



Organização das Nações Unidas
para a Alimentação
e a Agricultura



Mid Term Review of FAO-GEF Project

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“Sustainable Land Management in target landscapes in Angola’s Southwestern Region” (FSP)

Final Report

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED
NATIONS**

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AEZ	Agroecological Zoning
AEC	Agroecological Centres
ARP	Agricultural Recovery Program
AGPM	Plant Production and Protection Division
AP	Agro-Pastoral
APFS	Agro-Pastoral Field School
AWP/B	Annual Work Plans and Budgets
CDA	Center(s) for Agrarian Development
CETAC	Centre of Tropical Ecology and Climate Change
DNAAC	National Directorate of Environment and Climate Change
DSA	Data Sharing Agreement
EDAs	Stations of Agrarian Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FCA	Faculdade de Ciências Agrárias
FFS	Farmer Field School
FPMIS	Field Program Management Information System
GABAC	Office for Biodiversity and Climate Change
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GIS	Geographic Information System
ICE-SLM	"Integrating Climate Change into Environment and Sustainable Land Management Practices"
ICE- SLM	Integrating Climate Change into Environment and Sustainable Land Management Practices
IRCEA	Increasing climate resilience into Agricultural and agro- pastoral systems through soil fertility management in key productive and vulnerable areas using the farmer Field Schools approach
IDA	Agricultural Development Institute
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IIA	Investigação Agronómica
INAMET	Instituto Nacional de Meteorologia e Geofísica
IRCEA	Integrating climate resilience into agricultural and agropastoral production systems through soil fertility management in key productive and vulnerable areas using the Farmer Field School approach
LDN	Land Degradation Neutral
MCTA	Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Environment
MINAGRIF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
MINAMB	Ministry of Environment
MTR	Mid-Term Review
LDN-TSP	Land Degradation Neutrality - Target Setting Program
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PMPSA	Plano Médio Prazo do Sector Agrário
PPR	Project Progress Report
PTF	Project Task Force
SADCP	Smallholder Agriculture Development and Commercialization Project (aka MOSAP II)
SLM	Sustainable land management
STAP	Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee
TSP	Target Setting Programme
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
WB	World Bank
ZAEC	The Sustainable Land Management in target Landscapes in Angola's Southwestern Region

Executive Summary

Introduction:

1. The Mid Term Review (MTR) is primarily a monitoring and adaptive management tool to identify challenges and outline corrective actions to ensure that a project is on track at the mid-term of the project cycle to achieve maximum results by its completion. The Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Evaluation Policy states that a MTR is mandatory for all full-sized projects¹ (FSP). The primary output/deliverable of this MTR process is the MTR report.
2. The MTR report provides evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful and is intended to be used by the Implementing Agency/ Partner, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) and the Implementing Partner, the Executing Agency, the Ministry of Environment (MINAMB), in order to make practical adjustments to the project's implementation framework, operational management, activities and internal budget allocations wherever necessary in order to achieve its stated objective.
3. The MTR team reviewed and assessed the following four categories of project progress towards results as outlined in the project's strategic results framework (SRF) and according to the Guide for Planning and Conducting Midterm Reviews of FAO-GEF Projects and Programmes²:
 - i. Project strategy including the project's design and the results framework (log frame).
 - ii. Progress towards results using the indicators selected during the project's design and observations made during the field mission and desk work.
 - iii. Project implementation and adaptive management including the management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation, stakeholder engagement, social and environmental standards (safeguards), reporting and, communication and knowledge management.
 - iv. Sustainability of the project's outputs and outcomes³ including an assessment of the financial risks, socio-economic risks, institutional frameworks and governance, and the environmental risks to sustainability.
4. The MTR has three primary purposes:
 - i. To assess progress made towards achievement of a project's planned results in terms of its relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, sustainability and impact. Key questions include: "What results, intended and unintended, has the project achieved to date?" and "Is the project on track to achieve its planned results?"
 - ii. To identify any problems or challenges the project is encountering, understand the causes of any underperformance and leverage project strengths and good practices to overcome them. The MTR makes recommendations for corrective measures, if needed, to overcome challenges and ensure the expected deliverables and results are achieved by the end of the project. Key questions include: "What can be done to improve project delivery and to increase the likelihood of longer-term sustainability of project results?"
 - iii. To identify/highlight any success stories, key contributions, good practices and areas with the potential for upscaling and replication, and to promote knowledge-sharing and learning between FAO and project stakeholders, including the identification of lessons to improve future project formulation and implementation.
5. The MTR was carried out by a two-person team consisting of a National and International Consultant between 1st May 2023 and the 20th of July 2023 and the field missions were carried out by the National Consultant between the 20th May – 1st June, 2023.

¹ GEF-financed projects with budgets of USD 2 million or more are classified as FSPs.

² <https://www.fao.org/3/ca7788en/ca7788en.pdf>

³ The interchangeability of the terms "outcome" and "component" is a feature of many GEF project SRF/LFs. For the avoidance of doubt, the LDN Project has 4 Outcomes and 4 Components and there is equivalence.

6. The MTR utilized three sources of primary data and information:
 - **Desk review:** the documentation covering project design, implementation progress reports, project reports, monitoring and review studies, local and national development plans, policies and regulatory instruments.
 - **Interviews, stakeholder consultations and field missions:** additional information collection and validation took place through remote and (where possible) face-to-face consultations with a range of stakeholders (see Annex 9), using "semi-structured interviews" with a key set of questions in a conversational format.
 - **Direct observations of project results and activities:** wherever possible from the project area including consultations with local government and local agencies, local community representatives, project partners, service providers and participants in field activities.
 - Gender equality and women's empowerment were assessed through collecting gender-disaggregated results arising from project activities, inclusion of women participants and relevant women's groups in the MTR interviews and specific questions regarding the extent to which they were included in project implementation and/or benefited from the project.
 - **Analysis:** following the data collection phase, the MTR team analysed the information according to the MTR guidelines and the Terms of Reference (ToR) in order to draw conclusions and propose any recommendations.
7. The MTR assessed the project's progress against the five OECD DAC⁴ criteria, including in the Guide for planning and conducting mid-term reviews of FAO-GEF projects and programmes (FAO, 2020):
 - Relevance - are the project outcomes congruent with the GEF focal areas/operational program strategies, country priorities, FAO Country Programming Framework and beneficiaries needs?
 - Effectiveness - the delivery of results, to what extent has the project delivered on its outputs, outcomes, and objectives? what, if any, wider results has the project had at regional and global levels to date? Were there any unintended results? To what extent can the attainment of results be attributed to the GEF-funded component?
 - Efficiency - to what extent has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and management been able to adapt to any changing conditions to improve the efficiency of project implementation?
 - Impact - the Likelihood of impact at the mid-term, are there any barriers or other risks that may prevent future progress towards and the achievement of the project's longer-term objectives? What can be done to increase the likelihood of positive impacts from the project?); progress towards outcomes?
 - Sustainability - what is the likelihood that the project results will continue to be useful or will remain after the end of the project? What are the key risks that may affect the sustainability of the project results and benefits (financial, socio-economic, institutional and governance, and environmental)?
 - The MTR considers factors affecting progress including: project design, project execution and management, financial management and co-financing, implementation role, partnerships and stakeholder engagement, M&E design and implementation, and communication and knowledge management.
 - Cross-cutting issues are considered mainly in terms of gender, minority groups, and environmental and social safeguards.
8. The final MTR report will be circulated to the project stakeholders, including the PMU, FAO GEF Coordination Unit (FAO GEF CU), Project Steering Committee (PSC) members, project partners,

⁴ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee.

the country's GEF Operational Focal Point, relevant national agencies and local stakeholder groups and the GEF Secretariat.

9. Provincial-level partners may utilise those MTR findings and recommendations appropriate to their role and position in the project management hierarchy.
10. Participating farmers, women and farmer groups should also be provided with a briefing of the MTR findings as an important component of their participation in the project and in the interests of accountability and transparency.

Main findings:

Relevance (Satisfactory).

11. The project was, and remains, **relevant**. The Project Document⁵ demonstrates that the project outcomes and objective are closely aligned with: FAO's Strategic Programmes and Objectives at the time and remains consistent with FAO's current Strategic Framework⁶ (2022 – 2031) in the Programme Priority Areas (PPAs). It is aligned with the FAO and Government of Angola Country Outcome(s) UNDAF Strategic Areas and the Country Programming Framework(s) and Output(s), Priority Areas 1, 2 and 3 as well as the Regional Initiative/Priority Area: Integrated Management of Agricultural Landscapes in Africa / Generating and sharing knowledge and Capacity Building.
12. Nationally, The Project Document makes a strong case for alignment with the national policy framework including the National Development Plan (PDN)⁷ for the period 2018-2022, the Agricultural Sector Mid-Term Plan (PMPSA⁸) 2018-2022, the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Program (LDN-TSP), the National Action Program to Combat Desertification (PANCOD⁹) and the municipalities requirement to develop municipal planning instruments which include Municipal Master Plans (PDMs), Environmental Land-Use Plans (POAs) and Rural Land-Use Plans (POR).
13. According to the Project Document the project objective is closely aligned with the GEF's Land Degradation Focal Area Strategy for GEF-6 through enhancing the sustainability of land management in Angola in two different fronts, LD-3 and LD-1.

Effectiveness (Moderately Satisfactory).

14. The effectiveness of the project is considered moderately satisfactory. While the PCU and the AEZ Unit have done some very good work, there are concerns regarding the sustainability of the project outcomes. Furthermore, the project has encountered some unavoidable and largely exogenous delays as well as challenges with existing institutional capacities which will affect the quality of the outcomes given the short time remaining for implementation.
15. **Outcome 1: Satisfactory:** The project has made considerable progress and the AEZ Unit established within CETAC is impressive with important intellectual and technical capacities. The AEZ Unit has mapped two AEZs (Alto Hama and Chipipa) and is currently completing the third (Chongoroi) and these are expected to be completed along with a third within the next year. The national team have proved technically capable and managed the component to a very high level, to the extent that the achievements have been delayed but not reduced in quality. The Decision Support System (DSS), which in particular will provide the LDN indicators (cover, production and soil organic carbon (SOC))¹⁰ is under development and should be completed in the next year. However, this will only provide fine-grained detail for the three "demo areas" of the project. It currently covers 3,000 ha (Land Cover Classification and Land Degradation

⁵ pp. 103 – 108.

⁶ <https://www.fao.org/3/cb7099en/cb7099en.pdf>

⁷ Plano de Desenvolvimento Nacional (PDN).

⁸ Plano Médio Prazo do Sector Agrário (PMPSA).

⁹ Programa de Acção Nacional de Combate à Desertificação (PANCOD).

¹⁰ Necessary for the national reporting to the UNCCD.

- analyses, etc.) and is anticipated to extend to approximately 350,000 ha by the end of the project. To achieve nation-wide coverage will require considerable investment and upscaling. The AEZ Unit will prepare a proposal for nation-wide coverage including sampling intensity which can be used to populate the platform (DSS) as data becomes available.
16. The post-project strategy is being developed, but, the MTR has concerns that any strategy for the AEZ Unit is critically dependent upon the future of the CETAC and will need to be embedded in a larger institutional strategic plan for the organisation which would include human resources, finance, a clear vision and mandate and a substantive Director to lead the process¹¹.
 17. Data sharing agreements are critical to the success of the AEZ Unit. While the organisations necessary for data sharing have been identified, there appears to be resistance to actually sharing data. The PCU has limited powers to achieve an effective data sharing agreement (DSA) and high-level commitment through the PSC is probably necessary to ensure this takes place. The MTR understands that the MINAMB is going to support CETAC in getting these DSAs signed.
 18. The considerable training provided by the project has been well-received across a range of institutions (AFC, INMET, IDA, etc...).
 19. **Outcome 2: (Moderately Satisfactory):** This outcome was particularly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. Three community-level SLM plans have been prepared using the LADA approach¹² (Alto Hama, Chipipa and Chongoroi) and are approved at the Municipal level. These plans have information for three specific zones alongside the SLM activities that need to be implemented.
 20. The project uses an impressive range of FAO tools related to AEZ such as GAEZ 4, essentially a global analysis tool¹³ and PyAEZ¹⁴ to step AEZ down to the local level. TAPE (Tools for Agroecology Performance Evaluation¹⁵ is used to assess various criteria including governance, particularly in the APFS.
 21. 623 (including 179 women) people from nine communities were involved in the planning process. Training in the 14 FFS/APFS has included a range of SLM and AE approaches in line with the project's AEZ LDN objective. However, the MTR is concerned that the plans will prove hard to implement without long-term support to the communities and the local government agencies. Community-based approaches require long-term, phased support. This support is not limited to technical support but requires a process to assist the key actors develop their decision-making skills and will necessitate support in problem solving. Without an adequately capacitated CETAC, with a strategic focus and plan, the MTR has concerns that this support will not continue after the close of the GEF-funded project.
 22. The focus of the project is largely agricultural and through the vehicle of the FFSs, which are a proven and effective means of building farmer capacities¹⁶. However, as the Project Document places considerable importance on a landscape approach, it may be that the FFS, in its current format, is not sufficient to adequately address all of the driving forces of land degradation at this scale. It is possible that a wider governance approach is required which could be loosely

¹¹ Currently the Director of CETAC has been absent due to health reasons for approximately two years.

¹² The LADA planning assessment is based on the participatory completion of a detailed and georeferenced questionnaire that pays attention to the state, causes and evolution of soil, water and biological characteristics.

¹³ gaez.fao.org

¹⁴ <https://github.com/gicait/PyAEZ>

¹⁵ (<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341940191>)

¹⁶ Henk van den Berg, Jan Willem Ketelaar, Marcel Dicke, Marjon Fredrix, Is the farmer field school still relevant? Case studies from Malawi and Indonesia, NJAS - Wageningen Journal of Life Sciences, Volume 92, 2020, *et al.*

described as a community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) approach. While this component is now making progress despite the earlier setbacks from the pandemic restrictions, it is still behind schedule and requires a refocusing of efforts in the field to utilise the remaining time.

23. While the project has made efforts to include women in the FFS selection and activities, this has been mostly targeted. It has focused on the number of women participating in activities. The project is aware of this and has struggled to find women to fill the roles within the AEZ Unit to support this process. The role of women is strengthened further and should aim to have in place strategies and capacities to be gender responsive, that is; addressing differential needs of men and women and addressing the distribution of benefits, resources, status and rights, by the end of the project.
24. **Outcome 3: (Moderately Unsatisfactory):** Progress in Outcome 3 is less clearly defined. While it is understandable why this component and activities would be important, the MTR considers that the Project Document's expectations for this third component were unrealistic. The targeted economic analysis¹⁷, on this scale, would have required much of the project's other outputs to be in place including a substantive data sharing agreement as well as the collection of considerable amounts of primary data.
25. The project is lobbying hard to increase available funds for land restoration, the Integrated Land Use Planning is designed to use as a prototype document with a methodological approach to increase the investment in land restoration, a policy brief for Nguga has been developed to mobilize financial support to SLM activities and five institutions that fund SLM initiatives have been identified.
26. The MTR has concerns regarding this component which stem from the design phase. As already stated, the expectations were unrealistic and in the case of the fiduciary fund¹⁸ to be "*created specifically to support community-based SLM finance and micro and small entrepreneurs interested in SLM*"; it suggests that there was a degree of "blue-sky thinking"¹⁹ taking place.
27. To support this view, the MTR contrasts the situation and concerns raised in this report regarding the sustainability of CETAC and the AEZ Unit against the ambitions of Outcome 3. That is, there are real concerns regarding the institutional and financial sustainability of the AEZ Unit within CETAC without attempting to establish elaborate and sophisticated SLM financing mechanisms. Arguably, the achievement of LDN in Angola requires long term support and commitment. It is also reasonable to suppose that this will require continued, external, project support for some time to come before it can move towards a more programmatic and finally budget-supported approach.
Efficiency: (Moderately Satisfactory).
28. The project design has been a critical factor in reducing the efficiency of the project. To some extent, this has been mitigated by the support of the FAO Country Office, PTF and a very efficient PCU. However, the Project Document itself is at times confounding and impenetrable, a view that was reflected by a number of higher-level key informants. The Project Document's SRF, the principle M&E tool does not provide a clear and logical hierarchy from inputs, outputs, outcomes leading to the objective. This will have made the reporting burden on the Project Coordinator quite challenging at times and likely reduced efficiency.

¹⁷ Output 3.1 **Economic analyses on the cost of land degradation** in Huambo and Benguela Provinces are carried out and disseminated among key decision makers to bring financial leverage and scale to the actions needed for restoring/rehabilitating land in central Angola.

¹⁸ Project Document, p. 87, para 217

¹⁹ Open-minded thinking, but thinking that is not necessarily grounded or in touch with the realities of the present.

29. The inception phase²⁰ made considerable and successful efforts in extracting a clear project strategy and pathway from the Project Document. However, it did not seize the opportunity to reorganise the project strategy²¹, SRF and indicators to make them more efficient.
30. The weaknesses in CETAC have reduced the efficient performance of the project. For instance, the Project Document intended the AEZ Unit to be comprised of existing CETAC personnel. In the event, these conditions did not exist on the project's start-up and necessitated considerable reorganisation of project staffing and technical assistance²² resulting in reduced national ownership of the AEZ Unit.
31. In a similar vein, there was an expectation that technical services and existing data sets could be made available through Letters of Agreement (LOA)²³. However, there was an over-estimation of the national capacities in this respect and these gaps needed to be filled by "*engaging national entities through Data Sharing Agreements and allocating more resources into national and international consultancies*". For the avoidance of doubt, the MTR considers the PTC and PCU acted decisively with efficiency and effectiveness, a characteristic of this project; that an important project has emerged from a confusing design.
32. The project was clearly taking a top-down approach. Within the four-year timeframe of a GEF-funded project this was necessary, but very consumptive of technical expertise in establishing the AEZ Unit. This is reflected in the component 1 budget allocation (US\$ 1,201,550), largely reflecting the technical assistance component.
33. The delivery of SLM and AEZ activities through the FFS in Outcome 2 is an efficient means to provide services at this level. The MTR raises issues regarding the completeness of the FFS to build the capacity for the collective management of common pool resources beyond those directly contained on the farm.
34. From a strategic perspective Outcome 3 was included in the project's design. However, from a pragmatic point of view, an economic analysis on the cost of land degradation in Huambo and Benguela Provinces²⁴ would be a very big undertaking which would require many of the outputs (e.g. data sharing), and even outcomes of the project to be in place and running efficiently before it could be undertaken with any chance of success. From a "bigger picture" perspective such an analysis would be extremely important. From a four-year project-realism perspective; examining the financial sustainability of the principle LDN institution, CETAC, and assisting the FFS with the type of fine-grained detail analysis of cost benefits and risk reduction to individual farmers and farmer groups might be less ambitious; but more efficient.
35. It is important to stress that the PTF and the PCU (the AEZ Unit in effect) are very efficient. However, FAO procurement procedures are complex and at times, in the opinion of the MTR, inflexible in the sense that solutions tend to satisfy the procurement procedures and pathways, and not necessarily the specific project challenge.

Impact

36. The MTR is not required to rate the impact. However, it is required to rate the project's progress towards achieving the project's development objective, the overall progress on implementation and provide an overall risk rating for the project.
37. Based on the Theory of Change and the "pathway position" of the project at mid-term, the MTR assesses the project to be broadly on target (**Moderately Satisfactory**) towards achieving the project objective, but will need additional time to consolidate outcomes 1 and 2.

²⁰ Project Inception Report, Office Memorandum, 21/05/2021

²¹ There appears to be an attempt to revise the outcome indicators during the inception phase, but this is never developed further and carried through an SRF revision. Inception Report, PP, p. 44 - 46

²² PPR, June 2021, p.3

²³ Project Document, p. 128

²⁴ The remaining 2 Outputs in this component were weakly defined and somewhat fuzzy.

38. The **overall progress on implementation** is **Moderately Satisfactory** based on the project's cost effective and efficient delivery of outputs and the way it has carried out activities. However, there are concerns related to the sustainability of the AEZ Unit, the completeness of the FFS approach to address common pool resource management and outcome 3 in general due to design issues.
39. Therefore, the MTR rates the **projects risk** as **High**, but notes that this can be effectively mitigated by extending the project for a minimum of twelve months to encompass a whole agricultural season without making available additional financial and material resources.
40. Four **barriers** are identified:
41. Barrier 1: There is not a convincing case for CETAC continuing to adequately support and resource the AEZ Unit after the closure of the GEF-funded project.
42. Barrier 2: Delay in signing and operationalising data sharing agreements. The issue of data sharing is critical to the expansion of the DSS and the effective implementation of LDN approaches.
43. Barrier 3: Lack of gender balance within the AEZ Unit. Due to societal norms and constraints, moving the project's interventions from gender targeted to gender responsive will require a woman technical officer particularly for Outcome 2.
44. Barrier 4: Sufficient time to build capacity at the community-level in Outcome 2. The FFS approach is an effective approach, especially in introducing new techniques and appropriate technologies. However, it does not, in itself, create the opportunities for broad and equitable participation in the planning and management of the range of ecosystem goods and services contained within a single planning unit. Building the capacity of *communities*²⁵ is time-consuming.
45. The most critical barrier for the project being **the sustainability of the AEZ Unit in CETAC**. The remaining barriers are less critical and can be easily overcome by addressing the first barrier, support from the FAO Angola Country Office and requesting an extension to the project.
- Sustainability** – the likelihood of the project impacts continuing after the end of the GEF-grant are considered **Moderately Likely**, the most critical issue is the financial sustainability, especially of the AEZ Unit although this is very much tied to the institutional aspects of sustainability, the FFSs are likely to persist and are already financed through the MINAGRIF, EDA and it would be reasonable to assume that there will be continued financial support to the FFSs, the project impact will depend upon the effectiveness of the AEZ Unit to continue to provide AEZ and SLM support to the FFSs
- Factors affecting progress:**
46. The Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, elections, institutional restructuring and changes in institutional personnel have all affected the project. These factors affect every project and are larger strategic issue to be considered in the planning of GEF projects. The capacity of the CETAC, issues relating to land and resource tenure and the weaknesses of the project design and strategic results framework (SRF) have affected the progress of the project. The MTR recognises the efforts of the PCU to overcome these challenges.
47. However, the project needs to urgently address the legacy of the AEZ Unit within the CETAC and its resource needs, explore ways in which the gap between the SLM plans, FFS and the management of common pool resources can be bridged and the effective sharing of data.
- Progress, challenges and outcomes of stakeholder engagement:**
48. Stakeholder engagement at this scale is challenging. There are also inequalities in the relationships between stakeholders to be considered. The key issues with regards stakeholders are:

²⁵ The term "community" here is sometimes problematic in the management of common pool resources.

- Ownership of the AEZ Unit and project outcomes.
- Data sharing.
- The role of traditional authorities in implementing the SLM plans and adapting them.
- Women engagement in the SLM planning process and FFSs.

Progress on gender-responsive measures, indicators and intermediate results:

49. The Project Document does provide a Gender Action Plan consisting of gender-responsive actions mainstreamed in the project. The Project Document gender rating is G2A. The role and position of women in the agricultural sector is complex and nuanced whereas the activities of the project are targeted but not as far as the MTR can determine responsive²⁶
50. The project is gender targeted. It is important that the role of women is strengthened further and the project should aim to have in place strategies and capacities to be gender responsive, that is; addressing differential needs of men and women and addressing the distribution of benefits, resources, status and rights, by the end of the project.

Knowledge activities/products and lessons learned:

51. The project has established a web page within CETAC's website to share information about the activities of the AEZ Unit, the AEZ methodology and awareness on AEZ. Similarly, the project has been very active in promoting AEZ and the aims of the project with a number of good-quality presentations.
52. The MTR has concerns that unless this is embedded in the mandate and activities of CETAC, with sufficient budget support, communication and knowledge management will reduce when the GEF-funded project ends.

Conclusions:

Conclusion 1 (relevance): Satisfactory.

53. The ZAEC project outcomes are aligned with the existing policy and planning framework and contributes to national, regional, Convention, FAO and GEF objectives. Although there is a sometimes-expressed opinion that "there is no shortage of land for agriculture" there is a growing realisation that utilising new land should not come at the expense of existing agricultural areas. There is a demand for the types of data that the AEZ Unit can generate, especially in relation to the national commitments to the UNCCD.

Conclusion 2 (progress towards outcomes): Moderately Satisfactory.

54. Some delays have been caused by exogenous (e.g. Covid-19 pandemic, elections, institutional changes, etc.) events, while others have been due to weaknesses and inefficiencies in the original project design. The AEZ Unit (Outcome 1) based in CETAC has developed impressive GIS capabilities which will be able to map agro-ecological zones at the national level, provide fine-grained LDN data to various institutions and decision-makers and dynamically monitor land degradation parameters across the corner. The project has delivered an impressive amount of training (GIS, remote sensing, AEZ and SLM) across a range of 24 different organisations involved in land management and agriculture. The AEZ Unit is in the process of developing the DSS capability, expected to be in place by the end of the project. The AEZ Unit has considerable technical and intellectual capacities. There are very real concerns about the sustainability of the Unit post project largely due to the uncertain future of CETAC as a home for the Unit as well as the efficacy of data sharing agreements, 22 organisations have expressed interest in data sharing but no agreements have been signed as yet.

²⁶ For instance, during the field visits to the FFS at Chipipa there appeared to be a hesitance of women to come forward. While this might be a cultural barrier, but these issues are very complex and generally require a dedicated gender expert to spend time and gain trust within the community. Given the per centages reported in the Project document it would seem reasonable to invest more support directly to women's equitable involvement in the project activities, especially in outcome 2.

55. Outcome 2 has been impacted to a greater extent by the delays (pandemic, institutional, change of demonstration site, etc.). Six SLM plans have been produced at Chipipa and Chingoroi. 281 people have been trained with the ICE-SLM project in Chipipa and six demonstration sites (interventions zones) at Chipipa and Chongoroi were confirmed. The demonstration sites cover a total population of approximately 6,147 included in 14 FFS. The project has used the LADA approach to assess agro-pastoral resources in Chingoroi. Further, the project uses an impressive range of FAO tools related to AEZ such as GAEZ 4, essentially a global analysis tool²⁷ and PyAEZ²⁸ to step AEZ down to the local level. TAPE (Tools for Agroecology Performance Evaluation²⁹ is used to assess various criteria including governance, particularly in the APFS.
56. The MTR is concerned that the plans will prove hard to implement without long-term support to the communities and the local government agencies. Without an adequately capacitated CETAC, with a strategic focus and plan, the MTR has concerns that this support will not continue after the close of the GEF-funded project.
57. Progress in Outcome 3 is less clearly defined. The targeted economic analysis³⁰, on this scale, would have required much of the project's other outputs to be in place including a substantive data sharing agreement as well as the collection of considerable amounts of primary data.
58. To support this view, the MTR contrasts the situation and concerns raised in this report regarding the sustainability of CETAC and the AEZ Unit against the ambitions of Outcome 3. The achievement of LDN in Angola requires long term support and commitment. It is also reasonable to suppose that this will need continued, external, project support for some time to come before it can move towards a more programmatic and finally budget-supported approach. Outcome 3 should refocus on the sustainability of CETAC.

Conclusion 3 (efficiency): Moderately Satisfactory.

59. The ZEAC project is a "top down" approach which to some extent is necessary due to the highly technical aspect of the GIS, remote sensing, mapping and DSS. The ZEAC project has an efficient PCU and PTF. Work planning, M&E and reporting is regular and thorough. This efficiency has been affected by the weaknesses in the design of the project and the preparedness following project start up (e.g. the institutional arrangements and capacities necessary for the AEZ Unit in CETAC). Data sharing agreements are also proving hard to obtain with approximately 25 organisations and this is affecting the efficient delivery of project services and outputs.
60. The relationship between the CETAC and the PCU results in the PCU representing not just the project but having to promote the project and negotiate with other organisations reducing the ownership of the project outcomes and significantly slowing the rate of progress.

Conclusion 4 (sustainability): Moderately Likely.

61. Socio-politically, the project outcomes are considered moderately likely as there is a growing and widespread need for LD data. Climate change and other external pressures will increase this demand. Financially the results are less likely (moderately unlikely) as this would require greater budget support and a strategic institutional plan for CETAC. Institutional sustainability is also moderately unlikely for similar reasons. Environmental sustainability is judged likely given that the pressures on ecosystem goods and services is likely to increase support and motivation for LDN. Two barriers to sustainability are identified: financial and institutional.

²⁷ gaez.fao.org

²⁸ <https://github.com/gicait/PyAEZ>

²⁹ <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341940191>

³⁰ Output 3.1 **Economic analyses on the cost of land degradation** in Huambo and Benguela Provinces are carried out and disseminated among key decision makers to bring financial leverage and scale to the actions needed for restoring/rehabilitating land in central Angola.

