Mid-Term Review of the GEF Project Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management in St. Kitts and Nevis and IPMR SMA ID 43235

2020 – 2024



UNEP Latin America and the Caribbean
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Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management
in St. Kitts and Nevis
(IPMR SMA ID 43235)
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The reviewer would like to express their gratitude to all persons met and who contributed to this review, as listed in Annex II.

The review team would like to thank the project team and in particular Task Manager Dr. Christopher Cox for their contribution and collaboration throughout the review process. Sincere appreciation is also expressed to the project team who took time to provide comments to the draft report. The evaluator(s) would also like to thank the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis.

Special acknowledgement to the Project National Coordinator Ms. Nikkita Browne.

The review consultant(s) hopes that the findings, conclusions and recommendations will contribute to the successful finalisation of the current project, formulation of a next phase and to the continuous improvement of similar projects in other countries and regions.

BRIEF EXTERNAL CONSULTANT(S) BIOGRAPHY

Lochan & Co., established in 1987, is an upcoming consultancy firm headquartered in India with offices in Cambodia, Australia, Malawi, Mozambique, and the USA. With a proven track record of over 7,800 completed assignments for multilateral and bilateral development agencies across more than 100 countries, dedicated to advancing international development. The firm has conducted several midterm reviews, including for the Sustainable Management of Peatland Ecosystems in the Mekong countries in Cambodia and Lao PDR, and Towards Ending Drought Emergencies in Kenya, in collaboration with the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and Forest Landscape Restoration initiative in the Mayaga Region for UNDP Rwanda. Lochan & Co. has undertaken more than 10 comprehensive verifications and assessments for various projects funded by the World Bank, Green Climate Fund and other agencies in Africa, Asia, South-East Asia and Europe.

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ABOUT THE REVIEW

Joint Review: No

Report Language(s): English

Review Type: Mid-term Review

Brief Description: The mid-term review report for the "Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management" project focuses on assessing progress towards achieving the project's goals. These include the transformation of degraded forest landscapes into areas of sustainable agricultural production, compliance with international environmental commitments, and capacity building in St. Kitts and Nevis. Key actions to be assessed included revised land use regulations, implemented sustainable land management and CSA practices, and enhanced BD conservation. The review evaluates the 13 criteria of the project based on stakeholder participation, policy revisions, technical training, and the success of on-the-ground environmental interventions. It includes field research to triangulate findings from literature review to assess gaps in the project design and execution at the mid-term point. The conclusions and recommendations guide any necessary adjustments to ensure the project remains on track toward its objectives by the technical completion date.

Key words[1]: Climate resilience, Capacity building, Land degradation, Climate Smart Agriculture, Mangrove restoration

Secondary data collection period: 20 July 2024 – 20 September 2024

Field mission dates: 19 August 2024 – 23 August 2024



Picture captured during the field mission

[1] Please provide maximum five key words, which are not already in the project title.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AACARI	Agriculture Alliance of the Caribbean
ANR	Assisted Natural Regeneration
BD	Biodiversity
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CCM	Climate Change Mitigation
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DoE	Department of Environment
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EA	Executing Agency
ESG	Environmental, Social, and Governance
ESS	Environmental and Social Safeguards
EWS	Early Warning Systems
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographic Information System
GOV	Government of St Kitts and Nevis
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KBA	Key Biodiversity Area
KII	Key Informant Interview
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSDF	Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NPDP	National Physical Development Plan
NRM	Natural Resource Management
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PCU	Project Coordinating Unit
PIR	Project Implementation Report
ProDoc	Project Document
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PSIP	Public Sector and Investment Planning
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SKN	Saint Kitts and Nevis
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
ToC	Theory of Change
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION TABLE

Table 1. Project Summary Table

UNEP Project ID/SMA ID[2]	IPMR SMA ID 43235	**Grant ID[3]**	GEF ID 9785
UNEP Management	UNEP Latin America and the Caribbean	**Executing Agency**	IUCN - Regional Office for Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean
Sources of Funding (Co-finance)	*Country[4](ies):* St. Kitts & Nevis, EU	*Institution[5] Name/Type: Government of St. Kitts and Nevis/ Co-financing*	
Relevant SDG(s)	SDG 13 (climate action), SDG 15 (life on land), and SDG 2 (zero hunger)		
Sub-programme	Nature action subprogramme	**Programme Coordination Project**	-
UNEP approval date:	15 May 2020	**GEF approval date**	15 May 2019
GEF Operational Programme	-	**GEF Strategic Priority**	-
Project type	Full Sized Project (FSP)	**Focal Area(s)**	Biodiversity, Climate Change Mitigation, Land Degradation
***Expected* start date**	25 May 2020	**Actual start date**	25 May 2020
***Planned* completion date**	30 June 2025	**Actual operational completion date**	24 May 2025
***Planned* total project budget at approval**	USD 25,711,270	**Actual total expenditures reported as of 30.06.24**	USD 6,011,872
GEF grant allocation	USD 3,015,982	**GEF grant expenditures until 30.06.24**	USD 1,129,392
***Expected* Full-Size Project co-financing**	*Cash: USD 22,057,778* *In-kind: USD 637,510*	**Secured Full-Size Project co-financing**	*USD 4,882,480*
No. of formal project revisions (budget)	5	**Date of last approved project revision**	5 September 2024
No. of Steering Committee meetings	2	**Date of Last Steering Committee meeting**	18 March 2024
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation *(planned date)*	1 April 2024	**Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date)**	8 July 2024
Coverage - Country(ies)	St. Kitts and Nevis	**Coverage Region(s)**	Latin America & the Caribbean

[2] SMA refers to the ID provided by the Integrated Planning, Management and Reporting Solution (IPMR) system, which was introduced by UNEP in July 2023.
[3] For example, ID references from EC, IKI, UNDA, Adaptation Fund, GCF.
[4] Where applicable, list countries who have provided project funds and/or co-finance.
[5] Indicate where funding institutions are any/all the following: Foundation/NGO; Private Sector; UN Body; Multilateral Fund; Environment Fund.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Background

1. The project addresses critical environmental challenges in St. Kitts and Nevis stemming from the shift away from sugarcane farming and the impacts of climate change. With support from the GEF, it aims to restore degraded forest landscapes, promote sustainable agricultural practices, and enhance BD conservation. Key components include strengthening national policies, mainstreaming SLM practices, and building capacity through training and technical education. The project aims to combat land degradation, protect KBAs, and contribute to global goals like carbon sequestration and ecosystem conservation by involving national institutions, and CSOs, and building resilient communities.

This Review

2. The MTR utilized a comprehensive evaluation matrix to objectively assess project progress and accountability, along with tailored data collection tools (KIIs and FGDs) enabling a mixed methods approach that incorporated diverse stakeholder perspectives. The tools were refined to capture qualitative data comprehensively, supported by an extensive literature review and field visits for data triangulation. Progress in the results framework is visually represented using a traffic light system, allowing for quick identification of areas needing improvement. This report constitutes synthesized findings across thirteen evaluation criteria, highlighting successes, challenges, and actionable recommendations for project enhancement and timely completion. The review was conducted from 08 July 2024 to 08 December 2024 and covered activities carried out until 30 June 2024.

Key Findings

3. The overall assessment of the performance of the project is graded as Moderately Satisfactory. This rating is based on the findings of the review team following a review of the project documents and reports, field visits, and the key informant interviews conducted. Following multiple delays in initiating project implementation, the project has made progress in capacity building and stakeholder engagements but delays in restoration activities, legislative approvals, and the lack of accurate data on indicator species targeted pose challenges to the achievement of expected project outcomes.

Strategic Relevance

4. The project demonstrates strong alignment with UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (POW), and strategic priorities, directly contributing to climate change mitigation (CCM), BD conservation, and sustainable ecosystem management. It addresses global, regional, and national environmental goals, including key SDG targets (SDG 2, 13, and 15). Additionally, the project supports donor priorities and strengthens national policies such as the NPDP and the National Adaptation Strategy. Strategic Relevance is rated as Highly Satisfactory.

Project Design

5. The project design effectively addresses land degradation, BD loss, and climate change impacts while incorporating stakeholder engagement and national policy alignment. A robust Theory of Change (ToC) and measurable indicators underpin the project design, the project is proactively addressing any potential gaps in co-financing realization and is adaptively managing implementation in response to early baseline data deficiencies. Overall, the Project Design is rated as Satisfactory.

Effectiveness

6. Availability of Outputs is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory. Overall, the project has achieved approximately 60% of the expected output as per described below:

- Output 1.1.1: Updated/Revised NPDP (80%): Foundational activities, such as data collection and consultations, are completed, but NPDP publication remains pending, limiting its practical utility.
- Output 1.1.2: Revised Legal and Regulatory Framework (44%): While a legal consultant firm has been hired and consultations are underway, legislative approvals and regulation publication are incomplete.
- Output 1.1.3: Baseline Digital Land Use Maps (70%): Foundational mapping activities are largely achieved, but dissemination and training aspects require further attention.
- Output 1.2.1: Capacity Building for Institutions and Communities (100%): All planned capacity-building activities, including training sessions, have been successfully executed.
- Output 1.2.2: Post-Graduate Technical Training (80%): Scholarships have been awarded, and students are in training, but program closure and reporting are still pending.
- Output 1.3.1: Biodiversity Management Strategy (100%): Biodiversity baseline assessments and management strategies have been completed without delays.
- Output 2.1.1: Reforestation and ANR (22%): Training activities are completed, but field-level reforestation and nursery establishment remain significantly behind schedule.
- Output 2.1.2: Mangrove Ecosystem Rehabilitation (27%): Foundational assessments and training are complete, but on-ground reforestation and monitoring have yet to begin.
- Output 2.2.1: Restoration of Degraded Land (43%): Foundational activities, including training and procurement, are advancing, but restoration work on farms is progressing slowly.
- Output 2.3.1: Water Storage and Distribution (34%): Feasibility studies and equipment assessments are completed for Nevis and are underway for St. Kitts, but water tank installations and support for farmers are delayed.
- Output 3.1.1: Knowledge Management Plan (31%): Initial development of knowledge management tools is underway, but the systematization efforts are lagging with the integrated monitoring platform no longer being developed, rather an alternative approach is being discussed.
- Output 3.2.1: Awareness of Environmental Issues (40%): Moderate progress in creating awareness materials, but impact evaluation and dissemination are less than halfway completed.

7. Achievements of project outcomes is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory. The MTR observed a mix of success and challenges across the various components. The outcomes of the project are:
    - *Outcome 1.1. GSKN adopts tools and regulations to reduce pressure on natural resources from competing land uses on the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis*: Tools and regulations to reduce pressure on natural resources are advancing, with NPDP updated and adopted after the cabinet approval but legislative approvals are still pending that would support NPDP implementation.
    - *Outcome 1.2: Improved systemic capacity for promoting sustainable development in the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis through INRM*: Capacity-building initiatives have surpassed targets, including scholarships and training programs for sustainable land management (SLM) and CSA.

- *Outcome 1.3: Reduced pressure on three indicator species at two Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) sites*: Reduced pressure on indicator species at KBAs is hindered by data limitations and the availability of baseline data has limited the capacity to determine pressure reduction. The project team is continuing to discuss and review suitable species selection and assessment methodologies.
- *Outcome 2.1: Conservation of BD habitat and ecosystem services, and increased carbon sequestration in soil and woody vegetation, achieved through restoration and management of critical forest sites*: Progress in BD habitat conservation is delayed due to various challenges. Forest restoration faces accessibility issues from wild grass overgrowth and lack of plants to commence reforestation. The initial nursery failed due to harsh conditions and was re-established, but seedling growth remains low, limiting reforestation. Additionally, private land ownership restricts mangrove restoration, as planting cannot proceed without permission, which is yet to be granted.
- *Outcome 2.2: Local communities adopt tested SLM practices to reduce land degradation, increased soil carbon sequestration, and enabled sustainable agricultural production on degraded / abandoned lands*: Local adoption of SLM practices is progressing, with interventions covering 50.49 hectares. Although logistical and procurement delays initially hindered progress in providing farm inputs and transportation, these issues have been addressed, and project is advancing.
- *Outcome 2.3: Improved infrastructure conditions support climate resilience in agriculture*: Infrastructure to support climate-resilient agriculture is in early stages, with water tank installations and hydrological support delayed.
- *Outcome 3.1: Public servants from key institutions have increased planning and environmental management capacity*: Public servants' capacity for planning and environmental management has improved. Delays in formalizing partnerships and the decision to remove the development of the monitoring platform, have impacted the project progress.
- *Outcome 3.2: Increased understanding and awareness of relevant environmental issues among the general public, land use managers, the tourism industry, and international visitors to SKN*: Awareness of environmental issues has increased among key stakeholders, but public outreach and data collection on awareness impact remain limited.

8. Achievement of likelihood of impact is rated as Moderately Likely. The project's intended achievement of outcomes has not made substantial progress, although there is some progress but there is low likelihood for the intended project objectives and outcomes to be achieved during the project's remaining lifetime. Thus, MTR recommends a 2-year extension in the project timeline. Continuous efforts with robust monitoring are needed for realizing the project's long-term environmental and socio-economic impacts.
9. Adaptive Management is rated as Moderately Satisfactory. Although challenges remain, the project demonstrates adaptability by addressing challenges, such as setbacks in legal amendments, reforestation delays, and infrastructure procurement, through hiring new teams, engaging volunteers, and leveraging technology.

Financial Management

10. Adherence to UNEP's/Donor Financial Policies and Procedures is rated as Highly Satisfactory. The project adheres strongly to UNEP and donor financial policies with timely updates on UNEP's Anubis platform. Budget revisions, fund allocation, and transparency are effectively managed. Financial reporting aligns efficiently with UNEP and GEF protocols.
11. Completeness of Financial Information is rated as Satisfactory, with total disbursements and expenditures accurately tracked. Although the Anubis financial reporting system poses

a barrier in component-wise recording of expenditures; however, in IUCNs' internal system, expenditures have been recorded with annotations indicating the corresponding components. . The financial framework is robust, but adjustments are needed for improved execution and reporting clarity.

Efficiency

12. Efficiency is Moderately Satisfactory due to delays in inception, hiring key personnel, and restoration activities, achieving only 19% of SLM targets to date. While capacity-building efforts, stakeholder engagement, and localized activities, such as farmer training and knowledge product development, were efficiently executed, co-financing shortfalls and procurement delays (water tanks, farming equipment) hindered progress towards achieving broader project objectives. Adaptations, such as engaging community groups, mitigated some challenges, but the reactive nature of adjustments and limited restoration progress reduced overall efficiency of the project.

Monitoring and Reporting

13. Monitoring Design and Budgeting is rated as Highly Satisfactory. The project employs a Results Framework with SMART indicators to systematically track progress, incorporating gender-disaggregated data and engaging marginalized groups. Approximately 6.4% of the GEF budget is allocated for M&E, ensuring robust evaluations and stakeholder engagement.

14. Monitoring of Project Implementation is rated as Moderately Satisfactory. The monitoring system, guided by the Results Framework, ensured regular tracking of outputs and gender-sensitive reporting, with 40% female participation. GIS tools supported tracking project progress and accuracy in project activities including SLM activities, BD conservation, and CC activities by spatial prioritization of activities by identifying areas to restore based on specific criteria. However, gaps in baseline data for species nesting and CO_2 monitoring persist. Delays in exit surveys and data updates limit comprehensive assessments.

15. Project Reporting is rated as Satisfactory. The project adhered to UNEP and GEF reporting requirements, the PIR and HYPRs were submitted timely with regular updates on outcomes, risks, and co-financing through platforms like PIMS and Anubis. Reports highlight gender inclusion and stakeholder engagement but lack some documents as per means of verification for comprehensive progress tracking. Overall, reporting timelines were met except for the MTR delay.

Exit Strategy and Sustainability

16. Exit Strategy: The project established a foundation for sustainability through revised legal frameworks like the NPDP and capacity-building efforts. However, delays in implementation and the absence of a formal exit strategy pose risks to long-term viability.

17. Socio-Political Sustainability is rated Moderately Likely. The project aligns with national priorities and promotes inclusivity, with broad stakeholder engagement. However, delays in legislative approvals and limited private sector involvement hinder full integration into formal mechanisms.

18. Financial Sustainability is rated as Moderately Unlikely. The project's financial sustainability in the long term depends on government commitments and co-financing. Sustainability of the project outcomes would be impacted the with shortfalls limiting additional investments. Thus, stable financial inputs and a clear funding roadmap are needed for sustained outcomes.

19. Sustainability of Institutional Framework is rated as Moderately Likely. Progress in governance structures and training is evident, but delays in approvals, weak enforcement, and limited community buy-in challenge long-term integration and institutional sustainability.

Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

20. Project Inception is rated is Moderately Unsatisfactory: The project's inception faced delays due to COVID-19, and the absence of the project coordinator and a sustainable agriculture expert. Progress improved once key personnel were hired, but procurement processes further slowed implementation.
21. Quality of Project Management and Supervision is rated Moderately Satisfactory. UNEP and IUCN ensured effective project supervision through adaptive management, risk assessments, and regular progress reviews. While the IUCN's project coordination unit efficiently managed day-to-day operations, delays in decision-making processes related to government approvals hindered progress.
22. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation is rated as Satisfactory. The project engaged diverse stakeholders, including community groups, government agencies, and technical organizations, with strong gender inclusivity (40% women participation). Operational-level cooperation was robust, but higher-level coordination and co-financing contributions require strengthening.
23. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality is rated as Moderately Satisfactory. The project achieved significant gender inclusivity through initiatives like scholarships and women-led cooperatives. However, limited focus on broader human rights considerations and the absence of a Gender Action Plan hinders a comprehensive approach.
24. Environmental and Social Safeguard is rated as Satisfactory. The project complies with UNEP's ESS guidelines, addressing risks through inclusive approaches like mangrove and forest restoration. No major grievances were reported, but a formal safeguarding monitoring plan is recommended.
25. Country Ownership and Drivenness is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory. The project aligns with national priorities, with key agencies promoting sustainable practices, eco-tourism regulations, and protected areas. However, challenges like balancing development pressure and environmental preservation and limited human capacity with few personnel handling multiple competing management roles require attention.
26. Communication and Public Awareness is rated as Moderately Satisfactory. Public awareness campaigns effectively engaged farmers and younger generations in sustainable practices and conservation activities. However, dissemination to the broader public and tracking tourism sector exposure remain limited, requiring improved outreach efforts.

Conclusions

27. The project aligns well with UNEP's strategic priorities, achieving progress in capacity building, stakeholder engagement, and gender inclusivity. However, challenges in restoration targets, co-financing, and legislative approvals highlight the need for improved coordination, resource allocation, and a formal exit strategy to ensure long-term sustainability and impact. Adaptive management has been effective, but further efforts are required to address key gaps and enhance project outcomes.

Lessons Learned

28. Lesson 1: Long-term capacity building with a bottom-up approach is crucial to achieve impact.
29. Lesson 2: Project objectives must be aligned with national priorities, and critical stakeholders must be engaged early.
30. Lesson 3: Adequate consultation and feedback is critical in achieving project outputs and outcomes.
31. Lesson 4: Adaptive management and planning are critical to project success.

Recommendations

32. Recommendation 1: 2-year extension of technical deadline and no cost adjustment budgetary revisions based on the mid-term progress. Re-evaluate co-financing targets given the changing government and priorities.
33. Recommendation 2: Preparation of a technically sound exit strategy.
34. Recommendation 3: Revising indicator targets for both Components 1 and 2 outcomes – Outcome 1.3 to replace the Brown Pelican with the Wilson Plover, lowering the leatherback turtle nesting success target between 10%–15% under component 1; and for Component 2 adjusting forest restoration targets by prioritizing sustainable land management (SLM) areas.
35. Recommendation 4: Prioritize and streamline restoration activities by addressing procurement and logistical challenges, enhancing local capacity, and leveraging community engagement to meet project restoration targets more effectively.
36. Recommendation 5: Enhance stakeholder collaboration by leveraging and strengthening existing mechanisms, such as the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Technical Working Group (TWG) to accelerate dialogue between entities to finalise partnership agreements and/or MOUs.
37. Recommendation 6: Commission a carbon sequestration assessment to serve as a baseline for the project.
38. Recommendation 7: Commission a third-party assessment of capacity development to devise the impact of the project on the country excluding bias. The sample should ensure gender neutrality.

I. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Title	Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management.
Managing Division	UNEP Latin America and the Caribbean
Type/Location	National project in St. Kitts and Nevis in the Latin America and Caribbean region.
Estimated Project Duration	The estimated duration for the completion of the project is 60 months.

39. The project focuses on addressing critical environmental challenges resulting from shifts in land use, economic transformation, and climate-related impacts on ecosystems. St. Kitts and Nevis, once dominated by sugarcane production, has transitioned towards a service-oriented economy, with tourism as a major contributor to its GDP. However, the closure of the sugar industry in 2005 led to large areas of abandoned farmland, causing BD loss, land degradation, and an increased risk of invasive species.

40. The project seeks to restore degraded forest landscapes and promote sustainable agricultural practices that protect BD and enhance climate resilience. With support from the GEF, the initiative aims to strengthen national policies and frameworks, revise the NPDP, and build local capacities to manage land sustainably. Through the mainstreaming of BD conservation and CSA, the project will contribute to the protection of KBAs and carbon-rich ecosystems like mangroves and forests.

41. The project's objective is to transition degraded forest landscapes into areas supporting BD and sustainable agriculture. It comprises three main components: improving environmental planning and management, mainstreaming sustainable practices into key economic sectors, and building capacity for implementing sustainable land management.

42. By fostering collaboration between national institutions, civil society, and local communities, the project supports coordinated actions to address the drivers of land degradation. It also includes training programs for government staff and postgraduate technical training for at least six individuals, ensuring the sustainability of the project's outcomes. Additionally, the project is set to contribute to global environmental goals, such as carbon sequestration and the conservation of vital ecosystems, while strengthening local capacity for resilience against climate change.

Table 1: Components, Outcomes, and Outputs

Component 1 **Integrated and strengthened environmental planning and management on the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis to support island sustainability**	
Outcome 1.1: GSKN adopts tools and regulations to reduce pressure on natural resources from competing land uses on the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis	**Output 1.1.1:** Updated/ revised National Physical Development Plan (NPDP) and Building Codes
	Output 1.1.2: Revised legal and regulatory framework to support NPDP implementation
	Output 1.1.3: Baseline digital land use maps of areas of high priority environmental concern
Outcome 1.2: Improved systemic capacity for promoting sustainable development in the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis through INRM	**Output 1.2.1:** Relevant Institutions, CSO and Communities capacitated for coordinated and effective action on SLM, BD conservation and climate smart agriculture
	Output 1.2.2: National capacities improved through post-graduate technical training for at least 6 students engaged with the local authorities.

Outcome 1.3: Reduced pressure on three indicator species at two Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) sites	**Output 1.3.1:** BD Management Strategy based on biodiversity baseline assessments for 2 KBAs
Component 2 **Mainstreaming BD conservation, SLM and CCM into key development and resource management sectors**	
Outcome 2.1: Conservation of BD habitat and ecosystem services, and increased carbon sequestration in soil and woody vegetation, achieved through restoration and management of critical forest sites	**Output 2.1.1:** Decreased soil erosion, increased carbon sequestration and agroforestry production through reforestation and Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) (265 ha)
	Output 2.1.2: Increased ecosystem integrity through 20ha of mangrove ecosystems rehabilitated and Protected (Cayon to Keys).
Outcome 2.2: Local communities adopt tested SLM practices to reduce land degradation, increased soil carbon sequestration, and enabled sustainable agricultural production on degraded / abandoned lands	**Output 2.2.1:** Decreased soil erosion, increased carbon sequestration and agricultural crop production obtained through restored areas of degraded land (215 ha).
Outcome 2.3: Improved infrastructure conditions support climate resilience in agriculture	**Output 2.3.1:** Water storage tanks and accompanying distribution lines in place to support sustainable and climate-friendly agricultural production for at least 100 participating farmers.
Component 3 **Knowledge management and dissemination for SLM, BD and CC**	
Outcome 3.1: Public servants from key institutions have increased planning and environmental management capacity	**Output 3.1.1:** A plan for knowledge management and information exchange on environmental issues is developed and under implementation
Outcome 3.2: Increased understanding and awareness of relevant environmental issues among the general public, land use managers, the tourism industry and international visitors to SKN	**Outcome 3.2:** Increased awareness and understanding of issues related to SLM, BD Conservation and CSA

43. In line with the UNEP/GEF Evaluation Policy, a Mid Term Review (MTR) of the Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management Project was undertaken to assess performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency) and determine the likelihood of the project achieving its intended outcomes and supporting their sustainability. The review sought to analyze whether the project is on-track; to assess the achievements and challenges at the mid-point and recommend corrective actions where required; and to promote reflections, learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among key stakeholders of the project.

Implementation Structure

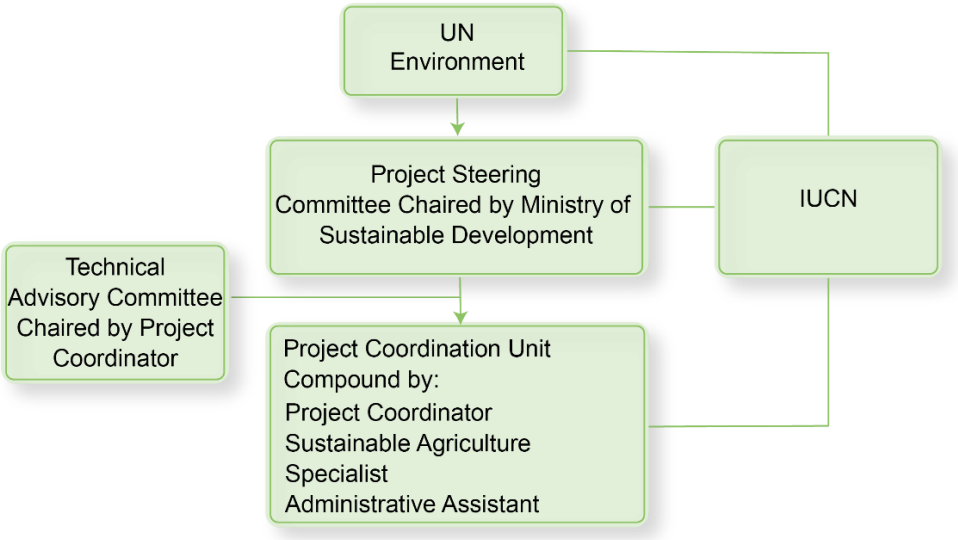


Figure 1: Implementation Structure

Project Financing

44. The project cost anticipated is US 25,711,270, encompassing GEF funding of USD 3,015,982 (12 % of total) and co-financing of USD 22,695,288. Table 3 shows an overview of the project budget allocations including the expenditure ratio. Anticipated co-financing from the Government comprised cash contributions totalling USD 22,057,778 and in-kind contributions totalling USD 637,510.

