities, which facilitated	Capacity building initiatives and pilot projects were carried out with Government	The principles of SLM were also mainstreamed into various national policies and plans such as

Country	Awareness Creation	Training Activities	Mainstreaming Activities
	the reaching out to additional stakeholders.	functionaries, farmers and the private sector.	the Poverty Reduction Strategy.
Grenada	The public awareness campaign targeted the general public with Jingles on the radio and TV, a 10 part drama series, public service announcements and press releases.	Training manuals for specific target groups developed.	The project has also laid the groundwork for mainstreaming SLM into policy through reviews and recommended amendments to the National Poverty Reduction Strategy, the principle macro-economic policy in Grenada.
Jamaica	Four demonstration projects were implemented through this project each demonstrating a specific aspect of land management-mining (land rehabilitation), irrigation	Capacities to implement best practices in SLM were strengthened within different national level agencies involved in SLM.	SLM Policy developed and is to be integrated into National Land Policy.

Source: TE reports of respective MSPs

Outcome 3: Systemic capacity building and mainstreaming of SLM principles into development planning

Land degradation has been a persistent issue in most LDCs and SIDS because of the general lack of institutional and systemic capacity to incorporate and integrate sustainable land management strategies into national planning processes and policy responses to the phenomenon. Through the implementation of the SLM-TPA project, there is now an increasing trend towards the mainstreaming of SLM principles into the national planning processes in all participating countries. Table 6 above shows the extent to which this has occurred in select countries from the portfolio. This process has occurred to a greater extent in those countries where the individual MSPs have been assimilated into UNDP Country Office initiatives that support aspects of SLM.

As with the Outcomes above, details on what has occurred in each participating country with regards systemic capacity are included in the Terminal Evaluation reports on each MSP.

Activities such as training and capacity building and mainstreaming of new principles into national planning processes take a long time to yield results. As detailed in Table 6 above, which shows a sample of countries from each of the regions, participating countries in all the regions have started mainstreaming of SLM into their planning processes. There however is still a general lack of understanding or appreciation of the link between economic development and SLM at high levels in most governments, which will continue to affect the extent to which SLM principles are adopted and factored into national planning. These processes will therefore need to be continued beyond the current project for them to take root. The Evaluation's assessment is that capacity building for SLM has been effectively conducted at various levels of development planning in all regions. There is also a growing trend towards increased funding of SLM related activities, which bodes well for the future. This Outcome is therefore rated **Satisfactory (S)**.

Outcome 4: Enhanced technical support

In addition to limited individual and institutional capacity for SLM in LDCs and SIDS, there was also a general lack of guidelines and tools for use by stakeholders in adopting this practice. The GCU produced the following tools and guidelines for SLM mainstreaming:

- SLM Project awareness brochures and posters were printed and disseminated to countries and at CCD events
- *A Resource Kit - Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting for Sustainable Land Management in LDC & SIDS Countries*, January 2006 was produced, disseminated and training provided
- *Developing UNDP-GEF Expedited Medium Sized Projects on Sustainable Land Management with Inter-Linkages to UNCCD National Action Programmes*, April 2006; produced and disseminated
- *Environmental Economics Tool Kit – Analyzing the Economic Costs of Land Degradation and the Benefits of Sustainable Land Management*, Sept. 2006

Despite the fact that the GCU was only operational for the first three years of the project, these tools have been adopted and used to varying levels of success in participating countries. This has resulted in overall improvements in individual and institutional capacities for SLM as well as the integration of SLM into the policy frameworks and development planning processes in most participating countries. In addition, the GCU also produced guidelines on mainstreaming SLM in partnership with UNEP and UNDP-DDC

and preparation of Medium-Term Investment Plans in partnership with GM and IEPF. The matrix below shows the countries where these improvements have occurred.

Table 7: Spread of Expected Results across the Regions

Portfolio Project Results Areas	Countries where results have occurred		
	Africa	Asia and Pacific	Latin America and Caribbean
Increased Individual and Institutional Capacity	Angola, Liberia, Mauritius, Rwanda, ECOWAS	Fiji, Cambodia, Vanuatu	Haiti, Jamaica, Dominican Republic
Increased Policy and Institutional Coordination for SLM	Rwanda, Burundi, Seychelles, Mauritius	Bangladesh, Palau	Dominican Republic
Improved SLM policy environment	CAR, Liberia, Mauritius, Guinea, Sierra Leone	Palau, Bhutan	Grenada, Belize
Increased financing for SLM	Rwanda, Sierra Leone	Maldives, Samoa	Belize
Increased mainstreaming of SLM in national development planning	Burundi, Sierra Leone, CAR	Bhutan, Cambodia	Belize, Jamaica
Increased livelihood benefits through SLM integration	Angola, Rwanda	Cambodia, Fiji	Dominican Republic
Development of Integrated Financing Strategies for SLM	Burundi, CAR, Mauritius, Seychelles	Cambodia, Tonga	Haiti

Source: Synthesised from MSPs' TE reports

The overall impact of the activities under this outcome was reduced by the fact the GCU was disbanded before the MSPs went to implementation. Further the quality of management of the implementation of the LDC SIDS at national level has been dependent upon whether the MSPs objectives were coincident with those of the individual country programme. Additional challenges that could have affected the realisation of this Outcome were in relation to generally poor infrastructural development with respect to communication in participating countries. Overall the results under this component were adjudged to be **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

Overall Rating of the Project

The *LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development and Mainstreaming of SLM project* was successful in developing and getting approval for a total of 46 medium-sized projects within a period of three years. The implementation of these MSPs, supported by the SLM-TPA project, has resulted in increased awareness and capacity for mainstreaming of SLM principles into local and national planning processes in most of the countries where the project was implemented. Overall, the project helped advance the implementation of the UNCCD through the incorporation of SLM into national and district development plans. Without this project, most LDCs would not have had the levels of capacity to address SLM issues that they have today. The SLM-TPA project is therefore adjudged to have been **Satisfactory (S)** in attaining its Objective.

Annex 3 shows the details of the TE's assessment of the end of project results.

3.3.2 Country Ownership

As highlighted in the project description section of this report, LDCs and SIDS suffer resource constraints and limitations in technical capacity to address the issue of land degradation. In a lot of these countries

development planning was implemented in ways that were in conflict with sustainable resource management resulting in widespread environmental degradation and poverty among the rural poor. Despite land degradation having been designated as a focal area for GEF, most LDCs and SIDS could not develop proposals to access the available funding.

The SLM-TPA project started very effectively with the GCU developing mechanisms for advancing project development at the global level. The situation was however different at regional levels where the development of the MSPs was affected by the capacity limitations that characterised most LDCs and SIDS. UNDP-GEF ended up engaging consultants to assist participating countries with project development. The levels of understanding of the concept of SLM were also generally low especially at the level of policy makers, which resulted in low political commitment to the project. Country ownership of the SLM-TPA project was therefore limited in the early stages of MSP development but increased over the life of the SLM-TPA project through the awareness creation and training activities that were implemented by the GCU.

As indicated in the project annual and progress report for 2012, the percentage of national governments that demonstrated increased support for SLM grew from 45% to 85% of all the countries involved in the project. Improved national ownership of the SLM-TPA project was also evidenced by increased trends towards mainstreaming of SLM into national human resources development programmes as well as development planning processes, especially in the Africa and Asia and Pacific regions where land degradation is a major development issue. UNDP-GEF will need to find ways of continuing support to LDCs and SIDS in their efforts to address SLM issues and implementing the provisions of the UNCCD.

3.2.3 Mainstreaming

A central element of the goal of the SLM-TPA project was the building of institutional and systemic capacities for mainstreaming of SLM in the planning processes of participating countries. Tools such as SLM guidelines and monitoring and evaluation toolkits were developed for use in the participating countries as vehicles for mainstreaming SLM. As reported in the Project Progress and Impact Reports for 2012 there has been a steady increase in the mainstreaming of SLM in participating countries across all the regions. There is also increasing evidence that national governments are increasing funding for SLM mainstreaming activities, especially in countries in Africa and Asia and the Pacific regions, even though the majority of funding is still provided by donors. In addition, innovative sources of financing including PES and resource user fees to augment funding for SLM have been identified in Burundi, Micronesia, Palau and St. Kitts/Nevis. SLM has also been mainstreamed into non-traditional sectors such as financial management, health and transport. This development seems to be related to increased understanding of the concept and higher levels of capacity within implementing agencies in participating countries.

The increasing trend towards mainstreaming of SLM is also reflected in policy dialogues in the majority of participating countries and it is expected that the current processes towards the formulation of National Sustainable Development Strategies will foster increased mainstreaming of SLM resulting in further increases in financial allocations to these initiatives.