Conclusion 5 (factors affecting progress – design and strategy): Moderately Satisfactory

62. The Project Document is un-necessarily complicated and confusing and there are weak linkages between the outcomes. It is over-ambitious in terms of scope and the available timeframe. The strategy is top-down, while this is understandable due to the very technical nature of the GIS components; in order to have effective management of ecosystem goods and services at the community level, communities will need to be empowered to collectively manage common pool resources and not just their on-farm activities.
63. The TOC in the Project Document is self-affirming and does not capture the complexity of the socio-ecosystem. Part of the problem stems from the imprecise pathways from inputs/outputs, outcomes and impacts.

Conclusion 6 (factors affecting progress – AEZ Unit):

64. The AEZ Unit established within CETAC is impressive with important intellectual and technical capacities. The national team have proved technically capable and managed the component to a very high level, to the extent that the achievements have been delayed but not reduced in quality. The DSS, which in particular will provide the LDN indicators (cover, production and soil organic carbon (SOC))³¹ is under development and should be completed in the next year. However, this will only provide fine-grained detail for the three "demo areas" of the project. To achieve nation-wide coverage will require considerable investment and upscaling. The AEZ Unit will prepare a proposal for nation-wide coverage including sampling intensity which can be used to populate the platform (DSS) as data becomes available.
65. The post-project strategy is being developed according to the PCU and key Implementation Partners. Any strategy for the AEZ Unit is critically dependent upon the future of the CETAC and will need to be embedded in a larger institutional strategic plan for the organisation which would include human resources, finance, a clear vision and mandate and a substantive Director to lead the process.
66. Progress with the FFS is now gaining momentum, there is only one year remaining and such community-level approaches require longer time horizons. The FFS approach is useful; however, it is likely that there will need to be a broader effort to build capacities at the level of the community(s) to collectively, and sustainably, manage common pool resources. Regional initiatives such as the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) or the Namibian Conservancies programme may offer useful insights.

Conclusion 7 (factors affecting progress – management arrangements):

67. The Direct Implementation Modality has its advantages in a number of efficiencies particularly with regards to recruiting. The disadvantages of these management arrangements are that there is a tendency to view the project as a stand-alone FAO project and not as an integral part of building resilience into agricultural sector.
68. The agreements signed between CETAC and the project in 2021³² do not entirely reflect the strategy that was outlined in the Project Document. While they do outline some lines of mutual support (e.g. the rehabilitation and provisioning of the soil laboratory), both agreements lack the basis for sustaining the AEZ Unit and the DSS, necessary for the continued supply of AEZ technical services to FFS.
69. Currently there is strong support to the PCU and Project Partners from the PTF, but the MTR would expect to find a strategy for ensuring this legacy is in place by this point in the project.

Conclusion 8 (project implementation): Satisfactory.

³¹ Necessary for the national reporting to the UNCCD.

³² Acordo de integração programática entre o Projecto ZAEC e o CETAC, 12 May 2021 and Acordo relativo à utilização das instalações do CETAC afectas ao Projecto de Gestão Sustentável de Terras na Região Central de Angola/ ZAEC, 12 May 2022(?)

70. Since the PIU was installed project management has been efficient and cost-effective in achieving the outputs with a high rate timeliness and effective implementation of activities. This has included establishing a good rapport and communications with project partners and stakeholders and a close monitoring and realistic evaluation of project progress and performance. This is more remarkable given the functional weaknesses in the project's M&E framework, the SRF, which were not addressed during the inception phase and workshop.
71. Work planning and budgeting is efficient and cost-effective. The December 2022 PPR, the project reports an operational delay of approximately 5 months. While no direct reasons are listed it is reasonable to assume that this is an aggregation due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, the changes in government, adaptive measures to adjust to the reality of CETAC's baseline institutional capacities, etc.
72. An adaptive management approach at this point in the project might reasonably recognise that the project's objective is best served by consolidating the successes of Outcome 1, adapting outcome 2 to encompass the governance issues of common pool resource management and refocusing outcome 3 on how to ensure the very important successes of outcomes 1, in particular, are secured post the GEF grant.
73. Financial management and control is adequate. The project is not independently audited because it falls within the Implementing Agencies normal financial controls.
74. Co-financing delivery has been reported in the June 2022 PIR as US\$ 1,925,000. However, figures given to the MTR in June 2023 report which report a delivery US\$ 15,500,000 indicating a leveraged US\$ 500,000 above the sums committed in the Project Document.
75. Currently (May 2023) GEF fund budget execution is US\$ 928,440³³ approximately 35% budget execution of the GEF grant.

Conclusion 9 (M&E and project SRF):

76. M&E has been diligent although not as regular as anticipated in the Project Document. Accordingly, two PPR and one PIR need be produced each year. The MTR has seen four PPR (06-07/2020; 07-12/2020; 01-06/2021; 07-12/2022)³⁴ and one PIR (July 2021- 06/2022). The project is currently producing the 01-06/2023 PPR.
77. The Project Document SRF lacks the clarity and simplicity necessary for monitoring and evaluating performance and impact which affect its utility as the principle M&E tool for the project. There are a confusing number of outputs and indicators with sub-indicators: 10 outputs, 2 objective-level indicators with 6 sub-categories, 3 outcome indicators with 7 sub indicators, 15 outputs indicators with some 14 sub-categories. The objective indicators appear largely unrelated to the purpose of the project, or the quality of the change. The outcome indicators lack any discernible baseline, mid-term and final targets. Some outcomes and outputs include adjectives or restate targets, in some cases, particularly in relation to the outputs, they include elements of the targets. The PCU reports mainly on the Output level indicators whereas the GEF monitors performance and impact with the outcome-level indicators. The objective-level indicators are not reported on in the PPR or PIR, however, the MTR is critical of these indicators in terms of M&E feedback for adaptive management.
78. Despite these shortcomings, at this stage of the project's implementation it would be unwise to drastically adjust the SRF.

Conclusion 10 (stakeholder engagement): Satisfactory.

79. Stakeholder engagement is a complex challenge requiring tailored messages for different levels and interests. This task currently falls mostly on the PCU and the NPC in particular. This

³³ Does not include committed funds in 2023.

³⁴ In response to the first draft it was noted by the LTO that DEX projects are not requested to produce a PPR in June in addition to the PIR. Annual reporting requirements are thus one PPR covering June to December and one PIR.

type of communications is an iterative process and requires continuous effort and flexibility to utilise opportunities as they arise. The MTR has concerns that unless this is embedded in the mandate and activities of CETAC, with sufficient budget support, communication and knowledge management will reduce when the GEF-funded project ends.

80. The project has developed 25 partnerships with other institutions, 24 arrangements delivered training on GIS, AEZ and SLM and 22 institutions have engaged with the data sharing, but no DSAs have been formalised yet and this is of concern.

81. The PCU has worked hard and appears to be trusted by partners and stakeholders although it is not possible to objectively measure this through the project's SRF.

Conclusion 11 (overall performance and outlook):

82. The MTR has a mixed opinion on the project's performance and likely results. The AEZ Unit is of a very high standard capable of providing very good LDN monitoring and data for LDN planning. However, there are real concerns about its sustainability, in particular, that once the project closes the Unit will need an institutional home and champion. The current arrangements with CETAC do not provide the level of confidence for the MTR.

83. The training delivered by the project has been remarkable. Key respondent feedback to the MTR repeatedly stated appreciation of the training delivered by the project suggesting that training was well-planned and delivered.

84. The SLM plans and the FFS are important developments. However, the MTR is concerned that the project, due to its design limitations, is not providing the full range of capacity building in relation to land and resources tenure systems in rural areas. Therefore, a common property CBNRM approach should be encouraged to implement the SLM plans and support the FFS activities.

85. FAO has a comparative advantage in supporting processes through its Country Office and inclusion of AEZ and community-based SLM through mainstreaming into other projects and programmes and providing a body of technical expertise as well as maintaining a memory of the processes. This should increase the chances of sustainability of the project's achievements. Given the revised TOC this could be an important factor in addressing the key system drivers and clarifying assumptions.

86. The economic analysis, innovative finance options and community-based SLM finance options, while a logical component of an overall strategy, would need the products of Outcomes 1 and 2 to be in place and fully functioning. The MTR considers that it may be more strategic to focus on consolidating the sustainability of the CETAC and the AEZ Unit, the SLM plans and the governance structures and FFSs.

87. The project has made good and important progress with outcomes 1 and 2. However, these outcomes are not easily achieved within the framework of a project and lend themselves to a programmatic approach. Both outcomes would benefit with an extension of time to consolidate the achievements.

Conclusion 12 (cross-cutting):

88. Women's involvement in agriculture is well-documented in the Project Document. Women play an important role in the management of ecosystem goods and services (provisioning and regulating) and in rural circumstances women often have a higher dependency on these resources for their livelihood security and its sustainable management is of real and practical concern to them. Whereas, The Land Law³⁵ lacks specific reference to women's access or rights to land³⁶. The original (Project Document) ESRA does identify gender inequalities, and there is

³⁵ Land Law, Law No. 9/04 of November 9th 2004

³⁶ USAID. 2005. Land Tenure and Property Rights Assessment for Angola. USAID, Washington, DC, USA.

a Gender Action Plan³⁷. This is best described as gender targeted but not necessarily gender responsive.

³⁷ Project Document, p. 143

Table 1 Recommendations

Rec. no.	Rationale for recommendation	Recommendation	Responsibility	Time/dates for actions
Strategic relevance				
1.	The project has made very good progress with Outcome 1 and the AEZ Unit has considerable technical and intellectual strengths. Outcome 2 is also showing promise. However, both outcomes would benefit from an extension of time on the basis that this would i) allow consolidation of the AEZ Unit to improve the likelihood of sustainability; ii) allow at least one more agricultural season with support to the FFSs, and; provide time for FAO to put in place measures to continue support to AEZ.	A justification for a project extension is prepared. Twelve months is recommended.	To be implemented by: PTF to prepare justification for submission to the GEF. PSC to review and validate.	Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High.
2.	Outcome 3 is necessary, but it is too ambitious within the ZAEC project and would need outcomes 1 and 2 to be fully operational (including data sharing agreements, etc.) in place. Project efforts in this outcome are unlikely to produce the outputs stated in the Project Document without being highly speculative in nature. An adaptive management approach would allow the project to still address issues of AEZ/SLM finance through consolidating project successes and not overstretching.	PSC to make a strategic decision on outcome 3. Through an adaptive management process focus the outcome's resources on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A financial plan and budget resources for the CETAC. • Advancing the implementation of the SLM plans. In particular, working with the community to internalise the costs and benefits of SLM and to build capacity at the community level to negotiate with external interests. 	To be implemented by: PTF to prepare justification. PSC to review and validate.	Timeline: To be submitted as part of the extension request. Priority: High.
Effectiveness				
3.	There are two principle parts to the project: the GIS, data and mapping and the development of local-level SLM maps with the delivery of SLM expertise to individual farmers (the FFSs). Both are critical for larger scale planning and management and to reduce the negative impact of inappropriate agricultural activities on ecosystem goods and services. However, it is not clear how these are tied together beyond the confines of the	In order to operationalise the SLM Plan with the FFS and SLM activities at the level of the community This can be started, within the body of the project, by any or all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging technical assistance with CBNRM experience (this is available regionally). • Develop these capacities within the AEZ Unit. 	To be implemented by: PTF to prepare proposal. PSC to review and validate. PCU to implement.	Timeline: Q 4 2023. Priority: High.

<p>individual farm. The SLM plan is based on available data and mapping and agro-ecological zones. The FFSs are a proven and effective means of delivering technical assistance and building agricultural capacity of individual farmers. What is not clear is how it affects the management of common pool resources or resources that under the present regime are regarded as <i>res nullius</i>³⁸. CBNRM³⁹ is not a fixed set of practices or technologies, nor a model to prescribe on the world; it is an approach to understanding complex ecological and ecological relationships in rural areas. LADA and the other techniques go some way to addressing this level of participation, but they do not represent the dynamic nature of collective decision-making and conflict resolution necessary to equitably and sustainably manage common pool resources. These community-level arrangements are often poorly represented in a state-private property regime and common property management is obfuscated by terms such as "community", when what is necessary is a recognition of a unit of management that is numerically, spatially and legally defined.</p> <p>Reasonably effective CBNRM systems have grown up in Zimbabwe and Namibia, admittedly around "wildlife" resources. However, the principles are the same – building community-level capacities and building social capital. Chipipa and Chingoroi may not have the high value natural resources which often provide the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to other initiatives working in the area of rights-based approaches to natural resources management (e.g. the Kvango Zambezi Trans-frontier Conservation Area). 		
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³⁸ The term "*res nullius*" is a Latin term derived from Roman Law and literally means "*belonging to no one*". In CBNRM it is often used to denote a fugitive (mobile) resource or a resource which lacks clear ownership either through common understanding or through the inability of the "owner" (state or private) to exercise the authority and responsibility to manage it. *Res nullius* resources are subject to the individual motivation of opportunistic or unsustainable exploitation, the motivation being to use before anyone else uses the resource. An example of this might be the use of forest resources to produce charcoal or excessive grazing pressure. In the latter, the cow being a private property and the pasture tenure being largely determined by the strength of the collective membership (the community) of the common property to not just organise itself, but to negotiate with external interests.

³⁹ The third component is not included here because CBNRM seeks to internalise the costs and benefits within the unit of effective management. However, this is not to exclude Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) schemes

	<p>motivation for collective and sustainable management. However, rural communities are increasingly vulnerable to losing their land, especially now that the government has established agriculture as the main practice to diversify the economy⁴⁰ and this may provide sufficient motivation to participate. This is a long-term strategy that is inherently political in nature and would extend beyond the life-time of the project.</p> <p>In order to operationalise the SLM Plan with the FFS approach it is necessary to organise land and resource users to collectively manage the entire range of their resources (private, common and <i>res nullius</i>) at the "landscape" level (e.g. the Soba⁴¹), or a level that has functional efficiency and provide a degree of tenure.</p>			
Factors affecting performance				
4.	<p>The project currently produces 2 PPR and 1 PIR per year and PSC meetings appear to be annual. The project progress reporting is considerable and DEX projects are not requested to produce a PPR in June in addition to the PIR. Annual reporting requirements are thus one PPR covering June to December and one PIR. This makes good sense in terms of efficiency. The PSC has met once a year (with occasional <i>ad hoc</i> meetings) and considering the complex arrangement of stakeholders it may be useful to meet biannually and share Quarterly Reports with lead Implementation Partners) in order to increase the national ownership of the project and increase the flow of information between project partners.</p>	<p>Provide one PPR with the PIR and hold two PSC meetings per year and share Quarterly Reports with key Implementation Partners.</p>	<p>To be implemented by: PTF. PSC to validate.</p>	<p>Timeline: Immediate. Priority: Moderate.</p>
Efficiency				

⁴⁰ Oglethorpe, J., Russo V., Neto J. and Costa A. 2018. Communities and Biodiversity in Angola: Analysis of the legal and institutional framework for community-based approaches to conservation and natural resource management. WWF US, National Geographic Society, ACADIR and Kissama Foundation.

⁴¹ The Soba is a traditional authority largely responsible for collective decision-making and conflict resolution.

5.	There are significant weaknesses in the project's SRF which make assessing performance and impact challenging. However, it will be too disruptive to revise the SRF at this stage. Given that a large and important component of the project is capacity development this should be more clearly reflected in the SRF. Otherwise, only minor adjustments should be made and there should be a general awareness regarding the shortcomings.	Continue to monitor and evaluate using the existing indicators and add an index of capacity development measure should be included at the objective level and retrofitted to the baseline. The simplest way to achieve this would be to adapt an "off the shelf" scorecard approach (e.g. the GEF Capacity Development Assessment Scorecard⁴²).	To be implemented by: PTF. PSC to validate.	Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High. Any revision to be submitted with extension request.
Sustainability & catalytic effect/replication				
6.	The sustainability of the AEZ Unit and to some extent Outcome 2 results is heavily dependent upon institutional support. There is insufficient evidence to suggest that there will be sufficient human, material and financial resources to support the AEZ Unit once the GEF-funded project ends. This is critical because the AEZ Unit will be tasked with rolling out the mapping and maintaining the DSS in order to monitor LDN and generate data necessary for dynamic planning. In order to achieve this the AEZ Unit will need substantive institutional support.	Undertake an institutional review of CETAC. Engage an experienced high-level Institutional Expert to undertake a participatory review of the organisation, working closely with (and mentor) the Director to develop a Strategic Plan including a corporate vision, mission statement and institutional plan and leadership mentoring.	To be implemented by: PTF to prepare proposal & TOR in collaboration with MINAMB. PSC to review and validate. FAO to identify Technical Assistance.	Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High.
7.	As a directly implemented project every effort should be made to support the process of national ownership of the project outcomes. Communication is critical to this process as the PCU reports to FAO.	Increase the communication between the PCU and MINAMB (Office of the Deputy Dean) by including the Office in the Quarterly Reporting and providing a quarterly briefing note/ aide memoire to accompany the report.	To be implemented by: PCU.	Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High.
Cross-cutting dimensions				
8.	The role of women in AEZ and SLM is presently addressed through targeting training and direct technical assistance in the FFS. However, this is to some extent a passive role and does not necessarily reflect the complex and nuanced, socio-economic factors that determine women's role and responsibilities and their	PCU to utilise available FAO gender resources to strengthen the women participation at the community level.	To be implemented by: PCU to prepare proposal in collaboration with FAO CO.	Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High

⁴² https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Capacity_Development_Indicators.pdf

	<p>life chances. FAO has well-established gender policies and working practices which could be brought to bear especially in the sphere of women's participation in the management of common pool resources. The project should coordinate with the FAO's existing gender resources to increase the participation, in particular, in learning from women with regards the management of these ecosystem goods and services, not just to make the project's intervention gender responsive, but also to gather information in order to increase understanding of the system dynamics. This could include establishing rosters of gender specialists with land and resource tenure experience, more affirmative recruiting and considering volunteers or international technical assistance when local social norms and customs militate against employing women nationally – the focus should be to ensure that women stakeholders have access and gender sensitive representation in the project processes.</p>			
9.	<p>The Municipal Administrations (local government) are important opinion leaders and can be important champions for LDN especially when the linkages between LDN and health and infrastructure, as well as agricultural production and resilience are understood without the constraints of a binary decision-making approach of development/production versus resilience and that resilience needs to be built into the system rather than traded off against immediate benefits. The AEZ Unit has developed impressive data presentation and communication capacities and these can be used to develop supportive, effective relationships.</p>	<p>PCU to develop local government communication materials including historic changes, present situation, likely forecasts of LD and recommended solutions that can be graphically presented to municipal and commune leaders.</p>	<p>To be implemented by: AEZ Unit.</p>	<p>Timeline: 2nd Q 2023 Priority: Medium</p>

Table 2 MTR Ratings and achievements summary table

GEF criteria/ sub-criteria	Rating	Summary comments
A Strategic relevance		
A1 Overall Strategic Relevance	S	
A1.1 Alignment with GEF and FAO strategic priorities	S	The project is aligned with FAO outcomes and the current programme framework, the UNDAF Country Programme, and the GEF LD-3 and LD-1 as well as the UNCCD LDN priorities.
A1.2 Relevance to national, regional and global beneficiary needs	S	The project objective and outcomes are aligned with 4 key land policies and the national programme on planning. It is aligned with the UNCCD and the DSS will address national target setting.
A1.3 Complementarity with existing interventions	S	The project is aligned with national programmes, in particular the national target setting programme (LDN-TSP) and the national programme on planning.
B Effectiveness		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	MS	Result 1 (AEZ Unit & DSS, etc.) are of high quality. Result 2 (FFSs, etc.) are in early development stages. Result 3 (financial studies & SLM financing, etc.)
B1.1 Delivery of project outputs	S	The project outputs are generally of a very good quality.
B1.2 Progress towards outcomes and project objective	MS	
- Outcome 1.	S	The AEZ Unit is of very high quality (material, human resources and technical products) but there are concerns regarding the sustainability within CETAC.
- Outcome 2.	MS	The FFS are at an early stage and will require more time. Furthermore, it is not clear whether the SLM and FFS will provide the governance environment necessary for the management of common pool resources.
- Outcome 3.	MU	There are concerns that the financial analysis of LDN and support to SLM is too ambitious and would need the products of outcomes 1 and 2 in place for its effective implementation.
- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes	MS	Despite some very good quality results in outcome 1 and good progress in outcome 2 the concerns about CETAC need to be addressed and the FFS and SLM plans will need more time to be consolidated and embedded.
B1.3 Likelihood of impact	Not rated at MTR	
C. Efficiency		
C1. Efficiency	MS	The activities of the PCU and support from the PTF are very efficient. However, issues such as the capacities of CETAC, the project design, national ownership of the AEZ Unit and its sustainability, data agreements and the dysfunctional SRF have reduced the project's efficiency.
D. Sustainability of Project Outcomes		
D1. Overall likelihood of or risks to sustainability	ML	There are concerns relating to the sustainability. Strengthening the role of CETAC in particular would reduce the risks to sustainability.

D1.1 Financial risks	ML	The weaknesses in Outcome 3, the capacity and sustainability of the AEXZ Unit in CETAC are cause for concern. The FFSs are likely to be sustainable because there is a demand for their services and they are financed through the MINAGRIF.
D1.2 Socio-political risks	MU	There are concerns that the FFS is not sufficient to facilitate the community participation in the SLM plan implementation at the landscape scale. The AEZ Unit and the GIS needs a national institutional champion to promote the LDN monitoring and other LDN services provided by the unit at the national level.
D1.3 Institutional and governance risks	MU	The main concern is with the future of the AEZ Unit in CETAC and of CETAC itself. However, FAO has a comparative advantage with a strong presence in Angola which suggest that there will be continued, albeit limited, support to this process and the project results.
D1.4 Environmental risks	L	The project is building resilience into the socio-ecosystem.
D2 Catalyst and replication		The project has supported five other projects or initiatives, mostly providing AEZ services such as the GIS and mapping. However, the national roll out of the LDN indicator monitoring will need significant levels of investment. The project is preparing a costed proposal.
E. Factors affecting performance		
E1. Project design and readiness	MS	The Project Document is confusing and has a number of weaknesses. The original expectations were ambitious. The project's preparedness was challenged by inconsistencies in CETAC capacities and resources at the project's start-up which have impacted the efficient implementation.
E2. Quality of project implementation	S	Despite the shortcomings in CETAC's resources implementation has been efficient and effective largely due to the good work of the PCU, PTF and project Partners.
E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (BH, LTO, PTF, etc.)	S	FAO Country Office (BH) provides a wide range of support services giving it a comparative advantage. The PTF provides high quality support to the PCU which has significant expertise and intellectual resources. The provision of dual (AEZ and GIS) LTO support works well, however, it does not appear to cover the governance issues of common pool resource management which will differ from the normal land tenure issues necessary for conventional farming.
E2.2 Project oversight (PSC)	S	Project oversight is sufficient. The MINAMB (lead) provides support to the PCU in particular and is aware of the challenges of the project in areas such as ensuring future budget support, etc.
E3. Quality of project execution	S	See below.
E3.1 Project execution and management (PCU, partner performance, administration, staffing, etc.)	S	The project has a very effective and hard working (efficient) PCU. It has demonstrated that it is capable of solving complex problems. However, the project is often viewed as a FAO project rather than a national project
E4. Financial management and co-financing	S	Financial management is good with sufficient controls in place, but also flexible to accommodate unforeseen changes (e.g. the AEZ Unit staffing). The delivery of co-financing is high, although this does not equate to the situation regarding the AEZ Unit in CETAC.
E5. Project partnership and stakeholder engagement	S	The stakeholder engagement is complex, spatially, institutionally and hierarchically (national, provincial, municipal, commune and community/farmer). There has been a significant and high-quality provision of training which is highly appreciated by project partners. However, the stakeholder engagement responsibilities is largely falling on the PCU and not on the leadership of CETAC.
E6. Communications, knowledge management and knowledge products	S	The project has established a web page within CETAC's website to share information about the activities of the AEZ Unit, the AEZ methodology and awareness on AEZ. Similarly, the project has

		been very active in promoting AEZ and the aims of the project with a number of good-quality presentations. CETAC has also produced resources on issues such as fire management, etc.
E7. Overall quality of M&E	MS	An opportunity to address the issues in the SRF was not taken up during the inception phase. However, the SRF was approved during the PPG stage.
E7.1 M&E design	MU	The SRF has significant weaknesses. The original TOC lacks functional efficiency.
E7.2 M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	S	The project is diligently monitored by the PCU, PTF and PSC. The quality of the project's SRF is poor. The issue with the M&E relates to the design.
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	S	The ZAEC project can be characterised as a project implementation producing good results but struggling with a weak design.
F. Cross-cutting concerns		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	MS	The Project Document Gender Action Plan needs to be strengthened to reflect the complexity of women's involvement in agriculture and natural resource management. Currently it is gender targeted and it needs to be adjusted to gender responsive.
F2. Human rights issues	S	There are no apparent human rights issues, although issues relating to land tenure may impinge on this.
F3. Environmental and social safeguards	MS	The PCU should have women technical assistance to support the gender equality aspects at the community level and ensure their full and equitable participation in the planning process and management of common pool resources.

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose and scope of the MTR

89. The Mid Term Review (MTR) is primarily a monitoring and adaptive management tool to identify challenges and outline corrective actions to ensure that a project is on track at the mid-term of the project cycle to achieve maximum results by its completion. The Global Environmental Facility Evaluation Policy states that a MTR is mandatory for all full-sized projects⁴³ (FSP). The primary output/deliverable of this process is the MTR report. The MTR report will provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful and is intended to be used by the Implementing Agency/ Partner, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) and the Executing Agency, the Ministry of Environment (MINAMB), Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MINAGRIF) and the Institute of Instituto Nacional de Meteorologia e Geofísica (INAMET) in order to make practical adjustments to the project's implementation framework, operational management, activities and internal budget allocations wherever necessary in order to achieve its stated objective. Once accepted by the Implementing Agency the MTR Report becomes an integral part of the overall adaptive project cycle management.
90. The MTR team reviewed all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. Project Identification Form, Project Document, Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel review, etc.). Project reports including annual Project Implementation Reports (PIR), Project Progress Reports (PPR), project budget revisions, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review. The MTR team reviewed the baseline GEF focal area Tracking Tool (the GEF Land Degradation tracking Tool) submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Tracking Tool (the GEF 6 Core Indicators Tracking Tool)⁴⁴.
91. The MTR team reviewed and assessed the following four categories of project progress towards results as outlined in the project's results framework and according to the Guide for Planning and Conducting Midterm Reviews of FAO-GEF Projects and Programmes⁴⁵:
- i. Project strategy including the project's design and the results framework (log frame).
 - ii. Progress towards results using the indicators selected during the project's design (reported through the Project Implementation Reports (PIR)) and observations made during the field mission and desk work.
 - iii. Project implementation and adaptive management including the management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation, stakeholder engagement, social and environmental standards (safeguards), reporting and, communication and knowledge management.
 - iv. Sustainability of the project's outputs and outcomes⁴⁶ including an assessment of the financial risks, socio-economic risks, institutional frameworks and governance, and the environmental risks to sustainability.

⁴³ GEF-financed projects with budgets of USD 2 million or more are classified as FSPs.

⁴⁴ The revised results framework for GEF-7 (July 2018 to June 2022) (largely replaces the formerly used tracking tools with core indicators, comprising 11 main indicators, most of which have several sub-indicators. For most projects approved under GEF-6, the tracking tools are also no longer required when the mid-term or the terminal evaluation point is reached (whichever comes first). Instead, core indicators from the GEF-7 need to be identified and agreed and baselines retrofitted. The GEF indicators should then be scored.

⁴⁵ <https://www.fao.org/3/ca7788en/ca7788en.pdf>

⁴⁶ The interchangeability of the terms "outcome" and "component" is a feature of many GEF project SRF/LFs.

92. Additionally, the MTR reviewed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the overall project management, implementation and results (including on indicators and targets) and assessed the project's response including and not limited to responses related to stakeholder engagement, management arrangements, work planning and adaptive management actions.

1.2. Objective of the MTR

93. The MTR has three primary purposes:

- i. To assess progress made towards achievement of a project's planned results in terms of its relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, sustainability and impact. Key questions include: "What results, intended and unintended, has the project achieved to date?" and "Is the project on track to achieve its planned results?"
- ii. To identify any problems or challenges the project is encountering, understand the causes of any underperformance and leverage project strengths and good practices to overcome them. The MTR makes recommendations for corrective measures, if needed, to overcome challenges and ensure the expected deliverables and results are achieved by the end of the project. Key questions include: "What can be done to improve project delivery and to increase the likelihood of longer-term sustainability of project results?"
- iii. To identify/highlight any success stories, key contributions, good practices and areas with the potential for upscaling and replication, and to promote knowledge-sharing and learning between FAO and project stakeholders, including the identification of lessons to improve future project formulation and implementation.