Table 3: Financial table as on 30 June 2024

GEF financing agreed amount:	$ 3,015,982
Co-financing agreed amount:	$ 22,695,288
Total financing agreed	$ 25,711,270
Funds received from GEF as of 30 June 2024	$ 1,544,329 (51% of GEF Budget)
Expenditure reported for GEF funds as of 30 June 2024	$ 1,129,392 (37% of GEF Budget)
Co-financing Expenditure as of 30 June 2024	$ 4,882,480 (22% of Co-Financing Budget)
Total expenditure as of 30 June 2024	$ 6,011,872 (23% of Total Budget)

II. REVIEW METHODS

45. The MTR consultant used an evaluation matrix to assess progress and ensure project accountability based on the UNEP Evaluation Office guidelines. This matrix provided an objective and measurable framework to evaluate how well the project was advancing towards its original goals and objectives. This matrix served as an objective framework for evaluating not only the project's advancements but also its compliance with ESS, ensuring alignment with sustainable development principles.

46. The evaluation matrix, along with data collection tools (Tool I: KII, and Tool II: FGD) presented in the MTR inception report guided the assessment of various project dimensions, including objectives, activities, outcomes, and the challenges encountered. To systematically collect data, the MTR employed a mixed-methods approach involving KIIs with implementing agencies and FGDs with farmer communities, thereby ensuring that diverse perspectives are incorporated. The project Results Framework underpinned data collection efforts, allowing for rigorous measurement against baseline levels and targets.

47. The tools were refined at later stages upon receiving feedback from various stakeholders. Using ProDoc as a reference, the MTR consultant designed questionnaires for each department in the GOV to capture comprehensive qualitative data. The review process included a thorough literature review of relevant documentation including the ProDoc, Project Progress Reports (half-yearly reports), Project Expenditures Reports, Rapid Mangrove Assessments, and GEF PIR (15.08.24), etc. supplemented by a field mission (19.08.24 – 23.08.24) to gather first-hand information and validate existing data through direct interaction with project staff and beneficiaries.

48. This triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data enhances the reliability and comprehensiveness of the evaluation findings. Indicators in the results framework (presented in Annex X, first portal entry) are assessed using a traffic light system to visually represent progress toward mid-term targets, facilitating immediate identification of areas needing acceleration or improvement. For indicators not on track, the MTR team has recommended targeted actions to enhance project implementation. The final MTR report has presented synthesized findings, and highlighted successes and challenges, for the thirteen evaluation criteria.

49. In alignment with the UNEP Evaluation Guidelines, the project was assessed with a minimum set of evaluation criteria grouped into the following eight (8) categories: Strategic Relevance, Quality of Project Design, Effectiveness, Financial Management, Efficiency, Monitoring and Reporting, Sustainability, Factors affecting performance and cross-cutting issues. As per UNEP guidance, the evaluation ratings are on a six-point scale (HS, S, MS, MU, U, HU).

50. The overall output achievement is being calculated by averaging the progress across all activity in the output. Although, for most of the outputs preparatory activities such as assessments, training, and site identification were largely completed, critical field implementation activities — including reforestation, mangrove restoration, and degraded land rehabilitation for certain outputs (2.1.1, 2.1.2, and 2.2.1) - were minimal or only partially achieved.

51. An alternative approach of weighted average based on activity completion was used for specific outputs (2.1.1, 2.1.2, and 2.2.1). Activities essential to achieving the core purpose of the output (restoration and rehabilitation activities) can be assigned higher weights (60%), whereas preparatory or supporting activities (e.g., training sessions, consultations) can be assigned lower weights (40%).

52. Some critical elements that must be considered in reading this report for the way in which they have affected the review process and findings:
    - The MTR was scheduled one year before the project's targeted completion due to delay in project inception and implementation of activities caused majorly by the Covid-19 pandemic and delays faced in hiring of the National Project Coordinator.
    - Field visits could not be conducted to sites for mangrove restoration and biodiversity conservation due to inaccessibility of forest area due to extensive wild grass growth and mangrove areas are primarily privately owned.
    - Some means of verification mentioned in the Results Framework like the species inventories, biodiversity monitoring reports, and carbon sequestration assessments, etc. were not undertaken due to a gap between project design and implementation. Outcome monitoring was assumed in the project, however specific monitoring activities were not specified in the project design. .
53. The review was bound to the Ethical Code of Conduct as per the UNEP/GEF Evaluation Policy. Data were collected with respect for ethics and human rights issues. All pictures were taken, and other information gathered after prior informed consent from people, all interviews and information were provided in confidence and anonymously and no information can be traced back to a direct source/individual. All information was collected according to the UN Standards of Conduct.

Table 4: Respondents

Project team	People involved (M/F)	People contacted (M/F)	Number of respondents (M/F)	% respondent
Implementing agency (UNEP)	2/2	2/2	2/2	**100**
Project partners (received funding)				
Executing Entity (IUCN-ORMACC)	2/1	2/1	2/1	**100**
Executing Entity (GOV)	5/6	5/6	5/3	**73**
Project partners (not received funding)				
NGOs/CSOs	0/3	0/3	0/3	**100**
Direct beneficiaries (Farmers)	36/15	36/15	18/7	**49**

III. THEORY OF CHANGE

Theory of Change at Review

54. The was designed to address critical environmental challenges, including land degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate change impacts. The TOC explains the process of change by outlining causal linkages in a project, i.e., its outputs, project outcomes, 'intermediate states', and long-lasting outcomes.

55. The assumptions and drivers that influence the project at project design still hold therefore the TOC at project design is still valid and remain unchanged. However, mid-term insights necessitate minor updates to refine strategies and enhance clarity in achieving outcomes.

56. Overall, the TOC, has provided a reasonable articulation of the nature of the problem at hand, the needed long-term solutions, structural barriers to the application of such solutions and solution pathways that the project should undertake. The planned objective and outcomes are logical responses to the barriers identified.

Assumptions and Risks:

57. The original assumptions remain largely valid but are updated to reflect findings from the MTR:

A. Original Assumptions Still Valid:

- Counterpart organizations share information.
- Stakeholder institutions show interest in collaborating with project objectives.
- GSKN prioritizes regulatory reform.
- The Department of Physical Planning embraces the project and its outputs.
- Stakeholders and decision-makers are receptive to incorporating project results.
- Institutional stakeholders embrace outputs and institutionalize BD, SLM, and CSA.
- Ministry of Agriculture is fully engaged.
- Local communities (LCs) and agricultural stakeholders recognize the benefits of BD, SLM, CSA, and CCM.

B. Refined and Additional Assumptions:

- Legislative approval processes for NPDP & regulatory frameworks will be completed.
- Continued government and donor support sustains co-financing needs.
- Stakeholders maintain active engagement in restoration and conservation activities.

C. Potential Risks:

- Inadequate co-financing impacting project implementation.
- Insufficient infrastructure such as limited road accessibility to reforestation sites and land use constraints to mangrove restoration sites.
- Inadequate baseline data for critical metrics such as carbon sequestration and biodiversity indicators, making it difficult to assess the project's impact.

Key Recommendations:

58. In case of co-financing shortfalls, alternative mechanisms like partnerships with private and international entities can be consolidated.

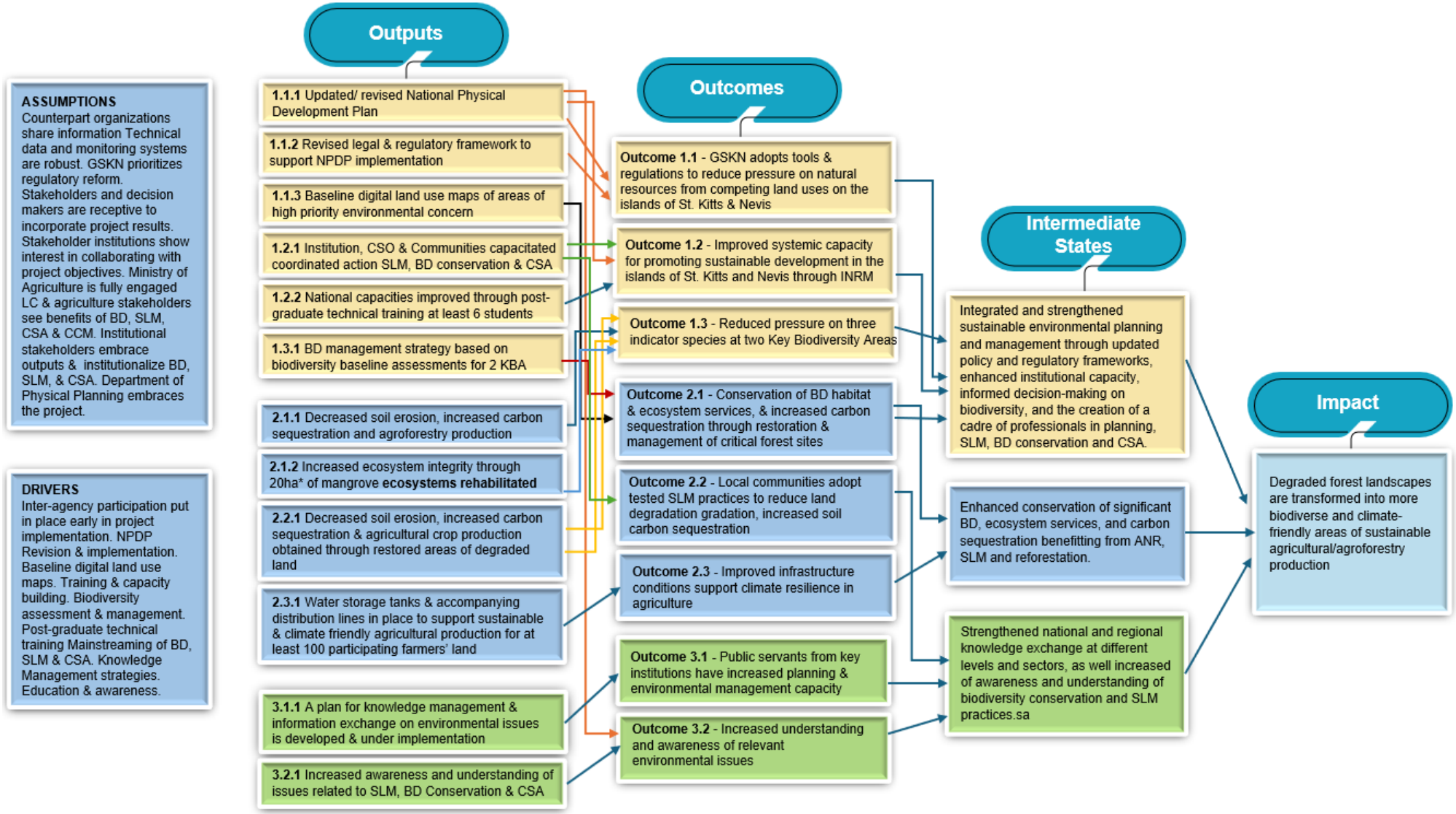
59. Building on the ROAM 'restoration readiness' assessment prioritize restoration sites (mangrove and forest) through community-based prioritization processes, ensuring local communities and stakeholders actively participate in identifying areas of highest socio-ecological, and livelihood value.

60. Commission baseline studies for carbon sequestration and biodiversity metrics using third-party experts to ensure objectivity and accuracy in monitoring of restoration activities. In line with ROAM, carbon sequestration is a key co-benefit of forest restoration alongside biodiversity and livelihood outcomes and be used as a quantifiable indicator to assess restoration activity effectiveness. The carbon assessment should be complemented with a

set of ROAM recommended biodiversity indicators, restoration goals, and available data (area under forest landscape restoration, species composition, habitat function, etc).

This **Theory of Change at Review** builds on the original ToC, with updated pathways reflecting mid-term findings while maintaining alignment with the project's objectives. It offers a clear roadmap to achieve sustained impacts through strategic interventions, stakeholder collaboration, and adaptive management.

ToC Diagram


Outputs
Outcomes
Intermediate States
Impact
ASSUMPTIONS
Counterpart organizations share information Technical data and monitoring systems are robust. GSKN prioritizes regulatory reform. Stakeholders and decision makers are receptive to incorporate project results. Stakeholder institutions show interest in collaborating with project objectives. Ministry of Agriculture is fully engaged LC & agriculture stakeholders see benefits of BD, SLM, CSA & CCM. Institutional stakeholders embrace outputs & institutionalize BD, SLM, & CSA. Department of Physical Planning embraces the project.
DRIVERS
Inter-agency participation put in place early in project implementation. NPDP Revision & implementation. Baseline digital land use maps. Training & capacity building. Biodiversity assessment & management. Post-graduate technical training Mainstreaming of BD, SLM & CSA. Knowledge Management strategies. Education & awareness.
1.1.1 Updated/ revised National Physical Development Plan
1.1.2 Revised legal & regulatory framework to support NPDP implementation
1.1.3 Baseline digital land use maps of areas of high priority environmental concern
1.2.1 Institution, CSO & Communities capacitated coordinated action SLM, BD conservation & CSA
1.2.2 National capacities improved through post-graduate technical training at least 6 students
1.3.1 BD management strategy based on biodiversity baseline assessments for 2 KBA
2.1.1 Decreased soil erosion, increased carbon sequestration and agroforestry production
2.1.2 Increased ecosystem integrity through 20ha* of mangrove ecosystems rehabilitated
2.2.1 Decreased soil erosion, increased carbon sequestration & agricultural crop production obtained through restored areas of degraded land
2.3.1 Water storage tanks & accompanying distribution lines in place to support sustainable & climate friendly agricultural production for at least 100 participating farmers' land
3.1.1 A plan for knowledge management & information exchange on environmental issues is developed & under implementation
3.2.1 Increased awareness and understanding of issues related to SLM, BD Conservation & CSA
Outcome 1.1 - GSKN adopts tools & regulations to reduce pressure on natural resources from competing land uses on the islands of St. Kitts & Nevis
Outcome 1.2 - Improved systemic capacity for promoting sustainable development in the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis through INRM
Outcome 1.3 - Reduced pressure on three indicator species at two Key Biodiversity Areas
Outcome 2.1 - Conservation of BD habitat & ecosystem services, & increased carbon sequestration through restoration & management of critical forest sites
Outcome 2.2 - Local communities adopt tested SLM practices to reduce land degradation gradation, increased soil carbon sequestration
Outcome 2.3 - Improved infrastructure conditions support climate resilience in agriculture
Outcome 3.1 - Public servants from key institutions have increased planning & environmental management capacity
Outcome 3.2 - Increased understanding and awareness of relevant environmental issues
Integrated and strengthened sustainable environmental planning and management through updated policy and regulatory frameworks, enhanced institutional capacity, informed decision-making on biodiversity, and the creation of a cadre of professionals in planning, SLM, BD conservation and CSA.
Enhanced conservation of significant BD, ecosystem services, and carbon sequestration benefitting from ANR, SLM and reforestation.
Strengthened national and regional knowledge exchange at different levels and sectors, as well increased of awareness and understanding of biodiversity conservation and SLM practices.sa
Degraded forest landscapes are transformed into more biodiverse and climate-friendly areas of sustainable agricultural/agroforestry production

IV. REVIEW FINDINGS

A. Strategic Relevance

Alignment to UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities

61. This project's focus on governance, capacity building, and ecological restoration strongly aligns with UNEP's strategic goals, offering measurable contributions to its MTS and POW objectives. The project aims to update the NPDP and improve the regulatory framework, fostering integrated NRM and land-use planning. These align with UNEP's goals of enhancing institutional capacities for sustainable governance and policy coherence. Restoration of degraded forest landscapes, SLM, and agroforestry practices address UNEP's emphasis on BD conservation and CCM. The focus on KBAs directly supports UNEP's POW outcomes in ecosystem-based approaches.

62. The project enhances government capacity through training programs and scholarships for technical expertise in GIS, SLM, and climate-smart agriculture. These efforts align with the BSP objectives of strengthening frameworks for policy coherence and compliance with international environmental agreements. The project encourages the exchange of knowledge and practices by building on and integrating experiences from other GEF and regional initiatives (e.g., IWEco and OECS SLM projects), which enhances the S-SC goal of fostering cooperation among developing nations.

Rating for Alignment to UNEP MTS and POW and Strategic Priorities: HS

Alignment to Donor/ Partner Strategic Priorities

63. The project strategically aligns with UNEP's priorities, donor goals, and national policies by directly supporting UNEP's objective of ecosystem management through sustainable ecosystem restoration. It addresses the triple planetary crisis of climate change, BD loss, and pollution, contributing to UNEP's mission of climate resilience, reducing harmful substances, improving resource efficiency, and conducting crisis-related environmental assessments.

64. The project's alignment with donor goals further reinforces UNEP's funding structure, which targets global environmental challenges such as climate stability and pollution reduction. National policy frameworks are supported by the project, which provides tools for ecosystem management and helps develop strategies that contribute to global environmental goals, including progress toward SDGs related to clean water and sustainable cities. This approach strengthens national resilience and supports global sustainability efforts, with a focus on BD conservation, CCM, and SLM.

Rating for Alignment to Donor/ Partner Strategic Priorities: HS

Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities

65. In supporting key SDGs, the project aligns with specific targets such as SDG 13 (Climate Action), addressing Target 13.1 by promoting climate-resilient agricultural practices to enhance adaptation to climate hazards. Under SDG 15 (Life on Land), it contributes to Target 15.3 by combating land degradation and restoring ecosystems. It also aligns with SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), targeting 2.4 by promoting sustainable agriculture to improve food security while maintaining ecosystems. These actions collectively enhance environmental sustainability, food security, and climate resilience. At the national level, the project is consistent with St. Kitts and Nevis' NPDP and other key policies, such as the National

Adaptation Strategy and the National BD Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), emphasizing the sustainable use of natural resources and enhancing ecosystem resilience.

Table 5: Project's contribution to global decisions/themes

CBD	UNCCD	UNFCCC
Implementation of GBF	Support for land degradation neutrality	Climate Change Mitigation
Mainstreaming biodiversity into other economic sectors		
Health, biodiversity and biosafety	Ecosystem Restoration	
Biodiversity and climate change	Sustainable Land Management	Climate Change Adaptation
Sustainable wildlife management	Sustainable Forest Management	
Protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures	Sustainable Food Systems	
Marine and coastal biodiversity	Early Warning, monitoring and assessment for drought	Nature-based Solutions
Invasive alien species	Impact Finance	
Implementation of Nagoya Protocol and ABS	National reporting, assessment and review	
Impact Finance		Private Sector Engagement
National reporting, assessment and review	Gender mainstreaming	
Gender mainstreaming	Stakeholder engagement	
Stakeholder engagement	Capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation	Technology Transfer
Capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation		
Communication	Communication	

66. Regionally, it aligns with the UN's MSDF in the Caribbean, supporting initiatives that strengthen NRM and climate resilience across communities. It also aligns with the OECS's St. George's Declaration on environmental sustainability by enhancing carbon sequestration through agroforestry, reforestation, and Assisted Natural Regeneration on degraded lands. It promotes climate-smart agriculture to reduce emissions and improve water efficiency supporting the declaration's call for reducing GHG emissions.

67. The project's ecosystem restoration efforts focus on rehabilitating mangroves, reducing soil erosion align strongly with the goals and targets of the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Specifically, the project contributes to:

- **Target 1**: Planning and managing areas to reduce biodiversity loss;
- **Target 2**: Restoring at least 30% of all degraded ecosystems;
- **Target 3**: Conserving 30% of terrestrial, inland water, coastal, and marine areas, including key biodiversity areas (KBAs);
- **Target 8**: Minimizing the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and enhancing ecosystem resilience;
- **Target 10**: Enhancing biodiversity and promoting sustainability in sectors such as aquaculture and forestry;

- **Target 20**: Strengthening capacity-building, technology transfer, and scientific and technical cooperation to support biodiversity actions; and
- **Target 21**: Ensuring that biodiversity-related knowledge is accessible and effectively used to guide action.

68. The project also mainstreams BD conservation into agriculture, tourism, and coastal development while raising public awareness about sustainable practices. These actions align with global environmental goals, reinforcing the project's relevance to international conventions.

69. At the national level, the project is consistent with St. Kitts and Nevis' NPDP and other key policies, such as the National Adaptation Strategy and the National BD Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), emphasising the sustainable use of natural resources and enhancing ecosystem resilience. The project's implementation strategies and delivered contributions are consistent with a) global, regional, sub-regional and / or national environmental priorities.

Rating for Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities: HS

Complementarity/Coherence with Existing Interventions

70. The project demonstrates strong complementarity and coherence with existing interventions, aligning well with national and regional goals. It supports the government's agenda to reduce the food import bill by 2025, focusing on SLM, BD conservation, and CSA. For instance, the UN Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (MSDCF) for 2022-2026 highlights St. Kitts and Nevis's commitment to economic resilience, human rights, DRR, and CCA. This framework serves as a strategic guide for collaboration with the UN, particularly in addressing the unique challenges faced by small island developing states.

71. Additionally, the Scholarship Initiative under the project aims to enhance local expertise by providing scholarships for civil servants to pursue Master's degrees in fields such as climate change, environmental management, and sustainable agriculture. This initiative is crucial for equipping professionals in St. Kitts and Nevis with the necessary skills to tackle pressing environmental challenges effectively. The project goals and activities align with the national policies and directives of Ministry/Department of Environment and Agriculture in both St Kitts and Nevis.

Rating for Complementarity/Coherence with Existing Interventions: HS

Rating for Strategic Relevance: HS

B. Quality & Revision of Project Design

72. *Operating context:* The design considers key challenges in SKN, including land degradation, BD loss, and the impacts of climate change. However, external risks such as severe droughts and hurricanes are underrepresented in mitigation plans. While the project acknowledges climate variability as a risk, the response mechanisms (e.g., alternative strategies for restoration delays) could be strengthened.

73. *Project Preparation:* The project preparation reflects a thorough approach to stakeholder engagement and alignment with national priorities, demonstrating a commitment to inclusive and strategic planning. While the co-financing estimates were ambitious, they presented challenges in securing full commitments, highlighting an area for potential refinement in future planning. The design showcases strong partnerships, though there is

an opportunity to further enhance adaptive planning to better address financial uncertainties and ensure sustained effectiveness.

74. *Strategic Relevance*: The project is fully aligned with global, regional, and national priorities. It also integrates UNEP's MTS and subprogram objectives. Clear articulation of relevance to UNEP's and the GOSKN's goals ensure a highly satisfactory rating.

75. *Intended Results and Causality*: The ToC is well-developed, linking activities, outputs, and outcomes effectively. The intervention logic is sound, though some assumptions (e.g., co-financing realisation) were optimistic. The Theory of Change (ToC) ensures project coherence; however, co-financial uncertainties pose potential risks to the sustainability of the project outcomes, underscoring the need to further strengthen partnerships.

76. *Logical Framework and Monitoring*: The logical framework incorporates measurable indicators for most outputs and outcomes, providing a strong foundation for tracking progress. However, the absence of realistic baselines for certain indicators, presents challenges in accurately assessing progress. While the framework remains functional, addressing these baseline and monitoring gaps would enhance its utility for adaptive management and ensure more effective tracking of project achievements.

77. *Governance and Supervision Arrangements*: The governance structure includes a PSC and TWG to ensure coordination and oversight. Regular stakeholder participation and strong EA involvement ensure smooth supervision.

78. *Partnerships*: Partnerships are diverse, with government agencies, local communities and associations (e.g. New River Farmers Association, Cades Bay Farmers Association, etc.), international organisations and regional institutions (e.g., CARDI and AACARI). Collaboration is robust, particularly with agricultural and conservation groups. Strong engagement across sectors, though the absence of private sector contributions reduces potential impact.

79. *Learning, Communication, and Outreach*: The project includes knowledge-sharing mechanisms (e.g., training guides, public awareness campaigns) and community engagement to amplify its reach. While effective, outreach could be more inclusive of ecotourism stakeholders to maximise sustainability.

80. *Financial Planning and Budgeting*: Budget allocations are well-distributed, with 6.4% dedicated to monitoring and evaluation. Strong financial planning, but reliance on co-financing may undermine sustainability of project impact. Although co-financing shortfall has no direct effect on the project's ability to complete the activities, the shortfall in co-finance will impact projects' capacity to complement (add value) and upscale sustainable land management activities in the longer term.

81. *Efficiency*: The project has made progress toward outputs despite challenges. However, delays in procurement of water tanks, and other equipment and restoration activities have slowed implementation.

82. *Risk Identification and Social Safeguards*: Risks, including ESS, are well-identified and managed. No major grievances have been reported. Proactive safeguards management ensure a satisfactory rating.

83. *Sustainability/Replication and Catalytic Effects*: The project integrates key elements for long-term sustainability, such as capacity-building and knowledge management, creating a strong foundation for lasting impact. While the potential for replication is evident, financial sustainability remains a critical area for attention, as reliance on co-financing could influence the scalability and broader catalytic effects of the project.

84. *Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps*: Financial assumptions and the lack of fully developed alternative strategies to mitigate external risks have presented challenges to project execution. Addressing these areas by enhancing financial resilience and

incorporating robust adaptive measures could further strengthen the project's design and implementation.

85. The quality of project design receives a Satisfactory rating. While the project is robustly aligned with strategic priorities and incorporates critical design features, gaps in adaptive planning for financial and external risks warrant certain improvements.

Rating for Quality & Revision of Design: S

C. Effectiveness

Availability of Outputs

86. Availability of Outputs is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory. Overall, the project has achieved approximately 60% of the expected output. As seen in Table 6 below, given the delay in project inception, quite a number of activities have either been completed or almost completed. Most notable are updated and revised NPDP, capacity development for coordinated and effective action on SLM, BD conservation and CSA, and drafting BD Management Strategy based on BD baseline assessments for 2 KBAs.

87. *Output 1.1.1. Updated / revised NPDP: 80% completed*. While the foundational activities have been effectively executed, the publication of the NPDP, a crucial step for the output's completion, remains unaddressed. This incomplete step impacts the overall utility of the NPDP in practice and the ability to integrate it into broader SLM initiatives.

88. *Output 1.1.2. Revised legal and regulatory framework to support NPDP implementation: 43.75% completed.* While hiring the legal consultant firm has been achieved, subsequent activities are lagging. The consultation process is halfway completed, and the legislative review process is in its early stages. However, no progress has been made on publishing the adopted regulations, which is critical for the output's overall success.

89. *Output 1.1.3. Baseline digital land use maps of areas of high priority environmental concern: 70% completed.* The average completion rate reflects that while foundational activities are largely achieved, dissemination and training aspects need more attention to fully realise the output.