In addition to mainstreaming of SLM into national and local level planning processes, the SLM-TPA project has also promoted the mainstreaming of climate change, indigenous knowledge and gender into MSP activities supported at national level. This has been reported by the majority of MSPs in Africa and the Pacific regions where SLM is directly associated with food security. The principal focus in these regions has been on adaptation strategies to climate change. Given the close relationship of traditional food production systems and the land and the pivotal role that women play in the process in Africa, there is an increasing trend towards mainstreaming of indigenous knowledge systems into the activities that were supported under the SLM-TPA project.

UNDP-GEF funded projects are a key component of UNDP country, regional and global programmes. Lessons from these projects are usually collected for mainstreaming into national level programme development. While the SLM-TAP project has yielded lessons that are relevant to issues such as poverty alleviation which are important for UNDP programming, the Evaluation did not find specific examples of where these have been mainstreamed into national level programmes.

3.3.4 Relevance

As stated in the Project Document, the SLM-TPA project was a strategic fit with the objectives of the GEF Operational Program 15 and Strategic Priority 1, relating to Targeted Capacity Building for sustainable land management. The SLM-TPA project's outcomes were directly in line with two of the expected outcomes of OP 15, namely: (a) "Institutional and human resource capacity is strengthened to improve sustainable land management planning and implementation ..." and (b) "The policy, regulatory, and economic incentive framework is strengthened to facilitate wider adoption of sustainable land management practices across sectors ..."

The project has also laid the foundation for the institutionalization of SLM in the countries where MSPs have been implemented. This process has created an enabling environment for the implementation of SLM. The expected uptake of SLM and the implementation of integrated financing strategies, which are expected to be developed as financing mechanisms for the operationalization of SLM initiatives, are all expected to result in "improvement in the economic productivity of land under sustainable management, and the preservation or restoration of the structure and functional integrity of ecosystems".

Ten out of the thirty-eight countries reviewed had embarked upon the process of developing IFSs at the time of this Terminal Evaluation, which was evidence of how seriously the issue of SLM is now being taken at national level. With the institutionalisation of SLM in central government operations it is expected that funding levels for this work will increase.

The SLM-TPA project was adjudged to be **Relevant (R)**.

3.3.5 Effectiveness

The SLM-TPA project has resulted in increased individual and institutional capacity for SLM at various levels. SLM is now recognised as being central to development planning in most participating countries. Despite this development, it should be asked whether the project implementation would have been more

effective had the GCU continued to operate until the end. The assumption of management responsibility by the RTA in Bangkok does not seem to have adversely affected the monitoring of project implementation, but programmatic issues such as knowledge management, the creation of communities of practice and experience sharing have not received the same attention as they would have under the guidance of the GCU. The observation has been made in this Evaluation that a report documenting lessons learned has not been produced. The evaluation believes that this is due to the fact that the responsible RTA's time is split between this project and his other regional responsibilities.

The effectiveness of the project is therefore rated **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

3.3.6 Efficiency

A central concern to be addressed when assessing efficiency in project implementation is whether the project was delivered in a manner that meets both international and national norms for project management. These standards include among other things the balance between results achieved and expenditure incurred (value for money) and timeous delivery of outcomes and results.

As of May 2013, a total of US\$ 2,287,993 of the total budget of US\$ 2,400,000 for the SLM-TPA project had been disbursed. This equated to a delivery rate of 95%. In addition, 92% of the total co-financing had been disbursed.

With respect to the project implementation timeframe, the evaluation observed that the project was supposed to close in 2007 but was still under implementation, albeit as national level interventions, in 2012/2013. This constitutes a time over run of seven years! This evaluation has highlighted the fact that the GCU was efficient in mobilising the development of the individual country level MSPs within three years following its establishment. Following the GCU's disbandment, UNDP-GEF had to introduce a different project management system that depended on the UNDP-GEF RTAs who had other pressing duties of their own. Although the monitoring of project implementation has continued under the guidance of the RTA, important aspects which were intended under the project such as the creation of regional and national networks or communities of practice and documentation lessons learnt have not received the attention they might have received under the GCU.

The overall assessment of the evaluation is that despite the management shortcomings in the period following the closure of the GCU, the project was implemented efficiently. As part of the project close out processes, the evaluator recommends that UNDP-GEF addresses the issues of documenting lessons learnt the project as these will be useful for future portfolio level programming. This aspect of the project was therefore **Satisfactory (S)**.

3.3.7 Sustainability

Project sustainability is measured through four interrelated parameters namely: financial sustainability, socio-economic sustainability, institutional sustainability, and environmental sustainability.

The proposed development of Resource Mobilization Plans through donor coordination which was included in the project design as well as IFSs that were to accompany the National Action Programmes were meant to ensure financial sustainability in each participating country. The assessment of the project and its results discussed above indicates that there is increasing attention being paid to SLM at national government level in all participating countries which is evidenced by increasing allocations of budgetary resources to SLM related planning. At the local level, resource users are also beginning to invest in land management practices as a way of enhancing their food production systems. As SLM becomes integrated into local and national planning processes the expectation is that it will be handled as a mainstream planning issue with the associated resource allocation. However all participating countries will continue to require guidance on how to achieve their investment plans, along with good coordination with the NAP processes, and stronger collaboration and joint action planning with the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD and potential donors. This will ensure financial sustainability of the initiative.

As indicated in Table 6 the training and capacity building activities supported under the portfolio project have resulted in increased appreciation of SLM at individual, institutional and systemic levels in all participating countries. SLM is now also integrated into the operations in sectors that go beyond the traditional ones like agriculture, environment and land use. In Fiji and Cambodia for example, farmer level interventions promoting SLM have been promoted thereby ensuring the adoption of the concept at the local production level. These processes are expected to integrate SLM into the social and economic production systems in the participating countries, which will guarantee the social and economic sustainability of the portfolio approach project.

LDCs and SIDS have continued to experience land degradation because of weak institutional and policy frameworks that did not recognise SLM as an important planning consideration. Most institutions that had responsibility for land management lacked the necessary capacity to articulate this concept and therefore did not have appropriate governance structures for the sustainable management of land resources. The SLM-TPA project has promoted institutional capacity enhancement and the creation of the appropriate governance structures for the integration of SLM into national planning processes. The integration of the concepts into national planning strategies such as PSRPs and NSSDs will promote the adoption of the concept by most national and local institutions and in the process promote institutional sustainability of the initiative.

The adoption of SLM at both local and national level will promote effective land management and reduce environmental degradation. The sustainable management of land and other resources at these scales will in the end translate into regional and global environmental benefits.

Each of these aspects of sustainability is therefore expected to be likely given the structure of the project. Project sustainability is therefore adjudged to be **Likely (L)**.

3.3.8 Impacts

The measuring of development project impacts is fraught with many difficulties primary among which are the articulation of cause and effect relationships as well as the identification of when they begin, as these usually occur well after the project has been closed.

According to the 2012 Progress and Impact Report of the project, there is evidence of increasing financial flows to SLM related planning processes across all the regions in which the SLM-TPA project has been implemented, as shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Trends in Financial Flows for SLM

Increased financial flow to SLM	Africa	Asia	Caribbean	Pacific
1-5%	DRC, Guinea	Bangladeshi	Barbados, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, St. Kitts/Nevis	Nauru, Samoa,
6-15%	Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leon	Maldives	Belize, St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Fiji, Solomon Islands
16 -30%	Central African Republic, Comoros, Mauritius		Dominica, Guyana,	Micronesia, Palau, Tonga, Tuvalu
> 30%	Burundi, Seychelles		Granada	

Source: UNDP GEF: 2012 Progress and Impact Report

Although most of the resource flows are still sourced from outside sources, national sources are now reported to account for up to 40% of resources allocated to SLM in some countries.

A second focus area for measuring impact under the SLM-TPA project is in relation to individual and institutional capacity building initiatives, which are beginning to have an influence on policy development and reform in the participating countries. Nearly two-thirds of all the MSPs reported increased contributions to policy reform processes in participating countries in all three regions at the time of the Terminal Evaluation. The observation of the evaluation is that these are but very early steps towards project impacts, which still require nurturing. The project has however set a strong foundation for this to happen. Overall, the impact of the SLM-TPA project is rated as having been **Minimal**.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

The GCU that was established to coordinate the global SLM-TPA project and spearhead the development and operationalization of MSPs for all qualifying LDCs and SIDS proved to be an effective vehicle for the development and approval of the 46 MSPs. Further, the GCU produced training materials and SLM guidelines and toolkits that proved useful in the awareness creation activities that were implemented at the beginning of the project, thereby priming participating country institutions for the uptake of SLM approaches.