1.3. Intended users

94. The Budget Holder (BH), circulates the final MTR report to the project stakeholders, including the PCU, FAO GEF Coordination Unit (FAO GEF CU), Project Steering Committee (PSC) members, project partners, the country's GEF Operational Focal Point, relevant national agencies and local stakeholder groups and the GEF Secretariat.
95. The key respondents interviewed during the MTR selected during the Inception Phase and based on the Project Document and MTR analysis of stakeholders should be sensitised to the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the MTR appropriate to their level of involvement. This should be the task of the PCU to communicate the MTR findings at the national management level (e.g. through the PSC, the MINAMB, Centre of Tropical Ecology and Climate Change (CETAC), MINAGRIF and INAMET) as well as through provincial and community channels.
96. Provincial-level partners such as the Agricultural Development Institute (IDA) may utilise those MTR findings and recommendations appropriate to their role and position in the project management hierarchy.
97. Technical Consultants and Service providers (e.g. the Framer Field Schools (FFS) and Agro-Pastoral Field Schools (APFS) should be sensitised to the findings and recommendations as part of the adaptive management process.
98. Participating farmers, women and farmer groups should also be provided with a briefing of the MTR findings as an important component of their participation in the project and in the interests of accountability and transparency.

1.4. Methodology

99. The MTR was carried out by a two-person team consisting of a National and International Consultant between 10th April and the 31st July, including a field mission between 21st May 2023 and the 1st of June 2023.
100. The MTR utilized three sources of primary data and information:
- **Desk review:** the documentation covering project design, implementation progress reports, project reports, monitoring and review studies, local and national development

plans, policies and regulatory instruments. This covered, and elaborated, on the documents listed in the TOR, a working list of which is presented in Annex 10.

- **Interviews, stakeholder consultations and field missions:** additional information collection and validation took place through remote and face-to-face consultations with a range of stakeholders (see Annex 9), using "semi-structured interviews" with a key set of questions in a conversational format. The questions asked aimed to provide answers to the points listed in the evaluation matrix in. Interviews were confidential and the information is used discreetly without attribution unless agreed with informants and specified. Information from interviews was triangulated and validated, where necessary, before inclusion in the analysis and reporting. Interviews started with an introduction about the aims and nature of the review and informing the interviewee that they have the right not to respond if they so wish.
- **Direct observations of project results and activities:** wherever possible from the project area including consultations with local government and local agencies, local community representatives, project partners, service providers and participants in field activities.

101. Gender equality and women's empowerment were assessed through collecting gender-disaggregated results arising from project activities, inclusion of women participants and relevant women's groups in the MTR interviews and specific questions regarding the extent to which they were included in project implementation and/or benefited from the project. Specific attention was given to analysing examples, best practices and lessons learned regarding women's empowerment arising through the project's scope of activities.

102. **Analysis:** following the data collection phase, the MTR team analysed the information according to the MTR guidelines and the Terms of Reference (ToR) in order to draw conclusions and propose any recommendations.

103. In addition to the five OECD DAC⁴⁷ criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, the MTR provides the fine detail to give answers to any questions raised by the FAO and project partners during the MTR process.

104. A draft MTR Report was circulated to key stakeholders for comment and feedback. The final MTR Report is submitted with an Audit Trail documenting the feedback from stakeholders as a separate Annex.

1.5. Limitations of the MTR

105. The MTR recognizes a number of limitations and will seek to minimize the impact of these constraints on aspects such as the scope, participation, and utility of any recommendations. These constraints are:

- The MTR team did not include a woman Evaluator. While all efforts were made to ensure that the opinion and views of woman participants and beneficiaries were heard and understood, this will have invariably constrained the participation of women in the review process and this will have mostly affected interactions at the community and individual farmer level.
- The MTR is taking place at the end of the third year of a four-year project. As such and without an extension, this limits the effectiveness of some recommendations particularly remedial actions intended to increase the project's effectiveness.
- There are significant weaknesses in the project's strategic results framework⁴⁸ (SRF) in as much as it contains four objective indicators, fifteen outcome (or sub-) indicators, and twenty-eight output indicators (objective, outcome and output indicators are

⁴⁷ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee.

⁴⁸ Also referred to as the Logical framework or log frame

complex including sub-indicators). Most indicators appear to be at the output level and not the outcome level as well as outputs and outcome indicators that are essentially activities, making it difficult to determine impact. Critically the fifteen outcome indicators lack baselines, mid-term and end of project (EOP) targets rendering them effectively useless unless the output indicators are utilised instead. The SRF is overly and unnecessarily complicated.

1.6 Structure of the MTR report

106. This report is structured in line with the guidance given on conducting MTRs of FAO - GEF projects and in accordance with the MTR Terms of Reference (ToR) provided in Annex 1:

Section 1 provides an executive summary which gives basic information on the project, a brief description of the project and its progress to date, the MTR ratings and achievement table, summary of conclusions and recommendations.

Section 2 provides a description of the review process and methodology.

Section 3 describes the background and context of the FAO-GEF LDN project including the problems that the project sought to address, the objectives, outcomes and means of monitoring and evaluation, the implementation arrangements, a timeline and key milestones as well as a summary of project stakeholders.

Section 4 presents the main findings of the MTR on all aspects including the project's design, strategy, its progress towards results, the performance of its implementation and efficiency of adaptive management as well as assessing the sustainability of the project outcomes

Section 5 presents the conclusions, recommendations and lessons derived from analysing the implementation of the project.

2. Project background and context

107. The Sustainable Land Management in target Landscapes in Angola's Southwestern Region (ZAEC) full-sized project (FSP) is planned for four-years in duration. It is financed under the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Land Degradation (LD) Operational Programme (OP) intend to be in line with the LD-3 Objective 3: Reduce pressures on natural resources by managing competing land uses in broader landscapes and; Program 4: Scaling-up Sustainable Land Management through Landscape Approach. It is directly implemented by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) in conjunction with the lead national Executing Agency, the Ministry of Environment (MINAMB) and secondary Partners: The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MINAGRIF) and the Instituto Nacional de Meteorologia e Geofísica (INAMET).

2.1 Environmental context

108. Land degradation is a serious threat to ecosystem services and livelihoods in Angola. Yet, in the current post-conflict era, there have been very few attempts to systematically address it. The extent of land degradation across the national territory, and its impacts on the rural economy – including its growth potential – are yet to be assessed, along with further impacts on food security. In the meantime, land use is changing rapidly in various parts of the country and mostly in an unregulated fashion. In the rural zones, most land-use change is caused by shifting cultivation, overgrazing and the unsustainable use of fire across the landscapes.

109. The ZAEC project is located in the Central Plateau of Angola, in Huambo Province and extending into parts of the neighbouring provinces of Benguela, Bié and Cuanza Sul. The project area is intended as a testing ground for solutions for both assessing and addressing the issue of land degradation through land-use practices.

110. At the time of the project's design, according to a survey taken as part of the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Program (LDN-TSP)⁴⁹, ecosystem services were declining in 5 out of the 11 municipalities in Huambo Province and in 5 out of 6 non-coastal municipalities in Benguela. In spite of the severity of land degradation in the region, the causes of land degradation were not well known among land-users and technical practitioners within the agricultural sector. In addition, rural land use planning was practically non-existing. Municipal-level spatial plans existed but focused only on urban areas. There had been some attempts at characterizing landscapes in terms of agroecological features and ideal land uses (including crop suitability) with a view to improving land productivity and informing the attribution of land rights (including the concession of agricultural lands), but these had never materialized into outputs that were useful for local land-use aiming at the sustainable improvement of rural livelihoods.

111. According to the Project Document⁵⁰, in Angola, the single most important proximate cause of land degradation is linked to agricultural activities and, more specifically, to the prevalent practices in the agricultural sector.

112. At the level of landscapes in both Huambo and Benguela Provinces, the Project Document identifies that three types of land-use practices, under the 'agricultural activities' broad category, impact the stock, as well as the flow of ecosystem services, leading to land degradation:

- shifting cultivation, where increased competition for land is now making this land use unsustainable;

⁴⁹ "Definition of the Land Degradation Neutrality Voluntary National Targets (LDN-TSP)". Ministry of Environment. November 2018

⁵⁰ Project Document, p. 30.

- overgrazing, which affects the fragile balance of the more arid rangelands, and
- the excessive use of fire across landscapes, resulting in significant loss of above ground biomass, and whose stocks may or may not seasonally recover, depending on local circumstances.

113. The MTR notes that the Project Document does not identify large scale commercial agriculture on privately owned land which might, under a LDN approach and not necessarily a conventional agricultural approach, qualify as a causative factor in land degradation.

2.2 Development context

114. The Centre of Tropical Ecology and Climate Change (CETAC), Huambo, under the MINAMB, was identified as the principle implementing partner for the project with the intention of the organisation becoming the centre for a national network of Agroecological Centres (AECs). If adequately capacitated through investment, by the government and other initiatives (including this project), CETAC would have the long-term potential to become a country-level hub in the domain of Agroecological Zoning (AEZ) and planning for Sustainable Land Management (SLM), thus capable of promoting SLM nationwide as a core strategy for improving land productivity, safeguarding long-term food security and halting the loss of ecosystem services due to land degradation.

115. The practical integration of AEZ products in local spatial planning for SLM and local agricultural and other land-use practices was to be operationalized through the national network of AECs and the AP/FFSs, an approach that has proved successful in Angola, but needed to be improved and upscaled.

116. The project is expected to develop the approach to this long-term vision in regard to a restricted focus zone, (i.e., a Wider Landscape) in the provinces of Huambo and Benguela. There was a growing network of AP/FFSs in Huambo and Benguela and neighbouring provinces, which were already delivering community-level extension services on a regular basis with the support from both government and a series of international projects set on upscaling the approach. The ZAEC project was expected to create opportunities, which the project would use, for actively engaging land users in local spatial planning of SLM based on AEZ and adopting SLM practices on the ground⁵¹.

2.3 Policy and institutional context

117. The Project Document provides a comprehensive description of the policy and institutional environment⁵². While it provides an impressive description, it lacks sufficient critical analysis. The MTR does not repeat the description of the policy, regulatory and institutional landscape. Neither will it provide an in-depth analysis. However, it does note that Angola has a comprehensive policy and institutional framework already in place but, in the context of the project's intervention (LDN), it is important to identify that the critical weakness is in the implementation, enforcement and the institutional capacities for effective implementation at all levels.

118. According to the Project Document, the policy framework is largely aligned with the intentions of the UNCCD as well as a policy intention to diversify away from a reliance on oil revenues as well as linking agricultural development with sustainable development, food security and poverty alleviation; "According to Angola's Medium-Term Development Plan for the Agrarian Sector 2018-2022 (PMPSA 2018-22), the agricultural sector only represents about 12.5 % of the Angolan GDP. In an effort to diversify the economy away from oil proceeds, the agenda of the Government of Angola holds as a central priority the exploitation of the country's agricultural potential as part of a broad economic development strategy for the current post-

⁵¹ Source: Project Document, pp. 1 – 2.

⁵² Project Document, pp. 17 – 24.

conflict recovery era. As in most African countries, increasing agricultural productivity in Angola is not just about creating incentives for a struggling agricultural sector, but more fundamentally about food security and poverty alleviation. This implies addressing the more systemic issues that slow down growth, while ensuring that this growth is sustainable and more equitable than what it has been in the past⁵³.

2.4 Description of the project

119. The Sustainable Land Management in target Landscapes in Angola's Southwestern Region (ZAEC)

Table 3 Project description

Project Symbol: GCP/ANG/055/GFF. GEF ID: 9798	
Recipient Country: Angola	Financing Partner: Global Environmental Facility (GEF)
GCP/ANG/055/GFF. GEF ID: 9798	
Government /other Counterpart(s): Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Environment (MCTA) National Directorate of Environment and Climate Change (DNAAC), Centre for Tropical Ecology and Climate Change (CETAC) Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MINAGRIP)	
CEO Endorsement: 24 January 2020	
Expected EOD (starting date): October 2019, Actual Start Date: 1 June 2020	
Expected NTE (End date): October 2023, Actual End Date 1 June 2024	
GEF Focal Areas: Land Degradation	GEF/LDCF/SCCF strategic objectives: LD-3 Objective 3: Reduce pressures on natural resources by managing competing land uses in broader landscapes; Program 4: Scaling-up Sustainable Land Management through Landscape Approach.
Initial Project Risk Certification: Low (Project Document – no change in PIR & PPR)	
Financing Plan: GEF allocation (USD):	
GEF financing:	US\$ 2,639,726
Co-financing from Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Environment (MCTA):	US\$ 8,000,000
National Directorate of Environment and Climate Change (DNAAC)	US\$ 2,000,000
Center for Tropical Ecology and Climate Change (CETAC)	US\$ 4,500,000
Co-financing Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MINAGRIP)	US\$ 500,000
Co-financing FAO	US\$ 15,000,000
Sub-total co-financing:	US\$ 17,639,726
Total Budget:	
Total GEF grant disbursement as of May, 2023 (US\$⁵⁴)	US\$ 928,440⁵⁵ (35%)

2.5 Project objective and scope

120. The Project Document sets out the project objective and scope as:

"The CETAC, under MINAMB, is centrally located in Huambo City also closely located to academic institutions which conduct research and offer training in related environmental fields, in particular the Faculdade de Ciências Agrárias (FCA) and the Instituto de

⁵³ Project Document, p. 15, para. 22.

⁵⁴ Source: BH 23 May 2023.

⁵⁵ Does not include committed funds in 2023.

Investigação Agronómica (IIA). The CETAC is intended to constitute the pivot of a national network of Agroecological Centers (AECs). If adequately capacitated through investment, by the government and other initiatives (including this project), CETAC has the long-term potential to become a country-level hub in domain of Agroecological Zoning (AEZ) and planning for Sustainable Land Management (SLM), thus capable of promoting SLM nationwide as a core strategy for improving land productivity, safeguarding long-term food security and halting the loss of ecosystem services due to land degradation. The practical integration of AEZ products in local spatial planning for SLM and local agricultural and other land-use practices will be operationalized through the national network of Agroecological Centers and the Agro-Pastoral and Farmer Field Schools (AP/FFSs), an approach that has proved successful in Angola, but which needs to be improved and upscaled.

This FAO-GEF project will develop the approach to this long-term vision in regard to a restricted focus zone, i.e., a Wider Landscape in the provinces of Huambo and Benguela. Along the above-mentioned relevance of these landscapes for land degradation and the proximity to CETAC to one of the four AECs in Angola (Chipipa), there is a growing network of AP/FFSs in Huambo and Benguela and neighbouring provinces, which are already delivering community-level extension services on a regular basis with the support from both government and a series of international projects set on upscaling the approach. This creates opportunities, which the project will seize, for actively engaging land users in local spatial planning of SLM based on AEZ and adopting SLM practices on the ground⁵⁶.

121. According to the Project Document this would be achieved through three components:
122. **Component 1:** is intended to build national capacity for land-use management through AEZ, by strengthening CETAC's GIS and spatial planning capabilities, developing a dedicated spatial planning unit with focus on SLM within the Centre. This includes engaging 6-12 young professionals (post-graduate level) through a Job Shadowing program, with strong encouragement towards female candidates in order to deliver on-demand services to planners, investors and land-use decision makers at various levels.
123. **Component 2:** is intended to support the integration of SLM into rational decision-making pertaining to land-use management, both at the municipal/commune level and at the local level (i.e. village/community). In selected demonstration landscapes, the project would work with municipal and communal authorities, as well as local communities on topics such as sustainable land-use allocation, crop suitability, fire prevention, integrated soil fertility management, as well as other SLM techniques and science-based approaches.
124. It was intended to target both agricultural and pastoral land uses, making use of agroecological data and tailored AEZ products developed by CETAC's specialized AEZ Unit. Its goals are to monitor, prevent and, where needed, reverse the process of land degradation on the ground, aiming at meeting LDN targets by project end, thereby demonstrating the effectiveness of AEZ-based SLM in delivering LDN. Local stakeholders are expected to be involved in a process of negotiating territorial agreements through participatory methodologies (e.g. GreenTD). This process is to form the basis for preparing local SLM plans, which will be validated by municipalities and incorporated in the Angolan land-use planning system. The implementation of the local SLM plans will be promoted and mediated by FFS and APFS and the AEC in Chipipa within the targeted communities (demo sites) in three demonstration landscapes. In addition, the project will deliver a comprehensive training program targeting at least 30 FFS/APFS master trainers active in the Central Plateau region and focusing on SLM and AEZ.

⁵⁶ Project Document, p. 2

125. **Component 3:** is intended to identify and develop suitable options for SLM finance and improve the national capacity for mobilizing resources to be invested in SLM. This should include both carrying out and disseminating among key decision-makers targeted economic analysis of the cost of land degradation in the provinces of Huambo and Benguela. The aim is to bring financial awareness and leverage, as well as to expand the scale of actions needed for restoring/rehabilitating land in that part of the country. Both mainstream and innovative finance options for SLM were to be assessed, explored and probed. Enabling actions for operationalizing the most promising mechanisms in selected local communities within demonstration landscapes was expected.

2.5.1 Threats and barriers to land degradation neutrality

126. The Project Document states that a legal and policy framework is in place in Angola for developing and enforcing land-use plans in different geographical and jurisdictional settings. However, there are many gaps in the practical application of these frameworks. It identifies three barriers to the effective implementation of these policies and regulations:

- i. Insufficient technological and capacity for planning including tools and stakeholder consultation mechanisms for halting and reversing land degradation.
- ii. Local level, capacity for land-use allocation/management and the application on the ground of tools and concepts relating to AEZ, SLM and LDN with significant gaps.
- iii. Access to finance for sustainable land management (SLM). The principles of SLM are not yet part of the decision-making processes that lead to investments in the agricultural sector or to rational land-use allocation in different contexts.

127. To address this the project was arranged into three components:

- i. The project would build national capacity for land-use management through Agroecological Zoning (AEZ), by strengthening CETAC's GIS and spatial planning capabilities.
- ii. The project would support the integration of SLM into rational decision-making pertaining to land-use management, both at the municipal/commune level and at the local level (i.e. village/community).
- iii. Identify and develop suitable options for SLM finance and on improving national capacity for mobilizing resources to be invested in SLM.

128. The logical hierarchy of outputs and outcomes in order to achieve this objective is provided in Table 4 below.

2.5 Project strategy: objective, outcomes and expected results

Table 4 Objective, outcome, outputs and indicators

<p>Objective: Error! Reference source not found.</p>	<p>Indicator 1: Number of project beneficiaries, of which women: 1a): Indirect beneficiaries in Wider Landscape (provincial level): /Huambo (rural communes only) /Benguela (no coastal municipalities only, rural communes) 1b): Indirect beneficiaries in demo landscapes: rural population of selected communes: / Alto Hama (Londumbali) / Bailundo (Bailundo) / Chongoroi (Chongoroi) 1c): Direct beneficiaries in demo sites: population of selected communities served by AP/FFSs 1d): Direct beneficiaries of capacity building programs other than AP/FFS (including staff from extension services and public institutions, technicians, academics, decision makers and entrepreneurs) Indicator 2: Area (ha) targeted by the project for the implementation of SLM frameworks and the integration of SLM into prevalent agricultural practices: 2a): At the Wider Landscape's (macro) level, development of a support mechanism for SLM: Approximate area coverage (in millions of ha) for the project's a broad target for demonstrating the integration of AEZ into decision-making for SLM and LDN 2b) Demo landscapes: Area within which integrated landscape management practices are adopted by local communities – assessed as the application of INRM practices in demo sites</p>
<p>Outcome 1: Error! Reference source not found..</p> <p>Output 1.1: Error! Reference source not found..</p> <p>Output 1.2: Error! Reference source not found..</p> <p>Output 1.3: Error! Reference source not found..</p> <p>Output 1.4: Error! Reference source not found..</p> <p>Output 1.5: Error! Reference source not found..</p>	<p>Indicator 3: Achievement of measures of institutional sustainability regarding national capacity for agroecological zoning (AEZ) and integrated planning by project end. The benchmarks will include the following: 3a): Capacity developed of CETAC's staff members, including women, to conduct the work of the AEZ Unit [related to outputs 1.2 and the job shadowing activities, and output 1.5 on the broader institutional training and networking.] 3b): Post-project management modality worked out 3c): Number of partnerships developed 3d): Services of the AEZ Unit delivered for other projects / initiatives 3e): Number of people trained in the AEC Chipipa in collaboration with the ICE-SLM project, among them % of women who meet same qualifications criteria as men for selection 3f): Number and profile of the users of the AEZ system (gender disaggregated, if possible, to anonymously collect data on it)</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Error! Reference source not found..</p>	

<p>Output 2.1: SLM plans: Community-level land-use plans integrate AEZ and SLM are prepared through a participatory approach (GreenNTD) in 3 municipalities as part of a nested approach to landscape-level management.</p> <p>Output 2.2: A network of AP/FFSs (Agro-Pastoral and Farmer Field Schools) in three municipalities is supported in implementing SLM plans and promoting SLM practices.</p> <p>Output 2.3: A broad training program focused on SLM and the use of AEZ products for supporting decision-making at community-level is institutionalized and delivered through a regional antenna.</p>	<p>Indicator 8⁵⁷: Number of ha, where the general LDN goal of "achieving neutral land degradation by 2030 compared to degradation levels for 2015" is achieved <u>by project end</u>. The project will seek to demonstrate the effectiveness of AEZ-based SLM for achieving LDN and the and specific targets of the LDN-TSP within a shorter time span. <i>The specific LDN targets that apply to the demo landscapes is the following:</i></p> <p>8a): Reduction of marked land degradation by around 50% compared to the reference year (2015) for land where agriculture is currently practiced;</p> <p>8b): Restoration of 50% of ecosystems currently degraded by unsustainable land use practices;</p> <p>8c): 30% increase of soil organic carbon content (SOC) in all land classes and halving (0.4%) the current rate of deforestation throughout the country;</p> <p>8d): Reinforcing information, education and awareness-raising on good land-use practices including those linked to sustainable agriculture-conservation for 80% of rural households;</p> <p>8e): Reduction of 25% of livestock in areas with a strong tradition of livestock production;</p> <p>8f): Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 50%.</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Increased availability of funding for, and investments in, land restoration / rehabilitation in Angola.</p> <p>Output 3.1: Economic analyses on the cost of land degradation in Huambo and Benguela Provinces are carried out and disseminated among key decision makers to bring financial leverage and scale to the actions needed for restoring/rehabilitating land in central Angola.</p> <p>Output 3.2: Error! Reference source not found..</p> <p>Output 3.3: Community-based SLM finance, public-private partnerships and targeted matching grants are designed and implemented to channel funds from various funding sources.</p>	<p>Indicator 12: Increase in overall investment (both public and private funds) mobilized for SLM</p> <p>Key target benchmark: Key-decision makers have a solid understanding of how to bring financial leverage and scale to SLM initiatives, resulting in the active mobilization and deployment of investment at both landscape and community level.</p> <p><i>[From Tracking tool, GEF Outcome Monitoring concerning LD1 and LD3, item [iii.] Increased investments in integrated landscape management, measured as 'Increased resources flowing to INRM and other land uses from diverse sources']</i></p> <p>\$4.8 million per year (2016/2017 GoA expenditure with SLM - base year 2016 – to be confirmed/updated at inception).</p>

⁵⁷ The SRF in the Project Document numbers the indicators consecutively with the output indicators. The MTR assesses progress towards results based on the outcome indicators.

2.6 Project sites

129. The Project Document description of the project sites is at times confusing. Component 1 is expected to have a direct impact at the national scale by "*building capacity, structures and resources at national level regarding the AEZ, environmental monitoring and using products related to these for decision making support. In the development phase of CETAC's spatial planning capabilities*"⁵⁸. The project is directly implemented in two provinces, Huambo and Benguela on the central plateau and the source of Angola's major water basins such as: the Okavango, Cunene and Queve which originate in Huambo province, where its catchments also contribute to rivers such as the Cubango and Cuanza. CETAC is located in the provincial capital, Huambo.
130. "*For the demonstrative integration of AEZ-based SLM in planning and decision-making*"⁵⁹, three areas were selected in Huambo and Benguela Provinces termed "demonstration landscapes (or demo landscapes)", within which the component 2 activities are being implemented. The three selected demo landscapes comprise: (1) the communes of Alto Hama, in the municipality of Londuimbali; (2) the rural commune of Chipipa⁶⁰ in the Londuimbali municipality; and (3) the commune of Chongoroi in the municipality with same name. The communes of Alto Hama and the municipality of Bailundo are in Huambo Province and Chongoroi is in Benguela Province. The three selected demo landscapes have a combined approximate productive landscape of some 410,000 ha.
131. All three demo landscapes are located within the sub-humid agroecological zone of Angola, but it is much more arid in Chongoroi than the other two. Alto Hama and Bailundo display altitudes of 1,400 – 1,700 m, whereas Chongoroi reaches altitudes of 748 - 850 m, a factor that influences climate, land use and erosion risks, differentiating these landscapes⁶¹.
132. The Project Document describes the implementation approach as a "*tiered nested approach*" which "*resembles the 'scheme of Matryoshka' dolls*"⁶². It is not immediately clear how the "Matryoshka dolls" analogy adds to the description of the project's geographic implementation.

2.7 Implementation arrangements

133. The project is directly implemented by the FAO, which is responsible for supervision and provision of technical guidance during project implementation. As the GEF Agency, FAO is responsible for:
- Administrating funds from GEF in accordance with the rules and procedures of FAO;
 - Overseeing project implementation in accordance with the project document, work plans; budgets, agreements with co-financiers and the rules and procedures of FAO;
 - Providing technical guidance to ensure that appropriate technical quality is applied to all activities concerned;
 - Conducting regular supervision missions; and
 - Reporting to the GEF Secretariat and Evaluation Office, through the annual Project Implementation Review, on project progress and provide financial reports to the GEF Trustee.

134.

⁵⁸ Project Document, para. 41, p. 25.

⁵⁹ Project Document, para. 43, p. 26

⁶⁰ The commune of Bailundo was originally selected but it was unable to get agreement with the local administration and therefore an alternative site (Chipipa) was selected.

⁶¹ Source: Project Document, pp. 24 – 28.

⁶² Project Document, para. 49, p. 28.

135. FAO's representative in Angola is the BH responsible for the management of GEF resources, as applicable. The FAO Representation in Angola has established an interdisciplinary Project Task Force (PTF) within FAO, to guide the implementation of the project.
136. The PTF is a management and consultative body that integrates the necessary technical qualifications from the FAO relevant units to support the project. The PTF is composed of a BH, two Lead Technical Officers (LTO), the Funding Liaison Officer (FLO) and one or more technical officers based on FAO Headquarters (HQ Technical Officer). In this instance there are two LTOs, one GIS specialist and one AEZ specialist, reflecting the inter-disciplinary nature of the project.
137. In consultation with the LTO, the FAO Representative in Angola is responsible for timely operational, administrative and financial management of the GEF project resources, as applicable, including in particular: (1) the acquisition of goods and contracting of services for the activities of the project, according to FAO's rules and procedures, in accordance with the approved AWP/B; (2) processing the payments corresponding to delivery of goods, services and technical products in consultation with the PSC; (3) providing six-monthly financial reports including a statement of project expenditures to the PSC; and (4) at least once a year, or more frequently if required, preparing budget revisions for submission to the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit through the Field Program Management Information System (FPMIS) of FAO.
138. The FAO Representative in Angola, in accordance with the PTF, provides its non-objection to the Annual Work Plans and Budgets (AWP/B) submitted by the PMU as well as the Project Progress Reports (PPRs). PPRs may be commented by the PTF and should be approved by the LTO before being uploaded by the BH in FPMIS.
139. The LTO supports the BH in the implementation and monitoring of the AWP/Bs, including work plan and budget revisions. The LTO is responsible and accountable for providing or obtaining technical clearance of technical inputs and services procured by the Organization.
140. The lead national Executing Partner is the MINAMB, through its Office for Climate Change (GABAC), will lead the project. The project staff are hosted at the CETAC.
141. The MINAGRIF is mainly involved through the Institute for Agricultural Development (IDA), in charge of extension services, mainly to support small farmers and represented at the provincial level Provincial Departments under the Provincial Directorate with local teams at municipal and communal level named Stations of Agrarian Development (EDAs) and Centers for Agrarian Development (CDAs) respectively. The EDAs are the units of the front-line extension work involved in the day-to-day field activities with farmers and are present in Londuimbali, Chipipa and Chongoroi.