90. *Output 1.2.1. Relevant Institutions, CSO and Communities capacitated for coordinated and effective action on SLM, BD conservation and climate smart agriculture: 100% completed*. The thorough completion of activities reflects a well-managed and executed strategy for this specific output.

91. *Output 1.2.2. National capacities improved through post-graduate technical training for at least 6 students engaged with the local authorities: 80% completed.* Key milestones, such as the selection and active training of scholarship recipients, have been successfully achieved. However, the program's closure and reporting need attention to finalise the initiative and assess its outcomes comprehensively.

92. *Output 1.3.1. BD Management Strategy based on biodiversity baseline assessments for 2 KBAs: 100% completed*. This indicates strong progress and efficient execution of planned activities, with no reported delays or unfinished tasks.

93. *Output 2.1.1. Decreased soil erosion, increased carbon sequestration and agroforestry production through reforestation and Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) (265 ha*): 22%*

completed. The most significant achievements are in training activities, which have reached full completion. However, critical implementation tasks, such as the establishment of nurseries, fieldwork, and monitoring, show limited progress. The low advancement on foundational tasks like developing the manual and reforestation in the field suggests potential delays in achieving the intended outcomes of decreased soil erosion, increased carbon sequestration, and enhanced agroforestry production.

94. *Output 2.1.2. Increased ecosystem integrity through 20ha of mangrove ecosystems rehabilitated and Protected (Cayon to key): 27% completed*. The average completion rate indicates that while foundational analyses, training, and assessments are complete, critical actions such as reforestation and monitoring have not begun. This suggests delays in translating planning into on-ground implementation.

95. *Output 2.2.1. Decreased soil erosion, increased carbon sequestration and agricultural crop production obtained through restored areas of degraded land (215 ha*): 43% completed*. The foundational steps are fully achieved, and tangible implementation activities like procurement and initial training are advancing.

96. *Output 2.3.1. Water storage tanks and accompanying distribution lines in place to support sustainable and climate- friendly agricultural production for at least 100 participating farmers: 34.16% completed*. Progress is relatively slow, with only preparatory activities (feasibility studies and assessments) making significant headway. Critical implementation steps such as water tank installation, procurement of systems, and hydrological support are either at an early stage or have not started. The lack of progress in these areas could hinder the goal of enhancing climate-friendly agricultural production if delays persist.

97. *Output 3.1.1. A plan for knowledge management and information exchange on environmental issues is developed and under implementation: 31.25% completed*. The completion rate indicates significant progress in development of knowledge management strategy and tools but a lag in establishing systematisation efforts are evident. Moreover, although the integrated monitoring platform is no longer being developed, other alternatives like upgrading the knowledge platform an existing platform developed under the GEF 5 National project are being considered. and.

98. *Output 3.2.1. Increased awareness and understanding of issues related to SLM, BD Conservation and CSA: 40% completed*. There has been moderate progress in the development and dissemination of awareness materials, but both tasks remain less than halfway completed. The campaign's effectiveness evaluation has not yet begun, indicating that the awareness program's impact cannot currently be assessed.

Table 6: Progress Implementation Towards Delivery of Outputs (as per PIR 2024)

Outputs	Activities	Implementation status as of 30 June 2024 (%)	Average % completed
Output 1.1.1 Updated / revised NPDP	Field Data Equipment & Gear for Dept of Physical Planning and Lands & Surveys Department	100	**80**
	GIS & Mapping Equipment	100	

	(plotter, printers, computers, software…also to be used for Output 1.1.3)		
	Physical Planning Consultant hired to develop NPDP	100	
	National Physical Planning Consultation Process targeting all sectors	100	
	Publication of NPDP	0	
Output 1.1.2 Revised legal and regulatory framework to support NPDP implementation	Hiring of Legal Consultant Firm with Multi-sectoral Specializations	100	**44**
	National Country Wide Legal Consultation Process	50	
	Legislative review and approval process	25	
	Publication of adopted regulations in Government Gazette	0	
Output 1.1.3 Baseline digital land use maps of areas of high priority environmental concern	Digital Assessment	100	**70**
	Training in GIS Tools and integrating existing platforms (Arc Map and ERDAS Imagine remote sensing)	50	
	Ground Truthing of baseline field data	100	
	Production of land use and other baseline maps	100	

	Baseline Map Publication & Dissemination	0	
Output 1.2.1 Relevant Institutions, CSO and Communities capacitated for coordinated and effective action on SLM, BD conservation and climate smart agriculture	Development of NPDP Training Implementation Manual	100	**100**
	Training to NDPD Implementation Partners	100	
Output 1.2.2 National capacities improved through post-graduate technical training for at least 6 students engaged with the local authorities.	Appointment of Scholarship Committee. of Scholarship Committee	100	**80**
	Advertising of Scholarships in national media	100	
	Selections and Award Notification to successful applicants	100	
	Scholarship awardees on post-graduate training	100	
	Closure of Scholarship Program and corresponding Closure Report	0	
Output 1.3.1 BD Management Strategy based on biodiversity baseline assessments for 2 KBAs	Training in Biodiversity Baseline Assessment Tool and Conservation Action Planning Tool (CAP)	100	**100**
	Biodiversity Baseline Assessments	100	
	Report Preparation & Publication including recommended management strategies and regulations for biodiversity	100	
Output 2.1.1	Development of ANR &	10	

Decreased soil erosion, increased carbon sequestration and agroforestry production through reforestation and Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) (265 ha*)	Reforestation Manual, inclusive of monitoring techniques and protocols		**22** **Critical Activities Identified (60% weight total):** • Conduct ANR & Reforestation Field Activities (1.6%) • Monitoring of ANR & Reforestation Performance (1.6%) **Supporting Activities (40% weight total):** • Manual development, training, nursery establishment. **Calculation:** • **Critical Activities' Average Progress** = (1.6% + 1.6%) ÷ 2 = 1.6% • **Supporting Activities' Average Progress** = (10% + 100% + 50%) ÷ 3 ≈ 53.3% • **Weighted Average Progress** = (1.6% × 0.6) + (53.3% × 0.4) = (0.96%) + (21.32%) = **22.28% ~ 22%**
	Conduct Training in ANR & Reforestation to targeted extension personnel and selected farmers and NGOs	100	
	Establishment of Agroforestry Nurseries including the sourcing of seedlings and procurement of all start-up materials	50	
	Conduct ANR & Reforestation in the field	1.6	
	Monitoring of ANR & Reforestation performance using methods delivered in training	1.6	
Output 2.1.2 Increased ecosystem integrity through 20ha of mangrove ecosystems rehabilitated and Protected (Cayon to key)	Conduct a Rapid Mangrove Ecosystem Assessment	100	**27** **Critical Activities Identified (60% weight total):** • Conduct Mangrove Reforestation Field Exercise (0%) • Monitoring of Mangrove Growth (0%) **Supporting Activities:** • Conduct Rapid Mangrove Ecosystem Assessment (100%) • Develop Mangrove Conservation Action Plan (0%) • Conduct Spatial Prioritization Analysis (100%) • Conduct Cost-Benefit Analysis (100%) • Develop Mangrove Reforestation Training Manual (10%) • Conduct Training in Mangrove Reforestation (100%) **Calculation:** Critical Activities' Average Progress = (0% + 0%) ÷ 2 = 0%
	Develop Mangrove Conservation Action Plan	0	
	Conduct a spatial prioritization analysis of 500 Ha using INVEST and ROOT	100	
	Conduct Cost-Benefit Analysis of Forest Restoration	100	
	Develop Mangrove Reforestation Training Manual, inclusive of monitoring	10	

	techniques and protocols		Supporting Activities' Average Progress = (100% + 0% + 100% + 100% + 10% + 100%) ÷ 6 ≈ 68.33% Weighted Average Progress = (0% × 0.6) + (68.33% × 0.4) = (0%) + (27.33%) = **27.33% ~ 27%**
	Conduct Training in Mangrove Reforestation to personnel of the Department of Marine Resources and selected NGOs	100	
	Conduct Mangrove Reforestation Exercise on 20 Ha of mangroves in St. Kitts	0	
	Monitoring of Mangrove Growth	0	
Output 2.2.1 Decreased soil erosion, increased carbon sequestration and agricultural crop production obtained through restored areas of degraded land (215 ha*)	Identify the priority 215 ha for land rehabilitation, with the largest impact on seasonal water flow and sediment retention, based on the land use map and InVEST and ROOT tools	100	**43** **Critical Activities Identified (60% weight total):** • Conduct Farmland Restoration Process (23%) **Supporting Activities:** • Identify Priority 215 ha for Rehabilitation (100%) • Conduct Crop Climate Suitability Analysis (100%) • Crop Market Suitability Analysis (100%) • Conduct Training in SLM and CSA (50%) • Procurement and Demonstration of SLM and CSA (75%) • Deliver Extension Services to Farmers (35%) **Calculations:** **Critical Activity Progress** = 23% **Supporting Activities' Average Progress** = (100% + 100% + 50% + 75% + 35%) ÷ 5 = 72% **Weighted Average Progress** = (23% × 0.6) + (72% × 0.4) = (13.8%) + (28.8%) = **42.6% ~ 43%**
	Conduct Farmland Restoration Process (removal of invasive underbrush/ regrowth, sustainable clearing, bunding and contouring, terracing)	23	
	Conduct Crop climate suitability Analysis	100	
	Crop Market Suitability Analysis	100	
	Conduct Training in SLM and CSA and select farmers to engage in CSA	50	

	Procure selected seedlings, equipment and materials, and launch demonstration of SLM and CSA on participating farms	75	
	Deliver Extension services support to participating farmers in SLM and CSA	35	
Output 2.3.1 Water storage tanks and accompanying distribution lines in place to support sustainable and climate-friendly agricultural production for at least 100 participating farmers	Technical and Environmental Feasibility Study, including technical designs and construction plans (drawings and rendering)	50	**34.16**
	Confirmation of Land Tenure of Selected Sites for pond/dam construction	50	
	Water Storage Tank Installation	0	
	Assess Auxiliary water distribution equipment needs for farmers in Nevis	100	
	Procurement of water distribution system (Pond or Reservoir)	5	
	Hydrological Extension Service Support to Farmers	0	
Output 3.1.1 A plan for knowledge management and information exchange on environmental issues is developed and	Identify and/or Develop Knowledge Management Tools (data depository, social media platform and project account, interactive project website)	100	**31**

under implementation	Integrated monitoring platform will be developed to generate cross data reports for SLM, BD Conservation and CSA for international or national commitments	0	
	Systematisation Reports	0	
	Knowledge Management Networking & Participation in Regional KM Exchanges	25	
Output 3.2.1 Increased awareness and understanding of issues related to SLM, BD Conservation and CSA	Development of Public Education & Awareness Materials and Messages	40	**40**

Rating for Availability of Outputs: MU

Progress Towards Project Outcomes

99. The project's progress toward achieving its intended outcomes shows a mix of successes and challenges across various components. It is rated Moderately Unsatisfactory. While some components exceed expectations, delays in foundational activities (e.g., delays in inception due to COVID-19 and in hiring of Project Coordinator) hinder overall effectiveness. The extent to which the outcomes of the project were achieved is summarised in the table 7 below. The following are the main results of the project.

100. *Outcome 1.1. GSKN adopts tools and regulations to reduce pressure on natural resources from competing land uses on the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis*. While foundational efforts such as planning and consultations are advancing, the implementation and approval of key tools and regulations remain pending. The timeline indicates potential alignment with project targets if no further delays occur. However, immediate outcomes are still limited, and the overall rating reflects a mix of satisfactory and moderately satisfactory progress.

101. *Outcome 1.2: Improved systemic capacity for promoting sustainable development in the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis through INRM*. Capacity-building initiatives have surpassed targets, and ongoing educational efforts are on track. However, gaps remain in the evaluation of systemic outcomes (e.g., the capacity scorecard), of which responsibility is not tagged in the ProDoc. During the review, the EA conducted the scoring exercise.

102. *Outcome 1.3: Reduced pressure on three indicator species at two Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) sites*. While some indicators have made significant progress, particularly in

biodiversity assessments and community engagement, others face persistent challenges related to data availability, habitat protection, and restoration efforts.

103. *Outcome 2.1: Conservation of BD habitat and ecosystem services, and increased carbon sequestration in soil and woody vegetation, achieved through restoration and management of critical forest sites*. Progress on ecological restoration indicators (reforestation and mangrove rehabilitation) is significantly behind schedule due to varied reasons. Challenges for forest restoration, such as limited accessibility due to the lack of proper roads and the presence of invasive grass, differ from those affecting mangrove restoration, which is hindered by issues related to private land ownership. However, progress has been made in benefiting producers through CSA and SLM initiatives.

104. *Outcome 2.2: Local communities adopt tested SLM practices to reduce land degradation, increased soil carbon sequestration, and enabled sustainable agricultural production on degraded / abandoned lands*. The progress under Outcome 2.2 has faced delays due to logistical challenges, such as lack of transportation and slow procurement of farm inputs. However, there has been significant progress since 2024, with SLM interventions implemented on approximately 50.49 hectares.

105. *Outcome 2.3: Improved infrastructure conditions support climate resilience in agriculture*. The infrastructure improvements essential to supporting climate resilience in agriculture are still in the planning and discussion phases, leaving the outcome far behind schedule. Challenges such as sourcing water to meet both domestic and agricultural needs remain significant barriers.

106. *Outcome 3.1: Public servants from key institutions have increased planning and environmental management capacity*. While there is progress in specific areas, significant delays in achieving key indicators suggest slow advancement toward the outcome. Stakeholders participating in the project's KM Networks has surpassed the mid-term target. With the platform no longer being developed, other alternatives like formalizing partnerships through MoUs and leveraging collaborations for scientific reviews and regular SLM development can help advance outcome progress.

107. *Outcome 3.2: Increased understanding and awareness of relevant environmental issues among the general public, land use managers, the tourism industry, and international visitors to SKN*. While the outreach to key local stakeholders such as government institutions, CSOs, and farmers is progressing steadily, challenges remain in assessing awareness among international visitors and residents due to lack of framework to collect the required data. MTR suggests an alternative cost-effective mechanism (e.g. placing posters with QR code at airport to collect feedback) to be developed and implemented.

Table 7: Implementation Progress Towards Achieving Project Outcomes

Indicators	Mid-Term Target	Progress at MTR	Details of progress at MTR
Outcome 1.1. GSKN adopts tools and regulations to reduce pressure on natural resources from competing land uses on the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis			
Number of land use planning and management tools approved by parliament and adopted	2	1	The updated NPDP and Land Use Maps have been developed but not approved by the parliament yet.
Number of legal and/or regulatory instruments	1	0	Amendments to the building code (regulations) and the development control

developed to support land use planning implementation			and planning act (legislation) are being conducted but not complete.
Outcome 1.2. Improved systemic capacity for promoting sustainable development in the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis through INRM			
Number of stakeholder institutions capacitated for coordinated action in SLM, BD and CSA	4	11	Training and capacity building in Conservation Action Planning, SLM, reforestation, mangrove restoration, land use planning, and public awareness strategies have been provided to various institutions, including St. Christopher National Trust, St. Kitts Sea Turtle Monitoring Network, and departments of Agriculture and Planning across St. Kitts and Nevis, as well as other key organizations.
Number of technical persons in the government service who have completed post-graduate training in the fields of Geographic Information Systems (GIS); Land Use Planning; Sustainable Land Management; Climate Change and/or Climate Smart Agriculture; and Environmental Management/Ecosystem Restoration	3	0	No completion yet, but 7 scholars are enrolled with 2 expected to graduate this year. The MTR finds it moderately achieved because initial delays in the project occurred due to Covid i.e. unforeseen circumstances.
Increase in score of Capacity Development Scorecard (score out of a maximum of 39)	22	24*	The Capacity Development Scorecard developed at Mid-Term indicates an achievement of 24 points surpassing the target. However, with due consideration to the lack of independence in this evaluation, the indicator is found to be moderately satisfactory. **Evidence is preliminary*.
Outcome 1.3. Reduced pressure on three indicator species at two Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) sites			
Number of KBAs with Biodiversity Baseline Assessments	1	2	Baseline Assessment for two specific KBAs completed: the Southeast Peninsula ponds and Cayon to Keys exceeding mid-term target of 1.
Number of Indicator Species with increase in population	1	1	Small increase in migratory wetland birds is indicated in the raw data received by the MTR consultant. The reports which are the means of verification were not available at this stage; therefore, preliminary evidence has been considered.
Area in m^2 available for Leatherback Turtle nesting on beaches within the targeted KBAs	Baseline is maintained	Baseline is not maintained	No updated spatial data is available.
% change in number of successful leatherback turtle nests over baseline	At least 10% change in	0%	0% change, preliminary data shows a decrease in nesting success. The MTR has also conducted research from all available external resources to find

	nesting success		evidence supporting the indicator. Progress has been behind due to biodiversity monitoring challenges.
Number of locals engaged in Leatherback turtle conservations activities	At least 30 persons engaged	39	Turtle camp participants lists have been provided as evidence of conservation activities and awareness programmes conducted by the executing agency.
% change in recorded successful nesting of the Least Terns and Brown Pelicans within KBAs over baseline	At least 5% change in nesting success	0	Critical decline in Least Terns is noted, while Brown Pelicans have shown a small increase in nesting. Although recent reports still indicate low breeding success in the area. The baseline was not determined; therefore, the calculation of change cannot be done. Alternative approach like Prioritizing habitat improvements like predator control, reducing disturbances, and enhancing nesting conditions to support breeding success can be incorporated.
Number of hectares of mangroves restored within KBAs	5	0	The target has not been met at the midterm. The MTR consultant confirms that the summary by the EA in the PIR against the indicator hold valid.
Outcome 2.1. Conservation of BD habitat and ecosystem services, and increased carbon sequestration in soil and woody vegetation, achieved through restoration and management of critical forest sites			
Number of hectares restored through reforestation / ANR and/or trees planted in agroforestry	100	1.6	1.6 hectares has been restored as indicated in the PIR. The EA is taking adaptive measures to accelerate the progress.
Number of hectares of mangrove ecosystems rehabilitated and protected	10	0	Mangrove restoration is delayed due to nursery loss and seedling shortages. Also, engaging private landowners has been a challenge.
Metric tons of CO2 emissions directly mitigated as a consequence of project investments in reforestation, ANR, CSA, and SLM	0	0	The indicator is not measured at Mid-Term and will be calculated at the end of the project.
Number of men producers' direct beneficiaries in 215 ha. on CSA and SLM	40	36	Training and support have been well received by 36 male farmers, along with equipment. Some farmers have shown hesitation in signing beneficiary agreements, citing concerns about the process and implications. Although, the MTR consultant observed a highly satisfactory relationship between the farming community and EE.
Number of women producers' direct beneficiaries in 215 ha. on CSA and SLM	15	15	Training and support have been well received by 15 female farmers meeting the midterm target.
Outcome 2.2. Local communities adopt tested SLM practices to reduce land degradation, increased soil carbon sequestration, and enabled sustainable agricultural production on degraded / abandoned lands			

Number of hectares of degraded land restored (removal of invasive underbrush/ regrowth, sustainable clearing, bunding and contouring, terracing, etc) resulting in decreased soil erosion, increased carbon sequestration, agricultural crop production and increased BD conservation and ecosystem services	80	41	41 hectares has been restored. The MTR consultant confirm circumstances causing delay in the indicator progress.
Outcome 2.3. Improved infrastructure conditions support climate resilience in agriculture			
Number of hectares benefitting from improved water infrastructure (irrigation) for agricultural production in support of SLM measures	50	0	Water infrastructure development activities are ongoing with some success observed in Nevis farms. Since irrigation infrastructure facility is not adequate to support 100 Ha. The target can be adjusted between 70 – 80 Ha, benefitting from improved water infrastructure for agricultural production in SLM.
Outcome 3.1. Public servants from key institutions have increased planning and environmental management capacity			
Number of reports produced for international commitments using SLM, BD conservation and CSA data of integrated monitoring platform	3	0	The indicator can be revised to "Number of reports produced for international commitments using SLM, BD conservation and CSA data generated by the project", as the integrated monitoring platform, is no longer being developed. However, other alternatives like upgrading the existing platform developed under GEF 5 National project are being discussed. Further, MTR recommends strengthening MOUs and partnerships to conduct the scientific reviews of environmental conditions, that will contribute to the achievement of the indicator to produce reports for international commitments, and the overall outcome for increased planning and environmental management capacity.
Number of partnerships established with regional research institutions or platforms	1	0	Partnership agreements or MOUs have not been developed.
Number of stakeholder institutions participating in the project's Knowledge Management Network	7	8	Participation exceeded expectations, with more institutions involved than originally targeted.
Outcome 3.2. Increased understanding and awareness of relevant environmental issues among the general public, land use managers, the tourism industry, and international visitors to SKN			
Number of government institutions, schools, CSOs, and productive sectors	15	9	9 out of the target 15 institutions are engaged. Engagement through agriculture fairs and capacity building workshops has

specifically targeted by key messages of the Public Awareness Campaign			been effective, but broader public outreach remains limited.
Number of farmers who have heard, seen, or read public awareness messages on SLM, CSA and Biodiversity conservation communicated by the project.	100	125	Farmers' information for around 50 farmers has been received, however, feedback forms are not available.
Percentage increase in number of visitors and residents interviewed departing from airports and seaports in St. Kitts & Nevis who have seen, heard, or read public awareness messages on BD conservation and sustainable use of natural resources communicated by the project.	20%	0%	There has been no progress made to achieve the indicator, the MTR has suggested a consideration in the change of approach of cost-effective and accessible mechanism (e.g. placing posters with QR code at airport to collect feedback) to be developed and implemented. The indicator should measure the percentage as compared to the total inflow of tourists being aware of BD conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

Rating for Progress Towards Project Outcomes: MU

Likelihood of Impact

108. The likelihood of impact for the project is promising, as it builds upon several foundational elements. The project's intervention pathways are designed to achieve long-term sustainability through systemic policy reforms, institutional strengthening, and community engagement. Technical advice has been very impactful for the farmers. They benefit from getting the assessment of the current state and the best practices/techniques that could be applied. Some were helped immediately with materials by the project. The techniques chosen were tailored to the farmers needs and the practicality for the type of soil and environment. St Kitts farms were aided with diversion ditches and Nevis mostly ground cover, tools and water tanks. Both groups were exposed to trainings that would improve the quality of harvest as well as preserve the land such as composting.

109. Farmers are using ground covers provided by the project, which helps preserve the soil and reduces the labour intensiveness of mechanical weed control and replanting. It also helps to hold in moisture content so less water is used and controls runoff. The project has had a domino effect in terms of capacity building among farmers. When neighbouring farms observe the success, they inquire about becoming beneficiaries to the project. The farmers have taken to the changes and look forward to expanding on what they have received. Requests and questions are raised by both genders to the Nevis Department of Agriculture for up taking project activities and getting involved in the project. The department makes specific plant recommendations for different seasons to help the beneficiaries, but the procurement process needs to be accelerated because a timelier distribution of assistance will allow for more timely results and impact.

110. Key outputs, such as the development of baseline digital land use maps and technical training for relevant institutions, ensure that stakeholders at all levels can make informed decisions and take coordinated action on sustainable practices. Furthermore, community-based interventions, including agroforestry and CSA, are expected to have a direct and measurable impact on land restoration and conservation.

111. While the project aligns with its TOC in addressing environmental issues, the likelihood of achieving the desired impact could be compromised if critical project outputs and ecosystem restoration efforts aren't resolved promptly and effectively. Although significant efforts are underway, the project has not yet achieved substantial progress toward its intended outcomes, and it is unlikely that these outcomes can be fully realized within the remaining timeline. . The EA has been collaborating with various NGOs and other agencies to enhance the project's impact. The likelihood of impact, despite provision of NPDP and policy instruments, widely depends on the government’s support and vision.

Rating for Likelihood of Impact: ***ML***

Adaptive Management

112. While the project remained aligned with its original design, it demonstrated adaptability and moderation in responding to shifting stakeholder needs and priorities during implementation. According to the KIIs conducted at the MTR, informants noted that the project effectively evolved to manage stakeholder expectations throughout its execution.. The current version has many components which are perceived to be too ambitious, leading to challenges in executing activities in the selected hectares. The project has shown adaptability in addressing various challenges. After setback with a consulting firm, a new team was contracted to advance legal amendments for the NPDP, and Component 1 was brought on track. The scholarship program also adapted to delays in Cabinet approval, with students now enrolled and expected to complete their programs by 2025.

113. Despite delays in reforestation, the project responded by hiring teams and engaging volunteers to increase the efficiency of activities within Component 2. Similarly, infrastructure efforts, such as water tank installations are progressing, however as mentioned in the following section, there are delays caused by procurement processes. The St Kitts Sea Turtle Marine Network emphasised on enhancing monitoring capabilities for BD conservation, to which the project responded by procuring appropriate drone technology. The concerned personnel in the EA have responded promptly to evolving challenges in the project.

Rating for Adaptive Management: ***MS***

Rating for Effectiveness: MS

D. Financial Management

Adherence to UNEP's/Donor Financial Policies and Procedures

114. The project's adherence to UNEP/Donor Financial Policies and Procedures appears to be thorough and in compliance with key expectations. Financial management has been consistently rated as low risk, demonstrating strong adherence to UNEP's financial guidelines. According to UNEP procedures and systems, the monitoring of financial aspects of the project are timely reflected on Anubis (UNEP's monitoring platform) including budget revisions. The financial closure is expected by 2026, and there are no major issues reported regarding fund allocation. However, the project did encounter delays in procurement and co-financing materialisation. Some initial co-financing commitments from the government were not fully realised, requiring revisions due to shifting priorities. The project management has remained transparent, and corrective actions, such as realigning co-financing commitments, are in place. The overall financial reporting and budgeting process continues to follow UNEP and GEF protocols efficiently. The MTR consultant was provided guest access on the platform during the review to validate financial compliance of the project.

Rating for Adherence to UNEP's/Donor Financial Policies and Procedures: ***HS***

Completeness of Financial Information

115. The project's financial information, as tracked on UNEP's Anubis platform, shows adherence to financial reporting requirements, with key aspects such as total disbursements, expenditures, and co-financing regularly updated. As of June 30, 2024, the project has disbursed approximately $6,426,809 and incurred total expenditures of $6,011,872. Co-financing faces a shortfall, with only $4,882,766 realized out of the expected $22,695,288, due to change of the government and subsequent change in priorities. The

financial management is confirmed to be low risk, signifying good governance, though some delays in procurement and legislative approvals have impacted overall progress. While the financial management framework remains robust, adjustments to co-financing and execution pace are necessary. The configuration of financial reporting in Anubis poses a challenge; however, in IUCN's practice, expenditures have been recorded indicating the corresponding components.