The SLM-TPA project was successful in expediting the development and implementation of MSPs for SLM in countries that would otherwise have not been able to access GEF funding due to individual and institutional capacity constraints. Multi-country capacity building approaches have therefore been useful in promoting the mainstreaming of SLM into national and local level development planning processes.

Despite their normal heavy workloads, UNDP-GEF team took on the additional responsibility of providing programmatic oversight over the SLM-TPA project when the GCU was abandoned. They have continued to provide adequate guidance and monitoring and evaluation support to the MSPs. In a number of cases, UNDP managed to fit the individual MSPs into their country programme frameworks; greater success in capacity building and mainstreaming of SLM was achieved in such situations as the SLM-TPA project was synchronised with already on-going national projects and country programmes and therefore did not constitute an additional administrative burden to Country Offices.

Capacity building for SLM has been enhanced through extensive awareness creation activities implemented through this initiative. In 35 of the 38 countries (examined under this TE) across the three regions, training programmes for SLM have been incorporated into the curricula of school and tertiary institutions.

Mainstreaming of SLM has also occurred at various levels including policy levels. More than two-thirds of governments in all the regions have demonstrated their commitment to SLM by amending land management and natural resources management policies to incorporate SLM principles, with some going further to promote the mainstreaming of SLM approaches and principles into their national development planning processes. This is an important development as it will ensure the long term sustainability of the results of the project as well as promote increased financial allocations for SLM related programmes.

The rate of financial disbursements in the MSPs under the SLM-TPA project was much faster than would have been the case had the MSPs been developed on a project by project basis. The use of a pre-agreed project approval template and the delegation of the approval process to GEF Secretariat by Council also assisted with this process. The enforcement of a close out date of June 2012 resulted in expedited project implementation and high delivery rates on all funded projects. This aspect of the project could have been even better had the regional institutions originally identified as Centres of Excellency been better engaged.

Progress with the development of SLM Financing Strategies has generally been limited with just over 30% of the participating countries having taken the first steps towards the attainment of this outcome. However, there is evidence that participating countries are beginning to allocate more of their internal resources to SLM related initiatives, which should result in increased flows of resources towards SLM.

The project failed to build strong global partnerships with the institutions that were proposed in the ProDoc. The Evaluation saw little evidence of linkages with mechanisms such as the Global Mechanism of UNCCD, World Bank/TerrAfrica and NEPAD especially in the period following the closure of the GCU. This issue constitutes a missed opportunity for the project to contribute to realisation of global sustainable development targets, such as the Millennium Development Goals, by participating countries.

4.2 Lessons Learnt

The development and implementation of the SLM-TPA project has yielded a number of lessons that will be useful for future programming of similar portfolio level initiatives. These are summarised below:

1. Projects targeting the introduction of new concepts need to be presented in ways that make them relevant to intended beneficiaries. It was only after SLM was linked to critical concerns such as poverty, hunger and food security that governments, NGO representatives and the community members started paying attention to the issue.

2. The management and consolidation of experiences from UNDP Country Offices, RTAs and 46 MSPs was a huge task. In the absence of the GCU, the SLM-TPA project's objective—of developing sub-regional programmatic synergies, advancing SLM through networking, information exchange and development of joint knowledge products—would have been lost had it not been for the fact that UNDP-GEF assumed global coordination of the initiative through the RTA based in Bangkok, Thailand. The assumption of this responsibility by UNDP-GEF was also at a cost, as UNDP had to allocate its own resources to fund this additional project management responsibility. In the end, the MSPs were managed as extensions of CO programmes and were affected by the usual “hands off” approach to management of such projects by COs. Future global or portfolio programmes will need to provide for dedicated effective long term programme management.

3. Projects targeting national level policy changes should be developed with appropriate levels of participation by the ultimate beneficiaries. The delays experienced with the development of the MSPs by the GCU were due to stakeholder perceptions that the SLM-TPA project was handed to national stakeholders as a *fait accompli* with little or no consultation. Top down approaches to project development are not sustainable as they usually do not reflect the needs of beneficiary institutions. Fortunately, in the case of the SLM-TPA project there was built in flexibility that allowed individual MSPs to focus on priority issues in each country.

4. The inefficiencies experienced with the development and roll out of the SLM-TPA project could have been avoided by adopting different approaches to the “let a thousand flowers bloom” approach to rolling out the MSPs. The project could have been implemented as a pilot on a regional basis or on a thematic basis with lessons learned disseminated to the other countries. The choice of countries for piloting could have been done on the basis of the results of national capacity audits to identify those countries with capacity to develop and manage the proposed national activities.

5. The SLM-TPA project provided opportunities for learning, knowledge generation and experience sharing among stakeholders. These undertakings require dedicated management capacity over the long term. This should have been provided for through ensuring that there were adequate resources to support the GCU for longer than the three years that it was in operation.

4.3. Recommendations for future actions

The following recommendations are proposed for use in the programming of similar activities by UNDP, GEF and any other stakeholder working with national governments in the field on capacity enhancement.

Recommendations for Immediate Action

Finding 1: The portfolio approach project has generated significant interest for SLM among participating countries as well as within the institutions charged with the responsibility to implement related projects and programmes in these countries. This interest has resulted in an increasing number of countries adopting plans aimed at mainstreaming of SLM into local and national level planning processes.

Recommendation 1: *UNDP-GEF should ensure that the momentum that has been generated by the SLM-TPA project is not lost by introducing a mechanism that will ensure that there is continued engagement among stakeholders to share experiences in promoting capacity building and the mainstreaming of SLM principles into national development planning processes. The recommended mechanism could take the form of a community of practice to popularise SLM related capacity building and mainstreaming at national level.*

Finding 2: The terminal evaluation has established that all the participating countries have had different experiences with respect to capacity building and SLM mainstreaming. These lessons need to be documented and packaged for global dissemination as knowledge products.

Recommendation 2: *UNDP-GEF should commission a study to synthesise the lessons learnt from the implementation of the SLM-TPA project for use in future programming. The terminal evaluation reports conducted on each MSP are a useful starting point for such an exercise.*

Recommendations for the medium to long term

Finding 3: Capacity development and mainstreaming are by their nature long drawn out processes as they usually involve the changing of people's attitudes and practices. The SLM-TPA project was originally designed to be implemented over a four year period from 2004 to 2008, but was still being implemented four years beyond this planned close out date.

Recommendation 3: *Future design of programmes such as the portfolio approach should provide for implementation timeframes that are long enough to allow for consolidation of lessons and experiences.*

Finding 4: The SLM-TPA project has created "economies of scale" through which globally significant environmental problems like land degradation can be addressed using a multi-country approach. This portfolio approach is more efficient and cost effective than the traditional country by country project approach that UNDP-GEF has used in the past to address similar issues. With this approach, more meaningful engagement and collaboration with regional and sub-regional entities such as NEPAD could be developed. Lessons could be learned from the International Waters portfolio, which has been using this approach so some time now.

Recommendation 4: *UNDP-GEF should continue refining the portfolio approach to addressing development issues that affect more than one country.*

Finding 5: The SLM-TPA project produced its most visible outputs when it was coordinated by the GCU. These included SLM awareness publications, MSP development guidelines and tool kits for project development and monitoring. This role was to have been continued through the engagement of regional

centres of excellence which were to have provided technical support services to national MSP development and implementation. Engagement with these centres of excellence was however uneven across the regions where the project was implemented with no clear focussed programmes developed together with these centres beyond the closure of the GCU. This detracted from the effectiveness of project implementation.

Recommendation 5: Future projects of a similar nature should identify, strengthen and empower regional “champions” to be tasked with advancing global project objectives. These champions should be supported to operate as vehicles or communities of practice for advancing the goals of these global projects.

Finding 6: The adoption and mainstreaming of SLM into national development planning processes by policy makers in participating countries was generally slow. This was ascribed to low levels of capacity at systemic levels. The evaluation also identified the failure by project implementation agencies to demonstrate the economic value of SLM to participating countries as an additional cause for the slow uptake of the practices. SLM was therefore viewed as an externality to mainstream development planning.

Recommendation 6: Future projects targeting SLM should demonstrate the economic value and contribution of SLM and other environmental management projects to national development in order to capture the attention of policy makers at the highest levels in government.

5.0 ANNEXES

Annex 1: Evaluation Terms of Reference



Terms of Reference for the Terminal Evaluation

LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management Project (PIMS: 3130)

Expected Duration: March - May 2013



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

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INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. These terms of reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for a Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management Project(PIMS: 3130).