2.8 Project timing and milestones

Table 5 Key project events and milestones

Preparation	
Received by GEF	7 Mar 2017
GEF Grant approved	1 Nov 2017
CEO approval of Project Document	22 Jan 2020
Implementation	
Project Document signature & official start-up	1 June 2020
Inception workshop	11 May 2021
Appointment of Project Coordinator	
COVID pandemic lockdown	
Midterm Review (planned)	June 2022
Midterm Review (actual)	May – June 2023
MCTA restructuring	17 September 2022
Terminal Evaluation (planned)	May – June 2024
Planned project end	June 2024

2.9 Main stakeholders

Table 6 Summary of project stakeholders

Stakeholder ⁶³	Relevant Role
Central Government	
Ministry of Environment (MINAMB)	<p>MINAMB has the overall responsibility for the coordination of land management and environmental policies. The Ministry will make sure that relevant policies, institutional and legislative frameworks, and other important elements are ready to support the implementation of project activities. It will equally support the process of Agroecological Zoning (AEZ) and related activities in the project.</p> <p>Under MINAMB</p> <p><u>Office for Biodiversity and Climate Change (GABAC):</u> As the focal government body for the project within MINAMB, the Office for Biodiversity and Climate Change will be the institution responsible for leading the national project coordination and monitoring and evaluation. The office will also coordinate unit responsible for AEZ and will promote synergy between any existing or foreseen project working with similar topics.</p> <p><u>Provincial Directorates for the Environment in Huambo and Benguela</u> have been established. They will be the key liaison entity of the provincial governments in accompanying the project. (see further below the role of the provincial government).</p> <p><u>The Center for Tropical Ecology and Climate Change (CETAC)</u> The CENTER will be a central element for the project implementation arrangement at the landscape level and the main focus for capacity building. It will work as a facilitator for the coordination of local partnerships, e.g. with universities, and will host the unit responsible for AEZ, functioning as a 'hub' for the national AEZ system. The institution will also be part of efforts of monitoring and evaluation of the project.</p> <p><u>Centro Agroecológico da Chipipa (AEC)</u> The Chipipa Agroecological Center can function as a hub for FFS and APFS, playing a role in testing techniques and training FFS master-trainers. Training is already on-going supported by SADC and other projects. Currently, the mandate and attributions of the AECs are under review by government. If there will be important changes that have a bearing on the feasibility of certain activities project team will adapt.</p>
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MINAGRIF)	<p>MINAGRIF has the responsibility over the agriculture and forestry sectors. It also has a mandate over a number of rural development issues. Along with MINAMB, MINAGRIF will be engaged in the execution of the project, and the organization of the project's activities.</p> <p>Under MINAGRIF</p> <p><u>Agrarian Development Institute (IDA) & the Agro-Development (Field) Station (EDA)</u> IDA and EDAs will work on building capacity, facilitating and integrating AEZ in the local level, involving FFS and APFS. They will be able to promote and monitor SLM in the local</p>

⁶³ According to the Project Document

Stakeholder ⁶³	Relevant Role
	<p>level, as well as to collect data and contribute to monitor and evaluation.</p> <p><u>Provincial Directorates for Agriculture and Forestry in Huambo and Benguela</u> have had a presence for a few years and work closely with Provincial Directorate for the Environment. They will be closely articulated with the provincial IDA regarding the involvement of the municipal EDA's in the project's implementation.</p> <p>Food Security Office (GSA) is a technical support entity within MINAGRI in defining and following-up on the implementation of policies and strategies that allow the improvement of food security. GSA is responsible for the collection of meteorological data to operate the agrometeorological crop monitoring and crop yield forecast system for food security. Jointly with IGCA and INAMET, the GSA should participate by sharing its geographic data with the AEZ in the effort of consolidating a centralized database of AEZ relevant data.</p>
Ministry for Urban Affairs and Housing (MINOTH) and Ministry of Territorial Administration (MAT)	<p>At a central and local level, in particular MINOTH's National Institute for Territorial Planning and Urban Development (INOTU) will help with the engagement of different levels of government in land use planning -- central government, provincial and municipal governments. They have an important role to play in decentralizing the spatial and landscape level planning. They also play important roles in statutory commissions that are relevant for the endorsement of plans produced under the legal umbrella of the 2004 LOTU and its 2006 regulations. Also, under MINOTH, the Angolan Institute for Geodesy and Cartography (IGCA) is responsible for the ongoing national land cadaster initiative. Jointly with GSA and INAMET, IGCA should participate by sharing its geographic data with the AEZ in the effort of consolidating a centralized database of AEZ relevant data.</p> <p>To a lesser extent, and more in an accompanying role, the MAT will also need to be involved.</p>
Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technologies (MTTI)	<p>The National Institute of Meteorology and Geophysics (INAMET) is the national institution in charge of monitoring the weather and climate. It is also a research organization which provides scientific services in the fields of meteorology and geophysics under the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technologies (MTTI).</p> <p>INAMET ensures the functioning of the network of Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) and conventional observations of atmospheric parameters, carrying data storage, processing and dissemination.</p> <p>INAMET is represented across the country through its provincial departments. Jointly with GSA and IGCA, INAMET will be engaged by a partnership to encourage the sharing of geographic data with the AEZ Unit, in a joint effort of consolidating a centralized database of AEZ-relevant data.</p>
Provincial and Local Government	
Provincial governments of Huambo and Benguela and Provinces	<p>Mostly through the interfaces of the provincial directorates of MINAMB and MINAGRIF, provincial governments will be engaged in the planning and implementation of the project and support its activities in the demo landscapes. They will support the project in all its phases and will ensure linkage with local development strategies. They are a key beneficiary of project's capacity building interventions.</p>
Municipal Governments	<p>Together with provincial governments, the municipal governments will be working on the project's execution and provide support throughout the entire time of its implementation and planning. The three target municipalities are: Londuimbali and Bailundo in Huambo, and Chongorói in Benguela. The respective municipal administrations are also a key project beneficiary.</p>
Local stakeholders	
Family farmers	<p>These groups will be the direct beneficiary of the project on the ground. The current count of family farmers assisted through AP/FFSs will likely be 1,500, of which 52% are women.</p>
Farmers associations organized in AP/FFSs	<p>One of the most important targets of this project for its potential to transform farming systems and recover or degrade land. This category is also the one that suffers more directly the impact of land degradation and the benefits of its recovery.</p>
Traditional authorities	<p>They will be supporting the project's implementation in a role as mediators, enabling communication between local groups engaged in the project. They will also monitor the project's activities.</p>
Funders and NGOs	
Donor agencies and private companies	<p>Wherever relevant the project will to collaborate with possible donors and private sector. Co-financing with multilateral partners is being leveraged and more details will be provided in due course.</p>
NGOs and CBOs	<p>The project has been developed with the participation of NGOs, in particular those that are currently helping build the capacity of local land users and managers in from agricultural sector. The scope of their work includes Benguela and Huambo provinces. During project preparation and implementation, the project will develop the collaboration with a wider network of NGOs working in the region.</p>
Other relevant stakeholders	
Academic and research institutes	<p>Where applicable, project's activities will be developed in cooperation with local research institutions. Academic and research institutes that manifested an interest in the project include the Instituto de Investigação Agronómica (IIA) and the Faculdade de Ciências Agrárias (FCA), both located in Huambo city, as well as the Methodist University in Angola and Universidade Lusíada de Angola (ULA), both located in Luanda.</p>
Entrepreneurs in	<p>Entrepreneurs providing services or products that can contribute to SLM and to the diversification of</p>

Stakeholder ⁶³	Relevant Role
relevant domains	rural economy have an interest in the sustainability of the resources base of rural areas and could contribute to SLM through their businesses
Project Task Force	
Budget Holder (BH)	FAO's representative in Angola is responsible for the management of GEF resources, as applicable. As a first step in the implementation of the project, the FAO Representation in Angola will establish an interdisciplinary Project Task Force (PTF) within FAO, to guide the implementation of the project.
Lead Technical Officer (LTO).	The LTO for the project is the Plant Protection and Production Division (NSP). The role of the LTO is central to FAO's comparative advantage for projects. The LTO oversees and carries out technical backstopping to the project implementation. The LTO supports the BH in the implementation and monitoring of the AWP/Bs, including work plan and budget revisions. The LTO is responsible and accountable for providing or obtaining technical clearance of technical inputs and services procured by the Organization.
Funding Liaison Officer (FLO)	The FAO-GEF Coordination Unit will act as Funding Liaison Officer (FLO). The FAO/GEF Coordination Unit reviews the PPRs and financial reports, and will reviews and approves budget revisions based on the approved Project Budget and AWP/Bs. The FAO GEF Coordination Unit may also participate in the mid-term review and in the development of corrective actions in the project implementation strategy if needed to mitigate eventual risks affecting the timely and effective implementation of the project. The FAO GEF Coordination Unit will in collaboration with the FAO Finance Division request transfer of project funds from the GEF Trustee based on six-monthly projections of funds needed.
GEF Operational Focal Point (MINAMB)	The GEF OP for the UNCCD is in the MINAMB.

2.10 Project finance

142. This project has a financing from the GEF of US\$ 2,639,726 and a total expected co-financing (considering cash and in-kind) of US\$ 15,000,000 (see Table 7).

Table 7 Project financing and expected co-financing

Source & type	Amount (US\$)
GEF financing (Including Project Management Cost USD 113 742):	US\$ 2,639,726
Co-financing from Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Environment (MCTA ⁶⁴):	
National Directorate of Environment and Climate Change (DNAAC)	US\$ 8,000,000
Center for Tropical Ecology and Climate Change (CETAC)	US\$ 2,000,000
Co-financing Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MINAGRIP)	US\$ 4,500,000
Co-financing FAO	US\$ 500,000
Sub-total co financing:	US\$ 15,000,000
Total Budget:	US\$ 17,639,726

⁶⁴ Now MINAMB

3. Theory of Change

Figure 1 Theory of Change (Project Document)

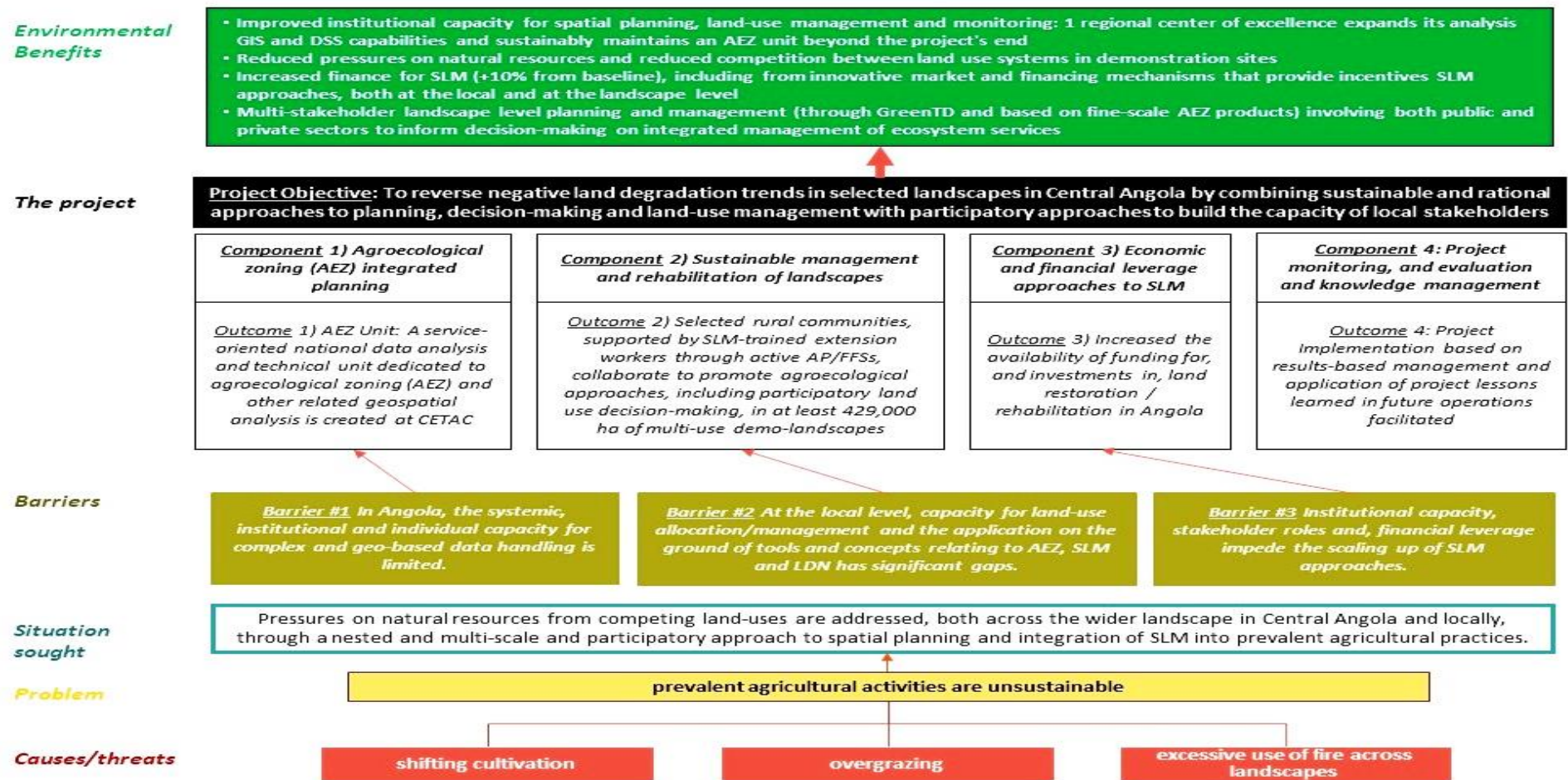
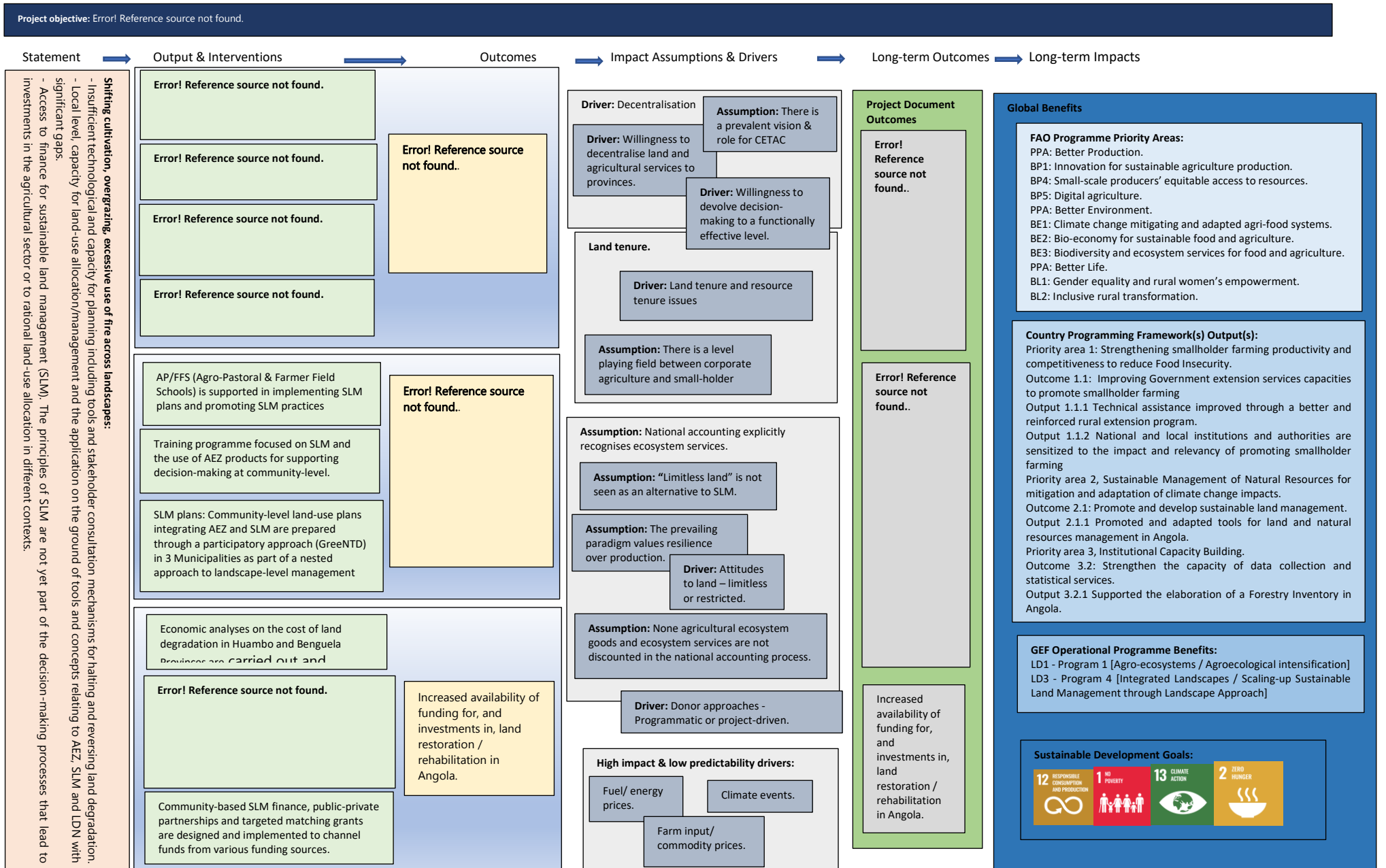


Figure 2 Revised Theory of Change (MTR)



143. The essential distinctive elements of a ToC compared to other approaches in project planning and management⁶⁵ are to:
- identify specific causal links among outputs and outcomes, with evidence;
 - describe the causal pathways by which interventions are expected to have effect, and identify indicators to test their validity over time, and;
 - be explicit about assumptions about these causal pathways, which includes an analysis of barriers and enablers as well as indicators of success.
144. The TOC is useful, in this sense, because it sets out the causal pathways from intervention through to the long-term impacts as well as identifying the key drivers shaping the system. By providing a reasonable depiction of the response hierarchy described in the Project Document and identifying the impact pathways and intermediate stages it is also useful in developing a temporal perspective necessary to for a realistic forecasting of project impacts.
145. A more detailed account of its use is given in the GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) guidelines.
146. The TOC developed in the Project Document⁶⁶ (Figure 1) lacks this utility because, it does not follow the inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact hierarchy necessary to construct the logical pathways. The MTR has sought to reconstruct a plausible TOC (Figure 2) based upon the project's SRF. However, there are obvious problems with this given the weaknesses in the SRF (see section 4.5.6). This confusion appears to occur throughout the Project Document in the form of un-necessary and confusing diagrams.
147. The project TOC clusters a number of process into "threats" and in doing so it ignores the considerable complexity and dynamic nature of land use, ignoring the possibility that "farmers" or "communities" are responding rationally to a range of external and internal constraints, ecosystem, economic and socio-political drivers. As such, it reflects the "top down" approach which characterises the projects design and intervention. It identifies the *causes* or *threats* of land degradation (shifting cultivation, overgrazing and excessive use of fire across landscapes), it does not identify the key drivers or contextual issues which may result in shifting cultivation, overgrazing and the excessive use of fire across landscapes which may have their basis in a larger more unpredictable range of cause and effect driver relationships which is dynamic and may be less-well understood. In other words, the causes or threats identified in the TOC may in fact be symptoms or results of more complex and systemic issues, which constitute an adaptive and not a technical challenge.
148. Limitations to any ToC is the possibility that aspects of the system are not included due to the complexity (and to some extent, the need to fit a complex and unpredictable system into the confines of an A4 sheet). In this instance there are issues related to adaptive challenges which might need to be overcome in order to achieve a collaborative governance approach to land management across a range of different stakeholders with different, but legitimate, priorities and agendas, but are not fully addressed in the project design.
149. During the development of the MTR, the Project TOC was revised to review and introduce modifications and be translated, if necessary, to the project's results framework with an appropriate justification and to support any recommendations.
150. The MTR has used the logical hierarchy (outputs – outcomes, etc.) from the Project Document (pp. 149-157), although as stated in this report (sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.6.1), there are weaknesses in this strategic framework.

⁶⁵ Theory of Change Primer A STAP document, December 2019

⁶⁶ Project Document p. 58

4. Key findings and MTR questions

4.1 Relevance

Gef criteria/ sub-criteria	MTR Rating
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE	
A1 Overall Strategic Relevance	S
A1.1 Alignment with GEF and FAO strategic priorities	S
A1.2 Relevance to national, regional and global beneficiary needs	S
A1.3 Complementarity with existing interventions	S

151. The project was, and remains, **relevant**. The Project Document⁶⁷ provides the following to support the project's alignment with:
152. FAO's Strategic Programmes and Objectives at the time: Objective #2: Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable. Organizational Outcome 2.1: Countries adopted practices to increase productivity sustainably while addressing climate change and environmental degradation in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.
153. Country Outcome(s) UNDAF: Strategic Area of Intervention 3: Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Development.
- Outcome 3.1: Inclusive Growth, Economic Diversification, Production and Job Creation.
 - Outcome 3.2: Environmental Sustainability, Climatic Change and reduction of Risks Disasters.
154. Country Programming Framework(s) Output(s):
155. Priority area 1: Strengthening smallholder farming productivity and competitiveness to reduce Food Insecurity.
- Outcome 1.1: Improving Government extension services capacities to promote smallholder farming
 - Output 1.1.1 Technical assistance improved through a better and reinforced rural extension program.
 - Output 1.1.2 National and local institutions and authorities are sensitized to the impact and relevancy of promoting smallholder farming
156. Priority area 2, Sustainable Management of Natural Resources for mitigation and adaptation of climate change impacts.
- Outcome 2.1: Promote and develop sustainable land management.
 - Output 2.1.1 Promoted and adapted tools for land and natural resources management in Angola.
157. Priority area 3, Institutional Capacity Building.
- Outcome 3.2: Strengthen the capacity of data collection and statistical services.
 - Output 3.2.1 Supported the elaboration of a Forestry Inventory in Angola.
158. As well as the Regional Initiative/Priority Area: Integrated Management of Agricultural Landscapes in Africa / Generating and sharing knowledge and Capacity Building.
159. The project results remain consistent with FAO's current Strategic Framework⁶⁸ (2022 – 2031) in the Programme Priority Areas (PPAs):
- PPA: Better Production.
- BP1: Innovation for sustainable agriculture production.
 - BP4: Small-scale producers' equitable access to resources.
 - BP5: Digital agriculture.

⁶⁷ pp. 103 – 108.

⁶⁸ <https://www.fao.org/3/cb7099en/cb7099en.pdf>

PPA: Better Environment.

BE1: Climate change mitigating and adapted agri-food systems.

BE2: Bio-economy for sustainable food and agriculture.

BE3: Biodiversity and ecosystem services for food and agriculture.

PPA: Better Life.

BL1: Gender equality and rural women's empowerment.

BL2: Inclusive rural transformation.

160. Further, it adds to the four cross-cutting sectional accelerators identified as: innovation, technology, data and complementary accelerators (governance, human capital and institutions).

161. According to the Project Document the project objective is closely aligned with the GEF's Land Degradation Focal Area Strategy for GEF-6 through enhancing the sustainability of land management in Angola in two different fronts:

*"The **Landscape Approach** as a core objective and approach (LD-3) is prioritized in terms of scaling-up sustainable land management through the landscape approach. The choice of LD-3 is also highly appropriate for the project, given its Component 1 and 2 activities. This is particularly the case of activities foreseen under Component 1, which are directly linked to the development of national capacity for AEZ. Products from the AEZ will be useful for an informed and rational decision-making process, both nationally, but also on the ground, which will be done through Component 2. The focus on **agroecological intensification (LD-1)** as a focal area objective under Component 2 has a limited scale regarding landscapes' surface and number of beneficiaries in terms of the direct implementation of the activities foreseen for the three demo landscapes. This limitation may, in principle, be overcome through methodical technical integration with other projects employing the AP/FFS approach (e.g. IRECEIA⁶⁹, ICE-SLM⁷⁰, ARP⁷¹) who should lend added scale to the approach of this project's Component 2. As for Component 3, it contributes to both LD1 focal area objectives more generally"⁷².*

162. The MTR broadly agree with the alignment with the LD Focal Area Strategy but notes that the scaling up will require considerable further government investment.

163. It is worth noting that feedback from high-level key informants indicates that there is an institutional demand for data on LDN, in particular in relation to reporting. The AEZ unit with its GIS capability and the DSS can fill this role.

164. Nationally, The Project Document makes a strong case for alignment with the national policy framework including the National Development Plan (PDN)⁷³ for the period 2018-2022, the Agricultural Sector Mid-Term Plan (PMPSA⁷⁴) 2018-2022, the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Program (LDN-TSP), the National Action Program to Combat Desertification (PANCOD⁷⁵)

165. The PANCOD is as much a 'national program' as it is a convention compliance mechanism for Angola and also Angola's Spatial Planning System with the implementation of the "Spatial Planning Law" or LOTU (3/04) and the municipalities requirement to develop municipal

⁶⁹ IRCEA (FAO GEF) Integrating climate resilience into agricultural and agropastoral production systems through soil fertility management in key productive and vulnerable areas using the Farmer Field School approach

⁷⁰ "Integrating Climate Change into Environment and Sustainable Land Management Practices" (ICE- SLM - GEF ID 5231)

⁷¹ Agricultural Recovery Program (IFAD)

⁷² Project Document, p. 108.

⁷³ Plano de Desenvolvimento Nacional (PDN).

⁷⁴ Plano Médio Prazo do Sector Agrário (PMPSA).

⁷⁵ Programa de Acção Nacional de Combate à Desertificação (PANCOD).

planning instruments which include Municipal Master Plans (PDMs), Environmental Land-Use Plans (POAs) and Rural Land-Use Plans (POR).

166. The Project Document cites five ongoing (at the time of its design) initiatives aligned with the ZAEC project. These were: Land Degradation Neutrality - Target Setting Program (LDN-TSP), the World Bank (WB) funded Smallholder Agriculture Development and Commercialization Project (SADCP (MOSAP II)), the African Development Bank-GEF funded "Integrating Climate Change into Environment and Sustainable Land Management Practices"⁷⁶ (ICE- SLM - GEF ID 5231), the Provincial Agro-Zoning in Huambo, which at the time of the project's design was an ad-hoc inter-institutional commission created by the provincial governor that included representatives of IGCA, IDA, the Directorate of Agriculture and the Department of Urban Planning, and the FAO-GEF project "Increasing climate resilience into agricultural and agro-pastoral systems through soil fertility management in key productive and vulnerable areas using the farmer Field Schools approach (IRCEA)", in particular, through the adoption of the FFS system.

4.2 Effectiveness

Gef criteria/ sub-criteria	MTR Rating
B Effectiveness	
B1. Overall assessment of project results	MS
B1.1 Delivery of project outputs	S
B1.2 Progress towards outcomes and project objective	MS
- Outcome 1	S
- Outcome 2	MS
- Outcome 3	MU
- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes	MS
B1.3 Likelihood of impact	Not rated at MTR

4.2.1 Progress towards outcomes

167. Assessing the progress towards outcomes is challenging because of the weaknesses in the SRF, not least the absence of working outcome indicators (baselines, mid-term and end of project targets) as well as the weak linkages between the objective-level indicators and the purpose of the project. As a result, if based upon the project's M&E framework, the project appears less effective than it really is. Therefore, the MTR has not based its conclusions and subsequent ratings entirely on the SRF and indicators and it has used other evidence to support its conclusions. Table 9 below would normally include an assessment progress and impact as measured against the outcome indicators. However, as previously stated, the project's SRF does not include baselines and targets, therefore, they have not been included in the table. A review of the project's outputs is provided in Annex 8.

Outcome 1: Error! Reference source not found..

168. This was the largest component both by budget and technical assistance. The project has made considerable progress and the AEZ Unit established within CETAC is impressive with important intellectual and technical capacities. The AEZ Unit has mapped two AEZs (Alto Hama and Chipipa) and is currently completing the third (Chongoroi) and these are expected to be completed within the next year. The component has suffered as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, particularly due to the loss of the international CTA returning home during the lockdown. However, the national team have proved technically capable and managed the component to a very high level, to the extent that the achievements have been delayed but not reduced in quality. The DSS, which in particular will provide the LDN indicators

⁷⁶ The second component is implemented by FAO and it had CETAC as the focal institution.

(cover, production and soil organic carbon (SOC))⁷⁷ is under development and should be completed in the next year. However, this will only provide fine-grained detail for the three "demo areas" of the project. It currently covers 38,737 ha (Land Cover Classification and Land Degradation analyses, etc.) and is anticipated to extend to approximately 350,000 ha by the end of the project. To achieve nation-wide coverage will require considerable investment and upscaling. The AEZ Unit will prepare a proposal for nation-wide coverage including sampling intensity which can be used to populate the platform (DSS) as data becomes available.