Rating for Completeness of Financial Information: S

Rating for Financial Management: S

E. Efficiency

116. *Timeliness of Implementation*: The project experienced notable delays, which impacted the overall efficiency of its implementation. Key issues included:

    i. Delays in project inception and hiring of project coordinator: COVID-19 during the inception stage led to delays in kick-starting the project. Further, there were challenges which lead to a delay in hiring of the project coordinator delaying the progress by almost a year and a half.

    ii. Extended timeline for restoration targets: Restoration of landscapes and forests has progressed slowly. Only 41 hectares out of the targeted 215 hectares for sustainable land management have been achieved to date, representing 19% of the total goal. Forest restoration has started on a small scale (3 hectares), significantly behind projections.

117. Project extension: Although no grant extension request has been made yet, it is recommended that the project be extended by two years, considering the targets for reforestation and restoration to be achieved.

    While the implementation of on-the-ground activities (e.g., farmer training, restoration initiatives) is proceeding, the lags in other areas such as hectares restored through reforestation / ANR and/or trees planted in agroforestry, hectares of mangrove ecosystem rehabilitated and protected, hectares benefitting from improved water infrastructure (irrigation) for agricultural production, etc. has reduced the project's efficiency in achieving outcomes within the planned timeframe.

118. *Cost-Effectiveness*: The project has received 51% of its GEF funding ($1.544 million out of $3 million) as of mid-2024, and total expenditure is $1.129 million. This underutilisation of funds has affected achieving the project restoration activity targets and conservation efforts, potentially requiring reallocations of funds to fill gaps. An example of this includes the 35,000 USD allocated for platform development, which was not utilized as the platform was never developed and could have been reallocated towards an alternative tasks that lead to the achievement of the intended outcomes.

    Further, only $4.9 million out of the expected $22.7 million in co-financing has materialized, representing just 21% of commitments. This shortfall may affects the availability of complementary resources for scaling project activities in the longer term. Training programs and technical advice for 51 farmers, along with the postgraduate scholarship initiative, demonstrate effective allocation of funds for capacity-building activities. While localised activities have been executed efficiently, broader inefficiencies

arise which might be caused due to delays in the utilisation of funds, thus restricting cost-effective scaling of restoration and conservation efforts.

119. *Strengths in Resource Utilisation*: The project effectively utilised human and technical resources for stakeholder training and engagement. For example, 5 training sessions in farm, forest, and mangrove restoration were completed, and local labourers have been engaged in initial restoration efforts. Investments in knowledge products, including training guides and studies like the Crop Market Suitability Study and Cost-Benefit Analysis of SLM, have contributed to increased national visibility and stakeholder engagement.

120. *Weaknesses in Resource Utilisation*: Resources for restoration and legislative processes are underutilised. Progress on restoration (41 hectares out of 500 Ha) remains slow, suggesting that although there are resources available, they have not yet been fully utilised., The project demonstrates efficiency in implementing certain activities but delays in reforestation and ecosystem restoration reduce the project's overall performance.

121. *Adaptability to External Factors*: Adaptations including engagement of community groups and the TWG has somewhat mitigated delays in restoration efforts, ensuring some progress in achieving biodiversity and land management goals. While the project has made efforts to adapt to emerging challenges, the reactive rather than proactive nature of these adjustments has constrained its efficiency.

122. *Comparative Performance*: The project has demonstrated efficient stakeholder engagement, with over 50 individuals from various community groups, government departments, and technical agencies actively participating. This level of engagement is a positive benchmark for capacity-building efforts in projects of this scale.

Rating for Efficiency:	**MS**

F. Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring Design and Budgeting

123. The project employs a Results Framework (Appendix 4 of the ProDoc) outlining SMART indicators, which are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. These indicators are linked to project components and outcomes, ensuring that progress can be systematically tracked. The monitoring plan includes provisions for disaggregating data by gender and focusing on marginalized groups. Specific initiatives, such as engaging the Fahies Agricultural Women's Cooperative Society and training programs for women, demonstrate this commitment.

124. The project outlines regular data collection, BD baseline assessments, and the use of GIS and mapping tools for land use planning. BD monitoring methodologies are based on globally recognised frameworks, such as Conservation Action Planning (CAP), ensuring standardization and relevance. A Mid-Term Project Review and Independent Terminal Evaluation are planned, with their findings to inform project adjustments and final assessments. These evaluations will involve stakeholders, including government agencies, the GEF, and the UNEP, ensuring a collaborative approach.

125. The project dedicates approximately 6.4% (USD 194,077) of its GEF budget of USD 3,015,982 to M&E. This allocation supports periodic evaluations, data collection, and capacity-building initiatives for monitoring activities. The budget distribution is detailed

and aligns with the outlined M&E needs, such as baseline assessments and periodic reviews. Co-financing arrangements augment these resources, emphasising capacity-building and stakeholder engagement. Leveraging co-financing contributions ensures cost-effectiveness and maximizes impact.

Rating for Monitoring Design and Budgeting: HS

Monitoring of Project Implementation

126. The monitoring system, as outlined in the project design, was operational throughout the project implementation period. The project utilized a Results Framework supported by a M&E Plan (Appendix 4 & 7 of the ProDoc) to guide and track progress. While certain deliverables faced delays (e.g., finalisation of the NPDP and legislative amendments), the monitoring system facilitated regular tracking of outputs through periodic PIRs and HYPRs. GIS and participatory tools (e.g., CAP & InVEST modeling) were utilised to ensure data accuracy and relevance for project activities.

127. The project ensured gender-sensitive monitoring and reporting. For example:
    - 40% of participants in training and capacity-building initiatives were women.
    - Two-thirds of Technical Working Group (TWG) members were women.
    - Engagement with the Fahies Agricultural Women's Cooperative and the inclusion of the Department of Gender Affairs demonstrated responsiveness to gender needs.

128. Farmers and community groups from marginalized regions (e.g., New River, Brotherson) actively participated in project activities, ensuring that their voices were included in decision-making processes.

129. The monitoring system generated required data on land use planning, biodiversity, and climate-smart practices. While the MTR was delayed to 2024, the allocated resources ensured ongoing monitoring and reporting activities in line with UNEP and GEF requirements.

130. However, baseline data for nesting of the Least Terns and Brown Pelicans was not available, as well as accurate or complete data for leatherback turtle nesting is lacking. Also, spatial data to determine beach area available for Leatherback Turtle nesting is lacking. Progress regarding CO_2 emissions is not planned to be calculated before the end of the project, hence, it is not being monitored. Furthermore, exit surveys have not been revised/updated to gather data regarding the number of visitors and residents interviewed for checking if they have seen or heard messages on BD conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

Rating for Monitoring of Project Implementation: MS

Project Reporting

131. Project reports were uploaded to UNEP systems (e.g., PIMS, GEF Portal) in alignment with UNEP requirements. Half - yearly and annual progress reports, such as the Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs), provided updates on milestones, outcomes, risks, and co-financing. Reporting timelines have generally been adhered to, except for the delay in the Mid-Term Review, executed in 2024.

132. The project adhered to GEF-specific reporting, focusing on BD, land degradation, and CCM metrics. Indicators such as hectares restored, greenhouse gas mitigation, and

participation in SLM practices were prominently tracked. Reports reflect stakeholder involvement across government, private sector, and community organisations, fulfilling co-financing commitments and technical participation in studies and capacity-building initiatives.

133. Gender representation is a reporting focus, with women making up 40% of training participants and two-thirds of Technical Working Group (TWG) members. Vulnerable groups, such as smallholder farmers and women's cooperatives, were highlighted, showcasing equitable participation in activities.

134. The project actively engaged UNEP colleagues and partners in complementary initiatives, leveraging expertise in BD conservation, CCM, and land management planning. Additionally, the financial reporting system, 'Anubis', ensures that GEF funds and co-financing commitments are carefully tracked, with particular attention to any necessary revisions. It supports financial inputs that allows for ease of reporting; and makes data archive readily available to UNEP as well as the EA. Reporting outputs are made available to the PSC and critical stakeholders.

135. However, certain means of verification, as included in the Results Framework (Appendix 4 of the Project Document) were not available for the MTR team to review, indicating that some documentation of project progress are not available. Although, these are not project outputs, the availability of these documents through other sources (if required), may improve project reporting. The list of such documents is included in Appendix 3 of the MTR report.

Rating for Project Reporting: S

Rating for Monitoring and Reporting:	**S**

G. Exit Strategy & Sustainability

Exit Strategy

136. The project has made strides in advancing SLM and land use planning by revising and updating key policy instruments i.e. the NPDP, establishing a foundation for long-term sustainability. While a draft plan for Nevis existed prior to the project, it still awaits final approval. Building codes and development control legislation are also being updated to incorporate sustainable practices, ensuring future development aligns with environmental goals although some of the instruments are still pending final governmental approval due to administrative changes, the groundwork has been laid for their eventual implementation.

137. In parallel, the project has focused heavily on capacity building, training farmers, civil servants, and local institutions in sustainable practices such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM), soil nutrient management (composting), mangrove restoration, reforestation. . Farmers have shown strong ownership of these practices, ensuring their continued use beyond the project's end. Institutional capacity has also been strengthened, with government employees equipped to maintain and expand the project's initiatives. While policy implementation has been slower than anticipated, the trained personnel and revised frameworks ensure progress towards SLM goals will continue. Challenges such as access to materials and water infrastructure persist, but with the systems and training in place, local stakeholders are well-positioned to sustain the project's momentum. Public outreach and biodiversity monitoring will evolve with sustained government support.

138. Despite positive strides, a formalised exit strategy is notably absent, leaving the project vulnerable in terms of long-term viability. The continued success of its outcomes depends heavily on government follow-through, with essential policy instruments like the NPDP still awaiting Cabinet approval.

139. Furthermore, there are no clear mechanisms or secure funding frameworks in place to sustain or expand these efforts. The lack of a formalised exit strategy, alongside delays in critical legislative approvals, underscores the project's dependency on government action and financial support, both of which seem uncertain at this stage.

Socio-political Sustainability

140. The socio-political sustainability of the project is shaped by the project's integration of multi-stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and alignment with government priorities. The project has actively involved key national institutions and local communities, ensuring that policy reforms, such as the NPDP, have broad-based support. However, delays in legislative approval and limited private sector participation signal mixed levels of political urgency and institutional capacity. The establishment of collaborative frameworks (e.g., TWGs) demonstrates intent but requires more robust integration into formal policy mechanisms for sustained outcomes.

141. On a positive note, the project promotes social inclusivity by incorporating gender considerations into decision-making processes, with significant female participation in governance and training activities. This approach enhances social equity and encourages local ownership, thereby boosting the project's political viability. Additionally, the project's alignment with national development goals, including CSA and sustainable land use, ensures that it addresses critical socio-political concerns, including food security and environmental resilience.

142. The project's efforts to mainstream SLM and BD conservation into national frameworks provide a foundation for sustained environmental management. However, financial sustainability remains a concern, with co-financing commitments requiring revision due to shifts in government policy. Knowledge dissemination through public awareness campaigns and training materials adds value to community-level adoption, but scaling these initiatives post-project is uncertain without a clear long-term strategy.

Rating for Socio-political Sustainability: ***ML***

Financial Sustainability

143. The project's financial sustainability rests on several interconnected factors, crucial for ensuring the long-term endurance of benefits achieved at the outcome level. While the project design did not anticipate the development of new financial instruments, it was built on the premise that the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis would continue to finance key investments in land administration, including the continued support of personnel, such as those in the scholarship program who remain on salary. These commitments appear relatively firm, suggesting that there is a foundation for sustained investment in areas critical to land and environmental management. However, the extent to which these commitments will endure should be closely monitored as priorities may shift.

144. Regarding co-financing, it is important to clarify that the shortfall in co-financing does not directly impact the project's ability to complete its activities. The co-financing, primarily from government-related projects, was intended to add value and complement the project's implementation, rather than finance its core components. As of 30 June 2024,

$4,882,480 of the expected co-financing has materialised, with the shortfall being partly attributable to changing governmental priorities. While these shifts may affect additional investments in sustainable resource management post-project, the project remains on track to achieve its primary objectives.

145. Some project outcomes, like the adoption of revised policies (e.g., NPDP), may not require continuous funding but will need follow-up actions for enforcement and implementation, suggesting ongoing resource requirements. Restoration and SLM outcomes, such as forest restoration and water storage infrastructure for farmers, depend heavily on continued investment. These activities align with long-term goals but show dependency on stable financial inputs.

146. While the project has achieved certain milestones (e.g., NPDP development and restoration activities), the dependency on co-financing for the sustainability of project impact is high,. Capacity-building efforts are commendable but insufficient on their own to ensure financial sustainability without a clear roadmap or additional funding.

Rating for Financial Sustainability: MU

Sustainability of Institutional Framework

147. Governance Structures and Processes: The establishment of the National Physical Development Plan (NPDP) and related tools marks significant progress. It incorporates sustainability-focused land use planning to protect ecosystems while addressing competing land use demands. Legislative amendments supporting the NPDP are still in draft stages. Dependence on Parliamentary approval and delayed implementation of regulatory frameworks pose a risk to sustained governance structures.

148. Institutional Capacity Development: 11 stakeholder institutions have received training on topics such as SLM, CSA, and BD conservation. A scholarship program has supported postgraduate training for 6 technical government staff, bolstering long-term expertise. Capacity development efforts are not yet institutionalized within the broader government structure. Continued funding and motivation of trained personnel post-project closure are not guaranteed.

149. Policy and Legal Frameworks: Draft amendments to the National Building Codes and the Development Control and Planning Act are underway. Stakeholder consultations have helped ensure alignment with national priorities. Lack of enforcement mechanisms and delays in finalising legislative amendments hinder the operationalisation of these frameworks.

150. Sub-Regional Agreements and Community Engagement: The project's regional alignment with international agreements like the UNFCCC and CBD enhances its policy robustness. However, community-level buy-in, especially for conservation initiatives, remains underdeveloped despite public awareness campaigns.

151. Knowledge Management and Dissemination: Knowledge-sharing initiatives, including training workshops and creation of knowledge products (e.g., training guides for NPDP), strengthen institutional memory. However, their long-term impact depends on continuous updates and integration into local practices.

Rating for Institutional Sustainability: ML

Rating for Sustainability: MU

H. Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

Project Inception

152. The inception phase faced challenges, particularly delays in recruitment for key project management personnel , technical implementation, and preparatory aspects (e.g. establishment of Technical Working Group and Steering Committee), which slowed implementation. The COVID-19 pandemic also caused setbacks in baseline BD assessments and implementing face to face field activities on the ground.

153. A delayed commencement of the project resulted in the postponement of all subsequent project activities. Due to the delayed project inception, the timing of project activities had to be adjusted to accommodate farmers' schedules. .

154. Other than that, only the weather created some periods of difficulty which is typical for farming. Component 2 was initially delayed due to the absence of sustainable agricultural expert, however, after the agricultural specialist was well aligned with the project and beneficiaries, technical advice was disseminated effectively, however, procurement process attributed to delays. Local procurements were done quicker but external purchases still took time.

Rating for Project Inception: MU

Quality of Project Management and Supervision

155. The UNEP team has demonstrated effective project management and supervision by following a comprehensive adaptive management approach. UNEP's supervision plan, developed during the project's inception, focuses primarily on monitoring outcomes, ensuring financial accountability, and keeping the project aligned with its objectives. Progress evaluations are carried out through regular steering committee meetings and periodic project reviews, ensuring that risks and assumptions are consistently monitored.

156. Key financial metrics are reviewed quarterly to guarantee efficient resource use. UNEP also emphasises monitoring the quality of technical outputs and scientific publications to maintain a high standard of project deliverables. UNEP further ensures compliance with GEF policies and standards, including M&E guidelines, fiduciary oversight, and social and environmental safeguards.

157. Project supervision includes risk assessment, quality control of project reports, and coordination with executing partners. Additionally, the MTR is commissioned to gather information on project implementation and adjust strategies based on stakeholder feedback and findings. This approach allows UNEP to identify and address challenges early in the project, ensuring continuous alignment with the global environmental benefits envisioned.

158. The project is overseen by a PSC, which meets semi-annually to review progress, ensure alignment with project goals, and make necessary adjustments. This committee includes representatives from key government ministries, such as Sustainable Development, Environment and Agriculture, and external stakeholders like the UNEP and IUCN. Financial oversight is stringent, with quarterly reviews to monitor resource utilization effectively. However, the project’s effectiveness has been somewhat hindered by challenges in

decision-making processes related to government approvals, which have slowed the overall progress.

159. The IUCN, as the EA, has demonstrated strong project management and supervision capabilities in the project. The IUCN established a PCU responsible for day-to-day operations, ensuring alignment with financial, technical, and environmental expectations. This unit effectively liaised with national and local stakeholders, drafted work plans, managed budgets, and monitored progress through periodic reports. The IUCN also provided technical guidance, coordinated procurement activities, and engaged experts to deliver specific components.

160. The IUCN's integration of ESS into the project's interventions ensured compliance with best practices and local policies, allowing for adaptive management to meet evolving project needs. Its structured oversight, exemplified by frequent Technical Working Group meetings and coordination with various ministries, enabled timely decision-making and issue resolution.

161. Furthermore, the IUCN's engagement in the project's procurement and financial management processes, as outlined in its comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan, demonstrated high accountability. Regular reporting to the PSC and adherence to UNEP's evaluation standards ensured that project risks, financial oversight, and technical outputs were closely monitored. The IUCN also coordinated with external consultants and project partners, providing transparency and accountability in financial disbursements and contract management.

162. The IUCN has contributed to maintaining momentum and ensuring progress by actively participating in reviews and audits, and leading public awareness initiatives. There was little to no progress in component 2 before the sustainable agriculture expert was secured. However, due to the expert's pre-existing relationship from past professional experiences in the sector, the activities were rolled out efficiently despite the loss of time.

Rating for Quality of Project Management and Supervision: MS

Stakeholders Participation and Cooperation

163. Stakeholder participation and cooperation have been effective, particularly at the community and operational levels. Gender inclusivity is a notable strength. However, delays in systemic reforms and co-financing contributions highlight areas for improvement in cooperation at higher levels. Addressing these gaps will be essential for achieving long-term project goals.

164. *Participation of Key Stakeholders*: The project engaged a broad range of stakeholders, including government agencies, community groups, farmers, and technical organisations. Specific stakeholder groups, such as the Fahies Agricultural Women's Cooperative and New River Farmers Association, were actively involved in training and restoration activities. Over 61 participants from organizations such as the Department of Physical Planning, Department of Agriculture (St. Kitts and Nevis), and Ministry of Sustainable Development contributed to the project through validation exercises and capacity-building workshops. Community beneficiaries from areas such as New River, Cayon, St. Pauls, and Mansion/Estridge were involved in restoration activities and decision-making processes.

165. *Inclusivity*: Women constituted 40% of the participants in capacity-building initiatives, while two-thirds of the TWG members were women. This reflects strong gender inclusivity

in governance and decision-making. Efforts were made to engage traditionally underrepresented groups, such as smallholder farmers, in project activities.

166. *Cooperation Among Stakeholders*: The PSC and TWG facilitated collaboration among government agencies, community groups, and technical organizations, with the TWG meeting quarterly to oversee implementation and ensure alignment with stakeholder needs. This engagement enabled the validation of critical studies, such as the crop market suitability study and the cost-benefit analysis of SLM practices. Partnerships with international organizations, such as the IUCN, further enhanced the project's technical and operational capacity.

167. *Challenges*: Stakeholder participation in co-financing commitments has been limited, with only $4.8 million of the $22 million in planned co-financing materialized as of mid-2024. Some delays in institutional reforms, such as the approval/adoption of the NPDP, suggest that stronger cooperation among high-level stakeholders is needed to achieve systemic outcomes. Community participation in scaling restoration activities is still limited, with only 41 hectares under sustainable management compared to the 215-hectare target.

Rating for Stakeholders Participation and Cooperation: S

Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

168. The project has implemented gender-sensitive initiatives, such as a well-defined scholarship program that ensures equitable gender representation. Both men and women, including local communities and school children, have been actively engaged in conservation and reforestation efforts. Gender equality is addressed through the active participation of women's cooperatives, particularly the Fahies Agricultural Women's Cooperative Society, in sustainable agriculture practices, which enhances their economic empowerment.

169. Women naturally play a significant part in projects because of the population structure. From a government standpoint, the focus is more on selecting beneficiaries based on need and not just gender because the mix of farmers ensures that the women would naturally be a part of the beneficiary group.

170. Despite this progress, there is limited evidence of targeted human rights-focused activities, such as addressing vulnerable or marginalised groups outside gender-specific considerations. Gender-disaggregated data is being collected for participation in project activities, which supports tracking progress on gender equality. While the human rights agenda is not a primary focus in the context of this project, it is important for the project to ensure that human rights are not compromised. .

171. The project demonstrates significant progress in gender inclusivity but lacks explicit integration of broader human rights dimensions. Strategic improvements, including the development of a Gender Action Plan and the mainstreaming of human rights considerations, are recommended to enhance responsiveness.

Rating for Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality: MS

Environmental and Social Safeguards

172. *Environmental safeguards*: Restoration activities on degraded land and forests are expected to have positive impacts on biodiversity, natural habitats, and soil quality. The project uses approaches like assisted natural regeneration and reforestation to improve ecosystems. Risks related to coastal development, deforestation, and biodiversity loss

are addressed through planned reforms (e.g., National Physical Development Plan) and community training programs.

173. *Social safeguards*: The project ensures inclusive stakeholder participation, engaging government agencies, farmers, and community groups. Gender inclusion is prioritized, with 40% of training participants being women, and the involvement of the Department of Gender Affairs in project governance. No major complaints or grievances related to ESS issues were reported during the reporting period, suggesting that the safeguards are being managed effectively.

174. *Risk management*: The project has been classified as low risk in terms of environmental and social safeguards. No new risks were identified during the implementation period.

175. *Positive Contributions*: The project's activities, such as mangrove and forest restoration, are expected to mitigate climate change by sequestering 79,342 metric tons of CO2 over 10 years if successfully implemented. Public awareness campaigns and knowledge-sharing products are strengthening community support for conservation efforts.

176. The project is well-aligned with UNEP's ESS guidelines, addressing environmental and social risks through participatory and inclusive approaches. As such there is adequate management for ESS, however, a management plan for addressing safeguarding, monitoring of the project implementation for safeguarding issues, and response to issues has not been recorded or reported.

Rating for Environmental and Social Safeguards: S

Country Ownership and Driven-ness

177. St Kitts and Nevis has about 42,000 acres which needs to be used efficiently because climate change impact is also reducing the amount of land that can be utilised. Interviews with key stakeholders indicated that, in the broader national context, development priorities often take precedence over environmental preservation. Stakeholders expressed that the project plays an important role in contributing to biodiversity restoration and addressing environmental degradation. .

178. The motivation of local communities remains reliant on the government's proactive engagement. Evidence indicates moderately unsatisfactory rating as the several (but not all) government ministries and public sector agencies played a leadership role in driving the transition from outputs to project outcomes or intermediate states through strategic guidance of project delivery, advocating for change to achieve higher-level results, endorsing project outcomes, and initiating complementary activities. The Ministry of Agriculture in St Kitts encourages zero or low tillage practices and use of crop cover to help with soil preservation and other management issues. Moreover, the farming community displayed a willingness and desire to not only be a part of the project but to take what was learned and build on it.

179. The Department of Physical Planning and Environment in Nevis, ensures that tourism related development takes place with limitations on the use of protected areas and regulations around certain types of eco-tourism activities. This department actively tries to deter the encroachment of tourism development on areas that are protected or needs extra preservation and conservation. A new land use category called management area was created to save lands for tourism development in a way to preserve KBAs. The department does not want unbridled development and are embarking on proper zoning and regulations.

180. Government Stakeholders value capacity building aspects and the cross-cutting nature of the project with their original mission. According to the Director of St Kitts Sea Turtle Marine Network, some areas have made progress, for e.g. the St Mary's Biosphere Reserve, because of zoning and creating a protected area for turtles. But there are a lot of challenges on the Peninsula, specifically with development and wildlife interaction that urgently need to be addressed. ***Rating for Country Ownership and Driven-ness: MU***

Communication and Public Awareness

181. The project's communication and public awareness efforts have been moderately satisfactory, with outreach and demonstration centres driving awareness among key audiences. Over 125 farmers, CSOs, and institutions, including the St. Kitts Sea Turtle Monitoring Network, have positively responded to promoted techniques, with notable participation from 39 volunteers and 59 children in turtle conservation. Capacity-building activities have enhanced institutional capacity through targeted training for ministry staff. However, while workshops have been consistent and partially responsive to audience needs, public dissemination has been limited. The absence of an exit survey framework in the tourism sector further constrains the ability to monitor the impact of conservation messages.

182. The Ministry of Agriculture sets up outreach and demonstration centres where the methods and initiatives are attempted before they are introduced as new ideas, techniques and strategies to the farmers. The farmers have been very receptive to implementing sustainable land management and other techniques being reinforced by the project.

183. There has been positive feedback, particularly from farmers and CSOs, with over 125 farmers exposed to these public awareness messages and active participation from institutions like the St. Kitts Sea Turtle Monitoring Network. Additionally, 39 volunteers and 59 children have participated in turtle conservation activities, indicating a positive behavioural shift, especially among younger generations.

184. Capacity-building initiatives were well targeted to the needs of the Ministry Sustainable Development and its employees so its ability to increase the institutions capacity was a built-in feature. Land surveyors, agriculturalist and other skillsets have been trained, and other areas have benefited from both islands, however, opportunities still exist. While dissemination has been consistent, the absence of an exit survey framework to track public exposure to conservation messages within the tourism sector remains a gap in data collection.

185. The project has arranged several workshops and sessions for beneficiaries and co-partners, internally. However, in terms of information being shared with the public that is not so evident. Therefore, the farmers will probably be more likely to exhibit changes in their farming practices and attitude towards sustainable and management, but the population has not been as exposed.

Rating for Communication and Public Awareness: MS

Rating for Factors Affecting Performance and Cross Cutting Issues: MS

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusions

186. The project demonstrates strong alignment with the country's strategic priorities, national obligations under the UNCCD and GEF strategic area (Biodiversity, Climate Change, and Land Degradation). The project is also in line with UNEPs' ecosystem management priority and has made progress in capacity building, stakeholder engagement, and gender inclusivity. Key achievements include training initiatives, public awareness campaigns, and alignment with international frameworks like the SDGs and CBD. These efforts have strengthened institutional frameworks and encouraged community participation, laying a foundation for long-term sustainability. Despite delays caused by external factors such as COVID-19, the project has effectively adapted through measures like hiring new teams, revising timelines, and maintaining a focus on key objectives.