Project TE: LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management Project (PIMS: 3130)
 Duration of Evaluation: February – April 2013
 Evaluation Team: International evaluator (IC)
 Place of Evaluation: home-based assignments

The essentials of the project to be evaluated are as follows:

Project Title:	LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management Project				
UNDAF Outcome/Indicator	MYFF Goal: Managing Energy and Environment for Sustainable Development				
Expected Outcome	3.4: Sustainable land management to combat desertification and land degradation				
Expected Output	Capacity development for policy and governance: Promotion and implementation of National Action Programmes to Combat Desertification				
GEF Project ID:	2441		At endorsement		At completion
			Amount (US\$)	Type	Amount (US\$)
UNDP Project ID:	3130	GEF financing:	2,400,000	GSU UNOPS Managed	
			29,000,000	MSPs UNDP COs	
Country:	Global	IA/EA own:	1,000,000	UNDP grant/in-kind (50/50)	
			726,500	UNCCD /GM (DIFS)	
Region:	Global (Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Pacific)	Government:	5,000,000	In-kind and cash	
Focal Area:	Land Degradation	Bilateral Other:	23,285,822	EU parallel through GM/ACP	
			387,678	Canada grant	
		Other	350,000	Regional Orgs. in-kind	
			200,000	Global Advisory Committee in-kind	
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):	OP 15 SP1 (GEF 3)	Total co-financing:	30,949,500		
Executing Agency:	UNOPS – GSU UNDP – MSPs	Total Project Cost:	62,349,500		
Other Partners involved:	UNCCD/GM	ProDoc Signature (date project began):			18 Nov 2004
		(Operational)	Proposed:		Actual:

	Closing Date:	17 Nov 2007	31 Dec 2012
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BACKGROUND

Countries that are party to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) have an obligation to prepare a National Action Programme (NAP) for the implementation of the provisions of the convention.

Nearly 200 countries representing many different climates and geographic and terrestrial conditions have signed or ratified this convention—evidence that the issues of land degradation transcend deserts and drylands, and are of importance globally to a wide spectrum of countries.

Due to capacity constraints and limited access to resources, Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Development States (SIDS) have been unable to adequately address critical barriers to realizing sustainable land management (SLM). In these countries, land degradation issues are often not systemically and strategically mainstreamed into national development policies and strategies, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDSs), and other national development frameworks for the achievement of the UNCCD’s Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As a result, government budgetary allocations into SLM areas have been weak, and policy recommendations relating to economic growth have often conflicted with the goal of SLM.

To address this issue, in September 2004 the GEF endorsed as part of GEF-3 the LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management. This approval aimed to help LDCs and SIDS that had not yet initiated elaboration of their NAPs combat land degradation and desertification. The LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach was developed in close consultation and cooperation with, and with support from, the UNCCD Secretariat.

The goal of the program is to promote SLM policies and practices, thereby generating multiple local and global benefits. Given the similar needs and constraints faced by many LDCs and SIDS, the project aims especially to develop the institutional and systemic capacities of the participating countries to mainstream SLM through a programmatic approach. An additional goal is to deliver a large number of relatively small projects to these countries, along with harmonized design and implementation support services, in a cost-effective manner.

At the conclusion of the projects under this program, each participating country will have begun a process of SLM capacity development and mainstreaming. Each country will have elaborated its NAP and produced an Integrated Financing Strategy as part of the NAP to mobilize and secure adequate resources for financing various SLM activities at the national and local levels. In addition, UNDP, through its country presence and ongoing assistance in the areas of governance, poverty alleviation, and capacity development, will ensure that the NAP elaboration process in each country is mainstreamed and integrated with the processes of reporting related to Millennium Development Goals, development of PRSPs, and preparation of NSDSs and National Environmental Action Plans. The objectives and strategy of this program also fall within the main priorities of most UNDP country programs.

The objective of the project is to strengthen domestic (national and local level) capacity development and mainstreaming into national development strategies and policies, focus on the needs of 48 LDCs and SIDS, while improving the quality of project design, implementation, outputs & impact; and ensuring broad-based political and participatory support for the process. The expected Outcomes of the project are:

Outcome One: Cost-effective and timely delivery of GEF resources to target countries

Outcome Two: Individual and institutional capacities for SLM will be enhanced.

Table 1 Project Structure and Participating Countries

Global Portfolio Project			
<p>Global Service Unit = providing harmonized design and implementation support services</p> <p>Outcome One: Cost-effective and timely delivery of GEF resources to target countries Outcome Two: Individual and institutional capacities for SLM will be enhanced.</p>			
Medium-sized Projects (independently managed by UNDP COs)			
Africa	Asia	Caribbean	Pacific
1. Angola 2. Burundi 3. Central African Republic 4. Equatorial Guinea 5. DRC 6. Guinea 7. Guinea Bissau 8. Liberia 9. Rwanda 10. Seychelles 11. Comoros 12. Mauritius 13. Sierra Leone	14. Bangladesh 15. Bhutan 16. Cambodia 17. Maldives 18. Timor Lester	19. Barbados 20. Belize 21. Dominica 22. Dominican Republic 23. Haiti 24. Jamaica 25. Guyana 26. Grenada 27. St. Kitts/Nevis 28. St. Lucia 29. St. Vincent and the Grenadines 30. Suriname 31. Trinidad and Tobago	32. Cook Islands 33. Fiji 34. Kiribati 35. Marshall Islands 36. Micronesia 37. Nauru 38. Niue 39. Palau 40. Papua New Guinea 41. Solomon Islands 42. Samoa 43. Tonga 44. Tuvalu 45. Vanuatu
46. Afghanistan cancelled the project in 2010. 47. Sao Tome and Principe did not submit the MSP for final approval. 48. Antigua and Barbuda did not participate.			

Objective of the Evaluation and Scope

The TE will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the [UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects](#).

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

As shown in Table 1, the project has provided harmonized support services in designing and implementing the 47 Medium-Sized Projects (MSPs) globally. These MSPs have been managed independently by the respective UNDP Country Offices and are expected to have completed their individual TEs by the time this global TE process begins.

The TE process described here in the Terms of Reference will look mainly at the results of globally harmonized support services provided to the participating countries but also how the services provided to the MSPs contributed to substantive SLM outcomes at the national level by reviewing the individual TE reports prepared by the MSPs.

Evaluation Approach and Methodology

An overall approach and method for conducting project terminal evaluations of UNDP supported GEF-financed projects has developed over time. The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact**, as defined and explained in the *UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects*. A set of questions covering each of these criteria have been drafted and are included with this TOR ([Annex C](#)). The evaluator is expected to amend, complete and submit this matrix as part of an evaluation inception report, and shall include it as an annex to the final report.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, including relevant GEF operational focal points, UNDP Country Offices, project teams, and in particular the UNDP GEF Technical and Principle Advisers, GEF Secretariat, UNCCD, GM, UNOPS, other members of the Global Advisory Committee² and relevant regional organizations. This TE is expected to be done entirely through a desk review and interviews of key stakeholders.

The evaluator will review all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including Annual APR/PIRs, project budget revisions, progress reports, project files, individual TE reports by MSPs and any other materials that the evaluator considers useful for this evidence-based assessment. A list of documents that the project team will provide to the evaluator for review is included in [Annex B](#) of this Terms of Reference.

The evaluator is then expected to produce a portfolio-level TE report, showcasing the impacts delivered through the MPSs and the lessons based on the evaluation’s findings. The report will consider the progress made by LDCs and SIDS in meeting UNCCD objectives through this portfolio approach, the opportunities and challenges faced by LDCs and SIDS in SLM, regional trends, best practices, key recommendations for further promoting SLM mainstreaming and capacity development in LDCs and SIDS, etc.

Evaluation Criteria & Ratings

An assessment of project performance will be carried out, based against expectations set out in the Project Logical Framework/Results Framework (see [Annex A](#)), which provides performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The evaluation will at a minimum cover the criteria of: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact**. Ratings must be provided on the following performance criteria. The completed table must be included in the evaluation executive summary. The obligatory rating scales are included in [Annex D](#).

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and	<i>rating</i>	2. IA& EA Execution	<i>rating</i>

²The function of the Global Advisory Committee (GAC) discontinued when the Global Coordination Unit (GCU) was closed in 2008. The GAC was chaired by the GEFSEC, and met once a year. Members of the Committee included: UNDP (Convener), UNOPS, World Bank, UNEP, UNCCD Sec, GM, regional representation (such as CARICOM, SPREP and/or Pacific Island Forum Secretariat, SACEP, CILSS, SADC), and other donors contributing substantially to the co-financing of the project. IFAD, FAO, ASDB, IADB and AfDB were invited to participate as required. The Global Coordination Unit acted as Secretary.