169. In summary, the project has put in place a highly capable AEZ Unit in CETAC as well as sufficient equipment, including hardware and software. There are no women members engaged in the AEZ Unit, an issue which will be covered in section 4.6. At the start of the project it was found that CETAC did not have a staff compliment sufficient in number and level of qualification. This necessitated an adaptive change in approach resulting in the larger project-employed staff compliment of the AEZ Unit, with the associated concerns for the pot-project legacy and retention of expertise.
170. The post-project strategy is being developed, however, the MTR has concerns that any strategy for the AEZ Unit is critically dependent upon the future of the CETAC and will need to be embedded in a larger institutional strategic plan for the organisation which would include human resources, finance, a clear vision and mandate and a substantive Director to lead the process⁷⁸.
171. In line with this, the data sharing agreement is critical to the success of the AEZ Unit. While the organisations necessary for data sharing have been identified, there appears to be resistance to actually sharing data. The PCU has limited powers to achieve an effective data sharing agreement (DSA) and high-level commitment through the PSC is probably necessary to ensure this takes place. The MTR understands that the MINAMB is going to support CETAC in getting these DSAs signed. The MTR reflects that this is an indication of the need to strengthen the CETAC leadership role of the project.
172. The training provided by the project has been well-received across a range of institutions (AFC, INMET, IDA, etc...). Paradoxically, the training is likely to benefit other organisations more than CETAC unless there is a clear legacy plan to strengthen the institutional management and not only the AEZ Unit.
173. The MTR rates this outcome as satisfactory with the caveat that unless there is a clear and plausible pathway to strengthen CETAC in the remaining time available to the project; the Terminal Evaluator will likely downgrade this rating despite the very good technical aspects.
174. **Outcome 2:** Error! Reference source not found..
175. Outcome 2, due to the need to have face to face training and meetings was particularly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. Three community-level SLM plans have been prepared using the LADA approach⁷⁹ (Alto Hama, Chipipa and Chongoroi) and are approved at the Municipal level. These plans have information for three specific zones alongside the SLM activities that need to be implemented. The MTR notes that these are very technical plans and it would be advisable for a simplified summary to be made available to the community through the traditional hierarchy.
176. The project uses an impressive range of FAO tools related to AEZ such as GAEZ 4, essentially a global analysis tool⁸⁰ and PyAEZ⁸¹ to step AEZ down to the local level. TAPE (Tools for

⁷⁷ Necessary for the national reporting to the UNCCD.

⁷⁸ Currently the Director of CETAC has been absent due to health reasons for approximately two years.

⁷⁹ The LADA planning assessment is based on the participatory completion of a detailed and georeferenced questionnaire that pays attention to the state, causes and evolution of soil, water and biological characteristics.

⁸⁰ gaez.fao.org

⁸¹ <https://github.com/gicait/PyAEZ>

Agroecology Performance Evaluation⁸² is used to assess various criteria including governance, particularly in the APFS.

177. 623 (including 179 women) people from nine communities were involved in the planning process. Training in the 14 FFS/APFS has included a range of SLM and AE approaches in line with the project's AEZ LDN objective. However, the MTR is concerned that the plans will prove hard to implement without long-term support to the communities and the local government agencies. Community-based approaches require long-term, phased. This support is not limited to technical support but requires a process to assist the key actors develop their decision-making skills will necessitate support in problem solving. Without an adequately capacitated CETAC, with a strategic focus and plan, the MTR has concerns that this support will not continue after the close of the GEF-funded project.
178. The MTR also notes that the focus of the project is largely agricultural (Chipipa does include some elements of agro-forestry and small-scale water shed management⁸³) and through the vehicle of the FFSs, which are a proven and effective means of building farmer capacities⁸⁴. However, as the Project Document places considerable importance on a landscape approach, it may be that the FFS, in its current format, is not sufficient to adequately address all of the driving forces of land degradation at this scale. It is possible that a wider governance approach is required which could be loosely described as a community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) approach. This would allow issues of scale (ecological, social, administrative, etc.), tenure (resource and land) as well people (collective decision-making and conflict resolution, cohesion and organisation, loosely described as *social capital*) to be organised within a functionally efficient unit of management (See Annex 6 for a description of functional efficiency). This is, to a large degree, the purpose of the LADA exercise and the SLM plans. However, there is a risk that the focus on agriculture ignores the larger common pool resources management issues which are necessary to build resilience into the system at different temporal, social, administrative and ecological scales.
179. Furthermore, there may be a range of extra-farm or non-farm resources which have livelihood importance at this level, including nutritional dependency. While these resources may be informally harvested and their management may be sustainable, until they are included in the range full range of livelihood resources managed through an agreed plan, they remain vulnerable.
180. Key to any CBNRM approach is the need to build capacity, and devolve authority and responsibility, at the level within a system (avoiding the use of the term "community") where decision-making and conflict resolution takes place regarding both common pool and private property resources.
181. The SLM plan and the GIS and mapping are a good means to formalise and legitimise these rights and responsibilities and as such are a significant step. However, the MTR is concerned that the focus will still be largely on the farm, the private property, where authority and responsibility is clearly delineated and legitimised. Those interstitial spaces, which may be critical to the maintenance of ecosystems services and future use options, between areas that have strong individual tenurial recognition and are absolutely critical from an AEZ management perspective; may remain ungoverned.
182. This is apparent in Chongoroi where the community, despite being selected because of their agro-pastoral activities, appear resistant to including livestock in the FFS approach and

⁸² (<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341940191>)

⁸³ Forest conservation at the head of the stream that has been impounded.

⁸⁴ Henk van den Berg, Jan Willem Ketelaar, Marcel Dicke, Marjon Fredrix, Is the farmer field school still relevant? Case studies from Malawi and Indonesia, NJAS - Wageningen Journal of Life Sciences, Volume 92, 2020, *et al.*

- are opting for more conventional, sedentary farming activities and in particular, support with irrigation.
183. While this component is now making progress despite the earlier setbacks from the pandemic restrictions, it is still behind schedule and requires a refocusing of efforts in the field to utilise the remaining time.
184. The FFS has constructed a small impoundment at Chipipa because irrigation during the dry periods was identified as a constraining factor. The MTR notes that such small impoundments are very efficient means of water management at this scale providing water for irrigation as well as increasing infiltration and ground water recharge while reducing sediment flows. It was noted that the dam has been constructed from soil collected from the stream basin (as opposed to material which is not alluvial in nature collected from higher areas). While this may not be an issue due to the small scale of the impoundment, it should nonetheless be monitored closely during periods of heavy rainfall.
185. The MTR also notes that, while the project has made efforts to include women in the FFS selection and activities, this has been largely targeted, that is, it has focused on the number of women participating in activities. It is clear that the project is aware of this and has struggled to find women to fill the roles within the AEZ Unit to support this process. It is important that the role of women is strengthened further and should aim to have in place strategies and capacities to be gender responsive, that is; addressing differential needs of men and women and addressing the distribution of benefits, resources, status and rights, by the end of the project.
186. Lastly, due to the delays (e.g. Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, institutional issues, etc.) the FFS would benefit from additional time than is available. This is particularly important because the FFSs will arguably require greater attention to process (e.g. building social capital at the community level) than if they were simply delivering technical services for conventional agriculture.
187. **Outcome 3: Increased availability of funding for, and investments in, land restoration/rehabilitation in Angola.**
188. Progress in Outcome 3 is less clearly defined. While it is understandable why this component and activities would be important, the MTR considers that the Project Document's expectations for this third component were unrealistic. The targeted economic analysis⁸⁵, on this scale, would have required much of the project's other outputs to be in place including a substantive data sharing agreement as well as the collection of considerable amounts of primary data.
189. The project is lobbying hard to increase available funds for land restoration, the Integrated Land Use Planning is designed to use as a prototype document with a methodological approach to increase the investment in land restoration, a policy brief for Nguga has been developed to mobilize financial support to SLM activities and five institutions that fund SLM initiatives have been identified.
190. The MTR has concerns regarding this component which stem from the design phase. As already stated, the expectations were unrealistic and in the case of the fiduciary fund⁸⁶ to be "*created specifically to support community-based SLM finance and micro and small entrepreneurs interested in SLM*"; it suggests that there was a degree of "blue-sky thinking"⁸⁷ taking place.

⁸⁵ Output 3.1 **Economic analyses on the cost of land degradation** in Huambo and Benguela Provinces are carried out and disseminated among key decision makers to bring financial leverage and scale to the actions needed for restoring/rehabilitating land in central Angola.

⁸⁶ Project Document, p. 87, para 217

⁸⁷ Open-minded thinking, but thinking that is not necessarily grounded or in touch with the realities of the present.

191. To support this view, the MTR contrasts the situation and concerns raised in this report regarding the sustainability of CETAC and the AEZ Unit against the ambitions of Outcome 3. That is, there are real concerns regarding the institutional and financial sustainability of the AEZ Unit within CETAC without attempting to establish elaborate and sophisticated SLM financing mechanisms. Arguably, the achievement of LDN in Angola requires long term support and commitment. It is also reasonable to suppose that this will require continued, external, project support for some time to come before it can move towards a more programmatic and finally budget-supported approach.

192. It would appear from the PIF that Outcome 3 was an expansion of the project to reflect national priorities:

"In sum, there are two overarching barriers to realizing the mentioned solution within the project landscapes: land-use governance and capacity. Components 1 and 2 refer directly to these. However, because the GEF envelope for this project can be limited, an additional barrier would refer to the finance aspect and this is linked to Component 3.

More specifically, a request from the GoA for this project was to bring as much 'leverage' as possible to SLM solutions, exactly because land degradation is a very serious and widespread problem in the country. This is true, even if the land degradation problem is not well quantified or assessed in its full parameters – and neither are all the solutions known, especially on the ground, where the context is as diverse as the country's ecosystems and its ethnic groups. For this reason, the GoA requested that the project should bring about solutions, not just to a few thousand hectares of landscapes, but that it should create powerful and 'nationally-appropriated' economic and financial instruments for fighting land degradation".⁸⁸

193. The inclusion of a financial component has a strategic logic to it. However, the outcome and outputs which emerge from the Project Document do not reflect the time and resources available to the project, not least that the results of Outcomes 1 and 2 might need to be in place before proceeding with Outcome 3.

Table 8 GEF-7 Core indicators

Core Indicator 4	Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)			(Hectares)
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE
Area under improved land management	14,000	14,000	1.186,77 ha	
Indicator 4.3	Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems			Hectares
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE
Area under improved land management (Demonstrations of SLM and SFM best practices in forests, rangelands and croplands that provide carbon benefits on 14,000 ha of land)	14,000	14,000	1.186,77 ha	
Core Indicator 6	Greenhouse gas emission mitigated			(Metric tons of CO ₂ e)
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE
Expected CO ₂ e (direct)	7,400	7,400	3,065,414 ⁸⁹	

⁸⁸ PIF Para. 35–36 p. 9

⁸⁹ Some of these figures are very similar to those reported in other GEF LDN projects

Core Indicator 11	Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment			(Number)
	PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE
Female		924	425	
Male		1,000	402	
Total		1,925	827	

Table 9 Outcomes progress towards results

Objective/ Outcome indicator	Baseline	MTR target	End of project target	MTR assessment	MTR rating
Objective: Error! Reference source not found..					
Objective Rating					Moderately Satisfactory
Objective indicator 1 : Number of project beneficiaries, of which women:	None	None	None	None	
1a): Indirect beneficiaries in Wider Landscape (provincial level): /Huambo (rural communes only) /Benguela (no coastal municipalities only, rural communes)	1a) /Huambo: 0 /Benguela: 0	1a) Approx.: /Huambo 1 million rural inhabitants, 52% women /Benguela 400 thousand rural pop., 52% women	1a) Approx.: /Huambo 1 million rural inhabitants, 52% women /Benguela 400 thousand rural pop, 52% women	Indicator 1a) & 1b) "indirect beneficiaries" is ambiguous and needs defining. The project has calculated these based on the population of the Committee Chipipa & Londimbali (Huambo). The MTR agrees with this approach with the caveat that there are assumptions which cannot be validated now or in the near future regarding "beneficiaries". In Chongoroi work is at a very early stage and the livestock/pastoral aspects of the intervention are meeting considerable challenges. It is likely that these will not be included in the outcomes or at the very most, peripherally to the FFS. An impact on the level anticipated in the Project Document was unrealistic and pre-supposed that there was a highly effective (albeit not in SLM and AEZ) extension system already in place.	Moderately Satisfactory (based upon the indicator)
1b): Indirect beneficiaries in demo landscapes: rural population of selected communes: / Alto Hama (Londimbali) / Bailundo (Bailundo) / Chongoroi (Chongoroi).	1b) Demo landscapes: <u>Communes of:</u> / Alto Hama: 0 / Bailundo: 0 / Chongoroi: 0	1b) Demo landscapes: <u>Communes of:</u> / Alto Hama: 9165 / Bailundo: 0 Chippipa / Chongoroi: 0	1b) Demo landscapes: <u>Communes of:</u> / Alto Hama: 9165 / Bailundo: 0 / Chongoroi: 0	Alto Hama not yet started, Chipipa 2,096, Chongoroi 4,051. This relates to people directly involved or peripheral to the FFS. The same issues that apply to indicator 1a) affect the utility of this indicator as well. The MTR agrees with the numbers provided by the projects M&E and notes that Alto Hama has not yet started (the Chipipa site was an alternative site when local authority agreement could not be reached at Bailundo). Chongoroi is still being instituted and it would appear that the pastoral element will be dropped because it is too complex. There is some evidence of the local government's willingness to replicate.	Moderately Satisfactory (based on the revised targets).

Objective/ Outcome indicator	Baseline	MTR target	End of project target	MTR assessment	MTR rating
1c): Direct beneficiaries in demo sites: population of selected communities served by AP/FFSs.	1c) Demo sites: 0 out of 15 selected communities with a total population of approx. 2,500 within demo landscapes	1c) Demo sites: 1,250 of which 50% are women in 7 selected communities	1c) Demo sites: up to 1500 of which 50% are women in approximately 15 selected communities	11 sectors from six demo sites (interventions zones) at Chipipa and Chongoroi were confirmed. It's demo sites cover a total population of approximately 6,147 included in 14 FFS.	Satisfactory (On track with training and exceeding the target figure).
1d): Direct beneficiaries of capacity building programs other than AP/FFS (including staff from extension services and public institutions, technicians, academics, decision makers and entrepreneurs).	1d) A total of 115 individual stakeholders were engaged, of whom 26% are women	1d) At least 200 individual stakeholders engaged by the project including 25% women as a minimum	1d) At least 300 individual stakeholders engaged by the project including 25% women as a minimum	IDA 2 persons & other academic institutions 7, decision-makers 5 (14 total). 26% were women. Only identified 1 service organization (IDA) – trained 2 people from IDA, others from academic institutions, etc.	Moderately Unsatisfactory
Indicator 2: Area (ha) targeted by the project for the implementation of SLM frameworks and the integration of SLM into prevalent agricultural practices:	None	None	None	None	
2a): At the Wider Landscape's (macro) level, development of a support mechanism for SLM: Approximate area coverage (in millions of ha) for the project's a broad target for demonstrating the integration of AEZ into decision-making for SLM and LDN	2a) 0 ha / No decision support system (DSS) support mechanisms for SLM in place, 'The Wider Landscape' is project's broad target, designed to cover approx. 6.1 million hectares in Huambo and Benguela, and it contains 3 demo landscapes	2a) 6.1 million ha coverage for 'The Wider Landscape' in Huambo and Benguela provinces / The AEZ system constitutes a nascent fine scale DSS and support mechanism for integrating SLM practices across landscapes and in multiple scales and entry points in the two provinces.	2a) Within the Wider Landscape, the AEZ support mechanism is fully consolidated with the continued integration of SLM across landscapes, in multiple scales and entry points, including through FFSs/APFs and targeted capacity building of land use planners and local stakeholders.	The AEZ Unit has been established and initiated operations, but the development of the DSS is behind schedule. The project has established a very competent (AEZ) unit currently housed within CETAC. This has carried out considerable work in mapping two AEZ and is poised to carry out work on a third. However, the MTR has very real concerns regarding the sustainability of this unit after the project closes. The "support mechanism" is still largely project-driven and it is hard to see how this can be continued by CETAC following the end of the project. The DSS is being developed. Presently it has fine-grained data for the 3 project areas totalling approximately 3,000 hectares. It is likely to reach approximately 350,200 ha by the end of the project. For nation-wide coverage the project will be able to produce a proposal for the sampling intensity by AEZ necessary for national coverage and a platform (the DSS) to include national coverage as data becomes available. The original Project document target of 6.1 million hectares was improbable. This should be revised down to reflect the reality for the Terminal Evaluation.	Moderately Satisfactory (the MTR has concerns regarding the sustainability of the AEZ Unit within CETAC. If the sustainability within CETAC is addressed this rating would be raised to Highly Satisfactory)

Objective/ Outcome indicator	Baseline	MTR target	End of project target	MTR assessment	MTR rating
2b) Demo landscapes: Area within which integrated landscape management practices are adopted by local communities – assessed as the application of INRM practices in demo sites	2b) 0 ha of demo landscapes	2b) Approx. 400,000 ha of 3 Demo landscapes are surveyed, with LDN indicators monitored and INRM practices initiated on the ground in: / Alto Hama 57,055 ha / Chongoroi 286,532 ha / Bailundo: 84,112 ha ----- ----- Total: 409,699 ha Rounded-off to 400,000 ha for monitoring purposes.	2b) In approx. 400,000 ha of demo landscapes, the project has influenced planners, land users, local communities and investors to adopt and integrate SLM in landscape-level management practices and monitor LDN indicators through the application of a nested approach to AEZ.	38,737 ha at present but the MTR considers that the 400,000 ha target was never feasible and should be reduced. Chipipa - 2,096 Chongoroi - 4,051 Alto Hama – not yet started Use 350,200 ha target	
None	2c) 0 ha of demo sites <i>[the exact location and surface areas of demo sites will be determined during project inception]</i>	2c) Estimated projections for demo sites: - 6,881 ha of agricultural lands - 7,800 ha of rangelands Total: up to 14,670 ha Considered as 11,000 ha as the mid-term target.	2c) Up to 14,000 ha (in total and rounded down), where 'Vegetative cover (natural & cultivated cover) is stabilized and regenerated at micro-landscape level (demo sites) managed through the project	This baseline (2c), MTR and EOP targets appear in the Project Document SRF. However, there is no indicator. Therefore, the MTR has not assessed it.	Not assessed.

4.2.2 Remaining barriers to achieving results

194. Notwithstanding the issues outlined above regarding Outcome 3, the MTR has identified four barriers to achieving the results expected in the Project Document:
195. Barrier 1: There is not a convincing case for CETAC continuing to adequately support and resource the AEZ Unit after the closure of the GEF-funded project. CETAC does not appear to have the core budget and prominence necessary to continue to drive AEZ across multiple sectors and scaling up to the national level. Furthermore, the organisation needs a substantive and present leadership to ensure that the ownership of the project outcomes, outputs and activities, as well as the intellectual capital contained in the AEZ Unit, remains
196. Barrier 2: Delay in signing and operationalising data sharing agreements. The issue of data sharing is critical to the expansion of the DSS and the effective implementation of LDN approaches. Data sharing agreements are challenging in many projects⁹⁰ and they require considerable time and effort on the part of the project coordinator who has put considerable effort and energy into pursuing these agreements. However, it is important to note that the agreements are essentially government institution to government institution and not on behalf of the project *per se*. Therefore, there is only so much that can be done by a Project Coordinator and it is beholden on higher-level leadership to create these data-sharing alliances. From the project's perspective this responsibility should lie with CETAC and not the Project Coordinator who can only facilitate, but has limited powers and mandate to achieve this.
197. Barrier 3: Lack of gender balance within the AEZ Unit. Due to societal norms and constraints, moving the project's interventions from gender targeted to gender responsive will require a woman technical officer particularly for Outcome 2. The AEZ Unit has made considerable efforts to engage women within its technical team and in many ways, those same societal norms and constraints have prevented this⁹¹. Given the role of women in agricultural which is highlighted in the Project Document and in particular, rural women's dependence upon natural resources, the absence of female project representation is an important issue at the level of the community and in relation to the FFSs.
198. Barrier 4: Sufficient time to build capacity at the community-level in Outcome 2. The FFS approach is an effective approach, especially in introducing new techniques and appropriate technologies. However, it does not, in itself, create the opportunities for broad and equitable participation in the planning and management of the range of ecosystem goods and services contained within a single planning unit. Building the capacity of *communities*⁹² is time-consuming. The FFS, LADA exercises and SLM Plan provide a useful entry point. However, these socio-ecosystems are dynamic and in terms of sustainability and AEZ; "*resilience is determined not only by a systems ability to buffer or absorb shocks, but also by its capacity for learning and self-organisation to adapt to change*"⁹³. Adaptive approaches are, by nature, time-consuming. It may be that; systemic resilience, at a socio-ecosystem scale, will require a much broader reform process than can be achieved through the FFS (see Annex 7).

4.3 Efficiency

Gef criteria/ sub-criteria	MTR Rating
C. Efficiency	
C1. Efficiency	MS

⁹⁰ Based upon the evaluation experience of the MTR Team.

⁹¹ For instance, the project had identified a highly qualified woman candidate, however, the Candidate's own family pressures prevented her from taking up the position.

⁹² The term "community" here is sometimes problematic in the management of common pool resources.

⁹³ Gunderson, L.H. and Holling, C.S. Eds. (2002). *Panarchy: Understanding transformations in human and natural systems*. Washington, DC. Island Press.

199. The project design has been a critical factor in reducing the efficiency of the project. To some extent, this has been mitigated by the support of the FAO Country Office, PTF and a very efficient PCU. However, the Project Document itself is at times confounding and impenetrable, a view that was reflected by a number of higher-level key informants. The Project Document's SRF, the principle M&E tool does not provide a clear and logical hierarchy from inputs, outputs, outcomes leading to the objective. This will have made the reporting burden on the Project Coordinator quite challenging at times and likely reduced efficiency.
200. The inception phase⁹⁴ made considerable and successful efforts in extracting a clear project strategy and pathway from the Project Document. However, it did not seize the opportunity to reorganise the project strategy⁹⁵, SRF and indicators to make them more efficient. To be clear, in the experience of the reviewers, it is highly unusual for a project to be able to significantly reorganise the SRF during the inception phase and therefore, this project should not be singled out for criticism, but it is worth noting that while the objective and outcomes could not be easily changed, the outputs and indicators could, and should, have been altered. A minimum would have been to reduce the number of outputs⁹⁶.
201. Linked to the Project Document, the weaknesses in CETAC have reduced the efficient performance of the project. For instance, Project Document stated that:
*"In order to achieve the goal of improving CETAC's capacity to ensure sustainability in the flow of services provided by the Unit after project's end, young talent will be involved in the Unit's activities according to the principle of learning-by-doing and ultimately prepared to maintain the Unit semi-independently. More specifically, a Job Shadowing Program will be launched and through it, six young professionals (trainees), of which ideally at least two women, will be recruited. These persons can potentially join the Unit after project's end. The trainees will be 'paired' with six members of CETAC's staff. As the technical experts interact with and incrementally integrate the trainees and professionals working at CETAC in their activities, they will progressively delegate responsibilities according to the developed capacities"*⁹⁷.
202. In the event, these conditions did not exist on the project's start-up and necessitated considerable reorganisation of project staffing and technical assistance⁹⁸ resulting in weak national ownership of the AEZ Unit and threatening the sustainability of the project's outcomes.
203. In a similar vein, there was an expectation that technical services and existing data sets could be made available through Letters of Agreement (LOA)⁹⁹. However, as is made clear in the June 2021 PPR, there was an over-estimation of the national capacities in this respect and these gaps needed to be filled by *"engaging national entities through Data Sharing Agreements and allocating more resources into national and international consultancies in support of national entities to implement project activities, enhancing national capacities and delivering expected products. In this context, certain positions foreseen in the original plan do not match the operational needs of the project, while other positions need to be included in the budget and recruitment plan because they are considered necessary by the PTF"*¹⁰⁰. For the avoidance of doubt, the MTR considers the PTC and PCU acted decisively with efficiency and

⁹⁴ Project Inception Report, Office Memorandum, 21/05/2021

⁹⁵ There appears to be an attempt to revise the outcome indicators during the inception phase, but this is never developed further and carried through an SRF revision. Inception Report, PP, p. 44 - 46

⁹⁶ A number of outputs are either activities or a statement of the target, that is, they are simple deliverables.

⁹⁷ Project Document, p. 71, para. 56

⁹⁸ PPR, June 2021, p.3

⁹⁹ Project Document, p. 128

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

effectiveness, a characteristic of this project; that an important project has emerged from a confusing design.

204. The MTR does note that the project was clearly taking a top-down approach. Arguably, within the four-year timeframe of a GEF-funded project this was necessary, but very consumptive of technical expertise in establishing the AEZ Unit. This is reflected in the component 1 budget allocation (US\$ 1,201,550), largely reflecting the technical assistance component. The MTR is unable to benchmark this against other project examples, however, given that the system to monitor AEZ and LDN is now in place, and ready for upscaling, it is reasonable to assume, without reference to the issues of sustainability, this represents value for money.
205. The delivery of SLM and AEZ activities through the FFS in Outcome 2 is arguably an efficient means to provide services at this level. However, the MTR has already raised issues regarding the completeness of the FFS to build the capacity for the collective management of common pool resources beyond those directly contained on the farm. Furthermore, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions have affected the efficiency of these activities, as has the time spent in putting in place the necessary project management structure. Delays were also encountered at one demonstration site, Bailundo, identified in the Project Document was unable to reach agreement with the stakeholders.
206. From a strategic perspective it is understandable why Outcome 3 was included in the project's design. However, from a pragmatic point of view, an economic analysis on the cost of land degradation in Huambo and Benguela Provinces¹⁰¹ would be a very big undertaking which would require many of the outputs (e.g. data sharing), and even outcomes of the project to be in place and running efficiently before it could be undertaken with any chance of success. From a "bigger picture" perspective such an analysis would be extremely important. From a four-year project-realism perspective; the MTR would argue that examining the financial sustainability of the principle LDN institution, CETAC, and assisting the FFS with the type of fine-grained detail analysis of cost benefits and risk reduction to individual farmers and farmer groups might be less ambitious; but it would be more efficient.
207. It is important to stress that the PTF and the PCU (the AEZ Unit in effect) are efficient as demonstrated by the adaptive measures taken to address the capacity gaps in CETAC, the loss of the International Technical Assistance due to the pandemic. The focus of attention has been largely directed towards outcome 1 which, notwithstanding the MTR comments regarding sustainability, has performed very well. Outcome 2 has performed less well, but in large part this has been due to the pandemic restrictions. However, Outcome 3 appears without direction and the MTR does not have a sense that the project has a clear vision given the time remaining suggesting that there needs to be a greater efficiency in the decision-making process to decide what is to be done and translate this into project activities. There are unspent funds allocated to component 3 and there is an apparent indecision as to how to address this component¹⁰². However, FAO procurement procedures are complex and at times, in the opinion of the MTR, inflexible in the sense that solutions tend to satisfy the procurement procedures and pathways, and not necessarily the specific project challenge. While strict procurement procedures are necessary in the interests of transparency, over the lifetime of a project each of these inflexibilities has a cumulative effect on efficiency. Inevitably, PTF and PCU personnel have to work a lot harder and innovatively to maintain efficiencies.

4.4 Sustainability

¹⁰¹ The remaining two Outputs in this component were weakly defined and somewhat fuzzy.

¹⁰² This would be much clearer if there was a simple budget expenditure by component or outcome.

Gef criteria/ sub-criteria	MTR Rating
D. Sustainability of Project Outcomes	
D1. Overall likelihood of or risks to sustainability	ML
D1.1 Financial risks	MU
D1.2 Socio-political risks	ML
D1.3 Institutional and governance risks	MU
D1.4 Environmental risks	L
D2 Catalyst and replication	ML

4.4.1 Financial

208. Moderately Unlikely. Due to the weakness in the design of Outcome 3, the level of committed co-finance and critically, because of the situation with CETAC. There is not a convincing case for the financial sustainability of the AEZ Unit. The PCU is investigating the possibilities for sustainable financing, but to provide a convincing level of certainty that there will be sufficient financial support to maintain the AEZ Unit and nationally expand the mapping and verification process as well as continuing to deliver support to the FFS in AEZ, an evaluation would expect to see evidence of strategic leadership and planning within CETAC.

209. FFS are already financed through the MINAGRIF, EDA and it would be reasonable to assume that there will be continued financial support to the FFSs, the project impact will depend upon the effectiveness of the AEZ Unit to continue to provide AEZ and SLM support to the FFSs.

4.4.2 Socio-political

210. Moderately Likely. There are clear benefits to the provincial and municipal authorities in building LDN and AEZ planning capacities at this level. Similarly, if the project can strengthen the role of existing societal governance structures, such as the Traditional Authority, in the management of the whole range of natural resources, there are clear benefits to communities in terms of reducing their vulnerability. At the time of the MTR it was not possible to determine whether this has taken place, however, if this role of local-level decision-making structures is strengthened. Certainly, there is a strong appreciation by IDA and EDA of the FFS approach which is likely to persist post-project.