187. However, challenges persist in achieving restoration targets, addressing co-financing shortfalls, and finalizing legislative approvals vital for project outcomes. Limited progress in ecosystem restoration and procurement activities highlights the need for improved coordination, timely resource allocation, and expanded outreach. While adaptive management has been effective, a formal exit strategy and secure financial frameworks are essential to ensure the scalability and sustainability of project impacts. Strengthening these areas will be crucial for the project's success in achieving its long-term environmental and socio-economic goals.

Table 8: Project Performance Ratings[6]

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
Strategic Relevance		**HS**
1. *Alignment to UNEP MTS and POW and Strategic Priorities*	The project aligns with UNEP's MTS and POW objectives, enhancing governance, capacity building, ecological restoration, BD conservation, CCM, and fostering regional cooperation.	**HS**
2. Alignment to, Donors / Partner Strategic Priorities	The project aligns with UNEP's priorities, donor goals, and national policies, addressing climate change, BD loss, and pollution through ecosystem restoration, supporting SDGs, climate resilience, pollution reduction, and global sustainability.	**HS**
3. Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities	The project aligns with SDGs, global conventions (CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC), and national/regional priorities, addressing climate resilience, BD conservation, sustainable agriculture, ecosystem restoration, and policy coherence to enhance sustainability	**HS**
4. Complementarity with existing interventions/ Coherence	The project complements existing interventions, aligns with national and regional goals, and enhances local expertise through scholarships, focusing on SLM, BD conservation, CSA, and economic resilience.	**HS**

[6] Most criteria will be rated on a six-point scale as follows: Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability and Likelihood of Impact are rated, also on a six-point scale, from Highly Likely (HL) down to Highly Unlikely (HU) and Nature of External Context is rated from Highly Favourable (HF) to Highly Unfavourable (HU).

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
Quality of Project Design	The project design is robust, addressing SKN's challenges through strong alignment with global, regional, and national priorities. It integrates UNEP's MTS, fosters strategic partnerships, and ensures effective monitoring, governance, and stakeholder engagement. With its focus on sustainability, knowledge sharing, and adaptive management, the project demonstrates strong potential for long-term impact, despite minor areas for improvement.	**S**
Effectiveness		**MS**
1. Availability of outputs	The project has achieved 59.89% of expected outputs, with strong progress in capacity development and BD management strategies. However, delays in critical implementation areas, including NPDP publication, reforestation, mangrove rehabilitation, and awareness campaigns, require attention for full realization.	**MU**
2. Progress towards project outcomes	The project shows mixed progress: successes include effective capacity-building and farming community engagement, while challenges persist in restoration, BD conservation, and procurement of materials. Despite positive outcomes, delays in key areas are impacting overall progress.	**MU**
3. Likelihood of impact	The project has strong foundations, with systemic reforms and stakeholder engagement contributing to long-term impact. Farmer-focused interventions and training show measurable benefits, though delays in ecosystem restoration and procurement pose challenges.	**ML**
4. Adaptive management	The project has adapted to challenges by hiring new teams for legal amendments, engaging paid workers to accomplish labour-intensive tasks with volunteers for reforestation, and enrolling students in scholarships despite delays. Infrastructure efforts are progressing, with ongoing adaptations in response to procurement & site selections.	**MS**
Financial Management	The project adheres to UNEP/Donor financial policies, ensuring low-risk financial management and transparency. Despite co-financing shortfalls and procurement delays, financial reporting is robust, though component-wise cost reporting requires improvement for better outcome-linking and tracking.	**S**
Efficiency	The project demonstrates effective resource utilization in capacity-building and stakeholder engagement, achieving localized successes like farmer training and scholarships. However, delays in inception, restoration, & fund utilisation have impacted overall efficiency, that require 2-yearextension in project timeline and adaptive measures to address emerging challenges and achieve project objectives and outcomes.	**MS**
Monitoring and Reporting		**S**
1. *Monitoring Design and Budgeting*	The project employs SMART indicators, gender-focused initiatives, and CAP methodologies, with a well-distributed M&E budget supporting evaluations, baseline assessments, and capacity-building for systematic tracking and cost-effective, impactful stakeholder collaboration	**HS**

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
2. Monitoring of project implementation	The project's monitoring system effectively tracked progress using a Results Framework, GIS tools, and gender-sensitive initiatives. While data gaps exist (e.g., CO_2 emissions, baselines), stakeholder inclusion and regular reporting ensured alignment with UNEP and GEF requirements	**MS**
3. Project reporting	The project adhered to UNEP and GEF reporting requirements, providing timely updates on progress, metrics, and gender representation. Stakeholder engagement and financial reporting were robust, though some verification documents were unavailable for review during the MTR.	**S**
Exit Strategy and Sustainability	The project has advanced capacity building, knowledge dissemination, and policy development, including the NPDP, laying a foundation for sustainability. Progress includes training programs, public awareness, and alignment with international agreements. However, delays in legislative approvals and the lack of finalized enforcement mechanisms for updated policies pose challenges. While significant strides have been made in restoration and infrastructure, their long-term success depends on stable funding. Without a formalized exit strategy and secure financial frameworks, the sustainability and scalability of project outcomes are at risk	**MU**
Factors Affecting Performance	There is a mix of success and failures in this criterion.	**MS**
1. Project inception	The project faced initial delays during the inception phase due to challenges in recruiting key personnel, forming governance structures, and technical preparations. The COVID-19 pandemic further impacted baseline assessments and field activities., Component 2 experienced initial setbacks due to the absence of an agricultural expert, but once onboarded, technical advice was effectively disseminated. Despite faster local procurements, external purchasing processes continued to face delays.	**U**
2. Quality of project management and supervision	Both UNEP & EA remain committed to overcoming obstacles & advancing project's goals, despite setbacks.	**MS**
2.1 UNEP/Implementing Agency:	UNEP has effectively managed the project, employing an adaptive management approach to monitor progress, ensure financial accountability, and maintain alignment with project objectives. Regular reviews and stakeholder engagement have been crucial in identifying and addressing challenges. While government approval processes have posed some challenges, UNEP's oversight has been instrumental in ensuring the project's overall direction and compliance with GEF standards.	
2.2 Partners/Executing Agency:	IUCN, as the EA, has demonstrated strong project management and technical expertise. The establishment of a dedicated PSC has facilitated efficient day-to-day operations, stakeholder engagement, and financial management. The IUCN's active role in procurement, financial management, and technical guidance has contributed to the project's progress, despite initial delays in securing key personnel.	

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
3. Stakeholders' participation and cooperation	The project engaged diverse stakeholders, including government agencies, community groups, and technical organizations, with strong gender inclusivity and effective community participation. Regular TWG meetings and partnerships with IUCN enhanced capacity and cooperation. However, co-financing gaps and delays in systemic reforms, like NPDP approval, highlight the need for stronger high-level coordination to achieve long-term goals	**S**
4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality	The project demonstrates strong progress in gender inclusivity, with active participation from women's cooperatives and gender-balanced scholarship programs. However, it lacks explicit human rights-focused activities and indicators. Developing a Gender Action Plan and integrating broader human rights considerations are recommended to enhance responsiveness	**MS**
5. Environmental and social safeguards	The project aligns with UNEP's ESS guidelines, employing inclusive approaches like mangrove restoration and community training to address environmental and social risks. Positive impacts include improved ecosystems, gender inclusivity, and climate change mitigation. No major ESS grievances were reported, and the project is classified as low risk. However, a formalized safeguarding management and monitoring plan is recommended for enhanced oversight.	**S**
6. Country ownership and driven ness	The project demonstrates partial country ownership with active community participation and efforts by departments like Physical Planning in eco-tourism regulation and land preservation. However, government support is inconsistent, with limited leadership from essential ministries in advancing outcomes. Balancing development and environmental preservation remains challenging, highlighting the need for stronger engagement and leadership to drive long-term project impact.	**MU**
7. Communication and public awareness	The project has effectively engaged farmers and CSOs through targeted capacity-building initiatives, public awareness messages, and conservation activities. Positive behavioural shifts, especially among younger generations, reflect growing support for sustainable practices. However, limited public outreach beyond the farming community and the absence of an exit survey framework for conservation message exposure in the tourism sector indicate areas for improvement in broader dissemination and impact tracking.	**MS**
Overall Project Performance Rating at Mid-Point	The project aligns with UNEP priorities, showing progress in capacity building and stakeholder engagement. However, challenges in restoration / reforestation, delays, and co-financing shortfalls affect sustainability, requiring enhanced coordination and improved restoration efforts for long-term success.	**MS**

B. Lessons learned

Lesson Learned #1	Long-term capacity building with a bottom-up approach is crucial to achieve impact
Context	The implementing agencies achieved significant long-term capacity building for climate resilience in the field of agriculture. The project delivered extensive training to farmer associations and government departments. Despite inception delays from the COVID-19 pandemic and bureaucratic delays, the EA enrolled seven scholars in post-graduate programs, boosting technical expertise. The farming community is aware of project's

	objectives and are aligned through awareness and training sessions, therefore, the knowledge sharing for modern techniques, CSA and SLM have made foundational progress.

Lesson Learned #2	**Project objectives must be aligned with national priorities and critical stakeholders must be engaged early to establish common ground on development aspects.**
Context	Socio-political commitment is extremely important for the success and sustainability of projects. Therefore, project alignment to national and local priorities at project inception is crucial. Involving policy makers (legislature) from the formulation stage of the project and throughout its implementation enhances the chance of replicability and sustainability. The updating of the NPDP and revision of building codes for the country reveal such commitment.

Lesson Learned #3	**Adequate consultation and feedback is critical in achieving project outputs and outcomes.**
Context	The project components are highly integrated, and each component requires participation by more than one project partner. As such, constant communication between the various project partners and regular updates are crucial in ensuring project progress.

Lesson Learned #4	**Adaptive management and planning are critical to projects**
Context	Planning must be realistic in relation to time and financial resources. Risk should be well identified and there should be continued revision of the adaptive management plan including unforeseen circumstances. Although not without its challenges, the project team and consultants did well to adapt to the management according to project needs.

C. Recommendations

Recommendation 1	Extension of technical deadline by 2-years and no cost adjustment budgetary revisions based on the mid-term progress. Co-financing targets must be re-evaluated, and a new amount should be determined.
Challenges to be addressed by the recommendation	There was delay in project inception due to Covid-19 pandemic, and the lack of a sustainable agriculture expert further hindered progress. Several critical indicators and outputs remain behind schedule such as number of hectares of degraded land restored, benefitting from improved water infrastructure but can be achieved if project is extended and budgeted funds are made available. There are several strategies like establishing partnerships and MOUs for conducting project monitoring activities and that need to be approached and implemented with innovation to ensure long-term impact.
Priority Level	Critical
Type of Recommendation	Strategic and Operational
Responsibility	GEF, UNEP, GOV, PSC, IUCN
Proposed implementation timeframe	Q2 2025

188. Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions: Results framework assessment at the mid-term stage, attached in Annex X (first portal entry).

Recommendation 2	Preparation of a technically sound exit/ strategy.
Challenges to be addressed by the recommendation	Sustainability of the project remains at risk. Stakeholder interviews highlighted that no real exit strategy exist for the project. Farmer interviews and questionnaire feedback noted that without continued support there would be no sustainable uptake in the SLM practices. Support includes adequate access to markets; increased government support; provision of

	adequate financial support; access to proper training. An exit strategy is always suggested well before the completion of the project.
Priority Level	High
Type of Recommendation	Technical
Responsibility	PSC, GOV, IUCN, UNEP
Proposed implementation timeframe	Q3 2025

189. Cross-reference to rationale and supporting discussions: The exit strategy has not been developed or formalised by the mid-term.

Recommendation 3	Component 1 – Revise Outcome 1.3 Indicator by replacing the Brown Pelican with the Wilson Plover, as the latter was identified as an indicator species during the biodiversity assessment. Additionally, due to the difficulty in measuring leatherback turtle nesting success and external challenges at the KBAs, the MTR suggests lowering the nesting success target between 10–15% by the project's end. Component 2 – The MTR advises adjusting reforestation targets by reducing forest restoration areas and increasing areas designated for sustainable land management (SLM).
Challenges to be addressed by the recommendation	The MTR recognised that project is struggling to achieve some key biodiversity and restoration indicators including lacking behind in forest restoration area and reducing pressure on three indicator species at two Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) due to baseline data limitations, logistical challenges and other land ownership constraints.
Priority Level	Critical
Type of Recommendation	Strategic and Technical
Responsibility	GEF, IUCN, UNEP and GOV
Proposed implementation timeframe	Q2 2025

190. Cross-reference to rationale and supporting discussions: Outcome 1.3 and outcome 2.1, in the project results framework

Recommendation 4	Prioritize and streamline restoration activities by addressing procurement and logistical challenges, enhancing local capacity, and leveraging community engagement to meet project restoration targets more effectively by adopting the following measures: • Enhance Procurement: Establish and implement a revised procurement plan for pending activities with predefined timelines to expedite material acquisition and distribution. • Strengthen Coordination: Develop scientific restoration plan with defined timelines and roles; and conduct regular progress review meetings to address bottlenecks. • Leverage Community Engagement: Partner with local communities for seedling production, site preparation, and maintenance; provide financial and technical support to community-based initiatives.
Challenges to be addressed by the recommendation	The project's restoration activities, including reforestation and mangrove rehabilitation, are significantly lagging, with only 41 hectares out of 500 targeted hectares completed. Delays are attributed to logistical challenges, slow procurement of materials, limited workforce capacity, and access difficulties in remote areas. The absence of clear timelines and fragmented coordination between stakeholders has further hindered progress.
Priority Level	High
Type of Recommendation	Strategic and Operational
Responsibility	IUCN, UNEP and GOV

Proposed implementation timeframe	Q1 2025 – Q3 2025

191. Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions: Outcomes 2.1 and 2.2, in the project results framework

Recommendation 5	Enhance stakeholder collaboration by leveraging and strengthening existing mechanisms, such as the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Technical Working Group (TWG) to accelerate dialogue between entities to finalise partnership agreements and/or MOUs.
Challenges to be addressed by the recommendation	Partnerships and collaborations will be a significant driver in producing just transition necessary to achieve sustainable impact of this project. Success and sustainability of the project is linked closely to the uptake of outcomes and partners working together. Without cohesive coordination, there is a risk of duplication of efforts, inefficiencies, and further delays, emphasizing the need to strengthen existing structures rather than introducing new ones.
Priority Level	High
Type of Recommendation	Strategic and Operational
Responsibility	UNEP, IUCN, TWG Members and GOV (Key ministries)
Proposed implementation timeframe	Q1 2025 – Q3 2025

192. Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions: Outcomes 1.3, 2.1, and Output 2.1.2 in the project results framework, attached in Annex X (first portal entry).

Recommendation 6	Commission a carbon sequestration assessment to serve as baseline for the project.
Challenges to be addressed by the recommendation	The project design and document lack thoroughness in CCM considerations while setting targets and goals. Carbon sequestration evaluation was not initially included in the project's scope. Conducting carbon sequestration assessment would offer an accurate carbon impact of the project. . As major activities for GHG emissions reduction and carbon pool creation are pending, the MTR consultant recommends that an assessment be undertaken at this stage to serve as the baseline data.
Priority Level	Medium
Type of Recommendation	Operational and Technical
Responsibility	UNEP, IUCN
Proposed implementation timeframe	Q2 2025 – Q3 2025

193. Cross-reference to rationale and supporting discussions: Outcome 1.3 of component 1 in the project results framework, attached in Annex X (first portal entry).

Recommendation 7	Commission a third-party assessment of capacity development to devise the impact of the project on the country excluding bias. The sample should ensure gender neutrality.
Challenges to be addressed by the recommendation	The project design and document does not specify the responsible organisation for governance of capacity development in St Kitts and Nevis through the project. Capacity Development Scorecard at Mid-term was developed during the MTR by the EA. It is inefficient when the implementing agency also acts as an evaluator of the progress. The results framework has absorbed the information as preliminary at this stage.
Priority Level	Low
Type of Recommendation	Strategic and Technical
Responsibility	UNEP, GOV, PSC, IUCN

Proposed implementation timeframe	Q2 2025

194. Cross-reference to rationale and supporting discussions: Preliminary Capacity Development Scorecard at Mid-term.

ANNEX I. RESPONSE TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Table 4.1: Response to stakeholder comments received but not (fully) accepted by the reviewers, where appropriate

Page Ref	Stakeholder comment	Reviewer Response
9	Just a general statement regarding what is being reported throughout the document and not the placement of this information. This document is reporting on things that have not yet been done and causes me to question the data collected. If there are questions, please reach out to the relevant KIs and get a proper understanding of what has been delivered by the project. You are reporting that we have targeted tourism stakeholders when we have not reported this.	These were reported based on KIIs, however, revisions have been made.
11	In general, there seems to be a lack of understanding of the technical components of the project e.g. mangroves, biodiversity etc or there is not enough consultation with subject matter experts within the team. This needs to be resolved or we will never achieve meaningful recommendations for key outcomes of components 1 and 2.	Technical experts have been consulted and their inputs are incorporated into the recommendations for the relevant components.
11	While I agree that there should have been a baseline, I disagree that this should be focus of the project moving forward. Has this impacted project implementation in a major way? How will this recommendation help us to achieve our objectives?	Agreed. The recommendation has been deprioritized.
11	General comment: there is a large emphasis on the mangrove restoration; compared to the rest of the project - the mangrove restoration is relatively minor given the small spatial footprint. The larger part of the recommendations should really be on the agric/land restoration aspects	Agreed. The recommendations have been revised accordingly.
	Agreed. This has been stated before. 20 ha of mangrove to be restored vs 480 ha of forest and farms to be restored and still no recommendation to expedite the 480-ha restoration. Forest restoration is slow, and you mentioned elsewhere in the document that their challenges...where is the recommendation????? Also…. what is this central processing plant? Is this even the correct term? Have been added?? This statement is incomplete	
11	Within scope?	This was updated
	Why though? This a length and possibly complicated process. In my opinion, it is not feasible. Also, bear in mind most mangrove on private property.	
11	This is not feasible. Anything related to passport fall under national security. We will not be exploring.	Removed
11	This does not connect to the recommendation statement above	The recommendations were updated
	Agreed. This entire section is all over the place. In general, the recommendations need to make sense and in most cases they do not. The MTR team must consider the MAJOR challenges that need to be addressed to achieve the outcomes and the connection of the recommendation to the challenges they are intended to address MUST BE CLEAR.	
	This may need a review by agric/project personnel. In any case the section is really about the project complementarity rather than outlining the specific interventions	This was removed and section updated accordingly
	Agreed. The KIIs picked this up I believe.	
18	Do not understand how the project design gets rated HU Rating not consistent with the evaluation criteria. This is to be discussed against the project design itself. Was the scoring applied using the numeric rating?	Agreed. The whole section has been revised based on the 13 criteria.

Page Ref	Stakeholder comment	Reviewer Response
	This is a mystery. I would like to see the assessment done for this using the table in the MTR criterion rating description document. E.g. the scores for Operating Context Project Preparation Strategic Relevance Intended Results and Causality Logical Framework and Monitoring Governance and Supervision Arrangements Partnerships Learning, Communication and Outreach Financial Planning / Budgeting Efficiency Risk identification and Social Safeguards Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic Effects Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps To see how you arrived at HU.	
18	This is not done correctly...the logic is to review activities to outputs in terms of if valid or need to be reconstructed toward the realization of the outcomes. Then the targets as per results framework are proposed.	Agreed that assumptions were not taken in the right context, and this has been updated accordingly. The TOC was considered to remain largely valid and hence the adjustments suggested were removed.
20	What does this mean? That they may no longer be participating. All beneficiaries? This will need to be contextualized. This is a very significant statement that is being made with significant implications	The statement was revised to provide more clarity as it was taken a bit out of context.
	This statement has no relevance. There are no signed beneficiary agreements...fine. We are in the process of drafting a report on the interventions on each farm so that all the support to beneficiaries is adequately documented. Please remove this statement. As a matter of fact, it does not seem as though what is written in the section is what should really be here. Perhaps the guidance document should be consulted.	
20	Meaning the project does not have enough funds to do this? What about the restoration opportunity analysis (done by IUCN) that intended to evaluate this...there is no mention of this but in this case would be very relevant. Clearly the project was not to invest in areas that were impossible or impractical to restore. The question is whether the spatial target needs to be reconsidered, or the nature of the intervention be adjusted?	This was recorded based on inputs from KIIs but has been revised accordingly.
	Chris since it´s forest, it is likely that the roads to access sites will require some clearing and maintenance. Some will not be vehicle accessible and require walking. We don´t mind working in those areas, we just want it to be clear that these contribute to the slow progress. They also require much work to clear strips in the invasive grass which requires manpower. That is a cost to the project but this isn´t phrased properly. Budget constraints for labour have not caused difficulties @Saanchi. All we have said was that the project document was not clear that it would require the allocation of funds for this labour-intensive work. The statement here is not saying the same thing so please revise.	
25	This has been noted in the prior version where the context for saying that there is lacking innovation; implying 'completely lacking' the way is expressed here. Note again that the mangrove restoration constitutes a relatively small part of the overall project, yet seems to significant sway this MTR opinion	This was updated.

Page Ref	Stakeholder comment	Reviewer Response
	I disagree with this as well. Mangroves did not get enough rainfall as the period was hot and dry. What innovation does it require to water them? All we did was use another site where they can be monitored and watered regularly. Still, this cannot represent our restoration efforts on a whole as we simply cannot plant mangroves without seedlings. Has reforestation really failed?	
26	Still confused over how the drone tech will enhance turtle nesting observations	Input was based on KIIs and the usage has been explained by Nikkita.
	It does help them monitor the beach at night if they do daily flyovers. They can better locate nests and in cases where they need to be relocated, they can detect this much easier. This is why the SKSTMN requested a thermal drone for night monitoring. They have lost most of the nests during previous nesting seasons because they do not have enough volunteers to monitor the entire stretch of beach every night. According to them	
	Realistically speaking, we cannot do this unless we go into drilling ground water or desalination which the project cannot afford either, so should it really be mentioned?	Agreed and removed
30	Overall, I find this assessment to be contradictory Are you suggesting there isn´t enough government support? If so, who do you think has been supporting our project activities?	The language has been revised to make it clear
31	Not seeing the connection between legislative approval and financial sustainability based on your statement. Please explain. What do you mean by this??	Revised

Table 4.2: Subsequent Comments received on the Prefinal MTR Report Version

Page Ref	Stakeholder comment	Reviewer Response
9	Monitoring platform no longer being developed by the project.	Noted that an alternative to the integrated monitoring platform is being explored
10	With less than 6 months remaining it should be clear if it can be done within the lifetime or if an extension is needed. If an extension is required for the outcomes to be achieved, I believe it should be clearly stated that they cannot be achieved with the time that remains.	Revised - the requirement for 2-year extension has been explicitly mentioned.
11	Not sure if this is reflected in UNEPs system but internally our expenditures are reported by component. I can share examples of our project´s monthly reports to validate this	The finding has been revised. However, IUCN is requested to share component wise financial reports.
11	This statement is made throughout the document but in reality, the cofinance shortfall has not impacted project implementation. There has been no reliance on the cash cofinance contributions.	Agreed that although, the implementation of the project activities have majorly relied on GEF financing, the shortfalls in co-financing will impact the upscaling the project activities in the long term.
13	There was the much consideration given to redefining the biodiversity targets; there is nothing contained in the recommendations listed here. This should have been prominent, no?	In concurrence to the project implementation body IUCN, the MTR team recommends the change in the indicator 1.3 from "% change in recorded successful nesting of the Least Terns and Brown Pelican…" to "% change in recorded successful nesting of the Least Terns and Wilson Plovers….".

Page Ref	Stakeholder comment	Reviewer Response
		Brown Pelican is replaced by Wilson Plover as the latter were recognized as an indicator species during the BD assessment, and Brown Pelicans were not. Moreover, considering nesting success is very difficult for leatherback turtle; additionally given all the external factors faced by KBA and the absence of an alternative metric to nesting success; the MTR recommends considering lowering the nesting success target 10% - 15% as the end of the project target. Added as Recommendation 3 above and detailed in Section V.
17	Just highlighting that the project is not responsible for generating them (means of verification), and clearly, this is not something that is monitored by the government or other stakeholders, making it difficult for the project to make any meaningful contribution.	As highlighted by IUCN team, parameters like species inventory, population density reports, abundance index reports, biodiversity monitoring reports, carbon sequestration assessment report were not monitored by government or other stakeholder and were not available for the MTR. Outcome monitoring was assumed in the project, however specific monitoring activities were not specified in the project design.
19	Not sure this is valid for forest restoration as forest restoration takes place in the forest. By its nature, the forest is not “easily accessible”. Also note that a spatial prioritization exercise was conducted to identify sites for forest restoration. The selection of sites is not arbitrary or based on ease of access.	ROAM reference added focussing on both mangrove and forest restoration. Diagnosis of ‘restoration readiness’ and strategies for addressing key institutional bottlenecks is a key product of the ROAM.
23	State the specific Global Biodiversity Framework targets, e.g. target 2 "Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems"	Specific GBF Targets have been added
30	This is an example when doing a simple arithmetic average of activity completion will not yield a realistic estimate of the overall output achievement which is substantially completion of the reforestation and ANR. In reality it will be less than 32%. The ANR work in the field should be weighted differently to the other activities.	For most of the outputs preparatory activities such as assessments, training, and site identification were largely completed, critical field implementation activities — including reforestation, mangrove restoration, and degraded land rehabilitation for certain outputs (2.1.1, 2.1.2, and 2.2.1) - were minimal or only partially achieved. For such indicators, we have updated our approach to use weighted averages to have a better percentage completion status. Weighted Average Based on Activity Completion Criticality: Activities essential to achieving the core purpose of the output (restoration and rehabilitation activities) can be assigned higher weights (60%), whereas preparatory or supporting activities (e.g., training sessions, consultations) can be assigned lower weights (40%).