Evaluation			
M&E design at entry		Quality of UNDP Implementation	
M&E Plan Implementation		Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	
Overall quality of M&E		Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	
3. Assessment of Outcomes	rating	4. Sustainability	rating
Relevance		Financial resources:	
Effectiveness		Socio-political:	
Efficiency		Institutional framework and governance:	
Overall Project Outcome Rating		Environmental :	
		Overall likelihood of sustainability:	

Project Financing and Co-financing

The Evaluation will assess the key financial aspects of the project, including the extent of co-financing planned and realized. Project cost and funding data will be required, including annual expenditures. Variances between planned and actual expenditures will need to be assessed and explained. Results from recent financial audits, as available, should be taken into consideration. The evaluator will receive assistance from the Portfolio Team (HQ and Regional), and, if necessary, from Country Offices and MSP Teams, to obtain financial data in order to complete the co-financing table below, which will be included in the terminal evaluation report.

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP own financing (mill. US\$)		Government (mill. US\$)		Partner Agency (mill. US\$)		Total (mill. US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Actual	Actual
Grants								
Loans/Concessions								
• In-kind support								
• Other								
Totals								

Mainstreaming

UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects are key components in UNDP country programming, as well as regional and global programmes. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project was successfully mainstreamed with other UNDP priorities, including poverty alleviation, improved governance, the prevention and recovery from natural disasters, and gender. In addition, the evaluation will be included in the global evaluation plan.

Impact

The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements.

Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons

The portfolio-level evaluation report must include a chapter providing a set of conclusions, recommendations and lessons.

Implementation Arrangements

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with the UNDP Headquarters (HQ) – and the Project Task Manager based in the Asia-Pacific Regional Centre. The UNDP HQ will contract the evaluator and ensure that evaluation related costs (i.e., telephone costs for conducting interviews) are reimbursed in a timely manner. The Task Manager, Regional Technical Advisors in Africa, Asia-Pacific and the Caribbean will be responsible for liaising with the evaluator to set up clear mechanisms to support and coordinate regional inputs to the portfolio-level TE.

Evaluation timeframe

The total duration of the evaluation will be 45 days according to the following plan:

Activity	Timing	Completion Date
Preparation	3 days	TBD
Review of individual MSP TE reports	15 days	TBD
Phone interviews with stakeholders (average 2 hours per MSP, plus the GAC and UNDP P/RTAs)	12 days	TBD
Draft Evaluation Report	10 days	TBD
Final Report	5 days	TBD

Evaluation Deliverables

The evaluator is expected to deliver the following:

Deliverable	Content	Timing	Responsibilities
Inception Report	Evaluators provide clarifications on timing and method	No later than one week after the start of the assignment	Evaluator submits to Task Manager and RTAs
Presentation	Initial Findings and (if necessary, a plan and study framework for field mission(s))	End of desk review	Evaluator submits to Task Manager and RTAs,
Draft Portfolio-level Final Report	Full report, (per annexed template) with annexes	Within 2 weeks of the completion of telephone interviews	Evaluator submits to Task Manager, P/RTAs and UNDP COs for review and comments
Final Report* and Final	Revised report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft	Sent to HQ for uploading to UNDP PIMS and ERC Sent for printing and circulation

*When submitting the final evaluation report, the evaluators are required also to provide an 'audit trail', detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final evaluation report.

Team Composition

The evaluation will be conducted by one international evaluator. The evaluator shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Experience with GEF financed projects is an advantage. The evaluator selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities.

The Evaluator must present the following qualifications:

- Minimum ten years of relevant professional experience
- Knowledge of UNDP and GEF, particularly in relation to UNCCD and its 10-year Strategy;
- Previous experience with results-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies, specifically undertaking complex programmatic reviews;
- Technical knowledge in the targeted focal area(s)
- Knowledge of GEF and UNDP reporting frameworks;
- Demonstrated experience in institutional analysis;
- Excellent English writing and communication skills;
- Demonstrated ability to assess complex situations in order to succinctly and clearly distil critical issues and draw forward looking conclusions; and,
- Excellent facilitation skills.

Evaluation Ethics

The evaluator will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct ([Annex E](#)) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG [Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations](#).

Payment Modalities and Specifications

%	Milestone
50%	Following submission and approval of the 1ST draft terminal evaluation report
50%	Following submission and approval UNDP P/RTAs of the final terminal evaluation report

Annex 2: Project logical Framework

Project Strategy	Objectively verifiable indicators			Sources of verification	Assumptions
	Indicator	Baseline	Target		
Overall goal: to assist LDC and SIDS in promoting SLM for global and local benefits					
Objective : to strengthen domestic (national and local level) capacity development and mainstreaming into national development strategies and policies, focus on the needs of 48 LDCs and SIDS, while improving the quality of project design, implementation, outputs & impact; and ensuring broad-based political and participatory support for the process					Political and security conditions allow target countries to work with UNDP to design and implement projects
Outcome 1: Cost-effective and timely delivery of GEF resources to target countries	- Savings in processing time of MSPs	At least 3 years for developing and submitting 48 MSPs	By end of year 1 48 MSPs approved	Annual Progress Report of SLM-TPA Project; mid-term and final evaluations	
Output 1.1: MSPs, under an expedited approval cycle, are under implementation	- Number of approved MSPs	none	20 MSPs approved within 6 months, and 29 approved within 12 months of start-up	Annual Progress Report of SLM-TPA Project	No change in GEF policy on expedited project approval cycle

Project Strategy	Objectively verifiable indicators			Sources of verification	Assumptions
	Indicator	Baseline	Target		
Outcome 2: Individual and institutional capacities for SLM will be enhanced at the national level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of an organizational entity with a clear strategy for promoting SLM - Entity has ability to effectively implement strategy - Good match between individuals' skills and job requirements - SLM and land degradation issues debated in national and local public fora such as media, parliament, etc. (should this last one be moved to Outcome 3?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 0 or 1 - 0 or 1 - 0 or 1 - 0 or 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3: by the end of SLM-TPA project - 2: by the end of the SLM-TPA project* - 2: by the end of the project* - 3: by the end of the project 	<p>Final evaluation.</p> <p>These indicators will be tracked using a scorecard approach for each country, for example the first indicator could be tracked as follows:</p> <p>0 = no entity 1 = entity has outdated strategies for SLM 2 = entity has irregular mechanism for updating strategy 3 = entity has relevant, participatory, updated strategy</p>	
Output 2.1: Training workshops, exchange visits held	- Number of workshops and visits	none	At least 25 workshops and at least 25 visits held on average per year	Annual Progress Report of SLM-TPA Project; workshop reports	
Output 2.2: Awareness raising activities organized around relevant regional, national, sub-national environmental events	- Number of events	Some GM supported events at national level	At least 12-15 such events organized per year	Annual Progress Report of SLM-TPA Project	

* Capacity development is a gradual, incremental process. The SLM-TPA project will jump-start this process. The full ability to effectively implement an SLM strategy and good match between skills and job requirements are therefore expected to be acquired after project completion, as countries make progress with implementing their medium-term investment plans.

Project Strategy	Objectively verifiable indicators			Sources of verification	Assumptions
	Indicator	Baseline	Target		
Output 2.3: Enhanced institutional structures and functions, in line with needs of SLM	- Studies and recommendations on institutional enhancements. - Institutional reform process in countries	Some ad hoc processes under way	At least 25 countries begin process of reform by end of project		Government commitment to implementing recommendations
Outcome 3: Systemic capacity building and mainstreaming of SLM principles into development planning	- SLM agenda is being effectively championed / driven forward at country level	0 or 1	3: by the end of the project	Final Evaluation The indicator could be monitored using a scorecard approach as follows: 0= There is no SLM agenda; 1= There are some persons or institutions actively pursuing an SLM agenda but they have little effect or influence; 2= There are a number of SLM champions that drive the agenda, but more is needed; 3= There are an adequate number of able "champions" and "leaders" effectively driving forward an SLM agenda	
Output 3.1: Timely completion of high-quality NAPs through co-financing	- Number of NAPs submitted to UNCCD	5 NAPs under preparation but not submitted	48 NAPs submitted by end-2005	UNCCD Secretariat reports	Eligible countries honour their commitment to UNCCD