211. Feedback from the MINAMB would indicate that there is a strong appreciation of the value of this project and the utility of the AEZ Unit in helping align national policies with the UNCCD. However, there should be more regular feedback and communication between the PCU and MINAMB. However, this has not translated into direct action in building the capacities of CETAC for the future maintenance of the Unit.

212. Currently, it is the PCU that is most active in nationally promoting AEZ and the utility of the AEZ Unit. While this is very admirable, it does not have the impact that would come from a national institution promoting and championing the project outcomes. The MTR would need to see clearer signs of national leadership to be more certain of sustainability in this sphere.

4.4.3 Institutional & governance

213. Moderately Likely. The issues related to CETAC have been highlighted already in this report. The AEZ Unit needs to have leadership outside the current PCU. Issues such as the data sharing agreements, mainstreaming into other projects and programmes, increased budget support, adequate human resources, etc., are future challenges need to be led by CETAC with support from the project. Currently, there is a perception that this is "an FAO project" as opposed to a national project with support from the FAO.

214. The MTR observes that the FAO has a comparative advantage in supporting processes through its Country Office and inclusion of AEZ and community-based SLM through mainstreaming into other projects and programmes and providing a body of technical expertise as well as maintaining a memory of the processes. This should increase the chances

of sustainability of the project's achievements which arguably could improve the likelihood of institutional sustainability.

4.4.4 Environmental

215. Likely. Given the AEZ approach the project is building resilience into the socio-ecosystem necessary for adaptation. Contrasted with conventional agricultural approaches, the AEZ approach would arguably have a higher likelihood of social, economic and environmental sustainability given the unpredictable and uncertain directions of the key system drivers under climate change.

4.4.5 Risks to sustainability

216. The MTR identifies two significant risks to the sustainability of the project's outcomes:
- i. Financial sustainability. The MTR is not convinced that there will be adequate financial resources for the effective running of the AEZ Unit within CETAC¹⁰³. It is likely that the AEZ Unit and further role out of AEZ approaches within the agricultural sector will require a mix of budget support and project support for the foreseeable future.
 - ii. Institutional ownership of the AEZ Unit. Currently, the AEZ Unit is not sufficiently embedded in CETAC. While CETAC provides a home for the AEZ Unit, this appears to be largely within the framework of the project. The MTR has concerns that without a strategic plan which includes the AEZ Unit as part of a range of functions and resources in CETAC, it will not be sustainable once the GEF grant ends.

4.4.6 Replication and catalytic effects

217. Much is expected of projects in terms of replication and catalytic effects and therefore it is important to bear in mind that the project has been in operation for three years, much of that time being disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The project has supported five other projects or initiatives, mostly providing AEZ services such as the GIS and mapping. These are:

- Support for the Operationalization of the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy (STOSAR)"- GCP/SFS/004/EC.
- United States Forest Service (USFS) - Forests Training in Geospatial Technologies for Sustainable Forest Management.
- Faculty of agriculture science was supported with AEZ products to design the Tchandangombe Project that is an SLM initiative.
- Angola initiative of "Integrated landscape management to reduce land degradation and increase community resilience in the Miombo-Mopane arid forests was supported to training stakeholders on GIS tools.
- IC-SLM-project from MINAMB, supported with products to design SLM plans and activities on Agroecological Centre of Chipipa.

218. It is reasonable to assume that some of the uncertainties within the system (e.g. farm input prices, rainfall, fuel prices, etc.) will provide an incentive for other FFS and initiatives to take up AEZ approaches and greater SLM.

4.5 Factors effecting performance

Gef criteria/ sub-criteria	MTR Rating
E. Factors affecting performance	
E1. Project design and readiness	MS
E2. Quality of project implementation	S
E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (BH, LTO, PTF, etc.)	S

¹⁰³ One of the main constraints was the human resources, which had a profound effect on the project in relation to the AEZ Unit and personnel costs from the GEF budget. It is hard to understand how this was not realised during the project's formulation phase.

E2.2 Project oversight (PSC)	S
E3. Quality of project execution	S
E3.1 Project execution and management (PMU, partner performance, administration, staffing, etc.)	S
E4. Financial management and co-financing	S
E5. Project partnership and stakeholder engagement	S
E6. Communications, knowledge management and knowledge products	S
E7. Overall quality of M&E	MS
E7.1 M&E design	MU
E7.2 M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	S
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	S

4.5.1 Project design & readiness

219. The MTR is critical of the project design. The Project Document is unnecessarily complicated, prescriptive in many instances making it hard to follow and understand with an over-dependence upon jargon, diagrams and figures which gets in the way of clarity.
220. On the surface, it is possible to determine a basic strategy to: develop the technical capacities for AEZ and LDN monitoring, to introduce AEZ approaches through the FFS and to examine ways of financing AEZ and SLM. There is a real and pressing need for all of these things.
221. However, they do not lead easily and seamlessly into each other, and each one (AEZ, ecologically-sensitive small holder farming and including the ecosystem costs and benefits of SLM into the national accounting system) is a significant undertaking. The MTR challenges the wisdom of attempting to resolve all of these issues, in Africa's fourth largest country, into a four-year project with a GEF budget that might equate to the amount of investment in a small to medium commercial farm.
222. Therefore, the design is over-ambitious, not just in the sense of the scope of the project, but in terms of what is realistically achievable within the lifetime of a project, in this case, four years. While the technical aspects of the intervention are impressive; they can be addressed using existing expertise, protocols and operations and technical training (i.e. using a manual and new equipment) and; the means to address these challenges would be largely within the control of the PCU. As such it is possible to complete these within a relatively short period of time.
223. The adaptive challenges, such as getting a broad cross-party agreement on data sharing, building coalitions and project-personal relationships, awareness raising and all manner of other necessary tasks however, is much more time-consuming. Neither does it take account of the dynamic changes in project partner personnel which can require frequent briefings and awareness raising to ensure continued support and project partner buy-in, nor the challenges of getting a broad collaborative governance across a broad spectrum of institutions.
224. These challenges are quite normal in GEF projects because of their multi-stakeholder/partner and complex nature. But the more ambitious the project, the greater the impact of the inevitable delays due a mismatch between the Project Document's perception of readiness and the reality at project start up.
225. It is logical to see why Outcome 3 was included, but it was not pragmatic. At the very best this outcome would be able to provide generic information on SLM/AEZ financing while being a distraction to the other two outcomes. Arguably, there is an assumption within the project design that the scope is capable (in time and material resources) to address all aspects of the system. In reality this is rarely feasible and it may be prudent to focus well on just two components of the system.

226. Section 3 of this report has discussed the TOC provided in the Project Document and highlighted what the MTR considers are the weaknesses in its logical pathway. These need not be repeated here; other than to say that, in terms of effective design, the TOC was ignoring a significant "elephant in the room"¹⁰⁴ which is land and resource tenure. Rather, the TOC sought to frame a starting point for LD as "causes/threats" (shifting cultivation, overgrazing and excessive use of fire across landscapes) and not nuanced, rational, responses by rural communities to systemic constraints, one of these being the issue of land and resource tenure which might affect the quality of management, and investment in, common pool resources at the level that one might loosely term, the community or scaled up to a landscape-level.
227. In summary, the Project Document was weak to the point of being confusing. The lack of clarity has placed an additional burden on the PTC and PCU. Outcome 3 is weakly defined giving the impression that something needs to be done about financing, but it is not quite clear what will be done.
- #### 4.5.2 Quality of project execution & management effectiveness (including risk assessment)
- ##### 4.5.2.1 Management arrangements
228. The project is managed through a Direct Implementation Modality. This has its advantages in a number of efficiencies particularly with regards to recruiting. The disadvantages of these management arrangements are that there is a tendency to view the project as a stand-alone FAO project and not as an integral part of building resilience into agricultural sector. While individual activities and components of the project are clearly highly valued by project partners and stakeholders (e.g. the technical GIS training, the FFS and extension service training, etc.). But as a joined-up strategy, the present management arrangements do not provide the "interstitial" cohesion which would give the MTR confidence that the AEZ Unit and development and roll out of the DSS will persist post project. For instance, this is evident in the delays in getting data sharing agreements.
229. The PPR (December 2022) reported that, *"the main implementation problems have been related to the effects of electoral period and its consequence on Government changed the MINAMB structure twice, and left CETAC in subgovernment context. The PMU is attempting to overcome this constraint by finding potential institutions that can directly benefit on capacitation and be able to support the country on implementing Sustainable Land Management activities and LDN"*.
230. The agreements signed between CETAC and the project in 2021¹⁰⁵ do not entirely reflect the strategy that was outlined in the Project Document. While they do outline some lines of mutual support (e.g. the rehabilitation and provisioning of the soil laboratory), both agreements lack the basis for sustaining the AEZ Unit and the DSS, necessary for the continued supply of AEZ technical services to FFS.
231. Currently there is strong support to the PCU and Project Partners from the PTF, but the MTR would expect to find a strategy for ensuring this legacy in place by this point in the project.
232. It is worth noting that the PCU is working very hard and very well to make things work. This is not the same as everything always working very well. It is a challenging institutional environment and there is a shortage of qualified personnel throughout the system.

¹⁰⁴ The "elephant in the room" is an English idiom for an obvious truth that is being ignored or goes unaddressed. It is based on the idea that an elephant in a small room would be impossible to overlook. It sometimes is used to refer to a question or problem that very obviously stands to reason, but which is ignored for the convenience of one or more involved parties. The idiom also implies a value judgement that the issue *should* be discussed openly.

¹⁰⁵ Acordo de integração programática entre o Projecto ZAEC e o CETAC, 12 May 2021 and Acordo relativo à utilização das instalações do CETAC afectas ao Projecto de Gestão Sustentável de Terras na Região Central de Angola/ ZAEC, 12 May 2022(?)

Establishing the AEZ Team, the institutional network and working procedures and protocols has been a significant achievement in itself, especially when set against the challenge of adjusting the strategy to the situational realities on the ground. With regards to the PCU, things might have been done differently, but set against the numerous challenges it has faced, it is doubtful that they might have been done better.

4.5.2.2 Work planning

233. Work planning largely occurs in the PCU with support from the PTF in collaboration with the lead partners and is shared and approved through the SC. Work planning has been realistic and pragmatic and during the pandemic it was adaptive to meet the constraints and circumstances.

234. According to the December 2022 PPR, the project is reporting an operational delay of approximately 5 months. While no direct reasons are listed it is reasonable to assume that this is an aggregation due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, the changes in government, adaptive measures to adjust to the reality of CETAC's baseline institutional capacities, etc.

4.5.2.3 Adaptive management

235. The project has shown itself to be adaptive in the face of uncertainty and changes in circumstances. Examples of this are seen during the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, in particular, when the international technical assistance was withdrawn as a result, the project recovered well and without prevarication - suggesting a streamlined decision-making process. The project engagement of the AEZ Unit, at this point in time appears to be adaptive management, but without a clear legacy plan in place this will appear as project expedience¹⁰⁶ during the Terminal Evaluation. However, Outcomes 2 and 3 still need to be addressed within the project.

236. Although the issues affecting these two outcomes arise from the weak design of the project, they still need to be addressed, and in time for any changes to take effect. Part of this challenge is the loose "fit" between the three outcomes. Outcome 1 is clear and, notwithstanding the issues relating to sustainability, has been completed to a very high level. It is extremely important and likely the concept for the project began with the need for this. But when expanded to include outcomes 2 and 3 it becomes unwieldy. The MTR would argue that this is a shortcoming in the GEF project identification process where very complex issues are expected to be resolved within an unrelated budget and time envelope. An adaptive management approach at this point in the project might reasonably recognise that the project's objective is best served by consolidating the successes of Outcome 1, adapting outcome 2 to encompass the governance issues of common pool resource management and refocusing outcome 3 on how to ensure the very important successes of outcomes 1, in particular, are secured post the GEF grant.

4.5.2.4 Financial management

237. Financial management and control appear to be adequate. The project is not independently audited because it falls within the Implementing agencies normal financial controls.

238. The Project Document sets out the GEF budget against components (see Table 10 below) including GEF fund and co-financing.

239. Co-financing committed at the CEO approval stage was US\$ 15,000,000 giving a ratio of GEF finance to co-financing of 1:5.7 which is approximately in line with the required GEF-6 1:6 ratio. However, the reporting is not against component.

¹⁰⁶ A situation in which something is helpful to the project implementation but not necessarily the objective.

240. Co-financing delivery has been reported in the June 2022 PIR as US\$ 1,925,000. However, figures given to the MTR in June 2023 report which report a delivery US\$ 15,500,000 indicating a leveraged US\$ 500,000 above the sums committed in the Project Document.

Table 10 Project budget by component in Project Document

Component	GEF funds	Co-financing	Total
Component 1: Agroecological zoning (AEZ) integrated planning	\$ 1,201,550	\$ 4,400,000	\$ 5,601,550
Component 2: Sustainable management and rehabilitation of landscapes	\$ 706,825	\$ 5,200,000	\$ 5,906,825
Component 3: Economic and financial leverage approaches to SLM	\$ 478,525	\$4,400,000	\$ 4,878,525
Component 4: Knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation	\$ 127,100		\$ 127,100
Project management	\$ 125,726	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
Total	\$ 2,639,726	\$ 15,000,000	\$ 17,514,000

Table 11 Co-financing

Sources of co-financing	Name of co-financer	Type of co-financing	Amount confirmed at CEO endorsement/ approval		Actual amount materialized as of (May 2023 MTR)		Expected total disbursement by the end of the project
			In-kind (mill US\$)	Cash (mill US\$)	In-kind (mill US\$)	Cash (mill US\$)	
National Government							
OGE-PDN 2.4.1- Climate Change	MINAMB / GABAC and CETAC (public investment)	Public Investment		8	7.125		10
CETAC		In-kind	0.5	1.5	0.375		
OGE-PDN 2.3.2 promote agricultural production	MINAGRIF (public investment)	Public Investment	3.0		2.25		3
OGE-PDN 2.3.4 promote the sustainable use and management of forest resources	MINAGRIF (public investment)	Public Investment	1.5		1.125		1.5
	MINAMB / CETAC (in-kind)	In-kind	0.5		0.375		0.5
GEF Agency	FAO	In-kind	0.5		0.375		0.5
Totals			6.0	9.5	11.625		15.5

241. The MTR is not clear whether this is due to an under-reporting in June 2022 or there has been a significant increase in the rate of co-financing delivery since 2022.

242. The MTR notes that co-financing is being reported as "in-kind" and "cash" both in the Project Document and project reporting (see Table 11). The guidelines on co-financing are not very clear on what qualifies as "cash" co-financing. However, the MTR understands that "cash" co-financing should be taken to mean non-GEF monies that are included in the total budget and work plan in the Project Document and are therefore directly accounted for by the PIU. Therefore, the MTR has reported the co-financing as aggregated in-kind and public investment, but notes that the cash component of the MINAMB and MINAGRIF co-financing did not pass through the GEF-fund total budget in the Project Document and therefore, may not be

recorded as "cash co-financing" despite the monies being spent on actual activities directly related to the project implementation.

243. Currently (May 2023) GEF fund budget execution is US\$ 928,440¹⁰⁷ approximately 35% budget execution of the GEF grant.

4.5.2.5 Risk management

244. There is a change in risk rating between the PIF and Project Document from Moderate to Low. The PIF risk analysis has four risks (summarized here as: commitment of project partners, contention of the project ownership between MINAMB and MINAGRIF, institutional capacities and the retention of qualified staff). It did not list any exogenous risks and the approach to rating is confusing (e.g. Impact – Critical, Likelihood – Moderate, Assessment – Low) and appears to be arbitrary. Gender inequalities is not listed as a risk.

245. The Project Document risk identification¹⁰⁸ is also confusing. The risks identified are, in many senses, the very issues or constraints that the project should be addressing. That is, if the risk was still evident having designed the project; then it would be prudent to review the project's strategy and arrangements, rather than trying to manage the risk in the implementation of the project. The risks are not rated correctly (e.g. through a matrix score of likelihood/probability x impact, or similar¹⁰⁹) in the Project Document, although the single PIR (June 2022) does rate the risks and it (the Project Document) provides an unusual approach to risk identification including a category "*worst case consequence for the project*". In summary, the risk analysis in the project's design was weak. The Covid-19 pandemic should have been added to the PIR risk log.

246. In summary¹¹⁰, the risk assessment would have had greater utility if the risks had been fewer (through clearer identification and description), categorized into political, financial, environmental, markets, etc., and a better risk assessment in the PIF or a review of the risks at an earlier (design) phase of the Project Document might have resulted in adjustments to the design and implementation arrangements as opposed to allowing the risk to carry over to the implementation.

247. Risks are monitored by the PTF and PCU in the PPR and PIR and there is sufficient evidence to state that risks are adequately managed despite the poorly articulated descriptions in the Project Document. However, the MTR has concerns about risk 2 (*the proposed fit of the AEZ Unit at CETAC fails to work as it should due to the difficulty of CETAC's management model in hosting an independent technical unit*). It is surprising that this is phrased as a risk because it should have been jointly agreed by the project Partners during the design phase or alternative arrangements made to ensure the post project sustainability of the AEZ Unit.

248. The PIR (July 2021 – June 2022) states that the project risk rating is Low. The MTR would argue, based upon the above statements, that the risk should be raised to at least Moderate due to the issues relating to the sustainability of the AEZ Unit within CETAC.

4.5.3 Project oversight by FAO as the GEF Agency & National Partners

249. The FAO, as the GEF Agency, is responsible for:

- The administration of funds from GEF in accordance with the rules and procedures of FAO;
- Overseeing project implementation in accordance with the project document, work plans; budgets, agreements with co-financiers and the rules and procedures of FAO;
- Providing technical guidance to ensure that appropriate technical quality is applied to all activities concerned;

¹⁰⁷ Does not include committed funds in 2023.

¹⁰⁸ Project Document, pp. 165 - 166

¹⁰⁹ A combined index rating of risk/probability of an event X the impact/hazard if it occurs.

¹¹⁰ The Social and Environmental Risks are addressed in section 4.6 Cross-cutting issues.

- Conducting regular supervision missions; and
 - Reporting to the GEF Secretariat and Evaluation Office, through the annual Project Implementation Review, on project progress and provide financial reports to the GEF Trustee.
250. The Project Document states that the *"FAO's representative in Angola will be the Budget Holder (BH) and will be responsible for the management of GEF resources, as applicable. As a first step in the implementation of the project, the FAO Representation in Angola will establish an interdisciplinary Project Task Force (PTF) within FAO, to guide the implementation of the project"*¹¹¹.
251. The PTF provides considerable technical and procedural backstopping and assistance to the PCU. The PTF is composed of a Budget Holder, two Lead Technical Officers (LTO), the Funding Liaison Officer (FLO) and one or more technical officers based on FAO Headquarters (HQ Technical Officer). The ZAEC project is in some ways unusual in that it has two LTOs (a GIS technical expert and an AEZ/SLM technical expert)¹¹² reflecting the multidisciplinary nature of Outcomes 1 and 2.
252. Due to the circumstances the AEZ Unit is in effect the PCU team. There is regular communication between the PTF and the PCU and the PCU is strongly supported by the BH based in Luanda.
253. Oversight and reporting is mostly through the PPR (bi-annual) and the PIR (annual).
254. National Implementing Partner oversight takes place through the Steering Committee, the highest level of project implementation decision-making with oversight of national activities, review of annual work plans and budgets, institutional coordination and national agency Focal Points.
255. According to the Project Document the PSC is chaired by the Director of the GABAC (or his/her nominee) with the participation of a member of the MINAMB's GEF unit, MINAGRIF, MINOTH, MAT, one Project Political Coordinator, representatives of the Provincial Governments of Huambo and Benguela, FAO, at least one representative from each municipality¹¹³, and observers from civil society organizations.
256. The inclusion of the "Project Political Coordinator" suggests that there were concerns about the sustainability of outcomes and national ownership of results. The SC has met twice (28/07/2021 and 07/02/2023). However, four MCTA-FAO Coordination Meetings have also taken place¹¹⁴ and issues pertaining to the CETAC project have also been discussed during these meetings (e.g. the CETAC Development plan, 5/05/2022).
- #### 4.5.4 Project partnerships & stakeholder engagement
257. The very nature of the ZAEC project results in a large and complex partnership and stakeholder engagement. This coupled with the logistical (Luanda, Huambo, Benguela) and institutional hierarchical (national, provincial, municipal, community) relationships make stakeholder engagement challenging. While the SC provides strategic engagement, it is important to recognise and note that there is a significant burden on the PC to remain engaged across multiple levels.
258. Changes in personnel in participating partner organisations have added to the difficulties in maintaining up to date relationships across partners, although the PCU has worked very hard

¹¹¹ Project Document, p. 122, para. 341

¹¹² The original project design only had one LTO from the Plant Production and Protection Division (AGPM). The decision was made to have two LTOs after the project's start up.

¹¹³ The objective of including a "Project Political Coordinator" and Provincial representation was to strengthen ownership by governmental counterparts and by other national institutions. This inclusion reflects a recommendation emanating from the RETESA Project, which suffered considerably from very low national ownership.

¹¹⁴ See Acta da Reunião de Coordenação MCTA-FAO: 21/09/2021; 26/01/2022; 05/05/2022; 04/08/2022.

to build and maintain these relationships. Expanding AEZ is a very large undertaking. Local communities and farmers are largely grateful for any project support that they can receive.

259. The project has developed 25 partnerships with other institutions, 24 arrangements delivered training on GIS, AEZ and SLM and 22 institutions have engaged with the data sharing, although no DSAs have been formalised yet.

260. The delivery of AEZ assistance is nuanced. Agriculture is often framed by a need for greater production rather than system resilience. Land degradation can be seen largely as a result of uncontrollable events such as extreme weather events or lack of farm inputs, fixable through a conventional approach and not necessarily through a systemic change in the approach to land management. This is a difficult message to deliver to stakeholders, especially when each stakeholder may only understand their narrow focus of involvement and not the larger landscape.

261. The PCU has worked hard and appears to be trusted by partners and stakeholders although it is not possible to objectively measure this through the project's SRF.

4.5.5 Communications, visibility, knowledge management & knowledge products

262. The project has established a web page within CETAC's website to share information about the activities of the AEZ Unit, the AEZ methodology and awareness on AEZ. Similarly, the project has been very active in promoting AEZ and the aims of the project with a number of good-quality presentations.

263. As has already been noted, this is a complex challenge requiring tailored messages for different levels and interests. This task currently falls mostly on the PCU and the PC in particular. This type of communications is an iterative process and requires continuous effort and flexibility to utilise opportunities as they arise. The MTR has concerns that unless this is embedded in the mandate and activities of CETAC, with sufficient budget support, communication and knowledge management will reduce when the GEF-funded project ends.

4.5.6 Monitoring & evaluation, including M&E budget & design

4.5.6.1 Strategic Results framework & indicators

264. The Project Document SRF has a number of weaknesses and design flaws which affect its utility as the principle M&E tool for the project. Simply put there are a confusing number of outputs and indicators with sub-indicators: 10 outputs, 2 objective-level indicators with 6 sub-categories, 3 outcome indicators with 7 sub indicators, 15 outputs indicators with some 14 sub-categories. The objective indicators appear largely unrelated to the purpose of the project, or the quality of the change. The outcome indicators lack any discernible baseline, mid-term and final targets. Some outcomes and outputs include adjectives or restate targets, in some cases, particularly in relation to the outputs, they include elements of the targets (e.g. "*development of the Web GIS DSS of the CETAC's AEZ Unit*") or they are obfuscated by the use of jargon (e.g. "*as part of a nested approach to landscape-level management*" and "*mainstream and innovative finance options for SLM are assessed, explored/probed and enabling action is undertaken to operationalize them in the targeted municipalities with fundraising campaigns are organized, and projects are formulated to mobilize fund*").

265. The SRF lacks the clarity and simplicity necessary for monitoring and evaluating performance and impact.

4.5.6.2 Project level M&E systems

266. Despite the shortcomings in the project's SRF, M&E has been diligent although not as regular as anticipated in the Project Document. Accordingly, two PPR and one PIR need be

produced each year. The MTR has seen four PPR (06-07/2020; 07-12/2020¹¹⁵; 01-06/2021; 07-12/2022) and one PIR (July 2021- 06/2022). The project is currently producing the 01-06/2023 PPR. The MTR considers that two PPR per year is a considerable burden and similar FAO projects¹¹⁶ have resorted to producing a single PPR and a PIR annually. There are regular oversight meetings and visits to project sights that the MTR concludes that M&E systems are implemented to a high degree.

267. The PCU reports mainly on the Output level indicators whereas the GEF monitors performance and impact with the outcome-level indicators. The objective-level indicators are not reported on in the PPR or PIR, however, the MTR is critical of these indicators in terms of M&E feedback for adaptive management.

268. A criticism of the M&E framework, stemming from its design, is that a central tenet of the project strategy is the building of national and local capacities. However, there are few means to measure capacity. A Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey might be one way to track and measure capacity development, however, a KAP is an expensive undertaking. Another solution might be to introduce a single index measurement through a self-assessment scorecard approach. The benefits of this scorecard approach are that the self-assessment exercise itself has an embedding effect if carried out through a participatory process. One possibility might be to adapt an "off the shelf" scorecard (e.g. methodology to the specific needs of the project and use this as an auxiliary objective level indicator). The GEF uses a capacity development scorecard which might be suitable for this purpose¹¹⁷.

269. Ideally, the problems in the SRF would have been resolved in the inception phase. However, it is the MTR's experience that this rarely happens. Challenging the SRF and validating the outputs, indicators and targets during the inception phase is a legitimate and critical part of the project management cycle. It never happens¹¹⁸. There are too many things that militate against this and for a newly appointed technical and project management team, it requires a considerable degree of confidence and risk, given that the project "clock" is ticking and there is considerable pressure to "get things moving". Furthermore, it can often challenge the very logic that the underpins the project strategy, which has already been approved at a number of stages and higher levels.

270. The detail and functionality of the output indicators is similar to the outcome indicators (e.g. some outputs and indicators are in fact activities, targets re-state the output, etc.). Annex 8 provides an assessment of the outputs against the indicators.

4.6 Cross-cutting issues

Gef criteria/ sub-criteria	MTR Rating
F. Cross-cutting concerns	
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	MS
F2. Human rights issues	S
F3. Environmental and social safeguards	MS

271. Two issues are raised in the Environmental and Social Risk Assessment (ESRA): gender and indigenous people.

272. The PIF raises the issue of women in the agricultural sector¹¹⁹. However, this is not carried through to the risk assessment. The Project Document states: "*the 2011 FAO Food and Agriculture State reported that 21.8 % of rural households in Angola were headed by women;*

¹¹⁵ 06-07/2020; 07-12/2020 amounted to five pages in total.

¹¹⁶ FAO-GEF LDN Moldova, GEF ID 10222, FAO ID 654506, FAO-GEF LDN Project (GCP/TUR/065/GFF), GEF ID 9586

¹¹⁷ https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Capacity_Development_Indicators.pdf

¹¹⁸ The MTR Team has never encountered a situation where the PCU and project's technical assistance have challenged a SRF during the inception phase.

¹¹⁹ PIF, p. 16, para. 81-84

and the most recent document of 2015, indicated a national value of 55.6%, regarding the participation of female agricultural labor force; and 79.4% for the participation of female laborers working in agriculture. The predominance of women in the family farming sector is widely recognized at all levels; however, this is not reflected in the presence of women in leadership positions at the various levels, from the positions and number of women among extensionists [sic] to the number of women presidents of associations and / or farmer cooperatives. This situation seems to be slowly changing with the introduction of the AP/FFS methodology, given that it encourages women take over positions with greater responsibility in AP/FFSs and farmers' organizations"¹²⁰. Further, it states that: "The current project has been tagged as G2A– i.e. it "[...] addresses gender equality in a systematic way, but this is not one of its main objectives"¹²¹

273. The Project Document does provide a Gender Action Plan consisting of gender-responsive actions mainstreamed in the project. While the MTR does not disagree with the G2A tag/rating, the role and position of women in the agricultural sector is complex and nuanced whereas the activities of the project are targeted but not as far as the MTR can determine responsive¹²²
274. It is important that the role of women is strengthened further and should aim to have in place strategies and capacities to be gender responsive, that is; addressing differential needs of men and women and addressing the distribution of benefits, resources, status and rights, by the end of the project.
275. The second issue raised in the ESRA is indigenous people. However, it concludes that there is no need for a specific strategy and Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). The MTR considers this a reasonable conclusion.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

276. **Conclusion 1 (relevance): Satisfactory.**

277. The ZAEC project outcomes are aligned with the existing policy and planning framework and contributes to national, regional, Convention, FAO and GEF objectives. Although there is a sometimes-expressed opinion that "there is no shortage of land for agriculture" there is a growing realisation that utilising new land should not come at the expense of existing agricultural areas. There is a demand for the types of data that the AEZ Unit can generate, especially in relation to the national commitments to the UNCCD. While Angola is not experiencing the extremes of agricultural land degradation that has occurred in some other countries, there is a growing awareness that the trend is towards further degradation. Furthermore, exogenous factors (e.g. market failures, rising fuel prices, etc.) may accelerate degradation of the agro-ecosystem. However, as detailed in the revised TOC (section 3), there are considerable assumptions and drivers which will not necessarily be addressed during the project's lifetime.