Page Ref	Stakeholder comment	Reviewer Response
34	Be mindful that the challenges for forest restoration differ from those of mangrove restoration.	Revised with stating separate challenges for forest and mangrove restoration.
34	Correct (challenges remain in assessing awareness among international visitors and residents). This is not feasible, what is recommended as an alternative? I am not seeing a recommendation in this report	MTR suggests an alternative cost-effective mechanism (e.g. placing posters with QR code at airport to collect feedback) to be developed and implemented.
35	Not identified. The assessments are completed	Revised – specifying the completed assessments
39	That will be 'perceived' as the project has not deviated from design at implementation; the context should be stated in terms of "managing the stakeholder expectations in project execution"	The statement has been revised highlighting project adaptability in response to changing stakeholder expectations.
44	Normally the preparation of an exit strategy will be toward end of the project rather than expecting it to be fully developed by mid-term. Hence the MTR recommendation should be that an exit strategy be developed in the latter stage of implementation	According to the MTR Criteria Ratings Matrix, the rating for financial stability criterion suggests that an exit strategy has been developed for a moderately likely rating and an exit strategy is initiated for a likely rating. Thus, the MTR has provided the unlikely rating for the same.
45	There should be the recommendation that the CF be revisited, and a new amount determined. I note that this para seems to be contrary to what has been stated elsewhere	The findings have been revised at other places in the report, and recommendation has been provided.
50	This section needs some work. Please consult the Criterion Rating Description Matrix. Additionally, examples from similar reports should be useful.	Noted and revised as per the Criterion Rating Matrix. The language has been revised to convey the correct message.
52	May have not made this point clear enough before but the first order of alignment should be with the country's priorities and relationship to the national obligations under the UNCCD (land degradation) that GEF resources have been committed to. The GEF focal area strategy should also be referenced. The reference the SDGs and other relevant frameworks. Following this, the alignment to UNEP's programme of work/strategy comes in.	Noted and revised accordingly, with GEF focal areas referenced
57	I would not say the priority is critical at this point	Accepted, priority level changed to High from Critical.
57	The recommendation 4 statement is rather general and vague although the statement below is speaking about the restoration challenges and approaches that are very specific. The recommendation statement should therefore be more concrete and targeted - list the specific things that project management should do that will address the challenges; actions that can be monitored.	The recommendation has been revised and specific measures provided. MTR recommends establishing and implementing a revised procurement plan for pending activities.

ANNEX II. PEOPLE CONSULTED DURING THE REVIEW

Table 5: People consulted during the Review

Organisation	Name	Position	Role in the project	Gender
United Nations Environment Programme	**Christopher Cox**	Task Manager	Oversees implementation to ensure effective strategies are developed for successful fund utilisation.	M
	Gloritzel Frangakis	Programme Assistant	Supports implementation and coordination of activities between UNEP & EA.	F
	George Saddimbah	Fund Management Officer	Overseeing the financial management and allocation of funds to ensure effective implementation.	M
	Sophia Mwangi	Financial Officer	Monitoring and reporting to ensure transparent management of project funds.	F
International Union for Conservation of Nature	**Nikkita Browne**	Project National Coordinator	Leads the implementation of project activities and is the national focal point.	F
	Melvin James	Sustainable Agriculture Expert	Plans and executes agricultural practices that enhance food production.	M
	Rodrigo Flores	Regional coordinator	Oversees implementation and financial management at the regional level.	M
Ministry of Sustainable Development	**Auren Manners**	Director PSIP	Oversees the coordination and strategic alignment of funding efforts to support overall sustainable development.	M
	Fiona Francis	Project National Focal Point 2	Implementation of project activities at the national level.	F
Ministry of Agriculture (NIA)	**Steve Reid**	Institutional liaison	Facilitates coordination & communication between farmer beneficiaries to support the implementation of CSA & SLM practices.	M
Ministry of Agriculture	**Ian Chapman**	Crop Programme Leader	Oversees agricultural initiatives and contributes to CSA & SLM strategies.	M
	Tonisha Weekes	Institutional liaison	Facilitates coordination & communication between stakeholders to support the implementation of CSA & SLM practices.	F
DoE	**Eric Browne**	Senior Forestry Officer	Coordinates reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives.	M
Department of Physical Planning	**Austin Farier**	Director, Physical Planning	Oversees land use planning and ensures SLM practices are integrated with a long-term strategy in St Kitts	M
Department of Physical Planning and Environment	**Thema Ward**	Senior environmental officer	Oversees the implementation of SLM practices and ensures compliance with environmental regulations in Nevis.	F
St. Kitts Sea Turtle Monitoring Network	**Kimberly Stewart**	Director	Provides expertise in marine conservation and contributes to knowledge sharing in turtle nesting at camps and other public awareness campaigns.	F
New River Farmers association	**Merla Isles**	President	Key leadership role in coordinating farmer involvement, implementing feasible practices, & highlighting gaps in execution.	F
Scholarship recipient - Virgina Tech University	**Orisia Williams**	Masters in Natural Resource Management (Aug 23 – Aug 25)	Involved in mangrove reforestation and education campaign/workshops focused on improving land management and environmental restoration.	F

ANNEX III. KEY DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Sn	Documents/References
Project planning and reporting documents	
1	Saint Christopher National Physical Development Plan
2	Project Document
3	Crop Climate Suitability and Economic Cost Analysis
4	Updated/revised National Physical Development Plan and Land Use Maps
5	Project Progress Reports
6	Bird Reports 2023
7	Bird Reports 2024
Monitoring and Evaluation documents	
1	UNEP Project Implementation Review Report and Half Yearly Progress Reports
2	Opportunity Map ROAM
3	NPDP Training Guide
4	Conservation Action plan for 2 KBAs
5	Rapid Mangrove Assessment
6	Environmental Management Capacity Mid-term update
7	Training registration forms, participants list, certificates
8	Baseline Assessment Reports
9	Participants' list of turtle conservation activities
10	Budget and quarterly financial reports uploaded on Anubis
Reference websites/documents	
1	National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
2	Integrating Water, Land, and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States
3	Department of Environment, Ministry of Sustainable Development
4	Staunching the flow: St. Kitts and Nevis' fight to keep its soil
Pending Reports or Means of Verification	
1	Species Inventory Report
2	Population Density Reports
3	Abundance Index Reports
4	Least Tern and Brown Pelican Nesting Reports
5	BD Monitoring Report
6	Annual Agriculture Sector Report
7	Carbon sequestration baseline assessment report
8	SLM, BD conservation and CSA reports
9	Partnership Agreements or MOUs
10	Signed beneficiary agreements
11	Public Awareness Survey Reports
12	Turtle Nesting Reports
13	Copies of undergraduate or post-graduate degrees obtained
14	Copies of baseline and actual digital land use maps and Building Codes

ANNEX IV. REVIEW ITINERARY

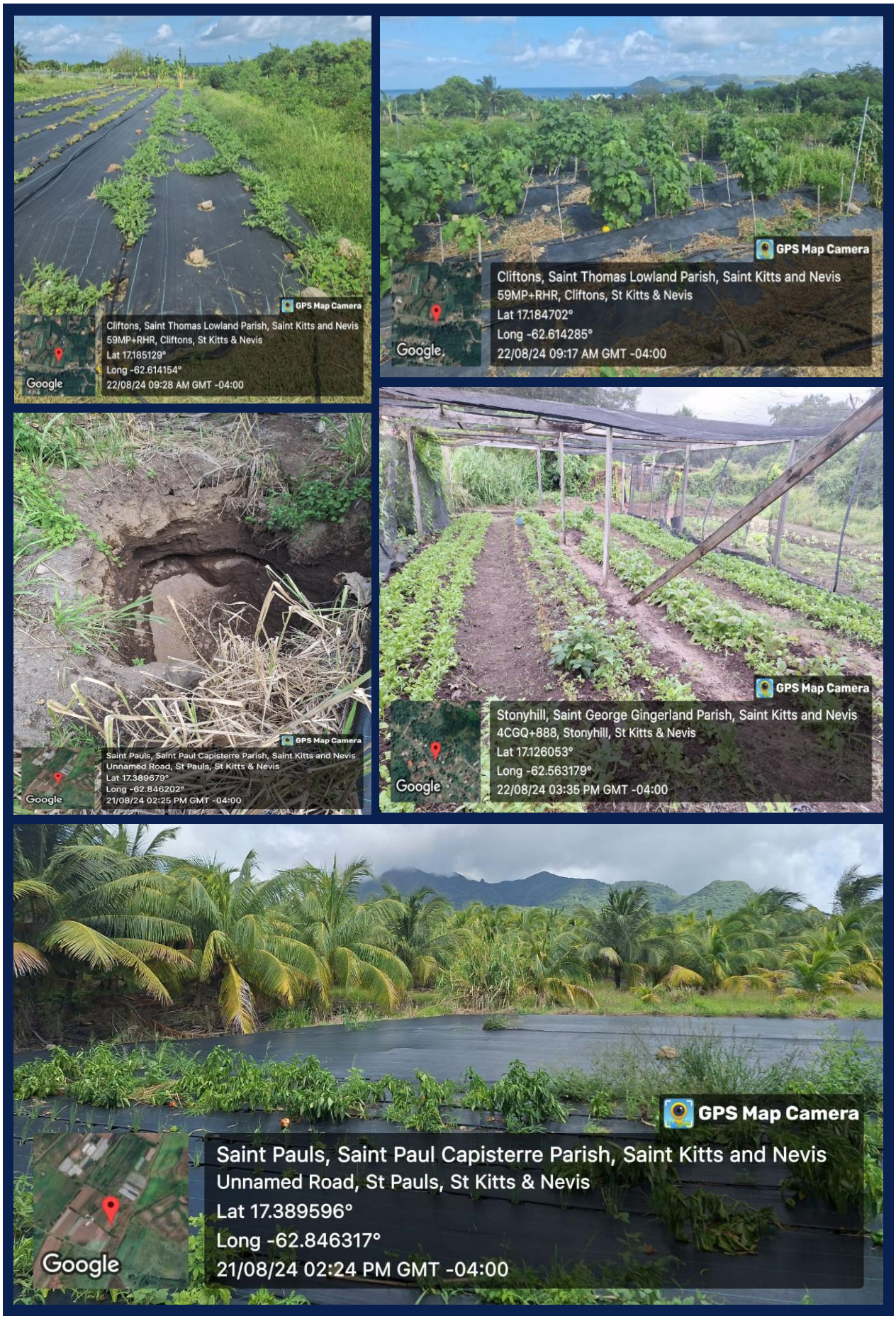
Table 2: Site Visits

Sn	Farm location	Island	Interviewees	Date of visit
1	Cayon	St Kitts	James Brandy	20 August 2024
2	Cayon	St Kitts	Otis Jeffers	20 August 2024
3	Cayon	St Kitts	Solomon Morton	20 August 2024
4	Cayon	St Kitts	Franklyn Mitcham	20 August 2024
5	Cayon	St Kitts	Tristram Mills	20 August 2024
6	Fahies	St Kitts	Aaron Hodge	21 August 2024
7	Cades Bay	Nevis	Don Liburd	22 August 2024
8	Hanley's Road	Nevis	Vanessa Morton	22 August 2024

Table 3: Focus Group Discussions

Sn	Location	Island	Beneficiaries participated	Date
1	Fahies	St Kitts	Aaron Hodge	20 August 2024
	Cayon		Franklyn Mitcham	
			Jason O' Donahue	
			Otis Jeffers	
	Estridge		Keithroy Matthew	
			Esmon Henderson	
			Nigel William	
			Evan Daniel	
			Lionel Stevens	
			Tutakhamen Mills	
			Tristan Mills	
2	New River	Nevis	Justin Huggins	22 August 2024
			Quincy Bart	
			Winston Fyfield	
			Greggory Elliot	
			Sally Parris	
			Ermileta Elliott	
			Christoph D	
			James David	
			Dow Liburd	
			Clive Bussue	
			Merla Barzey	
			Adina Taylor	
			Florence William	
			Vanessa Morton	

Geo-stamped pictures captured during field missions




17°23'22.8"N 62°50'46.3"W
17°23'22.6"N 62°50'46.7"W
Tabernacle
Cayon farms
Sandy Point Town
Saint Kitts
Old Road Town
Monkey Hill
Basseterre
Trinity
Frigate Bay
Fahies farms
17°11'04.9"N 62°36'51.4"W
17°11'06.5"N 62°36'51.0"W
17°07'33.8"N 62°33'47.4"W
Charlestown
17°07'33.8"N 62°33'47.4"W

ANNEX V. PROJECT BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

Table 4: Project Funding Sources

Funding source (All figures as USD)	Planned funding	% of planned funding	Secured funding	% secured funding
Cash				
Funds from the Environment Fund	3,015,982	11.6	1,544,329	51.2
Sub-total: Cash contributions	**3,015,982**	**11.6**	**1,544,329**	**51.2**
Co-financing				
Co-financing cash contribution	22,057,778	85.7	4,882,480	21.5
In-kind contribution from the EA	437,200	1.9	-	
Co-financing in-kind contribution	200,310	0.8	-	-
Sub-total: Co-financing contributions	**22,695,288**	**88.4**	4,882,480	**22.1**
Total	**25,711,270**	**100**	**6,426,809**	**25**

Table 5: Expenditure by Component

Component (USD)	Estimated cost at design	Actual Cost till 30 June 2024		
		GEF	Third party co-finance	Total
National Project Component	7,387,462.19	730,227.70	2,658,692.28	**3,388,919.98**
Subcontract Component	2,262,316.20	78,066.19	1,912,316.20	**1,990,382.39**
Training Component	1,223,358.61	81,936.99	-	**81,936.99**
Equipment & Premises Component	13,398,833.00	192,271.98	292,010.88	**484,282.86**
Miscellaneous Component	1,439,300.00	46,888.88	19,460.41	**66,349.29**
Total	**25,711,270.00**	**1,129,391.74**	**4,882,479.77**	**6,011,871.51**

ANNEX VI. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Table 8: Financial Management

Financial management components		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
1. Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures		**HS**	The project has supported UNEP's policies and procedures and has uploaded the financial reports timely on the Anubis platform. The delays have only been noted in instances where audit queries have been raised which have taken considerable time.
Any evidence that indicates shortcomings in the project's adherence[7] to UNEP or donor policies, procedures or rules		**No**	-
2. Completeness of project financial information[8]		-	-
Provision of key documents to the reviewer (based on the responses to A-H below)		**HS**	UNEP Management facilitated the MTR by providing the consultants with all necessary resources including guest access for the project on Anubis.
A.	Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines)	Yes	This has been highlighted in the budget attached in part D of this section.
B.	Revisions to the budget	Yes	The FMO has adapted to project requirements and annually revised the budget. The latest budget revision has been accepted on Anubis on 05/09/2024.
C.	All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA)	Yes	Available on Anubis and timely updated on the platform.
D.	Proof of fund transfers	Yes	Evidenced by all implemented activities. Advance payments have been made when necessary for project management and implementation of activities on the ground. ▾ **Advances:** 1,325,166.98 on 3,015,982.00 Budget | # | Requested | Acknowledged | Amount (US$) | | | 1 | 25/05/2020 | 13/07/2020 | 452,397.00 | detail | | 2 | 05/05/2023 | 16/06/2023 | 310,381.93 | detail | | 3 | 29/11/2023 | 15/12/2023 | 562,388.05 | detail | | | | | **1,325,166.98** | |
E.	Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind)	Yes	The Co- financing has been in kind, especially in terms of the technical support from relevant ministries in the GOV.
F.	A summary report on the project's expenditures during the life of the project (by budget lines, project components and/or annual level)	Yes	It is available on Anubis titled "Periodic Expenditures Report 17-Q2 2024" as on 18/09/2024.
G.	Copies of any completed audits and management responses *(where applicable)*	Yes	Available on Anubis and updated
H.	Any other financial information that was required for this project:	No	Required information is entirely available and uploaded on Anubis.
3. Communication between finance and project management staff		**HS**	

[7] If the review raises concerns over adherence with policies or standard procedures, a recommendation maybe given to cover the topic in an upcoming audit, or similar financial oversight exercise.
[8] See also document 'Criterion Rating Description' for reference

Project Manager and/or Task Manager's level of awareness of the project's financial status.	**HS**	The team was highly aware of the project's requirements, the timeliness for reporting among other financial issues of the project. The task manager's level of awareness of the financial status is noted to be in a detail.
Fund Management Officer's knowledge of project progress/status when disbursements are done.	**HS**	The Fund Manager has in-depth knowledge of the project status and disbursements.
Level of addressing and resolving financial management issues among Fund Management Officer and Project Manager/Task Manager.	**HS**	There is a high level of interaction for resolving financial management issues especially any audits issues that arise. The issues are resolved to their completion by the Task Manager and FMO.
Contact/communication between by Fund Management Officer, Project Manager/Task Manager during the preparation of financial and progress reports.	**HS**	It was noted that there is satisfactory engagement between IUCN, UNEP and financial reporting to GEF.
Project Manager, Task Manager and Fund Management Officer responsiveness to financial requests during the review process	**HS**	The Task manger and FM were highly responsive and understanding regarding project reporting.
Overall rating	**HS**	**Financial management is very low risk for the project.**

ANNEX VII. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH TOOLS

An outcome harvesting workshop was virtually conducted to validate the findings from the field missions. Representatives from the Government of St Kitts and Nevis, IUCN, and UNEP were invited. Critical stakeholders from IUCN and UNEP were keen participants of the workshop.



Table 6: List of attendees

Sn.	Name	Organization	Physical location
1	Christopher Cox	UNEP – Latin America and the Caribbean	Panama City
2	Nadia Mujica Rosero	IUCN – ORMACC	Costa Rica
3	Nikkita Browne	IUCN – ORMACC	St Kitts and Nevis
4	Gitau Wamukui	Lochan & Co.	Kigali
5	Wayne Archibald	Lochan & Co.	Miami
6	Candice Charlton	Lochan & Co.	Kingston
7	Samarth Agarwal	Lochan & Co.	New Delhi
8	Saanchi Prakash	Lochan & Co.	New Delhi
9	Yuvraj Singh	Lochan & Co.	New Delhi

ANNEX VIII. BRIEF CV OF THE REVIEWER

Name: Sharad Agarwal

Profession	Chartered Accountant
Nationality	Indian
Country experience	97 Countries across Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, Central America, South America and Pacific Islands regions
Education	Chartered Accountant (equivalent to Post Graduate Degree), The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India, 1990
	Bachelor of Commerce (H), Ramjas College, Delhi University, India

Short biography

Sharad Agarwal is a Senior Partner at Lochan & Co with more than 34 years of experience. He has led numerous development and consultancy projects, both nationally and internationally. He has successfully executed multibillion-dollar projects financed by international financial institutions and has collaborated with various government agencies, ministries, and global development organizations such as the World Bank, ADB, USAID, IUCN, UN agencies, and more.

Key specialties and capabilities cover: Project management & coordination, independent verification, mid-term reviews, external evaluations, developing SOPs/manuals, PFM assessments, audit, financial due diligence, training & capacity building etc.

Selected assignments and experiences

Project Director	MTR for the GEF funded project "Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management in St. Kitts and Nevis".	2024-(ongoing)
Project Director	MTR for Towards Ending Drought Emergencies – TWENDE Project a Forest & Land Use Programme, Kenya	2024-(ongoing)
Project Director	MTR of GEF Mekong Peatlands Project, Cambodia & Laos PDR	2023
Project Director	MTR of the Forest Landscape Restoration in the Mayaga Region Project, Rwanda	2023
Project Director	Independent Assessment of the GCF REDD+ Results-Based Payments Project in Indonesia	2022 to 2024
Team Member	Technical Assistance on Institutionalizing and Integrating climate change into the National Planning and Budgeting Processes	2022 - 2023
Team Member	Feasibility Study for integration of Climate Budget Tagging (CBT) into the National Accounting System and Private Sector & CSOs, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN)	2021

Name: Bivash Ranjan

Profession	Environment & Forestry Expert
Nationality	Indian
Country experience	India
Education	Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Management, Institute of Rural Management, Delhi, India, 2002
	Post Graduate Diploma in Forestry, Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy, Dehradun, India, 1991
	MSc. Zoology (Gold Medallist), Bhagalpur University, Bihar, India,1983

Short biography

Dr Bivash Ranjan is a highly accomplished environmental conservation expert with over three decades of experience in forest conservation, sustainable resource management, and BD protection. He holds advanced degrees in rural management, forestry, and zoology. He has served as the Additional Director General of Forests (Wildlife) at India's Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change. His leadership has been instrumental in high-profile national and international projects, including G20 negotiations, where he served as Co-chair and Theme Lead (Land and BD) for the Environment Working Group.

Key specialties and capabilities cover: Policy formulation, climate change mitigation, natural resource management, landscape ecology, afforestation & wildlife conservation, developing M&E framework, etc.

Selected assignments and experiences

Project Advisor	MTR for Towards Ending Drought Emergencies – TWENDE Project a Forest & Land Use Programme, Kenya	2024-(ongoing)
Additional Director General of Forest and Co-chair ECSWG G20	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Govt. of India	2022-2024
Deputy Director General	Integrated Regional Office (IRO) Uttar Pradesh, India	2020-2022
Chief Conservator of Forests	Forest Department, Government of Uttar Pradesh, India	2014-2020

Name: Gitau Charles Wamukui

Profession	Climate Change Expert
Nationality	Kenyan
Country experience	Rwanda, Kenya, St Kitts and Nevis
Education	Ph.D. (Project Management)
	Registered EIA Expert – Rwanda Environmental Management Authority (REMA)
	M.Sc. (Project Management)

Short biography

Gitau is a Project Management, Monitoring & Evaluation Expert with over 25 years' experience in the Environment and Project Management field gained both from an operational and consulting practices. Well versed in assessing and reviewing program strategies/policies, strategic planning of organizations (NGOs), quantitative & qualitative data collection and analysis.

Key specialties and capabilities cover: Project management, social and environmental surveys, baseline survey, midterm reviews, REEIS analysis, vulnerability assessment, etc.

Selected assignments and experiences

Team Leader	MTR for the GEF funded project "Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management in St. Kitts and Nevis".	2024-(ongoing)
Team Leader	MTR for Towards Ending Drought Emergencies – TWENDE Project a Forest & Land Use Programme, Kenya	2024-(ongoing)
National Team Member	MTR & Final Evaluation of increasing the adaptive capacity of vulnerable Rwandan communities to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change project, Rwanda.	2021-2024
Landscaping Expert	MTR of the Forest Landscape Restoration in the Mayaga Region Project, Rwanda	2023
Team Leader	MTR of Rwanda Digitalization Program	2023

Name: Wayne Archibald

Profession	Engineer/Researcher
Nationality	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Country experience	St Kitts and Nevis, St. Thomas, USVI, Jamaica, Virgin Islands, USA
Education	Ph.D. (Materials Science and Engineering), Carnegie Mellon, 2004
	M.S. (Materials Science and Engineering), Carnegie Mellon, 1999

Short biography

With over 15 years in consultancy, Dr Archibald specializes in climate vulnerability assessment, green technology training programs, and public awareness initiatives. He authored a report on climate change knowledge in the U.S. Virgin Islands and conducted a feasibility study for transforming Saint Kitts & Nevis' public transport to electric vehicles. He actively engages with the media, policymakers, and the public to advocate for sustainable policies and establishes partnerships with various organizations to promote energy and sustainability projects.

Key specialties and capabilities cover: Project coordination, climate change vulnerability assessment, sustainable development, green technology adoption etc.

Selected assignments and experiences

Founder	Green Solutions International SKN Incorporated	2017-date
Consultant	JPS Foundation/IDB Lab	2021-2022
Consultant	Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre	2018
Assistant Professor	University of the Virgin Islands	2010-2016

Name: Candice Charlton

Profession	Educator/Researcher
Nationality	Jamaican
Country experience	Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis
Education	Ph.D. in Applied Physics from The University of the West Indies, Mona (pending) Specialization: Bushfires & Climate Change
	B.Sc. Energy and Environmental Physics from The University of West Indies, Mona (2012-2015), Minored in Science Education

Short biography

Candice is an independent consultant partnered with Green Solutions International SKN. She has a diverse background spanning research and teaching in climate science, renewable energy, natural hazards (bushfires), and hazard mitigation and disaster management. She has been a researcher in these areas for the past eight years and has worked on both national and regional projects.

Key specialties and capabilities cover: Project coordination, Data analysis and visualization, Hazard mitigation and disaster management, Fire Investigation, Workshop Coordination, etc.

Selected assignments and experiences

Data Analyst	MTR for GEF project "Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management in St. Kitts and Nevis"	2024-(Ongoing)
Project Coordinator	The University of West Indies, Mona	2023-2024
National Consultant	CATIE (Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza)	2020-2021
Project Coordinator	Meteorological Service of Jamaica	2019-2020
Research Assistant	The University of the West Indies, Mona	2017-2022

Name: Samarth Agarwal

Profession	Chartered Accountant
Nationality	Indian
Country experience	India, Myanmar, Lao PDR, Thailand, Indonesia, Cambodia, Ethiopia, South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Kenya, Burundi, Jordan, The Netherlands etc.
Education	Certified Practicing Accountant (CPA), Australia, 2018
	Post Graduate Diploma in Finance and Accounting (PGDFA) Equivalent to Masters, Amity University, Noida, India, 2016

Short biography

Samarth is positioned as a Manager at Lochan & Co. He has executed consultancy projects in different sectors for international agencies, multilateral/bilateral agencies, local governments in 14 countries in Africa and Asia region.

Key specialties and capabilities cover: Project coordination, field management, data collection, data quality control, training & capacity building, independent verification, auditing, asset verification, expenditure verification, etc.

Selected assignments and experiences

Team Member	MTR for GEF project "Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management in St. Kitts and Nevis"	2024-(Ongoing)
Team Member	MTR for Towards Ending Drought Emergencies - TWENDE Project a Forest & Land Use Programme, Kenya	2024-(Ongoing)
Team Member	MTR of GEF Mekong Peatlands Project, Cambodia & Laos PDR	2023

Team Member	MTR of the Forest Landscape Restoration in the Mayaga Region Project, Rwanda	2023
Team Member	Independent Assessment of the GCF REDD+ Results-Based Payments Project in Indonesia	2022- 2024
Team Member	Planning and Budgeting for Climate Change: Technical Assistance on Institutionalizing and Integrating climate change into the National Planning and Budgeting Processes	2022 - 2023
Team Member	Feasibility Study for integration of Climate Budget Tagging (CBT) into the National Accounting System and Private Sector & CSOs, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN)	2021

Name: Saanchi Prakash

Profession	Climate and Sustainability Consultant
Nationality	Indian
Country experience	India, Kenya, St Kitts and Nevis
Education	M.A. in Public Administration from IGNOU, New Delhi, India (2020-2022), Specialised in Disaster Management
	B.A. (Honours) in Political Science from University of Delhi, India (2017-2020), Minored in Economics

Short biography

Saanchi is employed at Lochan & Co. as an Associate Consultant, a development consultant with a keen focus in climate change adaptation and community resilience. She has previously worked in restoring mangroves in the UNESCO heritage site of the Sundarbans in India, among other endeavours in CCA. She has also worked with an Indian ministry for implementation of a pan Indian government scheme.

Key specialties and capabilities cover: CCA, Nature Based Solutions, Resilience building, Disaster management and capacity development, action research in conflict zones, etc.