Project Strategy	Objectively verifiable indicators			Sources of verification	Assumptions
	Indicator	Baseline	Target		
Output 3.2: SLM principles and NAP priorities integrated into national and sectoral strategies to achieve MDGs	- Number of national strategies that integrate SLM principles and NAP priorities Ministers of finance, planning and economic politically supportive of mainstreaming SLM	Very few countries have mainstreamed SLM in full	At least 48 national development strategies integrate SLM principles by end of SLM-TPA project At least 25 finance sector ministries or other higher bodies acknowledge SLM	Annual Report of SLM-TPA Project; MDG Report; I-PRSP and PRSP documents Parliamentary records, public speeches, news media accounts	Tools and mechanisms for mainstreaming have been adopted and adapted to the countries
Output 3.3: Countries will have developed a Medium-term Investment Plan	Number of medium-term investment plans	None	Fifty by end of project	Annual Progress Report of SLM-TPA Project; terminal reports/evaluations of individual MSPs	Global Mechanism commitment to resource mobilization in these countries is stable or increases.
	- Donor consultations, government and other commitments to funding specific projects under the Investment Plans	Some countries have identified a “chef de file”	All 48 countries have an investment plan, with donor & government commitments for at least 25% of projects under the plan; and donor interest expressed in remainder of plan.	Annual Progress Report of SLM-TPA Project; terminal reports/evaluations of individual MSPs	Donor commitment to mitigation of land degradation is stable or increasing Government Budgetary means are stable or improving

Project Strategy	Objectively verifiable indicators			Sources of verification	Assumptions
	Indicator	Baseline	Target		
Outcome 4: Enhanced technical support	Technical queries and process-related issues are responded to/ resolved in a timely and cost-effective manner, and quality of preparation and implementation is enhanced through knowledge management	Project-by-project technical support total \$15,000,000 (see Table 3)	By end of project, technical support needs are met at a total cost of US\$ 1,500,000	Survey of project teams; Final evaluation	Overall Executing Agency delivers satisfactorily Global Advisory Council for SLM-TPA Project meets regularly, provides strategic guidance and resolves coordination-related issues in a timely manner
Output 1: Tools, guidelines and manuals for capacity development and mainstreaming on selected topics in SLM	- Match between expressed needs and guidance documents - capacity of sub-regional organizations enhanced	A brief Handbook being prepared under the UNEP/GEF project	- All eligible country requests are met through guidance documents - At least 10 different tools, manuals	Annual Progress Report of SLM-TPA Project	
	- Number of OP15-SP1 projects in non-LDCs/ SIDS that request technical support	none	- At least 10 countries outside the project's target group request support	Annual Progress Report of SLM-TPA Project	
Output 2: Global and regional knowledge networks and communities of practice	- Number of participants in networks	Ongoing relevant networks, such as LADA, TPNs, and other project related networks	- At least 300 practitioners	Network Facilitators' reports	Target countries have IT support, capability and infrastructure to participate in communities of practice

Project Strategy	Objectively verifiable indicators			Sources of verification	Assumptions
	Indicator	Baseline	Target		
	- Number of queries that are satisfactorily responded to	Weak networking	- 100% by end of project		
	- Number of regional meetings	none	- At least 3 regional meetings by end of project		
	- Compilation of lessons learnt; Technical publications	FAO has prepared various documents on land management	- Report on lessons learnt within 6 months of project completion		
Output 3: Effective monitoring and evaluation system	- Projects are on target vis-à-vis work plans - Periodic reporting to Council, CRIC/ CoP, relevant regional fora	none	- All projects are within 1-2 months of timeline	Annual Progress Report of SLM-TPA Project	
Output 4: Project Coordination Unit	- Establishment & operation of Unit	none	- Unit is operational within 1 month of start-up of the SLM-TPA Project	Annual Progress Report of SLM-TPA Project	

Annex 3: Project Results Assessment

Project Strategy	Objectively Verifiable Indicators			Evaluation Findings			
	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Status at Midterm	Status at Terminal Evaluation	Evaluator's Comments	Rating
Outcome 1: Cost-effective and timely delivery of GEF resources to target countries	- Savings in processing time of MSPs	At least 3 years for developing and submitting 48 MSPs	By end of year 1 48 MSPs approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 46 PDFAs approved (one country - no request) (100%) • 6 MSPs approved as of 15 January 2007 (13%) • 8 MSP under review in approval process (17%) • 18 MSP being revised prior to submission (38%) • 15 MSP under preparation (32%) 	All 46 MSPs developed and approved. It took three years to develop and fund all 46 MSPs through the GCU. The development of these MSPs was expedited through the Portfolio Approach. This would not have been achieved if the process had been approached on a country by country basis.	The Portfolio Approach reduced administrative burdens of MSP development but the target of having all MSPs delivered in year 1 was missed. All MSPs developed in less time than would have been the case had a country by country approach been used.	MS
Output 1.1: MSPs, under an expedited approval cycle, are under implementation	- Number of approved MSPs	none	20 MSPs approved within 6 months, and 29 approved within 12 months of start-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -46 PDFAs approved (one country - no request) (100%) -6 MSPs approved as of 15 January 2007 (13%) -8 MSP under review in approval process (17%) -18 MSP being revised prior to submission (38%) -15 MSP under preparation (32%) 	All MSPs had been approved and under implementation. Terminal evaluations had been conducted on thirty-eight MSPs which were reviewed as part of this terminal evaluation.	The Portfolio Approach was effective in getting all the projects approved within a short space of time and also facilitated the addressing of common issues of concern to participating countries in a strategic manner.	S

Outcome 2: Individual and institutional capacities for SLM will be enhanced at the national level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of an organizational entity with a clear strategy for promoting SLM - Entity has ability to effectively implement strategy - Good match between individuals' skills and job requirements - SLM and land degradation issues debated in national and local public fora such as media, parliament, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 0 or 1³ - 0 or 1 - 0 or 1 - 0 or 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3: by the end of SLM-TPA project - 2: by the end of the SLM-TPA project* - 2: by the end of the project* - 3: by the end of the project 		Institutional and individual capacity for SLM increased in 74 % of the participating countries all countries that were reviewed as evidenced by increases in financial allocations for SLM and policy reviews to incorporate SLM across all regions.	Capacity development is a slow and incremental process. The review of participating country programmes showed increasing awareness of SLM at central and local government level resulting in the amendment of policies and laws to incorporate the practice.	S
Output 2.1: Training workshops, exchange visits held	- Number of workshops and visits	none	At least 25 workshops and at least 25 visits held on average per year	8 (sub) regional workshops held for participants from 43 countries 4 side-events at international conferences 8 consultants engaged to assist with MSP	No additional workshops were convened following the closure of the GCU.	GCU promoted the SLM-TPA project at international conferences in the initial phase of the project. This momentum was however not maintained beyond its closure. Although the target of	MS

³Per the ProDoc, this indicator was tracked using a scorecard approach:

0 = no entity

1 = entity has outdated strategies for SLM

2 = entity has irregular mechanism for updating strategy

3 = entity has relevant, participatory, updated strategy

* Capacity development is a gradual, incremental process. The SLM-TPA project will jump-start this process. The full ability to effectively implement an SLM strategy and good match between skills and job requirements are therefore expected to be acquired after project completion, as countries make progress with implementing their medium-term investment plans.

				development.		25 workshops was not met the momentum gained from the 8 that were attended has resulted in the development of all 46 MSPs at country level.	
Output 2.2: Awareness raising activities organized around relevant regional, national, sub-national environmental events	- Number of events	GM supported events at national level	At least 12-15 such events organized per year	MSP project planning workshops and other consultations held within countries, raised awareness on SLM, especially in SIDS. 8 (sub) regional workshops held for country participants and 4 side-events at international conferences.	The terminal evaluation found no evidence of further training beyond that provided by GCU. However RTA disseminated experiences and lessons learned across participating countries.	SLM awareness is widespread in all three regions with customization to specific regional priority areas evident in the focus of the MSPs that have been implemented... The evaluation's assessment is that the target for awareness creation has been met.	S
Output 2.3: Enhanced institutional structures and functions, in line with needs of SLM	- Studies and recommendations on institutional enhancements. - Institutional reform process in countries	Some ad hoc processes under way	At least 25 countries begin process of reform by end of project	Only one country has implementation experience to date: Mauritius.	SLM has been integrated into the operations of relevant government institutions in the thirty-eight countries that were assessed. Cross sectoral implementation mechanisms have also been developed in most countries in all three regions. (See Table 5)	While there has not been direct institutional reform to accommodate SLM, the efforts at mainstreaming into operational programmes have facilitated the adoption of the practice across most government operations. In Africa, SLM has been integrated into traditional sectors such as agricultural development while in Asia and Pacific and LAC integration has also occurred into non-traditional sectors such as transport. (See Table	S