278. **Conclusion 2 (progress towards outcomes): Moderately Satisfactory.**

279. The project has experienced some delays in delivery of this outcome. Some of these have been exogenous (e.g. Covid-19 pandemic) while others have been due to weaknesses and inefficiencies in the original project design. The AEZ Unit (Outcome 1) based in CETAC has developed impressive GIS capabilities which will be able to map agro-ecological zones at the

¹²⁰ Project Document, pp. 141-142, para. 419

¹²¹ With reference to FAO's [Guidance Note on Gender Mainstreaming](#) in project identification and formulation.

¹²² For instance, during the field visits to the FFS at Chipipa there appeared to be a hesitance of women to come forward. While this might be a cultural barrier, but these issues are very complex and generally require a dedicated gender expert to spend time and gain trust within the community. Given the percentages reported in the Project document it would seem reasonable to invest more support directly to women's equitable involvement in the project activities, especially in outcome 2.

national level, provide fine-grained LDN data to various institutions and decision-makers and dynamically monitor land degradation parameters across the corner. The project has delivered an impressive amount of training (GIS, remote sensing, AEZ and SLM) across a range of 24 different organisations involved in land management and agriculture. The AEZ Unit is in the process of developing the DSS capability and this is expected to be in place by the end of the project. The AEZ Unit has considerable technical and intellectual capacities. However, the MTR has very real concerns about the sustainability of the Unit post project. These concerns are largely due to the uncertain future of CETAC as a home for the Unit as well as the efficacy of data sharing agreements, 22 organisations have expressed interest in data sharing but no agreements have been signed as yet.

280. Outcome 2 has been impacted to a greater extent by the delays (pandemic, institutional, change of demonstration site, etc.). Six SLM plans have been produced at Chipipa and Chingoroi. 281 people have been trained with the ICE-SLM project in Chipipa and six demonstration sites (interventions zones) at Chipipa and Chongoroi were confirmed. The demonstration sites cover a total population of approximately 6,147 included in 14 FFS. The project has used the LADA approach to assess agro-pastoral resources in Chingoroi. Further, the project uses an impressive range of FAO tools related to AEZ such as GAEZ 4, essentially a global analysis tool¹²³ and PyAEZ¹²⁴ to step AEZ down to the local level. TAPE (Tools for Agroecology Performance Evaluation¹²⁵ is used to assess various criteria including governance, particularly in the APFS.
281. The MTR is concerned that the plans will prove hard to implement without long-term support to the communities and the local government agencies. Community-based approaches require long-term, phased support. This support is not limited to technical support but requires a process to assist the key actors develop their decision-making skills will necessitate support in problem solving. Without an adequately capacitated CETAC, with a strategic focus and plan, the MTR has concerns that this support will not continue after the close of the GEF-funded project.
282. Progress in Outcome 3 is less clearly defined. While it is understandable why this component and activities would be important, the MTR considers that the Project Document's expectations for this third component were unrealistic. The targeted economic analysis¹²⁶, on this scale, would have required much of the project's other outputs to be in place including a substantive data sharing agreement as well as the collection of considerable amounts of primary data.
283. These concerns largely stem from the design phase. The expectations were unrealistic and in the case of the fiduciary fund¹²⁷ to be "*created specifically to support community-based SLM finance and micro and small entrepreneurs interested in SLM*"; it suggests that there was a degree of "blue-sky thinking"¹²⁸ taking place.
284. To support this view, the MTR contrasts the situation and concerns raised in this report regarding the sustainability of CETAC and the AEZ Unit against the ambitions of Outcome 3. Arguably, the achievement of LDN in Angola requires long term support and commitment. It is also reasonable to suppose that this will require continued, external, project support for some

¹²³ gaez.fao.org

¹²⁴ <https://github.com/gicait/PyAEZ>

¹²⁵ <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341940191>

¹²⁶ Output 3.1 **Economic analyses on the cost of land degradation** in Huambo and Benguela Provinces are carried out and disseminated among key decision makers to bring financial leverage and scale to the actions needed for restoring/rehabilitating land in central Angola.

¹²⁷ Project Document, p. 87, para 217

¹²⁸ Open-minded thinking, but thinking that is not necessarily grounded or in touch with the realities of the present.

time to come before it can move towards a more programmatic and finally budget-supported approach.

285. **Conclusion 3 (efficiency): Moderately Satisfactory.**

286. In many aspects the ZEAC project is a "top down" approach which to some extent is necessary due to the highly technical aspect of the GIS, remote sensing, mapping and DSS. The ZEAC project has an efficient PCU and PTF. Work planning, M&E and reporting is regular and thorough. However, the efficiency has been largely affected by the weaknesses in the design of the project and the preparedness following project start up. These relate to the institutional arrangements and capacities necessary to house the AEZ Unit in CETAC which resulted in having to engage directly through the project the full AEZ Unit. Data sharing agreements are also proving hard to obtain with approximately 25 organisations and this is affecting the efficient delivery of project services and outputs.

287. The relationship between the CETAC and the PCU results in the PCU representing not just the project but having to promote the project and negotiate with other organisations reducing the ownership of the project outcomes and significantly slowing the rate of progress.

288. **Conclusion 4 (sustainability): Moderately Likely.**

289. Socio-politically, the project outcomes are considered moderately likely as there is a growing and widespread need for LD data and the reasons for needing more data are likely to become more pressing due to climate change and other external pressures. Financially the results are less likely (moderately unlikely) as this would require greater budget support and a strategic institutional plan for CETAC. Institutional sustainability is also moderately unlikely for similar reasons. Environmental sustainability is judged likely given that the pressures on ecosystem goods and services is likely to increase support and motivation for LDN.

290. Two barriers to sustainability are identified: financial and institutional.

291. **Conclusion 5 (factors affecting progress – design and strategy): Moderately Satisfactory**

292. The Project Document is un-necessarily complicated and confusing and there are weak linkages between the outcomes. It is over-ambitious in terms of scope and the available timeframe. The strategy is top-down, while this is somewhat understandable due to the very technical nature of the GIS components the MTR argues that in order to have effective management of ecosystem goods and services at the community level, then those communities will need to be empowered to collectively manage common pool resources and not just their on-farm activities.

293. The TOC in the Project Document is self-affirming and does not capture the complexity of the socio-ecosystem. Part of the problem stems from the imprecise pathways from inputs/outputs, outcomes and impacts.

294. **Conclusion 6 (factors affecting progress – AEZ Unit):**

295. The project has made considerable progress and the AEZ Unit established within CETAC is impressive with important intellectual and technical capacities. The national team have proved technically capable and managed the component to a very high level, to the extent that the achievements have been delayed but not reduced in quality. The DSS, which in particular will provide the LDN indicators (cover, production and soil organic carbon (SOC))¹²⁹ is under development and should be completed in the next year. However, this will only provide fine-grained detail for the three "demo areas" of the project. It currently covers 3,000 ha (Land Cover Classification and Land Degradation analyses, etc.) and is anticipated to extend to approximately 350,000 ha by the end of the project. To achieve nation-wide coverage will require considerable investment and upscaling. The AEZ Unit will prepare a proposal for nation-

¹²⁹ Necessary for the national reporting to the UNCCD.

wide coverage including sampling intensity which can be used to populate the platform (DSS) as data becomes available.

296. The post-project strategy is being developed according to the PCU and key Implementation Partners, however, the MTR has concerns that any strategy for the AEZ Unit is critically dependent upon the future of the CETAC and will need to be embedded in a larger institutional strategic plan for the organisation which would include human resources, finance, a clear vision and mandate and a substantive Director to lead the process¹³⁰.
297. Although progress through the FFS is now gaining momentum, there is only one year remaining and such community-level approaches require longer time horizons. The FFS approach is useful; however, it is likely that there will need to be a broader effort to build capacities at the level of the community(s) to collectively, and sustainably, manage common pool resources. Regional initiatives such as the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) or the Namibian Conservancies programme may offer useful insights. Although these two systems are primarily involved in the management of common pool wildlife resources, arguably these are synonymous with ecosystem goods and services, the basis for management being; to recognise local communities as the *de facto* custodians and managers of these resources (see Annex 6).
298. **Conclusion 7 (factors affecting progress – management arrangements):**
299. The Direct Implementation Modality has its advantages in a number of efficiencies particularly with regards to recruiting. The disadvantages of these management arrangements are that there is a tendency to view the project as a stand-alone FAO project and not as an integral part of building resilience into agricultural sector.
300. The agreements signed between CETAC and the project in 2021¹³¹ do not entirely reflect the strategy that was outlined in the Project Document. While they do outline some lines of mutual support (e.g. the rehabilitation and provisioning of the soil laboratory), both agreements lack the basis for sustaining the AEZ Unit and the DSS, necessary for the continued supply of AEZ technical services to FFS.
301. Currently there is strong support to the PCU and Project Partners from the PTF, but the MTR would expect to find a strategy for ensuring this legacy is in place by this point in the project.
302. **Conclusion 8 (project implementation): Satisfactory.**
303. The delays experienced during the start-up phase and resulting from the change in implementation modality resulted in the PIU only being established four to five months after the project's official start-up date and after the inception phase, workshop and report was produced.
304. Since the PIU was installed project management has been efficient and cost-effective in achieving the outputs with the timely and effective implementation of activities. This has included establishing a good rapport and communications with project partners and stakeholders and a close monitoring and realistic evaluation of project progress and performance. This is more remarkable given the functional weaknesses in the project's M&E framework, the SRF, which were not addressed during the inception phase and workshop.
305. Work planning and budgeting is efficient and cost-effective. According to the December 2022 PPR, the project is reporting an operational delay of approximately 5 months. While no direct reasons are listed it is reasonable to assume that this is an aggregation due to the Covid-

¹³⁰ Currently the Director of CETAC has been absent due to health reasons for approximately two years.

¹³¹ Acordo de integração programática entre o Projecto ZAEC e o CETAC, 12 May 2021 and Acordo relativo à utilização das instalações do CETAC afectas ao Projecto de Gestão Sustentável de Terras na Região Central de Angola/ ZAEC, 12 May 2022(?)

- 19 pandemic restrictions, the changes in government, adaptive measures to adjust to the reality of CETAC's baseline institutional capacities, etc.
306. The MTR has concerns with outcomes 2 and 3.
307. An adaptive management approach at this point in the project might reasonably recognise that the project's objective is best served by consolidating the successes of Outcome 1, adapting outcome 2 to encompass the governance issues of common pool resource management and refocusing outcome 3 on how to ensure the very important successes of outcomes 1, in particular, are secured post the GEF grant.
308. Financial management and control appear to be adequate. The project is not independently audited because it falls within the Implementing Agencies normal financial controls.
309. Co-financing delivery has been reported in the June 2022 PIR as US\$ 1,925,000. However, figures given to the MTR in June 2023 report which report a delivery US\$ 15,500,000 indicating a leveraged US\$ 500,000 above the sums committed in the Project Document.
310. Currently (May 2023) GEF fund budget execution is US\$ 928,440¹³² approximately 35% budget execution of the GEF grant.
311. **Conclusion 9 (M&E and project SRF):**
312. M&E has been diligent although not as regular as anticipated in the Project Document. Accordingly, two PPR and one PIR need be produced each year. The MTR has seen four PPR (06-07/2020; 07-12/2020; 01-06/2021; 07-12/2022) and one PIR (July 2021- 06/2022). The project is currently producing the 01-06/2023 PPR.
313. The Project Document SRF lacks the clarity and simplicity necessary for monitoring and evaluating performance and impact which affect its utility as the principle M&E tool for the project. There are a confusing number of outputs and indicators with sub-indicators: 10 outputs, 2 objective-level indicators with 6 sub-categories, 3 outcome indicators with 7 sub indicators, 15 outputs indicators with some 14 sub-categories. The objective indicators appear largely unrelated to the purpose of the project, or the quality of the change. The outcome indicators lack any discernible baseline, mid-term and final targets. Some outcomes and outputs include adjectives or restate targets, in some cases, particularly in relation to the outputs, they include elements of the targets. The PCU reports mainly on the Output level indicators whereas the GEF monitors performance and impact with the outcome-level indicators. The objective-level indicators are not reported on in the PPR or PIR, however, the MTR is critical of these indicators in terms of M&E feedback for adaptive management.
314. Despite these shortcomings, at this stage of the project's implementation it would be unwise to drastically adjust the SRF.
315. **Conclusion 10 (stakeholder engagement): Satisfactory.**
316. Stakeholder engagement is a complex challenge requiring tailored messages for different levels and interests. This task currently falls mostly on the PCU and the NPC in particular. This type of communications is an iterative process and requires continuous effort and flexibility to utilise opportunities as they arise. The MTR has concerns that unless this is embedded in the mandate and activities of CETAC, with sufficient budget support, communication and knowledge management will reduce when the GEF-funded project ends.
317. The project has developed 25 partnerships with other institutions, 24 arrangements delivered training on GIS, AEZ and SLM and 22 institutions have engaged with the data sharing, although no DSAs have been formalised yet and this is of concern.
318. The PCU has worked hard and appears to be trusted by partners and stakeholders although it is not possible to objectively measure this through the project's SRF.

¹³² Does not include committed funds in 2023.

319. **Conclusion 11 (overall performance and outlook):**

320. The MTR has a mixed opinion on the project's performance and likely results. The AEZ Unit is of a very high standard capable of providing very good LDN monitoring and data for LDN planning. However, there are real concerns about its sustainability, in particular, that once the project closes the Unit will need an institutional home and champion. The current arrangements with CETAC do not provide the level of confidence for the MTR.

321. The training delivered by the project has been remarkable. Key respondent feedback to the MTR repeatedly stated appreciation of the training delivered by the project suggesting that training was well-planned and delivered.

322. The SLM plans and the FFS are important developments. However, the MTR is concerned that the project, due to its design limitations, is not providing the full range of capacity building in relation to land and resources tenure systems in rural areas. Therefore, a common property CBNRM approach should be encouraged to implement the SLM plans and support the FFS activities.

323. FAO has a comparative advantage in supporting processes through its Country Office and inclusion of AEZ and community-based SLM through mainstreaming into other projects and programmes and providing a body of technical expertise as well as maintaining a memory of the processes. This should increase the chances of sustainability of the project's achievements. Given the revised TOC this could be an important factor in addressing the key system drivers and clarifying assumptions.

324. The economic analysis, innovative finance options and community-based SLM finance options, while a logical component of an overall strategy, for it be effective it would need the products of Outcomes 1 and 2 to be in place and fully functioning. The MTR considers that, given the very good progress with the AEZ Unit it may be more strategic to focus on consolidating the sustainability of the CETAC and the AEZ Unit as well as the SLM plans and the governance structures and FFSs necessary for their implementation.

325. The project has made good and important progress with outcomes 1 and 2. However, these outcomes are not easily achieved within the framework of a project and lend themselves to a programmatic approach. Both outcomes would benefit with an extension of time to consolidate the achievements.

326. **Conclusion 12 (cross-cutting):**

Women's involvement in agriculture is well-documented in the Project Document. Furthermore, women play an important role in the management of ecosystem goods and services (provisioning and regulating) and in rural circumstances women often have a higher dependency on these resources for their livelihood security and its sustainable management is of real and practical concern to them. Whereas, The Land Law¹³³ lacks specific reference to women's access or rights to land¹³⁴. The original (Project Document) ESRA does identify gender inequalities, and there is a Gender Action Plan¹³⁵. This is best described as gender targeted but not necessarily gender responsive.

¹³³ Land Law, Law No. 9/04 of November 9th 2004

¹³⁴ USAID. 2005. Land Tenure and Property Rights Assessment for Angola. USAID, Washington, DC, USA.

¹³⁵ Project Document, p. 143

5.2 Recommendations

327. Based on the findings and conclusions of the MTR the following recommendations are made:

Rec. no.	Rationale for recommendation	Recommendation	Responsibility	Time/dates for actions
Strategic relevance				
1.	The project has made very good progress with Outcome 1 and the AEZ Unit has considerable technical and intellectual strengths. Outcome 2 is also showing promise. However, both outcomes would benefit from an extension of time on the basis that this would i) allow consolidation of the AEZ Unit to improve the likelihood of sustainability; ii) allow at least one more agricultural season with support to the FFSs, and; provide time for FAO to put in place measures to continue support to AEZ.	A justification for a project extension is prepared. Twelve months is recommended.	To be implemented by: PTF to prepare justification for submission to the GEF. PSC to review and validate.	Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High.
2.	Outcome 3 is necessary, but it is too ambitious within the ZAEC project and would need outcomes 1 and 2 to be fully operational (including data sharing agreements, etc.) in place. Project efforts in this outcome are unlikely to produce the outputs stated in the Project Document without being highly speculative in nature. An adaptive management approach would allow the project to still address issues of AEZ/SLM finance through consolidating project successes and not overstressing.	PSC to make a strategic decision on outcome 3. Through an adaptive management process focus the outcome's resources on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A financial plan and budget resources for the CETAC. Advancing the implementation of the SLM plans. In particular, working with the community to internalise the costs and benefits of SLM and to build capacity at the community level to negotiate with external interests. 	To be implemented by: PTF to prepare justification. PSC to review and validate.	Timeline: To be submitted as part of the extension request. Priority: High.
Effectiveness				
3.	There are two principle parts to the project: the GIS, data and mapping and the development of local-level SLM maps with the delivery of SLM expertise to individual farmers (the FFSs). Both are critical for larger scale planning and management and to reduce the negative impact of inappropriate agricultural activities on ecosystem goods and services. However, it is not clear	In order to operationalise the SLM Plan with the FFS and SLM activities at the level of the community This can be started, within the body of the project, by any or all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging technical assistance with CBNRM experience (this is available regionally). 	To be implemented by: PTF to prepare proposal. PSC to review and validate. PCU to implement.	Timeline: Q 4 2023. Priority: High.

<p>how these are tied together beyond the confines of the individual farm. The SLM plan is based on available data and mapping and agro-ecological zones. The FFSs are a proven and effective means of delivering technical assistance and building agricultural capacity of individual farmers. What is not clear is how it affects the management of common pool resources or resources that under the present regime are regarded as <i>res nullius</i>¹³⁶. CBNRM¹³⁷ is not a fixed set of practices or technologies, nor a model to prescribe on the world; it is an approach to understanding complex ecological and ecological relationships in rural areas. LADA and the other techniques go some way to addressing this level of participation, but they do not represent the dynamic nature of collective decision-making and conflict resolution necessary to equitably and sustainably manage common pool resources. These community-level arrangements are often poorly represented in a state-private property regime and common property management is obfuscated by terms such as "community", when what is necessary is a recognition of a unit of management that is numerically, spatially and legally defined.</p> <p>Reasonably effective CBNRM systems have grown up in Zimbabwe and Namibia, admittedly around "wildlife" resources. However, the principles are the same – building community-level capacities and building social capital. Chipipa and Chingoroi may not have the high value natural resources which often provide the motivation for collective and sustainable management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop these capacities within the AEZ Unit. • Reach out to other initiatives working in the area of rights-based approaches to natural resources management (e.g. the Kvango Zambezi Trans-frontier Conservation Area). 		
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¹³⁶ The expression "*res nullius*" is a Latin term derived from Roman Law and literally means "*belonging to no one*". In CBNRM it is often used to denote a fugitive (mobile) resource or a resource which lacks clear ownership either through common understanding or through the inability of the "owner" (state or private) to exercise the authority and responsibility to manage it. *Res nullius* resources are subject to the individual motivation of opportunistic or unsustainable exploitation, the motivation being to use before anyone else uses the resource. An example of this might be the use of forest resources to produce charcoal or excessive grazing pressure. In the latter, the cow being a private property and the pasture tenure being largely determined by the strength of the collective membership (the community) of the common property to not just organise itself, but to negotiate with external interests.

¹³⁷ The third component is not included here because CBNRM seeks to internalise the costs and benefits within the unit of effective management. However, this is not to exclude Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) schemes

	<p>However, rural communities are increasingly vulnerable to losing their land, especially now that the government has established agriculture as the main practice to diversify the economy¹³⁸ and this may provide sufficient motivation to participate. This is a long-term strategy that is inherently political in nature and would extend beyond the life-time of the project.</p> <p>In order to operationalise the SLM Plan with the FFS approach it is necessary to organise land and resource users to collectively manage the entire range of their resources (private, common and <i>res nullius</i>) at the "landscape" level (e.g. the Soba¹³⁹), or a level that has functional efficiency and provide a degree of tenure.</p>			
Factors affecting performance				
4.	<p>The project currently produces 2 PPR and 1 PIR per year and PSC meetings appear to be annual. The project progress reporting is considerable and DEX projects are not requested to produce a PPR in June in addition to the PIR. Annual reporting requirements are thus one PPR covering June to December and one PIR. This makes good sense in terms of efficiency. The PSC has met once a year (with occasional <i>ad hoc</i> meetings) and considering the complex arrangement of stakeholders it may be useful to meet biannually and share Quarterly Reports with lead Implementation Partners) in order to increase the national ownership of the project and increase the flow of information between project partners.</p>	<p>Provide one PPR with the PIR and hold two PSC meetings per year and share Quarterly Reports with key Implementation Partners.</p>	<p>To be implemented by: PTF. PSC to validate.</p>	<p>Timeline: Immediate. Priority: Moderate.</p>
Efficiency				

¹³⁸ Oglethorpe, J., Russo V., Neto J. and Costa A. 2018. Communities and Biodiversity in Angola: Analysis of the legal and institutional framework for community-based approaches to conservation and natural resource management. WWF US, National Geographic Society, ACADIR and Kissama Foundation.

¹³⁹ The Soba is a traditional authority largely responsible for collective decision-making and conflict resolution.

5.	There are significant weaknesses in the project's SRF which make assessing performance and impact challenging. However, it will be too disruptive to revise the SRF at this stage. Given that a large and important component of the project is capacity development this should be more clearly reflected in the SRF. Otherwise, only minor adjustments should be made and there should be a general awareness regarding the shortcomings.	Continue to monitor and evaluate using the existing indicators and add an index of capacity development measure should be included at the objective level and retrofitted to the baseline. The simplest way to achieve this would be to adapt an "off the shelf" scorecard approach (e.g. the GEF Capacity Development Assessment Scorecard¹⁴⁰).	To be implemented by: PTF. PSC to validate.	Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High. Any revision to be submitted with extension request.
Sustainability & catalytic effect/replication				
6.	The sustainability of the AEZ Unit and to some extent Outcome 2 results is heavily dependent upon institutional support. There is insufficient evidence to suggest that there will be sufficient human, material and financial resources to support the AEZ Unit once the GEF-funded project ends. This is critical because the AEZ Unit will be tasked with rolling out the mapping and maintaining the DSS in order to monitor LDN and generate data necessary for dynamic planning. In order to achieve this the AEZ Unit will need substantive institutional support.	Undertake an institutional review of CETAC. Engage an experienced high-level Institutional Expert to undertake a participatory review of the organisation, working closely with (and mentor) the Director to develop a Strategic Plan including a corporate vision, mission statement and institutional plan and leadership mentoring.	To be implemented by: PTF to prepare proposal & TOR in collaboration with MINAMB. PSC to review and validate. FAO to identify Technical Assistance.	Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High.
7.	As a directly implemented project every effort should be made to support the process of national ownership of the project outcomes. Communication is critical to this process as the PCU reports to FAO.	Increase the communication between the PCU and MINAMB (Office of the Deputy Dean) by including the Office in the Quarterly Reporting and providing a quarterly briefing note/ aide memoire to accompany the report.	To be implemented by: PCU.	Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High.
Cross-cutting dimensions				
8.	The role of women in AEZ and SLM is presently addressed through targeting training and direct technical assistance in the FFS. However, this is to some extent a passive role and does not necessarily reflect the complex and nuanced, socio-economic factors that determine women's role and responsibilities and their	PCU to utilise available FAO gender resources to strengthen the women participation at the community level.	To be implemented by: PCU to prepare proposal in collaboration with FAO CO.	Timeline: Immediate. Priority: High

¹⁴⁰ https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Capacity_Development_Indicators.pdf

	<p>life chances. FAO has well-established gender policies and working practices which could be brought to bear especially in the sphere of women's participation in the management of common pool resources. The project should coordinate with the FAO's existing gender resources to increase the participation, in particular, in learning from women with regards the management of these ecosystem goods and services, not just to make the project's intervention gender responsive, but also to gather information in order to increase understanding of the system dynamics. This could include establishing rosters of gender specialists with land and resource tenure experience, more affirmative recruiting and considering volunteers or international technical assistance when local social norms and customs militate against employing women nationally – the focus should be to ensure that women stakeholders have access and gender sensitive representation in the project processes.</p>			
9.	<p>The Municipal Administrations (local government) are important opinion leaders and can be important champions for LDN especially when the linkages between LDN and health and infrastructure, as well as agricultural production and resilience are understood without the constraints of a binary decision-making approach of development/production versus resilience and that resilience needs to be built into the system rather than traded off against immediate benefits. The AEZ Unit has developed impressive data presentation and communication capacities and these can be used to develop supportive, effective relationships.</p>	<p>PCU to develop local government communication materials including historic changes, present situation, likely forecasts of LD and recommended solutions that can be graphically presented to municipal and commune leaders.</p>	<p>To be implemented by: AEZ Unit.</p>	<p>Timeline: 2nd Q 2023 Priority: Medium</p>

5.3 Lessons learned

328. The MTR draws four lessons from this review process:

GEF projects, especially those related to LDN, are dealing with complex and unpredictable socio-ecosystems and are therefore remarkably hard to design. Project designs should be made as simple as possible. The Project Document runs to 198 pages plus additional annexes. There is fine-grained detail on outputs and activities, global benefits and unnecessary jargon and a confusing SRF (the principal M&E tool) that includes 10 outputs, 2 objective-level indicators with 6 sub-categories, 3 outcome indicators with 7 sub indicators, 15 outputs indicators with some 14 sub-categories. The objective indicators appear largely unrelated to the purpose of the project, or the quality of the change. The outcome indicators lack any discernible baseline, mid-term and final targets. Some outcomes and outputs include adjectives or restate targets. In some cases, particularly in relation to the outputs, they include elements of the targets.

The Project Document would have been subjected to repeated review across the range of stakeholders¹⁴¹ suggesting that there were concerns with the project's design, but the issues with the project's SRF were not corrected. This tends to suggest that the design process progresses to a point where sunken costs should be ignored and a review of the project in order to simplify it may be a better course of action.

The SRF should provide a simple and easy to follow description of the project and if it doesn't it may be prudent to start again.

The design of GEF projects should match the project funding envelope and the time horizon. The MTR draws on its experience of having recently reviewed two other LDN projects. As a general rule, the expectations of the Project Document are over ambitious and are raised by several magnitudes more by trying to meet the co-financing requirements. In many ways, the PCU/AEZ Unit and other project partners have done remarkably well, especially in the areas of training and capacity building.

However, it is worth considering that every project is likely to encounter exogenous events (e.g. elections, institutional re-structuring, adverse climate events, etc.) which will lose time. Establishing the project "infrastructure" and participatory networks and pathways is time-consuming. Technical challenges are more easily addressed in within a discrete and predictable timeframe. Adaptive challenges (see Annex 7) are less predictable. Therefore, expectations of what is possible at, for instance, the community level need to be realistic and flexible. The means of measuring progress and impact at this level also needs to be carefully thought through in terms of establishing the project, identifying communities, sensitizing communities, making mistakes and correcting mistakes, the agricultural calendar, things that just go wrong for no reason at all, etc.

Change at this level is not a linear progression. It is worth noting that FAO with a continued country presence and other country programmes is better suited for this type of intervention, but the expectations of projects should be satisfied with small, secure, incremental steps.

¹⁴¹ <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/projects/9798>

Local community investment in AEZ and SLM is likely to be highest when farmers and farming communities have security of tenure¹⁴². The issue of tenure was raised repeatedly in discussions with key informants. The ZAEC project should not be expected to address the issue of tenure directly, however Outcome 2 would need to strengthen and support local communities to develop democratic internal governance arrangements in order to implement SLM plans at this level. By definition, the project would have to engage with the communities, including issues of tenure, to help them to implement the plans.

GEF projects that involve any issues related to land tenure, agriculture and natural resources use should include some degree of female technical expertise to address gender inequalities. These issues (tenure, farming and other natural resources) and the gender issues embedded in their systemic management are complex, layered and nuanced.

Women play an important role in the management of ecosystem goods and services (provisioning and regulating) and in rural circumstances women often have a higher dependency on these resources for their livelihood security and its sustainable management is of real and practical concern to them.