Selected assignments and experiences

Team Member	MTR for GEF project "Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management in St. Kitts and Nevis"	2024
Team Member	MTR for Towards Ending Drought Emergencies - TWENDE Project a Forest & Land Use Programme, Kenya	2024
Public Administration Expert	Action research on the impact of Covid-19 in hazard preparedness in the Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam	2022
Team Member	Mangrove restoration in the Sundarbans, West Bengal	2021

Name: Yuvraj Singh

Profession	Development Consultant
Nationality	Indian
Country experience	India, Ethiopia, St Kitts and Nevis
Education	M.A. in History from IGNOU, New Delhi, India (2020-2022) Specialised in Urban Economics
	B.A. in History from the University of Delhi, India (2017-2020)

Short biography

Yuvraj is employed at Lochan & Co. as an Associate Consultant. He has wide knowledge in development studies and keen interest in the economic and environmental aspects. He has worked on various projects related to community engagement and behavioural change communication.

Key specialties and capabilities cover: Project coordination and execution, Data analysis and visualization, Climate change and economic projection and analysis, etc.

Selected assignments and experiences

Team Member	MTR for GEF project "Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management in St. Kitts and Nevis"	2024
Team Member	Independent Verification Agent for the ADELE project in Ethiopia	2024-2027

ANNEX IX. REVIEW TORS (WITHOUT ANNEXES)

Version 0.2. June 2022

Annex 1
TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Regional Office for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature

(IUCN-ORMACC)

REQUIRES

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES

TO

"Conduct a Mid-Term Review of the UNEP/GEF project Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management in St. Kitts and Nevis"

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1. Project General Information

Table 1. Project Summary

UNEP PIMS/SMA[1] ID:	IPMR SMA ID 43235	
Donor ID:	GEF ID 9785	
Implementing Partners:	International Union for Conservation of Nature, Ministry of Sustainable Development, St. Kitts and Nevis	
SDG(s) and indicator(s):	2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries 14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution 15.3 By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation neutral world	
Sub-Programme:	Nature action subprogramme	**Expected Accomplishment(s):** EA3(a) The health and productivity of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring frameworks at the national and international levels EA3(b) Policymakers in the public and private sectors test the inclusion of the health and

[1] Acronym for ID assigned by the Integrated Planning, Monitoring and Reporting (IPMR) system.

		productivity of ecosystems in economic decision-making		
UNEP approval date:	15-May-19	**Programme of Work Output(s):** (i) Increase in the number of countries that have made progress to monitor and maintain the health and productivity of marine and terrestrial ecosystems (ii) Increase in the number of countries that demonstrate enhanced knowledge of the value and role of ecosystem services (i) Increase in the number of public sector institutions that test the incorporation of the health and productivity of marine and terrestrial ecosystems in economic decision-making		
Expected start date:		**Actual start date:**	25/05/2020	
Planned operational completion date:	30/06/2025	**Actual operational completion date:**	24-May-25	
Planned total project budget at approval (show breakdown of individual sources/grants):	3,015,982 USD	**Actual total expenditures reported as of [date]:**	819,670.08 USD	
Expected co-financing:	22,695,288 USD	**Secured co-financing**[2]:	25,000 XCD Cash	
First disbursement:	07/07/2020	**Planned date of financial closure:**	30/06/2026	
No. of project revisions:	0	**Date of last approved project revision:**	n/a	
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	2	**Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:**	Last: 06/07/23	Next: 18/03/24
Mid-term Review *(planned date)*[3]:	1-Apr-24	**Mid-term Review (actual date):**		
Terminal Evaluation/Review *(planned date):*	1-Dec-25	**Terminal Evaluation/Review (actual date):**	*Not applicable*	
Coverage - Country(ies):	St. Kitts and Nevis	**Coverage - Region(s):**	Latin America and the Caribbean	
Dates of previous project phases:	n/a	**Status of future project phases:**	n/a	

2. Project Rationale

Sustainable Land Management (SLM) issues in St. Kitts and Nevis are faced with a number of challenges linked to legislative, regulatory, institutional, and capacity barriers. The shift from sugar cane to tourism development as the primary economic driver has resulted in a series of use changes, not only on lands once used for sugar cane production, but also on the coastline to accommodate tourism development infrastructure. Deforestation on slopes has resulted in surface soil erosion and sedimentation, destroying suitable farm land, negatively impacting water supply and quality, and ultimately ending up on the coast with devastating consequences for mangroves, seagrass beds and coral reefs. Land degradation is also exacerbated by residential and tourism developments, by

[2] State whether co-financing amounts are cash or in-kind.

[3] UNEP policies require projects with planned implementation periods of 4 or more years to have a mid-point assessment of performance For projects under 4 years, this should be marked as N/A.

unplanned and unsustainable agricultural practices, and by land-based sources of pollution and waste disposal.

While the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis (SKN) has made steps to address these challenges through national policy attempts, such as the Medium Term Economic Strategy Paper: 2003–2005 which spoke to the enactment of legislation to address land degradation issues; the National Physical Development Plan of 2006 to guide physical development in reference to land and the Draft SKN Land Use Code; the development of a Draft Land Management Unit Framework in 2010, and the Agriculture Development Strategy 2013 – 2016, there has not been much evidence that land degradation and environmental degradation are being effectively addressed. The limited progress achieved to date is as a consequence of several deficiencies at the systemic level as described in detail above under 'Barriers':

- inadequate policy, regulatory and planning frameworks;
- limited technical capacities, experience and models for implementing ecologically sustainable pathways for natural resource use and economic development;
- and lack of knowledge, information and awareness.

The interventions of this project are consistent with a multi-pronged approach that targets the three primary barriers identified.

The project assists SKN to strengthen its policy, regulatory and planning frameworks through the updating/revision of the National Physical Development Plan, revise the legal and regulatory framework to support NPDP implementation, and the production of baseline digital land use maps of areas of high priority environmental concern. Technical capacity for land use planning, natural resource management, and economic development is being supported through training and capacity building for coordinated and effective action on SLM, BD conservation and climate smart agriculture, as well as support to a post-graduate technical training for at least 6 students engaged with the local authorities.

The project also supports SKN in the mainstreaming of BD conservation, SLM and CCM into key development and resource management sectors through the restoration and management of key forest sites, and supports SLM and sustainable agriculture practices. Knowledge, information and awareness are addressed through the implementation of a Public Education and Awareness Strategy and a Knowledge Management Strategy, both of which will have SLM, BD and CC as central themes, and targeted to all stakeholders across the length and breadth of the country.

3. Project Results Framework

Component 1: Integrated and strengthened environmental planning and management on the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis to support island sustainability

Component 1 seeks to address critical planning and management needs in order for SKN to better embrace its sustainable development challenges. In this regard, the project aims to strengthen the institutional and regulatory framework for land use planning to facilitate enhanced inter-agency coordination, as well as build the necessary technical capacity required for successful implementation at the levels of national institutions and stakeholders alike, with due consideration for competing land uses and the need to reduce stress on ecosystems and indicator species in Key Biodiversity Areas. While attempts were made to address land use planning under the last National Physical Development Plan (NPDP), its implementation faced difficulties with the required legal and regulatory support, the necessary institutional arrangements and implementation tools and equipment, valid land use baselines, and required human and technical capacity among key players at multiple levels of responsibility. Additionally, the lack of baseline data on critical biodiversity assets including indicator species, made it difficult to integrate land use policy planning with the need to

ensure that land uses gave due consideration to the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems integrity.

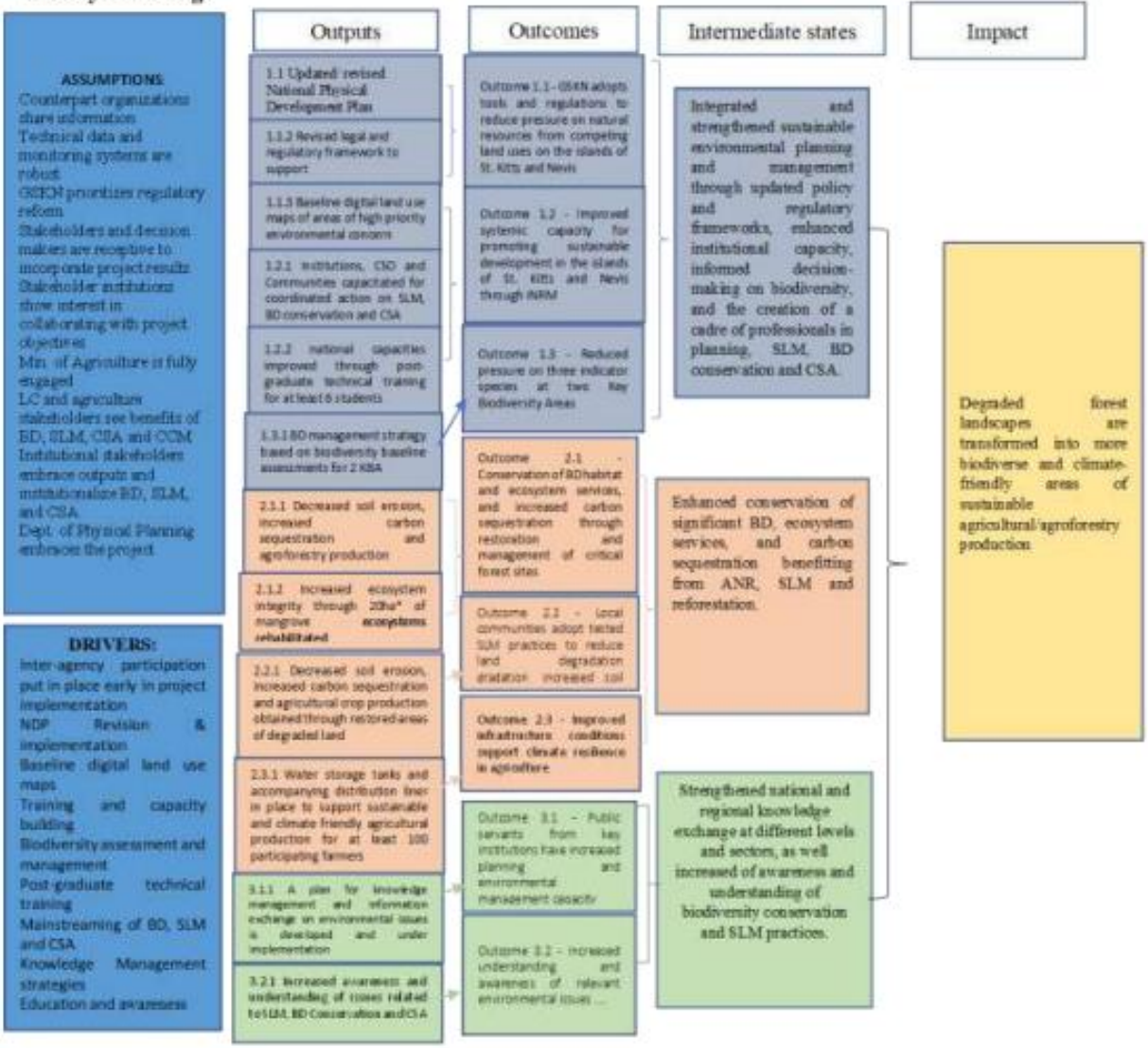
Component 2: Mainstreaming BD conservation, SLM and CCM into key development and resource management sectors

Component 2 complements the planning, regulatory and institutional interventions of Component 1, and focuses on mainstreaming biodiversity, SLM and CCM as a means to address deforestation, land degradation, surface soil erosion, and threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, resulting from current production models in key sectors in St. Kitts and Nevis, including agriculture, tourism, coastal development, pollution, and residential housing construction. The impacts of climate change, which may be aggravated by the particular topographical characteristics of the country, are also considered in the interventions proposed under this component. The project supports reforestation through agro-forestry and targeted planting of native species, and by Assisted Natural Regeneration on degraded landscapes, and in particular on lands once used for sugar cane production. Globally important ecosystems, in this case mangroves, are also receiving restoration investments from the project, and farmers are provided with new skills in Climate-Smart Agriculture, coupled to direct assistance in ensuring a constant and efficient water supply to enhance productivity and reduce wastage, consistent with sustainable agricultural practices.

Component 3: Knowledge management and dissemination for SLM, BD and CC

Component 3 seeks to create a SLM, BD and CC information and Knowledge Management (KM) framework, within the context of the proposed outputs and outcomes of the project in St. Kitts & Nevis. It is envisioned that the successful implementation of the KM framework within the life span of the project will result in a solid foundation for the extended dissemination and exchange of SLM, BD and CC knowledge in St. Kitts & Nevis, contributing directly to SLM, BD conservation and CC mitigation in the country. This component also provides support through public education and awareness interventions to communicate the objectives and actions of the project, in order to increase awareness among specific target groups, national and local authorities and CBOs, taking into account that each target group has an invaluable potential to contribute to SLM, BD and CCM. The project also specifically identifies the need to ensure that locals and visitors are aware of practices for the sustainable use of nature and protection of biodiversity, especially in and around forests, mangroves, reefs, and sea grass beds, and with regard to threatened species of flora and fauna. This component seeks to ensure sustainability of the lessons learned from the pilots under Component 2.

Theory of Change



4. Executing Arrangements

Project Implementing Agency – The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the GEF's Implementing Agency (IA) for this project. UNEP is tasked with the overall responsibility of ensuring that GEF policies and criteria are adhered to and that the project meets its objectives and deliver on expected outcomes. Other specific Implementing Agency responsibilities include ensuring compliance with GEF policies and standards for results-based M&E, fiduciary oversight, safeguards compliance, project budget approvals, technical guidance and oversight of project outputs, approval of Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), and participation in the project's superior governance structure.

Project Executing Agency – The International Union for Conservation of Nature, Regional Office for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (IUCN-ORMACC) is performing the role of executing agency. This decision was made by the GSKN, which has adopted a collaborative approach with partners to facilitate execution of the myriad of initiatives on sustainable development in the country.

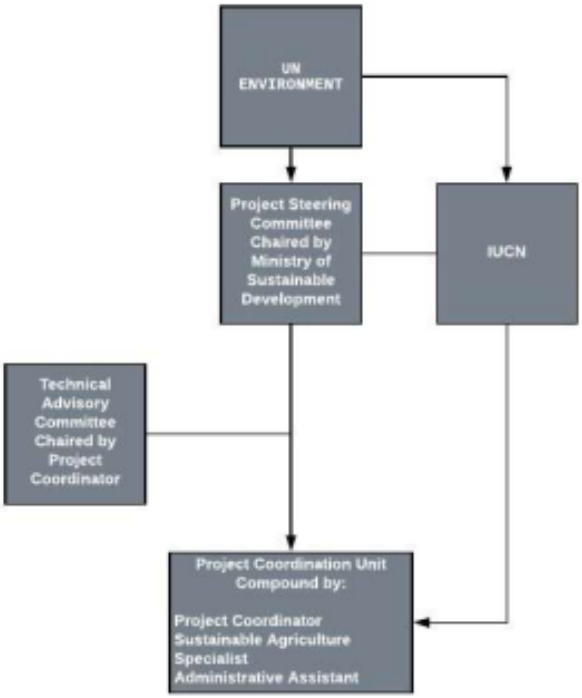
IUCN-ORMACC has established a Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) to oversee day-to-day project

execution. The PCU is responsible for the fiduciary oversight and reporting of the project, including technical and financial reporting to the IA, financial management and procurement consolidation according to the project´s operational manual and procurement plan. It is also responsible for monitoring and evaluation (M&E), provides and coordinates technical advice, and coordinates and assists overall orientation concerning project conception, strategies, criteria and methodologies. The PCU is staffed with a **Project Coordinator,** and a **Sustainable Agriculture Specialist**, based in SKN, and an **Administrative Assistant,** who provides support from Costa Rica.

The project's superior governing body is the **Project Steering Committee (PSC).** The PSC is responsible for ensuring that the project meets goals announced in the Project Results Framework by helping to balance conflicting priorities and resources. Conclusions and recommendations produced by the PSC are used by IUCN-ORMACC to modify implementation strategies, annual work plans and resources allocation budget and, when necessary, to adjust the project's Result Framework in consultation with UNEP and the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis.

A **Technical Working Group (TWG)** is appointed to provide technical oversight, guidance and support during project implementation. The TAC is also responsible for reviewing and providing recommendations on project methodological processes (technical quality) and activities to the PCU for its consideration.

Project Institutional & Implementation Structure



5. Project Cost and Financing

Overall project budget

The overall project budget consists of GEF financing (US$3,015,982, or 11.73% of the total project cost); and co-financing (US$22,695,288 or 88.27% of the total project cost). The budget was prepared for the GEF in accordance with UNEP Budget Line/Object of Expenditure format and is

detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the project documents. Detailed Consultants Costs are presented in Appendix 9 of the project documents, while Terms of Reference for key project staff are presented in Appendix 10, and the project's Draft Procurement Plan is presented in Appendix 13. The distribution of the GEF funding and corresponding co-financing is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Project Costs

Component	GEF Trust Fund	Co-Financing	Total
1: Integrated and strengthened environmental planning and management on the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis to support island sustainability	862,921	4,760,466	5,623,387
2: Mainstreaming BD conservation, SLM and CCM into key development and resource management sectors	1,356,476	15,177,280	16,533,756
3: Knowledge management and dissemination for SLM, BD and CC	458,892	1,607,778	2,066,670
Monitoring and Evaluation	194,077	15,000	209,077
Project Management Cost	143,617	1,134,764	1,278,381
TOTAL	**3,015,982**	**22,695,288**	**25,711,270**

6. Implementation Issues

Significant challenges were faced at the startup phase of the project, resulting in the lack of implementation during 2020 and 2021. This further increased the risks identified during the project preparation phase however since then, many of the implementation challenges have been addressed while IUCN continues to take steps to address new challenges while mitigating against project risks. A summary of the actions taken are as follows:

Challenges and Risks Identified	Actions Taken
The lack of a project coordinator at the start of the project, and up until the 4th quarter of 2021 led to significant delays in project implementation.	In the interim, IUCN staff based in Costa Rica were assigned to assist in the completion of relevant outputs, while 4 rounds of interviews were conducted.
The COVID-19 pandemic at the start of the project impacted the commencement of technical implementation. The delay was further compounded by the lack of a project coordinator.	A proposal for the initiation of technical activities was discussed and agreed upon with the Ministry of Sustainable Development. This allowed some preparatory activities to commence.
The project was without a Sustainable Agriculture Expert until the end of 2022, thus the advancement of Component 2 activities were significantly impacted.	A recruitment process was completed during the first semester of 2022 to find a suitable replacement for the outgoing Sustainable Agriculture Expert. However, changes in the political situation prolonged the final government approval and thus the hiring of the selected candidate.
The procurement processes for several consultancies were prolonged due to the lack of proposals or in some cases the lack of suitable proposals. Consultancies affected included the Rapid Biodiversity Assessment	Some activities have had to be fast-tracked in order to prevent further delays caused by the absence of consultants, while the project has also relied on the technical expertise of IUCN staff based in Costa Rica and that of national

for Mangrove Ecosystems Consultancy, the Consultancy to Develop a Mangrove Training Manual, the Consultancy to Develop a Knowledge Management Strategy, the Consultancy to Develop a SLM Training Manual and the Crop Market Suitability Study and SLM Cost Cost-Benefit Analysis Consultancy.	stakeholders to advance technical aspects of project activities.
In the case of the Scholarship Program for public servants under Component 1, the project design document had not clearly established the coordination and funding mechanism with the students and universities. This implied a financial and operational risk that generated negotiations between IUCN and SKN to define a management scheme, with roles and responsibilities, as well as procedures for financial management, payment and quality control procedures. This also caused a delay in the disbursement of university fees in the beginning.	IUCN and SKN signed a cooperation agreement specific to the Scholarship Program, in which SKN assumed the responsibility of overseeing the channelling of funds to the universities and students, and it established a joint mechanism to follow up on the performance of the students and the execution of funds.
The Legislative process has proven to be slow and identified in the risk register, it could extend beyond the life of the project with planned regulatory reforms not getting formally enacted/adopted by end of project.	In the absence of a coordinator, efforts were made by staff at the ORMACC office to advance this activity and it was one of the first to commence however it has still proven to be a slow process. It is hoped that the current engagement of high-level government officials would help to garner their support and move the process along so that it can be completed by the end of the project.

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE MID-TERM REVIEW

7. Objective of the Review

In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy[4] and the UNEP Programme Manual[5], the Mid-Term Review (MTR) is undertaken approximately half-way through project implementation to analyze whether the project is on-track, what problems or challenges the project is encountering, and what corrective actions are required.

8. Key Review Principles

Mid-Term review findings and judgements will be based on sound evidence and analysis, clearly documented in the Review Report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) as far as possible, and when verification is not possible, the single source will be mentioned (whilst anonymity is still protected). Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out.

Possible questions to be considered include, *(MTR Review Framework Questions available from UNEP Project Manager):*

- Does the TOC properly reflect the project's intended change process?
- Is the stakeholder analysis still appropriate and adequate to support the project's ambitions?

[4] https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/policies-and-strategies

[5] https://wecollaborate.unep.org

- Are results statements in keeping with UNEP definitions (e.g. outcomes are expressed as the uptake or use of outputs)
- Are roles and responsibilities commonly understood and playing out effectively?
- Is there an effective monitoring mechanism for the project's implementation (this is separate from, and supports, reporting)?
- Is the rate of expenditure appropriate for the mid-point?
- Have plans for inclusivity , equality and/or equity been implemented as planned, or does more need to be done?
- Are safeguard identification and mitigation plans being monitored and steps taken to minimize negative effects?
- Is there an exit strategy in place and are the elements needed for the project's benefits to be sustained after the project end, being incorporated in the project implementation?
- (Where relevant) Have recommendations from previous learning exercises/performance assessments been appropriately addressed
- (Where relevant) What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?

A Mid-Term Review is a *formative assessment*, which requires that the consultant(s) go beyond the assessment of "*what*" the project performance is and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of "*why*" the performance is as it is.

Attribution, Contribution and Credible Association: In order to *attribute* any outcomes and impacts to a project intervention, one needs to consider the difference between what has happened with, and what would have happened without, the project (i.e. take account of changes over time and between contexts in order to isolate the effects of an intervention). This requires appropriate baseline data and the identification of a relevant counterfactual, both of which are frequently not available for reviews. Establishing the *contribution* made by a project in a complex change process relies heavily on prior intentionality (e.g. approved project design documentation, logical framework) and the articulation of causality (e.g. narrative and/or illustration of the Theory of Change). Robust evidence that a project was delivered as designed and that the expected causal pathways developed supports claims of contribution and this is strengthened where an alternative theory of change can be excluded. A *credible association* between the implementation of a project and observed positive effects can be made where a strong causal narrative, although not explicitly articulated, can be inferred by the chronological sequence of events, active involvement of key actors and engagement in critical processes.

Partners and Key Project Stakeholders. A key aim of the Mid-Term Review is to encourage reflection and learning by UNEP staff, the implementing partners and key project stakeholders The Review Consultant should consider how reflection and learning can be promoted, both through the review process and in the communication of review findings and key lessons.

9. Review Criteria

All review criteria will be rated on a six-point scale as follows: Highly Satisfactory[6] (HS = 6); Satisfactory (S = 5); Moderately Satisfactory (MS = 4); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU =3); Unsatisfactory (U = 2); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU =1). A Criteria Ratings Matrix is available, within the suite of tools, to support a common interpretation of points on the scale for each review criterion. The Overall Performance Rating is calculated as a simple average of the ratings for each criterion (A-H). **Any criterion assessed as being in the 'Unsatisfactory' range should trigger corrective action in the Management Response.**

A. Strategic Relevance

[6] *Sustainability* is similarly rated on a six-point scale but labelled from Highly **Likely** (HL) down to Highly **Unlikely** (HU).

The Mid Term Review (MTR) will assess the extent to which the activity is suited to the priorities and policies of UNEP, the donors, implementing regions/countries and target beneficiaries and is operating in a way that is complementary to other ongoing interventions.

The MTR will assess whether there have been any changes in priorities since the project was designed and whether the project has/should adapt to address the changing policy/strategy context.

This criterion comprises two elements:

Alignment to UNEP's, Donors and Country (global, regional, sub-regional and national) strategic priorities

The Review should assess the project's alignment with the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) and Programme Of Work (POW) under which the project was approved and include, in its narrative, reflections on the scale and scope of any contributions made to the planned results reflected in the relevant MTS and POW. UNEP strategic priorities include the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building[7] (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The MTR will assess the extent to which the project is suited to, or responding to, donor priorities as well as alignment of the project with global priorities such as the SDGs and Agenda 2030. The extent to which the project is suited, or responding to, the stated environmental concerns and needs of the countries, sub-regions or regions where it is being implemented will also be considered. Examples may include: UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (Cooperation Framework) or, national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies or Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) plans or regional agreements etc. Within this section consideration will be given to whether the needs of all beneficiary groups are being met and reflects the current policy priority to leave no-one behind.

Complementarity/Coherence[8] with Relevant Existing Interventions

An assessment will be made of how well the project is taking account of ongoing and planned initiatives (under the same sub-programme, other UNEP sub-programmes, or being implemented by other agencies within the same country, sector or institution) that address similar needs of the same target groups.

The MTR will consider if the project team, in collaboration with all partners, is fulfilling any commitments to collaborate made at project design and is working to ensure their own intervention is complementary to other interventions. Examples may include work within Cooperation Frameworks or One UN programming. Linkages with other interventions should be described and instances where UNEP's comparative advantage has been particularly well applied should be highlighted.

B. Quality & Revision of Project Design

The MTR should provide a brief overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the project design and assess whether all elements of the project design have been initiated and/or are still planned for. Based on a review of the project design document, regular reports and meeting minutes, the Review

[7] http://www.unep.fr/ozonaction/about/bsp.htm

[8] This sub-category is consistent with the new criterion of 'Coherence' introduced by the OECD-DAC in 2019.

Consultant will confirm whether any amendments[9] have been made to the activities and/or results of the project. This includes changes to the formulation of results statements as well as changes in results indicators and/or project targets and the associated budget. Where revisions have been made the Consultant should confirm that formal documentation for these amendments is available and that UNEP/donor policies for revisions have been followed. In the absence of such formalisation the Review Consultant will make appropriate recommendations.

C. Effectiveness

The Review will assess effectiveness across three dimensions: availability of outputs, progress towards project outcomes and adaptive management. The Review Consultant will confirm that all results statements conform to UNEP's definitions[10] and make recommendations for adjustments where necessary. At the project's mid-point emphasis is placed on the timeliness, quality and ownership of outputs and whether the project is adopting approaches or delivering activities to support the uptake of outputs (i.e. outcome level results).

i. Theory of Change

The Review will assess whether the Theory of Change/Results Framework represents a coherent and realistic change process from a cause and effect perspective. Considerations will be given to whether the causal pathways are effectively shown/articulated and supported by a full set of contributing conditions (('drivers' are external factors largely under the influence of the project; 'assumptions' are external factors largely outside the influence of the project). The TOC should also reflect[11] UNEP's commitment to increasing equality in line with the UN's commitment to human rights. If adjustments are needed they should be clearly presented and justified during the MTR process and a recommendation made on how any revisions could be formally approved.