						5)	
Outcome 3: Systemic capacity building and mainstreaming of SLM principles into development planning	- SLM agenda is being effectively championed / driven forward at country level	0 or 1 ⁴	3: by the end of the project		2: The involvement of relevant sectors in planning and implementation of MSPs in all participating countries has assisted with laying the foundation for mainstreaming of SLM principles into development planning in all regions	Where the MSPs have addressed issues of priority concern there has been widespread uptake and mainstreaming of SLM in the development planning processes. There is evidence of the failure by governments to fully integrate SLM into development planning as economic development is not balanced with environmental sustainability	S
Output 3.1: Timely completion of high-quality NAPs through co-financing	- Number of NAPs submitted to UNCCD	5 NAPs under preparation but not submitted	48 NAPs submitted by end-2005	9 NAPS have been approved by UNCCD Secretariat to Dec. 2006	At least 29 countries (58%) of participating countries had elaborated NAPs with the remaining 42% endorsed at country level by 2012.	The target of 48 NAPS had not been met at the time of the TE but these were at various levels of development and approval. In some countries the process has been affected by the fact that GEF funds could not be used for developing or finalizing the NAPs.	MS
Output 3.2: SLM principles and NAP priorities integrated into	- Number of national strategies that integrate SLM principles and	Very few countries have mainstreamed SLM in full	At least 48 national development strategies	Only one country has implementation experience to date: in Mauritius, SLM	The implementation of the MSPs has resulted in the mainstreaming of	SLM principles have broadly been adopted at both national and local levels. Their integration	HS

⁴Per the ProDoc, the indicator was monitored using a scorecard approach as follows:

0= There is no SLM agenda;

1= There are some persons or institutions actively pursuing an SLM agenda but they have little effect or influence;

2= There are a number of SLM champions that drive the agenda, but more is needed;

3= There are an adequate number of able "champions" and "leaders" effectively driving forward an SLM agenda

national and sectoral strategies to achieve MDGs	NAP priorities Ministers of finance, planning and economic politically supportive of mainstreaming SLM		integrate SLM principles by end of SLM-TPA project At least 25 finance sector ministries or other higher bodies acknowledge SLM	principles are being integrated in Forestry Policy and Action Plan, the NAP and a general review of policies is proposed. Output 3.2 has not been achieved yet is part of the numerous activities addressing policy review and NAP completion in the advanced MSP drafts. The achievement of the Millennium Goals is not always specified in the MSPs reviewed	SLM principles into development planning processes at various levels including district and national levels. The NGOs working in this sector have also been sensitized in most of the countries and are advancing the institutionalization of SLM through their operations. In a number of countries, SLM has been incorporated into school and university curricula which will promote its integration into national training programmes.	into national and sectoral strategies will guarantee the sustainability of this process.	
Output 3.3: Countries will have developed a Medium-term Investment Plan	Number of medium-term investment plans	None	Fifty by end of project	Only one country has implementation experience to date: no action has been taken in Mauritius on investment plans; most countries are seeking guidance on this output and how it relates to NAP financing.	31 % of participating countries had developed draft Mid-Term Investment Plans at the time of the TE	Financing for SLM still lags behind principally because most planners in the participating countries do not understand the need to balance economic development with environmental sustainability. However collaboration between the GM and UNDP has successfully delivered eight sub-regional workshops in total across all four regions	MS

						on “Designing Integrated Financial Strategies” attended by 90% of all MSPs from the four regions	
	-Donor consultations, government and other commitments to funding specific projects under the Investment Plans	Some countries have identified a “chef de file”	All 46 countries have an investment plan, with donor & government commitments for at least 25% of projects under the plan; and donor interest expressed in remainder of plan.		More than half of the countries assessed are still in the process of developing their Financing Strategies so government and donor commitments to SLM are not confirmed.	No investment plans had been finalised at the time of the terminal evaluation even though planning was at advanced stages in a number of countries. UNDP country offices will need to maintain the momentum gained so far in the post-project period.	U
Outcome 4: Enhanced technical support	Technical queries and process-related issues are responded to/ resolved in a timely and cost-effective manner, and quality of preparation and implementation is enhanced through knowledge management	Project-by-project technical support total \$15,000,000	By end of project, technical support needs are met at a total cost of US\$ 1,500,000	Not assessed at MTE	The terminal evaluation could not however confirm the projected lower transaction costs per MSP but noted the expedited project development processes as a result of the implementation of the portfolio approach project.	The portfolio approach created economies of scale which lowered both transaction costs and administrative burdens as evidenced by the development and approval of 46 MSPs within the first two years of project implementation.	S
Output 4.1: Tools, guidelines and manuals for capacity development and mainstreaming on selected	- Match between expressed needs and guidance documents - capacity of sub-regional organizations	A brief Handbook being prepared under the UNEP/GEF project	- All eligible country requests are met through guidance documents - At least 10	GSU responses to queries for technical support (30 reported by December 2006). Project awareness brochures and posters printed and	The tools developed by the GCU were under refinement through sharing of experiences in all participating countries	Tools and guidelines for SLM mainstreaming have gone a long way towards changing stakeholder understanding of the concept. In addition,	HS

topics in SLM	enhanced		different tools, manuals	<p>disseminated to countries and at CCD events.</p> <p><i>Resource Kit - Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting for Sustainable Land Management in LDC & SIDS Countries</i>, January 2006; produced, disseminated and training provided; effectiveness assessment/refinement of Kit yet to be undertaken.</p> <p><i>Developing UNDP-GEF Expedited Medium Sized Projects on Sustainable Land Management with Inter-Linkages to UNCCD National Action Programmes</i>, April 2006; produced and disseminated.</p> <p><i>Environmental Economics Tool Kit – Analyzing the Economic Costs of Land Degradation and the Benefits of Sustainable Land Management</i>, Sept. 2006; effectiveness assessment /refinement of Kit yet to be undertaken.</p> <p>Initial planning for a guide to mainstreaming</p>		<p>effective monitoring of project implementation and impact was facilitated by the use of the manuals and tools developed under the project.</p>	
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				<p>SLM (in partnership with UNEP and UNDP-DDC) and the preparation of Medium-Term Investment Plans (in partnership with GM and IEPF). GSU responses to queries for technical support (30 reported by December 2006). -Project awareness brochures and posters printed and disseminated to countries and at UNCCD events.[for more detail, please see the MTR]</p>			
Output 4.2: Global and regional knowledge networks and communities of practice	- Number of participants in networks	Ongoing relevant networks, such as LADA, TPNs, and other project related networks	- At least 300 practitioners	<p>-3 cooperative agreements with regional institutions completed: CEHI [see the MTR for more detail] -Project website established (www.gsu.co.za); no service in French and assessment of website effectiveness not undertaken. -Extensive publications disseminated (brochures, posters, manuals/kits).</p>	There is no evidence of existing SLM networks or communities of practice at either country or regional level. The evaluator could not identify any practitioners in the proposed networks so could not verify their existence.	The regional Centres of Excellence that were identified as the nuclei from which networks could be developed did not continue providing the intended services beyond the like of the GSU. Their potential for continued contribution to the process was also reduced as staff members who were there at the beginning left.	MS
	- Number of queries that are satisfactorily	Weak networking	- 100% by end of project	Not assessed at MTE	No basis for assessment. Not assessed	No basis for assessment	

	responded to - Number of regional meetings	none	- At least 3 regional meetings by end of project	No meetings of global and regional knowledge networks were identified	Not assessed	Not assessed	
	- Compilation of lessons learnt; Technical publications	FAO has prepared various documents on land management	- Report on lessons learnt within 6 months of project completion	Not assessed at MTE	No report or technical publications have been developed since project closure.	These publications would have been valuable in assessing the impact of the project but none have been produced.	U
Output 4.3: Effective monitoring and evaluation system	- Projects are on target vis-à-vis work plans - Periodic reporting to Council, CRIC/CoP, relevant regional fora	none	- All projects are within 1-2 months of timeline	Portfolio level monitoring guide produced: <i>Performance and Impact monitoring of the UNDP-GEF LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development and Mainstreaming of SLM</i> , Sept. 2005; to be tested in the MSP implementation phase. - <i>Monitoring and Evaluation Resource Kit</i> (Jan. 2006) provides support to MSP planning processes; to be tested in the MSP implementation phase. -Timely Quarterly and Annual Reports submitted.	The disbandment of the GSU before the implementation of MSPs affected quality of monitoring while the passing on of management responsibilities for the MSP to UNDP RTAs and Country Offices also yielded mixed results since these entities were usually busy with their own projects and programmes. Monitoring and Evaluation was more effective where the MSP was integrated into on-going UNDP Country programmes.	The guidelines and monitoring resource kits developed under the project have been used by the project to track achievements at both national and portfolio levels. Annual progress reports produced by the RTA and submitted to Council were adjudged to be comprehensive but the evaluation found no evidence of these being presented to CRIC or regional fora.	MS
Output 4.4: Project Coordination Unit	- Establishment & operation of Unit	none	- Unit is operational within 1 month of	GSU operational five months after project start (Nov 2004).	GSU disbanded after two years due to lack of funding. Programme	The GSU was very successful in the beginning but this service was lost when it	MS

			start-up of the SLM-TPA Project		management responsibilities were devolved to Regional Technical Advisors and Country Offices	was disbanded.	
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Annex 4 SLM-TPA Project: Annual Expenditure per Activity (2004-2013)