Availability of Outputs[12]

The Review will assess the project's success in producing the planned outputs and making them available to the intended beneficiaries as well as its success in achieving milestones as per the project design document or any formal revisions. The availability of outputs will be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality, and the assessment will consider their ownership by, and usefulness to, intended beneficiaries and the timeliness of their provision. It is noted that emphasis is placed on the performance of those outputs that are most important to achieve outcomes. The Review will briefly explain the reasons behind the success or shortcomings of the project in delivering its planned outputs and recommend corrective action as appropriate.

Progress towards Project Outcomes[13]

At the project mid-point the Review Consultant will focus on the links between the provision of outputs and their adoption at the outcome level. The MTR will explore whether the assumptions and drivers

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[9] The conditions and processes for amendments should abide by the terms of the funding agreement. For example, the GEF has specific requirements for the approval/reporting of 'minor' and 'major' amendments. This includes the provision that any minor and major (approved) amendments should be reflected in the PIR report of the same year.

[10] UNEP, 2019, Glossary of Results Definitions

[11] This can be as a driver or assumption if there is no specific equality results statement.

[12] Outputs are the availability (for intended beneficiaries/users) of new products and services and/or gains in knowledge, abilities and awareness of individuals or within institutions (UNEP, 2019)

[13] Outcomes are the use (i.e. uptake, adoption, application) of an output by intended beneficiaries, observed as changes in institutions or behaviour, attitude or condition (UNEP, 2019)

that need to be in place to support the uptake of outputs are evident/emerging and consider whether sufficient effort and attention is being directed towards reaching outcome levels.

The Review Consultant will review the project Theory of Change (TOC) and confirm that is properly reflects all levels (outputs, outcomes, intermediate states and long-lasting impact) of results included in the project design. Where necessary, the TOC should be reconstructed, in discussion with the project team, to better guide and strengthen project implementation.

Likelihood of Impact

Based on the articulation of long-lasting effects in the reconstructed TOC (i.e. from project outcomes, via intermediate states, to impact), the Review will assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts becoming a reality.

The Review will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role14 or has promoted scaling up and/or replication as part of its Theory of Change (either explicitly as in a project with a demonstration component or implicitly as expressed in the drivers required to move to outcome levels) and as factors that are likely to contribute to greater or long-lasting impact.

Adaptive Management

The Review will assess whether any adaptive management[15] is evident, possibly reflected in annual reports or reports from field missions etc. The Review Consultant will consider the project's performance to-date from a risk perspective considering: a) the likelihood of any non/late delivery of the project's workplan; b) likelihood of any negative effects, including reputational risks and safeguard issues and c) factors undermining the endurance of project achievements.

During the MTR, forward plans should be reviewed and adaptive management strategies discussed such that the project's effectiveness and efficiency are maximized. Actions for adaptive management should be reflected in the MTR recommendations, which may include recommendations on governance structures, implementation arrangements, project design elements, monitoring and/or exit strategies etc.

Global Environment Facility	The Review should consider, under Effectiveness, the extent to which the evaluand is reaching Core Indicator targets (from GEF-6 onwards).
Global Environment Facility	The Review will determine, under Effectiveness, the project's additionality by comparing the benefits of GEF support to a scenario without GEF support. It will identify specific areas where GEF support has contributed additional results and what these additional results were. It will provide quantitative and qualitative evidence to support the findings.

[14] The terms catalytic effect, scaling up and replication are inter-related and generally refer to extending the coverage or magnitude of the effects of a project. Catalytic effect is associated with triggering additional actions that are not directly funded by the project - these effects can be both concrete or less tangible, can be intentionally caused by the project or implied in the design and reflected in the TOC drivers, or can be unintentional and can rely on funding from another source or have no financial requirements. Scaling up and Replication require more intentionality for projects, or individual components and approaches, to be reproduced in other similar contexts. Scaling up suggests a substantive increase in the number of new beneficiaries reached/involved and may require adapted delivery mechanisms while Replication suggests the repetition of an approach or component at a similar scale but among different beneficiaries. Even with highly technical work, where scaling up or replication involves working with a new community, some consideration of the new context should take place and adjustments made as necessary.

[15] Adaptive management is an **iterative process** in which practitioners test hypotheses and adjust behavior, decisions, and actions based on experience and actual changes (Stankey et al., 2005).

D. Financial Management

Under financial management the Mid-Term Review will assess: a) whether the rate of spend is consistent with the project's length of implementation to-date, the agreed workplan and the delivery of outputs and b) whether financial reporting and/or auditing requirements are being met consistently and to adequate standards by all parties. Any financial management issues that are affecting the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance will be highlighted. Expenditure should be reported, where possible, at output/component level and will be compared with the approved budget.

Ratings should be provided for two sub-categories (*adherence to policies and completeness of financial information*), as assessed at the mid-point: i) the Review will verify the application of proper financial management standards and adherence to UNEP's financial management policies; ii) the Review will record where standard financial documentation is missing, inaccurate, incomplete or unavailable in a timely manner. The Review may comment on the level of communication between the UNEP Project Manager[16] and the Fund Management Officer as it relates to the effective delivery of the planned project and the needs of a responsive, adaptive management approach.

Global Environment Facility	The Review will determine, under Financial Management, i) time from CEO endorsement (FSP) / CEO approval (MSP) to first disbursement; ii) disbursement balance; iii) whether the project has secured co-financing higher than 35% and iv) time between CEO Endorsement and (likely) end of MTR.

E. Efficiency

Under the efficiency criterion, the Review will assess the extent to which the project delivered maximum results from the given resources. The Review will assess the *cost-effectiveness and timeliness* of project execution.

Focusing on the translation of inputs into outputs, *cost-effectiveness* is the extent to which an intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its results at the lowest possible cost. *Timeliness* refers to whether planned activities have been/are being delivered according to expected timeframes as well as whether events are being sequenced efficiently. The Review will give special attention to efforts being made by the project teams during project implementation to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities[17] with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency.

The Review will also assess ways in which potential project extensions can be avoided through stronger project management.

F. Monitoring and Reporting

The Review will assess monitoring and reporting across two sub-categories: monitoring of project implementation and project reporting.

i. Monitoring of Project Implementation

[16] For GEF funded projects the UNEP Project Manager refers to the Task Manager.

[17] Complementarity with other interventions during project design, inception or mobilization is considered under Strategic Relevance above.

Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART[18] results towards the achievement of the project's outputs and outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender, marginalisation or vulnerability, including those living with disabilities. In particular, the Review will assess the relevance and appropriateness of the project indicators as well as the methods used for tracking progress against them as part of conscious results-based management.

The Review will assess whether the monitoring system is operational and facilitates the timely tracking of results and progress towards project milestones and targets throughout the project implementation period. This assessment will include consideration of whether the project gathered relevant and good quality baseline data that is accurately and appropriately documented. This should include monitoring the representation and participation of disaggregated groups, including gendered, marginalised or vulnerable groups, such as those living with disabilities, in project activities. It will also consider how quality monitoring data are being used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensure sustainability. The Review should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring are being used to support this activity.

Project Reporting

UNEP has a centralised information management system[19] in which project managers upload six-monthly progress reports against agreed project milestones. This information will be provided to the Review Consultant by the UNEP Project Manager. Donors may have specific reporting requirements and copies of reports will be made available by the UNEP Project Manager. The Review will assess the extent to which both UNEP and Donor reporting commitments have been fulfilled. This should include confirmation that meeting and field mission reports are being written and centrally stored.

Where the need for any corrective action has been indicated in any project reports (e.g. as an identified risk), the Review Consultant will record whether this action has been taken. This may include responses made during the COVID-19 pandemic or other unpredictable external events of a disruptive or crisis nature. The Review Consultant will also confirm whether formal reports have been appropriately authorised by both the author and the relevant supervisor.

Global Environment Facility	For internally executed projects the Review Consultant should review the quality of regular reports and confirm they have been submitted on a timely basis.

G. Exit Strategy & Sustainability (for Adaptation Fund, read Human and Ecological Sustainability and Security)

Sustainability[20] is understood as the probability of the benefits derived from the achievement of the project outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the intervention. It may be considered from the perspectives of socio-political, institutional and/or financial sustainability. The Review will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that *are likely* to undermine or contribute to the endurance of benefits at the outcome level. Some factors of sustainability may be embedded in the project design and implementation approaches while others may be contextual circumstances

[18] SMART refers to results that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented. Indicators help to make results measurable.

[19] Project Information Management System (PIMS) or, from 2022, Integrated Planning Monitoring and Reporting (IPMR)

[20] As used here, 'sustainability' means the long-term maintenance of outcomes and consequent impacts, whether environmental or not. This is distinct from the concept of sustainability in the terms 'environmental sustainability' or 'sustainable development', which imply 'not living beyond our means' or 'not diminishing global environmental benefits' (GEF STAP Paper, 2019, Achieving More Enduring Outcomes from GEF Investment)

or conditions that evolve over the life of the intervention. It is assumed that environmental sustainability is central to any UNEP project design but where applicable an assessment of bio-physical factors that may affect the sustainability of project outcomes may also be included.

The Review will ascertain that the project has put in place *an appropriate exit strategy* and measures to mitigate risks to sustainability. The Review Consultant will consider: a) the level of ownership, interest and commitment among government and other stakeholders to take the project achievements forwards; b) the extent to which the sustainability of project outcomes is dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance and c) the extent to which project outcomes are dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained. It will consider whether institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. are robust enough to continue delivering the benefits associated with the project outcomes after project closure.

H. Factors and Processes Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

i. Project Inception

This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project. The Review will assess whether appropriate measures were taken to either address weaknesses in the project design, fill information gaps or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. In particular, the Review will consider the nature and quality of engagement with stakeholder groups by the project team, the confirmation of partner capacity[21] and development of partnership agreements as well as initial staffing and financing arrangements. The Review Consultant will confirm whether appropriate inception meetings were held and whether an inception report is available on file.

Quality of Project Management and Supervision

During the MTR the consultant will review the planned implementation structure and the roles and responsibilities assigned to each partner or party. Where roles are not being played as planned, an appropriate recommendation to formalise correction action and/or a change in the implementation structure, should be made.

In some cases 'project management and supervision' may refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to partners and national governments while in others it may refer to the project management performance of an implementing partner and the technical backstopping and supervision provided by UNEP. The performance of parties playing different roles should be discussed and a rating provided for both types of supervision (UNEP/Implementing Agency; Partner/Executing Agency) and the overall rating for this sub-category is established as a simple average of the two.

The Review will assess the effectiveness of project management to-date with regard to: providing leadership towards achieving the planned outcomes; managing team structures; maintaining productive partner relationships (including Steering Groups etc.); maintaining project relevance within changing external and strategic contexts; communication and collaboration with UNEP colleagues; risk management; use of problem-solving; project adaptation and overall project execution. Evidence of adaptive project management should be highlighted.

Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

[21] During 2023 UNEP is reviewing its Partnership Policy and Procedures and a future version is expected to include a requirement for risk mitigation against weak performance among partners.

Here the term 'stakeholder' should be considered in a broad sense, encompassing all project partners; duty bearers with a role in delivering project outputs; target users of project outputs and any other collaborating agents external to UNEP and the implementing partner(s). The assessment will consider the quality and effectiveness of all forms of communication and consultation with stakeholders throughout the project life to-date and the support given to maximise collaboration and coherence between various stakeholders, including sharing plans, pooling resources and exchanging learning and expertise. The inclusion and participation of all differentiated groups, including gender groups, should be considered.

Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

The Review will ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on the human rights-based approach (HRBA) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Within this human rights context the Review will assess to what extent the intervention adheres to UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment[22].

The report should present the extent to which the intervention, following an adequate gender analysis at design stage, has implemented the identified actions and/or applied adaptive management to ensure that Gender Equality and Human Rights are adequately taken into account. In particular, the Review will consider the extent to which project implementation has taken into consideration: (i) possible gender inequalities in access to, and the control over, natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of disadvantaged groups (especially women, youth and children and those living with disabilities) to environmental degradation or disasters; (iii) the role of women in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation.

Environmental and Social Safeguards

UNEP projects address environmental and social safeguards primarily through the process of environmental and social screening, risk assessment and management (avoidance or mitigation) of potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with project and programme activities. The Review will confirm whether UNEP requirements[23] were met to: screen proposed projects for any safeguarding issues; conduct sound environmental and social risk assessments; identify and avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, mitigate, environmental, social and economic risks; apply appropriate environmental and social measures to minimize any potential risks and harm to intended beneficiaries and report on the implementation of safeguard management measures taken.

The Review will also consider the extent to which the management of the project is minimising UNEP's environmental footprint.

Country Ownership and Driven-ness

The Review will assess the quality and degree of engagement of government / public sector agencies in the project to-date. While there is some overlap between Country Ownership and Institutional Sustainability, this criterion focuses primarily on the forward momentum of the intended projects

[22]The Evaluation Office notes that Gender Equality was first introduced in the UNEP Project Review Committee Checklist in 2010 and, therefore, provides a criterion rating on gender for projects approved from 2010 onwards. Equally, it is noted that policy documents, operational guidelines and other capacity building efforts have only been developed since then and have evolved over time. https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7655/-Gender_equality_and_the_environment_Policy_and_strategy-2015Gender_equality_and_the_environment_policy_and_strategy.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

[23] For the review of project concepts and proposals, the Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) was introduced in 2019 and replaced the Environmental, Social and Economic Review note (ESERN), which had been in place since 2016. In GEF projects safeguards have been considered in project designs since 2011.

results, i.e. either: a) moving forwards from outputs to project outcomes or b) moving forward from project outcomes towards intermediate states. The Review will consider the involvement not only of those directly involved in project execution and those participating in technical or leadership groups, but also those official representatives whose cooperation is needed for change to be embedded in their respective institutions and offices (e.g. representatives from multiple sectors or relevant ministries beyond Ministry of Environment). This factor is concerned with the level of ownership generated by the project over outputs and outcomes and that is necessary for long term impact to be realised. This ownership should adequately represent the needs and interests of all gender and marginalised groups.

Communication and Public Awareness

The Review will assess the effectiveness of: a) communication of learning and experience sharing between project partners and interested groups arising from the project during its life and b) public awareness activities that were undertaken during the implementation of the project to influence attitudes or shape behaviour among wider communities and civil society at large. The Review should consider whether existing communication channels and networks were used effectively, including meeting the differentiated needs of gender or marginalised groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project the Review will comment on the plans to sustain, handover or decommission the communication channel at the end of the project.

Section 3. REVIEW APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

The Mid-Term Review will use a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the review process. Both quantitative and qualitative review methods will be used as appropriate to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is highly recommended that the Review Consultant maintains close communication with the project team and promotes information exchange throughout the review implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the review findings.

The findings of the Review will be based on the following:

(a) A **desk review** of:

Relevant background documentation, *inter alia*:
Project Document and Appendices
Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework and its budget;
Project reports such as six-monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence etc.;
Evaluations/Reviews of similar projects.

(b) **Interviews** (individual or in group) with:

- UNEP Project Manager[24] and UNEP Programme Assistant
- Project Coordinator (PC), Monitoring and Evaluation Expert, Sustainable Agriculture Expert, and the Project National Focal point and team from the Ministry of Sustainable Development
- UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO);
- Representatives from the project´s stakeholder groups, including the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture (NIA), Department of Environment, Department of Physical Planning, Department of Physical Planning and Environment (NIA), Ministry of Tourism

[24] For GEF funded projects, UNEP Project Manager refers to the Task Manager.

- Representatives from civil society and specialist groups such as Fahies Agricultural Women's Cooperative Society, the St. Kitts Sea Turtle Monitoring Network, and the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society.

Field visits: One country mission
Other data collection tools: If needed, to be decided by the Review Consultant at the inception phase

10. Review Deliverables and Review Procedures
See Annex 1 of these TOR for a list of tools and guidance available, see Annex 2 for a list of review criteria and sub-categories to be assessed. The Review Consultant will prepare:
Inception Report: (see Annex 3 of these TOR for guidance on structure and content) containing confirmation of the results framework and Theory of Change of the project, project stakeholder analysis, review framework and a tentative review schedule.
Preliminary Findings Note: typically, in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, the sharing of preliminary findings is intended to support the participation of the project team, act as a means to ensure all information sources have been accessed and provide an opportunity to verify emerging findings.
Draft and Final Review Reports: (see Annex 4 for guidance on structure and content) containing an Executive Summary that can act as a stand-alone document; detailed analysis of the review findings organised by review criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations and an annotated ratings table.

Review of the draft Review Report. The Review Consultant will submit a draft report to the UNEP Project Manager and revise the draft in response to their comments and suggestions. Once a draft of adequate quality has been peer-reviewed and accepted, the Project Manager will share the cleared draft report with key project stakeholders for their review and comments. Stakeholders may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions as well as providing feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons. Any comments or responses to draft reports will be sent to the Project Manager for consolidation. The Project Manager will provide all comments to the Review Consultant for consideration in preparing the final report, along with guidance on areas of contradiction or issues requiring an institutional response.

At the end of the review process and based on the findings in the Review Report, the UNEP Project Manager will prepare a **Recommendations Implementation Plan** in the format of a table, to be completed and updated at regular intervals, and circulate **Lessons Learned**.

11. The Review Consultant
The Review Consultant who will work under the overall responsibility of the UNEP Project Manager Christopher Cox in consultation with the Head of Branch/Unit Johan Robinson, Fund Management Officer, George Saddimbah. The consultant will liaise with the Project Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the Review. It is, however, the consultant's individual responsibility (where applicable) to arrange for their travel, visa, obtain documentary evidence, plan meetings with stakeholders (with assistance from the Partners), organize online surveys, and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The Project Manager and project team will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the Review Consultants to conduct the review as efficiently and independently as possible.

The Review Consultant will be hired over a period of 3 months [22 April 2024 to 21 June 2024] and should have the following: a university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other relevant political or social sciences area is required and an advanced degree in the same areas is desirable; a minimum of 10 years of technical / evaluation experience is required, preferably including evaluating large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; and a good/broad understanding of agricultural and land management systems in small island states

(SIDS) is desired. English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For this consultancy, fluency in oral and written English is a requirement. Working knowledge of the UN system and specifically the work of UNEP is an added advantage. The work will be home-based with one (1) field visit.

The Review Consultant will be responsible, in close consultation with the UNEP Project Manager, for overall management of the Review and timely delivery of its outputs, described above in Section 10 Review Deliverables, above. The Review Consultant will ensure that all review criteria and questions are adequately covered.

12. Schedule of the Review

The table below presents the tentative schedule for the Review.

Table 3. Tentative schedule for the Review

Milestone	Tentative Dates
Inception Report	2 weeks after commencement of contract
Review Mission	4 weeks after commencement of contract
E-based interviews, surveys etc.	6 weeks after commencement of contract
PowerPoint/presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations	7 weeks after commencement of contract
Draft Report to UNEP Project Manager	8 weeks after commencement of contract
Draft Report shared with the wider group of stakeholders	9 weeks after commencement of contract
Final Main Review Report	12 weeks after commencement of contract
Final Main Review Report shared with all respondents	13 weeks after commencement of contract

13. Contractual Arrangements

The Review Consultant will be selected and recruited by the UNEP Project Manager under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) on a "fees only" basis (see below). By signing the service contract with IUCN, the consultant certifies that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. Consultants who carry out a Mid-Term Review may not be contracted for a Terminal Review of the same evaluand. All consultants are required to sigh the Code of Conduct Agreement Form.

Fees will be paid on an instalment basis, paid on acceptance by the UNEP Project Manager of expected key deliverables. The schedule of payment is as follows:

Schedule of Payment for the Consultant:

Deliverable	Percentage Payment
Approved Inception Report ***(as per Guidance Note)***	20%
Approved Draft Main Review Report ***(as per Guidance Note)***	50%
Approved Final Main Review Report ***(as per Report Template)***	30%

Fees only contracts: All travel has to be approved in writing (email accepted) by the IUCN Contact Person before any reservation is made. Where applicable, air tickets will be directly purchased by IUCN. Ground transport and accommodation costs are reimbursed on the basis of actual costs incurred, whereas the cost of meals and ancillary costs are reimbursed on the basis of a Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA). A financial report with receipts (e.g. transportation, accommodation, meals and incidentals) must be submitted in the currency that will be agreed in the Consultancy Agreement to the IUCN Contact Person in order for reimbursement to be made.

The consultants may be provided with access to UNEP's information management systems (e.g. PIMS, IPMR, Anubis, SharePoint etc) and if such access is granted, the consultants agree not to disclose information from that system to third parties beyond information required for, and included in, the Review Report.

In case the consultant is not able to provide the deliverables in accordance with these guidelines, and in line with the expected quality standards by the UNEP Project Manager, payment may be withheld until the consultants have improved the deliverables to meet UNEP's quality standards.

If the consultant fails to submit a satisfactory final product to the UNEP Project Manager in a timely manner, i.e. before the end date of their contract, IUCN reserves the right to employ additional human resources to finalize the report, and to reduce the consultants' fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the project team to bring the report up to standard or completion.

Annex 2: Tools, Templates and Guidance Notes for use in the Review

The tools, templates and guidance notes listed below, and available here UNEP Communities of Practice, are intended to help UNEP Project Managers and Review Consultants to produce review products that are consistent with each other. This suite of documents is also intended to make the review process as transparent as possible so that all those involved in the process can participate on an informed basis. It is recognised that the review needs of projects and portfolio vary and adjustments may be necessary so that the purpose of the review process (broadly, accountability and lesson learning), can be met. Such adjustments should be decided between the UNEP Project Manager and the Review Consultant in order to produce review reports that are both useful to project implementers and that produce credible findings.

ADVICE TO CONSULTANTS: As our tools, templates and guidance notes are updated on a continuous basis, kindly download documents from the link provided by the Evaluation Office during the Inception Phase and use those versions throughout the review.

List of Tools, templates and guidance Notes available:

MID-TERM REVIEWS (All Funding Partners)

Mid Term Review (MTR) are intended to provide insights into possible course correction for the remainder of the project.

- 00_MTR_List of MTR Support Tools.docx
- 00a_UNEP Glossary of results definitions_April 2021.pdf
- 00c_MTR Documents needed for Mid Term Reviews.docx
- 00d_MTR Main MTR Report_Template FOR USE BY CONSULTANT.doc
- 01_TOR Mid Term Review_All Funders.docx
- 02_MTR Review Criteria Ratings_Table.docx
- 03_MTR Criterion Rating Descriptions_Matrix.docx
- 04_MTR Inception Report_Guidance Note.docx
- 05_MTR Main Review Report_Guidance Note.docx
- 06_MTR TOC Reformulation Justification_Template.docx
- 07_MTR Stakeholder Analysis_Guidance Note.doc
- 08_MTR Review Methodology_Guidance Note.docx
- 09_MTR Addressing Gender_Guidance Note.docx
- 10_MTR Safeguards Assessment_Template.docx
- 11_MTR Use of Theory of Change in Reviews_Guidance Note.docx
- 12_MTR_Financial Tables.docx
- 13_MTR Recommendations Quality_Guidance Note.docx
- 13a_MTR Presenting Recs and LL_Template.docx
- 14_MTR Recommendation Impl Plan_Template.docx
- 15_MTR Review Framework Questions_SUGGESTIONS.docx
- GCF Investment Criterion for Design Strengths.docx

ANNEX X. GEF PORTAL INPUTS

The following table contains text to be uploaded to the GEF Portal. **It will be drawn from the Review Report, either as copied or summarised text.** In each case, references should be provided for the paragraphs and pages of the report from which the responses have been copied or summarised.

Table XX: GEF portal inputs

Portal Entry: What is the performance at the project's mid-point against Core Indicator Targets? *(For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided[9])*
Response: *(Might be drawn from Monitoring and Reporting section). Please complete the following GEF Template capturing results as at MTR for all core/sub indicators that had targets at CEO Endorsement.*  MTR Results Framework (REV).xls
Portal Entry: What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/programme? *(This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval)*
Response: (Might be drawn from Factors Affecting Performance section/Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation)
Portal Entry: What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding gender-responsive measures and any intermediate gender result areas? *(This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent)*
Response: (Might be drawn from Factors Affecting Performance section/Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality)
Portal Entry: 1- *Provide an overall ESS risk classification to be entered into the portal as either Low, Medium/Moderate, or Hight/Substantial). Please reach out to UNEP Safeguards Advisor.* 2- *Provide updates on any revisions to identified types of risk classifications/ratings and describe progress made in the implementation of the management measures as outlined in the CEO Endorsement/Approval. Please make reference to any PIR-reported ESS risks.* 3- *Provide supporting documents*
Response: (Might be drawn from Factors Affecting Performance section/Environmental and Social Safeguards)
Portal Entry: What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding the implementation of the project's Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions. *(This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval)*

[9] This does not apply to Enabling Activities

Response: (Might be drawn from Factors Affecting Performance section/Communication and Public Awareness)

***Portal Entry:** What are the main findings of the review?*

Response:

***Portal Entry**: Actual Sources of Co-financing*

Response: Please include evidence for co-financing for the project as at MTR (please add rows as necessary and confirm with the EA and FMO as relevant)

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Cofinancing	Investment Mobilized	Amount ($)
(select)		(select)	(select)	
(select)		(select)	(select)	
(select)		(select)	(select)	
(select)		(select)	(select)	

Portal Entry: Key Risks (please refer to ANNEX XI)

ANNEX XI. GEF RISKS TO ACHIEVING PROJECT OUTCOMES

Summarise risks that might affect the achievement of desired outcomes and the mitigation measures which are planned or already undertaken to address these. The risk rating should reflect the *residual* risk to achieving outcomes after considering the implementation of mitigation measures. The rating scale is: High, Substantial, Moderate, Low. See the *GEF Risk Appetite* document (GEF/C.66/13) for more information and its Annex B for a description of each risk category. Note that the rating for the "Environment and Social" category should be the same as the risk rating for Safeguards.

RISK CATEGORIES	RATINGS	ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES
CONTEXT		
Climate	< Select rating >	< Insert text >
Environment and Social	< Select rating >	< Insert text >
Political and Governance	< Select rating >	< Insert text >
INNOVATION		
Institutional and Policy	< Select rating >	< Insert text >
Technological	< Select rating >	< Insert text >
Financial and Business Model	< Select rating >	< Insert text >
EXECUTION		
Capacity for Implementation	< Select rating >	< Insert text >
Fiduciary	< Select rating >	< Insert text >
Stakeholder	< Select rating >	< Insert text >
Other	< Select rating >	< Insert text >
Overall Risk Rating	< Select rating >	< Insert text >