Activity	Annual Expenditures (US\$)										
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Activity 1	-	299,878.89	254,153.34	336,328.58	154,713.23	5,759.74	-1,125.64	2,680.51	-	-	
Activity 2	2,641.99	34,969.97	56,600.47	202,990.82	21,126.92	-	-	-	-	-	
Activity 3	-	136,356.55	390,521.07	415,785.35	-8,187.30	-	-	-	-	-	
Activity 4	7,773.96	2,542.14	43,413.53	-57,416.29	-5,364.55	-1,045.25	-	-	9,830.45	71,016.70	
Total	10,415.95	468,663.27	744,579.09	895,777.06	162,288.30	4,714.49	-1,125.64	2,680.51	9,830.45	71,016.70	2,368,840.18

Key

- Activity 1- Global Support Unit
- Activity 2-Knowledge Networks
- Activity 3-Capacity Development
- Activity 4-Monitoring and Evaluation

Annex 5: List of Documents to be reviewed by the Evaluators

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

Review of documentation including but not limited to:

- Project Document and Project Appraisal Document;
- Global/Project implementation reports (APR/PIR's);
- Individual MSP Terminal Evaluation reports;
- Project Logframe and budget;
- Quarterly progress reports and workplans of the various implementation task teams;
- Audit and financial reports;
- M & E Operational Guidelines, all monitoring reports prepared by the project;
- Co-financing and cooperation agreements (i.e., CIDA Contribution Agreement, Aid Memoire for Coordination Partnership between GM, UNDP and UNEP); and
- Financial and Administration guidelines.
- Inception Toolkit on the Inception Phase: GEF/UNDP-Supported Sustainable Land Management Medium-Sized Projects (MSP) in LDC and SIDS Countries;
- Various inception workshop generic presentations;
- Manual for Capacity Development for Sustainable Land Management;
- Guidelines for Mid-Term Investment Plans (MTIPS) for Sustainable Land Management;
- Guidelines for Developing Integrated Financing Strategies for Sustainable Land Management;
- Environmental Economics Tool Kit;
- Resource Kit: Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting for Sustainable Land Management;
- Sub-regional workshop reports on Designing Integrated Financing Strategies by GM;
- GEF Publication: Programmatic Approach, 2009; and
- LDC-SIDS Websites and COP/CRIC side-event materials.

Annex 6: Evaluation Questions

Evaluative Criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Relevance: How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF focal area, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national levels?				
	•	•	•	•
	•	•	•	•
Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?				
	•	•	•	•
	•	•	•	•
Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards?				
	•	•	•	•
	•	•	•	•
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?				
	•	•	•	•
	•	•	•	•
Impact: Are there indications that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress toward, reduced environmental stress and/or improved ecological status?				
	•	•	•	•
	•	•	•	•

Annex 7: Rating Scale

Ratings Scales		
<p><i>Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, I&E Execution</i></p> <p>6: Highly Satisfactory (HS): no shortcomings 5: Satisfactory (S): minor shortcomings 4: Moderately Satisfactory (MS) 3: Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): significant shortcomings 2: Unsatisfactory (U): major problems 1. Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe problems</p>	<p><i>Sustainability ratings:</i></p> <p>4. Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability 3. Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks 2. Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks 1. Unlikely (U): severe risks</p>	<p><i>Relevance ratings</i></p> <p>2. Relevant (R) 1.. Not relevant (NR)</p> <p><i>Impact Ratings:</i></p> <p>3. Significant (S) 2. Minimal (M) 1. Negligible (N)</p>
<p><i>Additional ratings where relevant:</i> Not Applicable (N/A) Unable to Assess (U/A)</p>		

Annex 8: List of Countries Eligible for funding from SLM-TPA Project

LDCs	SIDS
AFRICA (14)	
Angola	Comoros
Burundi	Mauritius
Central African Republic	Sao Tome and Principe
Democratic Republic of Congo	Seychelles
Equatorial Guinea	
Guinea	
Guinea Bissau	
Liberia	
Rwanda	
Sierra Leone	
ASIA (21)	
Afghanistan	Cook Islands
Bangladesh	Fiji
Bhutan	Kiribati
Cambodia	Maldives
Myanmar	Marshall Islands
Timor Leste	Micronesia
	Nauru
	Niue
	Palau
	PNG
	Samoa
	Solomon Islands
	Tonga
	Tuvalu
	Vanuatu
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARRIBEAN (13)⁵	
Haiti	Barbados
	Belize
	Dominica
	Dominican Republic
	Grenada
	Guyana
	(Haiti)
	Jamaica
	St. Kitts/Nevis
	St. Lucia
	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
	Suriname
	Trinidad and Tobago
Total: 48	

⁵ Antigua and Barbuda, although eligible under the stated criteria, could not benefit from the SLM-TPA project because of duplication with an existing GEF-financed project.

Annex 9: List of People Consulted

Hans Eschweiler	Former Global Service Unit Manager
Andrea Kutter	Former GEF Secretariat Land Degradation Focal Point
Maryam Niamir Fuller	Director GEF Coordination Unit, UNEP
Nik Sekhran	UNDP-GEF PTA and Head of UNDP Biodiversity Programme
Jessie Mee	UNDP-GEF RKS
Akihiro Kono	UNDP-GEF RTA
Christella Innack	UNDP-GEF Programme Associate
Sven Walter	UNCCD Secretariat
Kwame Awere-Gyekye	UNCCD Secretariat
Anna Tenberg	Former RTA Asia and Pacific Region

Annex 10: Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct Agreement

Evaluators:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study imitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form⁶

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

Name of Consultant: Oliver Chapeyama

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): Enviroplan Pty Ltd

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at *Gaborone* on *February 20, 2014*

Signature: 

⁶www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct

Annex 11: Evaluation Report Outline⁷

- i Opening page:
 - .
 - Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project
 - UNDP and GEF project ID#s.
 - Evaluation time frame and date of evaluation report
 - Region and countries included in the project
 - GEF Operational Program/Strategic Program
 - Implementing Partner and other project partners
 - Evaluation team members
 - Acknowledgements
- i Executive Summary
 - i.
 - Project Summary Table
 - .
 - Project Description (brief)
 - Evaluation Rating Table
 - Summary of conclusions, recommendations and lessons
- i Acronyms and Abbreviations
- i (See: UNDP Editorial Manual⁸)
- i
- .
 - 1 Introduction
 - .
 - Purpose of the evaluation
 - Scope & Methodology
 - Structure of the evaluation 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
 - . (In addition to a descriptive assessment, all criteria marked with (*) must be rated⁹)
 - 3 Project Design / Formulation
 - .
 - Analysis of LFA/Results Framework (Project logic /strategy; Indicators)
 - 1.
 - Assumptions and Risks
 - Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g., same focal area) incorporated into project design
 - Planned stakeholder participation
 - Replication approach
 - UNDP comparative advantage
 - Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
 - Management arrangements
 - 3 Project Implementation
 - .
 - Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
 - 2.
 - Partnership arrangements (with relevant stakeholders involved in the country/region)

⁷The Report length should not exceed 40 pages in total (not including annexes).

⁸ UNDP Style Manual, Office of Communications, Partnerships Bureau, updated November 2008

⁹ Using a six-point rating scale: 6: Highly Satisfactory, 5: Satisfactory, 4: Marginally Satisfactory, 3: Marginally Unsatisfactory, 2: Unsatisfactory and 1: Highly Unsatisfactory, see section 3.5, page 37 for ratings explanations.

- Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management
 - Project Finance:
 - Monitoring and evaluation: design at entry and implementation (*)
 - UNDP and Implementing Partner implementation / execution (*) coordination, and operational issues
- 3 Project Results**
- Overall results (attainment of objectives) (*)
- 3**
- Relevance(*)
 - Effectiveness & Efficiency (*)
 - Country ownership
 - Mainstreaming
 - Sustainability (*)
 - Impact
- 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
- 5 Annexes**
- ToR
 - Itinerary
 - List of persons interviewed
 - Summary of field visits
 - List of documents reviewed
 - Evaluation Question Matrix
 - Questionnaire used and summary of results
 - Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Annex 12: Evaluation Report Clearance Form

Evaluation Report Reviewed and Cleared by:

UNDP Country Office

Name: __[Not applicable; global]_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

UNDP-GEF RTA

Name: Jessie Mee, UNDP-GEF EBD Global Results & Knowledge Specialist

Signature:  Date: 3 March 2014