During the project design phase there should be greater scrutiny of the gender issues and in particular, the project response, in order to test how the plan specifically addresses the gender inequalities that may contribute to land degradation. In the experience of the MTR, the GEF project design phase, in general, does not have the time, nor the material and human resources to fully understand the implications of gender inequalities on land degradation. Therefore, experience of gender in relation to the natural resources should be an integral component of a project's technical assistance to "figure things out" through an adaptive management approach. The MTR does not single this project out for criticism, because it is in many ways normal of GEF projects.

The design of GEF projects should match the project funding envelope and the time horizon. However, the GEF also wants to see a lot of ambition in any given project, sometimes leading to over-promising designs with objectives incommensurate with budget and timeline. In the MTR's experience, this is a reoccurring theme which overshadows good projects through overstressing capable and committed project management units. A more balanced approach might involve greater coordination between projects with strategic small, but incremental, steps. The competitive nature of project preparations is understandable. Furthermore, the co-financing can exacerbate these expectations and results in a mismatch between the TOC, the targets and the available resources and time.

¹⁴² This does not necessarily equate to private ownership.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Review the relevant background documentation made available by MTR manager and project team: the project document, the project's logframe, progress reports, workshop and technical reports, among other things;
- Review and complement (expand as appropriate) the methodology described in the terms of reference, contribute to the preparation of data-collection tools, including questionnaires, checklists and interview protocols as appropriate;
- Coordinate preparation, drafting and finalization of the MTR inception report, including an MTR matrix, theory of change and stakeholder table, and participate in the finalization of the team's work programme;
- Lead and coordinate the collection of primary data by the MTR team through interviews and meetings (face-to face or virtual) with relevant FAO officers in headquarters and national stakeholders including the government, FAO Representative, external partners, project teams, international organizations, the private sector, civil society, academia, research institutes and ultimate beneficiaries, as appropriate, as described in the terms of reference of the MTR;
- Coordinate the collection of primary data by the MTR team during country visits and relevant secondary data, according to the methodology presented in the MTR terms of reference and detailed in the inception report;
- Lead the analysis and discussion of evidence collected within the MTR team to identify key findings and preliminary conclusions that respond to the MTR's issues and questions, and formulate preliminary recommendations in line with the findings and conclusions;
- Ensure that all the findings are sufficiently triangulated and validated;
- Present the preliminary MTR findings to key stakeholders, as required;
- Lead, coordinate and prepare all deliverables planned in the MTR terms of reference, according to specifications provided in the terms of reference and detailed in the FAO–GEF MTR Guide and annexes;
- Coordinate the participation and contribution of team members in all deliverables, as required;
- Lead the preparation of the first and second drafts of the MTR report, integrate comments received, as appropriate, from the BH, FAO GEF CU, other FAO and government agency staff, and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate;
- Lead the finalization of the MTR report and coordinate the inputs of other members of the MTR team into the final version, as needed.

Reporting Line

In terms of reporting, or if information, advice, or guidance required, the consultant should address it to both the BH/RM and the FAO GEF CU focal point.

Qualifications and Experience

The international MTR consultant should have the following minimum technical requirements:

- An advanced university degree in evaluation, agriculture, natural-resource management, social and economic development, agro-ecological zoning or a related field;
- Five years of relevant experience in supporting, designing, planning and/or conducting development evaluations;
- Knowledge of FAO and GEF work/procedures, or other UN agencies, would be an asset as would appropriate language skills.
- Strong coordination and facilitation skills;
- Proven documentation skills;
- Fluent in English (both spoken and written), Portuguese language is an asset.

key performance indicators

<p>The international consultant will provide technical oversight and ensure quality control of the following outputs, to be jointly delivered by the national MTR team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inception report, including MTR matrix and validated Theory of Change • Briefing on preliminary findings of the MTR following the field mission(s) • First draft of the report • Final MTR report • Summary of the main results of the MTR (2 pages) and Field reports (as appropriate) <p>Payments of the honorarium will be authorized upon completion of the above deliverables, following the payment schedule stipulated here and in the MTR overall TOR and as agreed with the BH/RM and FAO GEF CU focal point.</p>	<p>Required Completion Date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 April 2023 (Payment of 1st tranche i.e. 20%) • 15 May 2023 • 20 May 2023 (Payment of 2nd tranche i.e. 40%) • 15 June 2023 (Payment of 3rd and last tranche i.e. 40%)
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Annex 2. GEF evaluation criteria rating table and rating scheme

GEF evaluation criteria rating table

The MTR team is required to rate the aforementioned MTR criteria for the purposes of reporting to GEF and FAO on progress to date. Ratings need to be well substantiated, based on evidence gathered from the MTR, and a summary description of this evidence should be presented in the MTR Ratings & Achievements Summary Table (Table A11.3).

The MTR team should compare their (independently derived) ratings with those of the most recent GEF project implementation review (PIR) and describe any significant discrepancies.

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 the likelihood of impact are rated from likely (L) down to highly unlikely (HU). Explanations as to how to rate the criteria of effectiveness, sustainability and factors affecting performance can be found in the corresponding sections in Table A11.3.

Table A11.3 MTR ratings and achievements summary table

GEF criteria/sub-criteria	Rating ¹⁴³	Summary comments ¹⁴⁴
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE		
A1. Overall strategic relevance	HS→HU	

¹⁴³ See rating scheme at the end of the document.

¹⁴⁴ Include reference to the relevant sections in the report.

A1.1. Alignment with GEF and FAO strategic priorities	HS→HU	
A1.2. Relevance to national, regional and global priorities and beneficiary needs	HS→HU	
A1.3. Complementarity with existing interventions	HS→HU	
B. EFFECTIVENESS		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	HS→HU	
B1.1 Delivery of project outputs	HS→HU	
B1.2 Progress towards outcomes ¹⁴⁵ and project objectives	HS→HU	
- Outcome 1	HS→HU	
- Outcome 2	HS→HU	
- Etc.	HS→HU	
- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes	HS→HU	
B1.3 Likelihood of impact	Not rated at MTR	
C. EFFICIENCY		
C1. Efficiency ¹⁴⁶	HS→HU	
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	L→HU	
D1.1. Financial risks	L→HU	
D1.2. Sociopolitical risks	L→HU	
D1.3. Institutional and governance risks	L→HU	
D1.4. Environmental risks	L→HU	
D2. Catalysis and replication	HS→HU	
E. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE		
E1. Project design and readiness ¹⁴⁷	HS→HU	
E2. Quality of project implementation	HS→HU	
E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (BH, LTO, PTF, etc.)	HS→HU	
E2.1 Project oversight (PSC, project working group, etc.)	HS→HU	
E3. Quality of project execution	HS→HU	
E3.1 Project execution and management (PMU and executing partner performance, administration, staffing, etc.)	HS→HU	
E4. Financial management and co-financing	HS→HU	
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement	HS→HU	
E6. Communication, knowledge management and knowledge products	HS→HU	
E7. Overall quality of M&E	HS→HU	
E7.1 M&E design	HS→HU	
E7.2 M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	HS→HU	
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	HS→HU	
F. CROSS-CUTTING CONCERNS		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	HS→HU	

¹⁴⁵ Assessment and ratings by individual outcomes may be undertaken if there is added value.

¹⁴⁶ Includes cost efficiency and timeliness.

¹⁴⁷ This refers to factors affecting the project's ability to start as expected, such as the presence of sufficient capacity among executing partners at project launch.

F2. Human rights issues	HS→HU	
F2. Environmental and social safeguards	HS→HU	
Overall project rating	HS→HU	

Rating scheme

Additional explanation on how to assess ratings for specific criteria, for example, whether they are highly satisfactory or moderately satisfactory, can be found in Tables A11.4 to A11.7.¹⁴⁸

Overall outcome ratings

MTRs should use mid-term targets per the project's logframe to assess outcome delivery. If no mid-term indicator targets are available, the MTR should base outcome ratings on an assessment of the delivery of results to date against milestones in workplans and delivery compared with end-of-project targets.

Table A11.4 How to assess ratings for specific criteria

Rating	Description
Highly satisfactory (HS)	<i>Level of outcomes achieved clearly exceeds expectations and/or there were no shortcomings</i>
Satisfactory (S)	<i>Level of outcomes achieved was as expected and/or there were no or minor shortcomings</i>
Moderately satisfactory (MS)	<i>Level of outcomes achieved more or less as expected and/or there were moderate shortcomings</i>
Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	<i>Level of outcomes achieved somewhat lower than expected and/or there were significant shortcomings</i>
Unsatisfactory (U)	<i>Level of outcomes achieved substantially lower than expected and/or there were major shortcomings</i>
Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	<i>Only a negligible level of outcomes achieved and/or there were severe shortcomings</i>
Unable to assess (UA)	<i>The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements</i>

Source: GEF (2017c)

In line with similar guidance on the assessment of ratings for GEF terminal evaluations (GEF, 2017c), the overall rating of the outcomes of the project should be based on performance on the criteria of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. The calculation of the overall outcome rating will consider all three criteria, of which relevance and effectiveness are critical. The relevance rating will determine whether the overall outcome rating is in the unsatisfactory range (MU to HU = unsatisfactory range). If the relevance rating is unsatisfactory, the overall outcome will be unsatisfactory as well. However, where the relevance rating is satisfactory (HS to MS), the overall outcome rating could, depending on its effectiveness and efficiency rating, be either satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

Table A11.5 Factors affecting performance (assess each element separately; M&E is treated differently)

Rating	Description
Highly satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder

¹⁴⁸ See further information on GEF rating scales in Annex 2: Rating scales in GEF (2017c).

	engagement/communication and knowledge management and results exceeded expectations.
Satisfactory (S)	There were no or minor shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder engagement/communication and knowledge management and results meet expectations.
Moderately satisfactory (MS)	There were some shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder engagement/communication and knowledge management and results more or less meet expectations.
Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder engagement/communication and knowledge management and results were somewhat lower than expected.
Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder engagement/communication and knowledge management and results were substantially lower than expected.
Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder engagement/communication and knowledge management.
Unable to assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder engagement/communication and knowledge management.

Table A11.6 Monitoring and evaluation design or implementation ratings (*Overall M&E design, design and implementation assessed separately*)

Rating	Description
Highly satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation exceeded expectations.
Satisfactory (S)	There were no or minor shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation meets expectations.
Moderately satisfactory (MS)	There were some shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation more or less meets expectations.
Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation somewhat lower than expected.
Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation substantially lower than expected.
Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in M&E design or M&E implementation.
Unable to assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of M&E design or M&E implementation.

Table A11.7 Sustainability

Rating	Description
Likely (L)	There is little or no risk to sustainability.
Moderately likely (ML)	There are moderate risks to sustainability.
Moderately unlikely (MU)	There are significant risks to sustainability.
Unlikely (U)	There are severe risks to sustainability.
Unable to assess (UA)	Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability.

Annex 2 MTR itinerary

HOUR	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
Date: Sunday, May 21, 2023		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrival of the Consultant team and ZAEC NCP at Luanda 	Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
Date: Monday, May 22, 2023		
09:00 – 12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with the FAOAO Luanda offices 	Penda, Miguel, Josina, Helinton, César Pakissi and, Francis Hurst
14:00- 17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with FAO Representative 	Gherda Barreto and Anastácio Gonçalves
Date: Tuesday, May 23, 2023		
09:00- 17:00	Meeting with MINAMB	Francis Hurst, Penda, Miguel and César
Date: Wednesday, May 24, 2023		
10:00-12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traval Luanda - Huambo 	Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
14:30 - 17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with CETAC, GPAGRSC and others stakeholders (IDA, FCA, ISCED-Hbo, ADRA, ADMH, IGCA) 	Amílcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
Date: Thursday, May 25, 2023		
8:00-11:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit to agroecological perimeter at Ngunga and Lomanda II – Chipipa 	Amílcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
11:00 – 17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traval to Chongoroi – Benguela 	Amílcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
Date: Friday, May 26, 2023		
09:00 - 10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Courtesy greetings to Municipal administration of Chongoroi-Benguela 	Amílcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
10:00 – 12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with the IDA – Chongoroi – Benguela 	Amílcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
Date: Saturday, May 27, 2023		
9:00- 12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit to Uvombo- and other FFS- Chongoroi 	Amílcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
12:00 – 18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> trip to Benguela 	Amílcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
Date: Sunday, May 28, 2023		
9:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return trip to Luanda 	Amílcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
Date: Monday, May 29, 2023		
8:00 am to 17:00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with MINAMB and ZAECs focal point on MINAGRIF, MINOPOT, IGCA, INAMET, Instituto de Geológico, INRH, MAT, MESCTI and Representante das organizações da Sociedade Civil 	Amílcar Salumbo , Francis Hurst, Penda, Miguel and César
Date: Tuesday, May 30, 2023		
8:00 am to 17:00 am	Meeting with MINAMB and ZAECs focal point on MINAGRIF, MINOPOT, IGCA, INAMET, Instituto de Geológico, INRH, MAT, MESCTI and Representante das organizações da Sociedade Civil	Amílcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst, Penda, Miguel and César

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date: Tuesday, May 31, 2023 	
		Amílcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst, Penda, Miguel and César
Wednesday: May 31, 2023		
	Return trip to Huambo	Amilcar and César
Thursday: June 1, 2023		
12.40 pm	Return trip to Lisboa	Francis Hurst

Annex 3 MTR matrix

Evaluative question	Indicator	Sources	Methodology
Questions & sub-questions	Relationships established, coherence of project design and implementation approach, specific activities conducted, quality of risk mitigation strategies, etc.	Project documents, national policies or strategies, websites, project staff, project partners, data collected throughout the MTR mission, etc.	Document analysis, data analysis, interviews with project staff, interviews with stakeholders, etc.
1. Strategic relevance - How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF Focal area, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national level?			
To what extent are the project's objectives consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, national priorities and policies, global priorities and partners' and GEF policies and priorities?	<p>Adequacy of activities in relation to policies and stakeholders' needs</p> <p>Alignment of project objective and outcomes with policy objectives</p> <p>Alignment of projects strategy and theory of change with country situation and national priorities</p>	National policies, GEF & UNCCD policies, FAO policies	Document analysis, interviews.
Were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, considered during project design processes?	Effectiveness of partnerships arrangements since inception, co-financing budget execution.	Project Document, Inception Report, PIRs/PPRs, minutes of SC meetings, TOC.	Document review, interviews with government agency stakeholders and project partners, analysis.
<p>How relevant is the project strategy to the situation in the project area/ national context and circumstances?</p> <p>Does it provide the most effective route towards expected/intended results?</p>	Coherence between project design and implementation – what changes have had to be made. Should changes have been made? Level of project resources assigned to tasks.	Project Document, Inception Report, Consultant's studies and reports, minutes of SC minutes	Document review, interviews with government agency stakeholders and project partners, analysis.

What has been the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document?	Suitability of specific components of the project to address issues and achieve results areas. Changes to the strategy, changes to the interventions. Completeness of interventions by mid-term.	Project Document, Inception Report, Work Plans, PIR, PPR and SC minutes of meetings, Consultants reports.	Documents, interviews with stakeholders, project implementing partners, PMU and project Consultants.
Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits?	National policy priorities and strategies, as stated in official documents. Approved policy and legislation related to agriculture, land use and land use planning, climate change, budgets, etc.	National policy and regulatory framework documents	Document review, interviews with high-level project partners.
2. Effectiveness – progress towards results, to what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?			
To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?	SRF indicators & mid-term targets	Project Document, SRF, PIRs, results	Document review, analysis, interviews with stakeholders and beneficiaries, verification in the field.
To what extent did the project contribute to the Country Programme outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the FAO Strategic Framework, Country Programming Framework Outcome, GEF strategic priorities, and national development priorities?	Alignment and synergies of outcomes	Project Document, CPAP, SDGs, GEF strategic priorities	Document review, high-level stakeholder interviews, analysis
What factors have contributed to the achieving or not achieving intended outcomes and outputs? Could the project include alternative strategies?	Progress towards results, efficiency of project strategy, adjustments to strategy Number of key priorities that have been met through the project Assumptions not met / unpredictable effects	SRF, Project Document, PIR, risk log	Document review, interviews, analysis
Has the project produced unintended results - positive or negative? If there are negative results, what mitigation activities are in place?	Progress towards results, efficiency of project strategy, adjustments to strategy Number of key priorities that have been met through the project Assumptions not met / unpredictable effects	SRF, Project Document, PIR, risk log	Document review, interviews, analysis
To what extent the project has demonstrated: a) scaling up, b) replication, c) demonstration, and/or d) production of public good?	Number of relevant initiatives not directly financed by the project, transfer of lessons learned, utilisation of project-developed tools and methodologies	PIR, other project reports	Document review, interview with FAO/PMU, SC, stakeholder, beneficiaries, government agencies
What evidence is there to suggest that the project will achieve the outcomes and objective by the close of the GEF-fund?	Budget execution, realism of work plans, results to date, review of SRF, indicators and MT and EOP targets	PMU, project documentation	Document review, interviews, field visits
3. Efficiency - Was the project implemented efficiently, in line with international and national norms and standards?			
To what extent has the project completed the planned activities and met or exceeded the expected outcomes in	Activity modifications (removal / adding) Budget revisions Functionality of M&E system	FAO finance & project staff Project Director interview Annual reports	Interviews, analysis, field visits

terms of achievement of global environmental and development objectives according to schedule, and as cost-effective as initially planned?	Compliance with GEF & FAO rules Likelihood of achieving outcomes		
To what extent were project funds and activities delivered in a timely manner?	As above		
Are all the project outputs (in the Project Document) the most efficient means to achieve the project objective?	Project strategy alignment with project objective	Project SRF & strategy, PIR, SRF, project objective	Interviews, analysis
How did the project adapt to the new normality COVID-19? Did the project contribute to minimizing the socioeconomic effects of the Pandemic?	Implementation adjustments (e.g., remote training, more widespread use of technology for communication / decision-making	Interviews SC members Interviews of activity implementers Interviews of project team Covid-19 plan	Interviews, analysis
4. Factors affecting performance -			
Design			
Is there a logical hierarchy between activities, outputs, outcomes and objective?	Effectiveness and efficiency of proposed activities, outputs to achieving the outcomes and objective Coherence of Project Document Theory of Change	Discussions with project staff, stakeholders, project partners, Project Document, SRF, PIRs.	Interviews & analysis.
Does the Project Document set out a clear and logical strategy to achieve the objective?	As above	Theory of Change	
To what degree is the project's implementation a participatory and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation? If so, how is this achieved?	Gender disaggregated data, level of co-financing commitment/ expenditure, workshop and meeting attendance, degree of ownership of project community-based/ civil society initiatives.	Project reports, PIR, workshop reports, co-financing records	Documents, interviews with stakeholders, project implementing partners.
Are there changes in circumstances which affect the project's strategy?	As above		
Implementation arrangements			
Were the capacities of the implementing partners correctly identified in the project's design	Efficacy of proposed & present project institutional implementation arrangements	Project Document, SC minutes of meetings, FAO/PMU	Analysis, interviews
Is there sufficient representation of stakeholders in the implementation?	Stakeholder participation	Stakeholder plan, Social & Environmental Screening process	Interviews, analysis
Are the implementation arrangements to most effective and efficient to ensure ownership of project results and continuity?	As above		

Financing & co-financing			
Are there variances between planned and actual expenditures? What are the main reasons? To what extent did financial controls allow the project management to make informed decisions regarding the budget?	Disbursement trends Follow-up and adjustments of procurement plan Co-financing complementarities / substitution M&E system updates and annual/intra-year budgetary adjustments	FAO finance & project staff Project Director interview Annual reports	Interviews, analysis
What extra resources has the project leveraged? How have they contributed to the project's ultimate objective?	Co-financing delivery	Financial reports	Analysis, interviews
Implementation, oversight & execution			
To what extent has FAO delivered effectively on activities related to project identification, concept preparation, appraisal, preparation of detailed proposal, approval and start-up, oversight, supervision, completion and evaluation?	Periodicity of technical meetings with project team & relevant support / timeliness of recruitments Changes in project team staff Activity / staff / service payment delays...	Annual reports, PIR FAO, principle OPIM partners & project team interviews CDR	Interviews, document review, analysis
To what extent have the Executing Partners contributed to the timely delivery of project outputs, agreed roles and responsibilities, supervision and evaluation?	PSC Minutes of Meetings, co-financing delivery and reporting, human resource, material and time contributions to activities.	Annual reports, PIR FAO, principle OPIM partners & project team interviews, co-financing reports	Interviews, document review, analysis
M&E, adaptive management			
How useful is the project's M&E framework?	Utility and ease of use of the SRF	SRF, PIR, PPR, GEF 7 Core Indicators	Interviews, document review, analysis
Are all the risks correctly identified and tracked?	Review of project risks outlined in Project Document and PIRs		
Are there regular M&E reviews?	Veracity of project M&E		
Are project partners and stakeholders included in the M&E activities?	Inclusion of OPIM in analysis & M&E		
Have any changes to the project been based on evidence?	As above		
5. Sustainability of project results			
How are risks monitored and managed?	Project risk log and management responses, communication with partners and stakeholders	Project Document, PPR/PIRs and the Risk Register, project communications strategy	Review, interviews, analysis
Financial risks to sustainability			
Have the co-financing commitments been met?	National contributions, regional and global upscaling commitments	Co-financing reports, project communications	Document interviews, analysis
Are there examples of project results being funded through national budget allocation (upscaling)?	As above		
Socio-economic sustainability			
What is the likelihood of financial and economic	OPIM and other project partners, public and private sectors, income generating	National policies and plans, local policies and plans, CSO feedback, private	Review, interviews, analysis

resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends?	activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes	sector feedback, project exit arrangements. Consultants and service providers reports	
Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability			
What are the long-term socio-political risks to the outcomes of the project?	Partner and stakeholder ownership, public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives, sharing of information on risks, adjustments to interventions to address specific risks	National policies and plans, local policies and plans, CSO and farmer feedback, private sector feedback, project exit arrangements. Consultants and service providers reports	Review, interviews, analysis
What are the risks to post-project ownership because of the change in implementation arrangements?	As above		
Has the project developed a legacy plan?	As above		
Environmental risks to sustainability			
What are the environmental risks to the sustainability of the project's outcomes? How are these managed and mitigated?	Climate data and forecasts. National disaster risk reduction strategies and plans	National data, policies and plans	Review and analysis, field visits
6. Cross-cutting issues – equity issues			
How were gender and human rights considerations integrated in the project's design, including analysis, implementation plan, indicators, targets, budget, timeframe and responsible party? To what extent has the project contributed to gender equality, the empowerment of women and human rights of disadvantaged or marginalized groups? To what extent did women, poor, indigenous, persons with disabilities, and other disadvantaged or marginalized groups participate and benefit from the project? Is there any potential negative impact on gender equality, women's empowerment, disadvantaged or marginalized groups? If so, what can be done to mitigate this? To what extent was the social and environmental screening process during the project's design realistic, followed and monitored.	M&E system covering gender Activity adaptability as per gender and target beneficiaries' types Degree of project targeting of vulnerable people Number of women & vulnerable people that were direct beneficiaries from project's results Level of participation of vulnerable groups & women in activities' operationalization Safeguarding actions and activities FPIC	Gender-specific & marginalized group interviews (focus) Project team interview OPIM interviews Annual reports Social & environmental screening process	Documentation review, interviews, field visits, analysis

Were gender related/ affecting activities, gender- blind, -negative, -targeted, - responsive, - transformational?			
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Annex 4 Results matrix outputs

Description	Indicator	Baseline	MTR Target	Self-reported (May 2023)	MRT assessment
Output 1.1: Error! Reference source not found.	<i>Indicator #4)</i> <i>Benchmarks for the establishment of the AEZ Unit within CETAC:</i>	There is no AEZ Unit within CETAC.	AEZ Unit is becoming progressively more operational and meets the following benchmarks by the project's mid-term:	<p>Most of the hardware and software installed at AEZ Unit in CETAC</p> <p>AEZ Unit teams is working in CETAC,</p> <p>An inventory of CETAC's soil lab has been produced</p> <p>The institution with historical data archived were identified</p>	<p>Achieved. The AEZ Unit has been established and is operational to a very high quality. The Unit itself has significant and valuable intellectual capacities and is achieving a high work load under sometimes challenging conditions. It has demonstrated an ability to solve problems with a high degree of innovation.</p> <p>The MTR has serious concerns regarding the sustainability of the AEZ Unit after the GEF grant closes. The Director of CETAC has been absent for approximately 2 years and it is critical that the institution develops a strategic and costed plan for the organization. A recommendation has been made (see section....)</p>
	4a) Maintenance of an AEZ Unit, i.e. a team of professionals working on AEZ, including women	4a) No Unit exists	4a) A team of professionals has been formed forming with at least 2 women as a part of the Team and further 2 recruited as trainees	The AEZ already exists and is operational. It is constituted by 2 permanent national experts who are to be joined by regular interns and capacitation beneficiaries.	<p>Achieved. Notwithstanding the issues related to sustainability. The project has found it challenging to employ women on the AEZ team (one women candidate was selected but was unable to take up the position due to family pressure). Recommendations to address the gender balance in the project are made in section..... It should be noted that the Team is now complete and it may not be possible to add to this in the remaining part of the project due to budget constraints.</p>
	4b) Maintenance of the Project's Wider Landscape as the AEZ Unit' geographical scope	4b) No Unit exists	4b) The scope for the project's Wider Landscape is maintained.	The scope of AEZ and LDN monitoring are defined	The MTR cannot interpret the original indicator.
	4c) Post-project management modality worked out	4c) Post project management modality considered in the PRODOC, but no concrete steps to implement what is proposed have been taken.	4c) The management modality for the post-project period has been discussed by relevant stakeholders in preparation for, and in the aftermath of, the MTR.	Post-project management modality of the AEZ Unit is defined by MINAMB. The climate and environmental observatory that integrates the Agroecological Zoning unit was formally created to work at CETAC, the training program takes this aspect into consideration in its design and target beneficiaries.	<p>Not on track. The MTR recognizes and agrees with the achievement of establishing the AEZ Unit within CETAC which is highly effective within the framework of the project and the impact of the training which is considerable.</p> <p>However, the MTR has serious concerns regarding the sustainability of the AEZ Unit after the GEF grant closes. The Director of CETAC has been absent for approximately 2 years, the organization has limited human resources</p>

					outside of project management units and there are clear indications that there is insufficient budget and a lack of strategic and institutional vision. It is critical that the institution develops a strategic and costed plan for the organization. A recommendation has been made (see section....). The MTR assessment is made on the basis that the considerable achievements made by the project in establishing the unit will be lost unless the institutional framework provided by CETAC is secured.
Output 1.2 Error! Reference source not found.	<u>Indicator #5</u> Benchmarks for the capacity of the AEZ Unit within CETAC to provide AEZ services			The key national institution with relevant data were identified. The draft for Data Sharing Agreement were designed	On track but vulnerable especially in relation to the future of CETAC. No one has signed because MINAMB is waiting to decide whether CETAC or DNRRC (Directorate of Climate Actions and Environment) signs. However, the delays may be more complex and nuanced than this. Data sharing agreements are often very challenging especially within the body of a project. The MTR observes that there may be project ownership issues at play due to the Direct Implementation Modality and in particular, the lack of direction from CETAC. For the avoidance of doubt, the data sharing agreement(s) should be between national project partners (either jointly or severally – one collective agreement or <i>ad hoc</i> agreements between CETAC and individual national partners). The data sharing is not between FAO and national partners or other national institutions.
	5a) Capacity developed of CETAC's staff members, including women, to conduct the work of the AEZ Unit [related to outputs 1.2 and the job shadowing activities, and output 1.5 on the broader institutional training and networking.]	5a) 0 people trained	5a) 6 selected staff members, including at least 2 women, are fully involved in the job shadowing training and the Unit is commencing preparations for handover at project end as proved by the CNA	5a) 74 staff from different institutions (including CETAC), of which 18 (24%) are women, have received specific training and have increased their level of knowledge and technical capacity to integrate data into AEZ processes	Partially on track The project has made considerable efforts with the delivery of training across a range of institutions (AFC, INMET, IDA, etc...). The training has been well-received and beneficial. In total XX individuals have been trained, of which XX are women (XX%). However, the MTR has the same concerns related to CETAC. CETAC does not have the staff. The current staff complement is entirely project financed and unlikely to continue post project. Therefore, the challenge of sustainability and upscaling the project

					<p>achievements, especially the DSS currently being developed will not be met. A measure of this is that when the project began CETAC did not have the staff compliment with sufficient base skills (as described) in the Project Document for the project to train.</p>
		5b) No AEZ network exists in Angola creating the opportunity for learning about AEZ as applied to Angola	5b) The internet platform for networking professionals interested in AEZ has been launched by the AEZ Unit	5b) Substantial progress has been achieved in preparing the groundwork for institutional partnerships (both for data sharing and training). The key national institution with relevant data were identified. The draft for Data Sharing Agreement were designed ToR for the development of a website to consolidate networking, the visibility of the AEZ Unit and outreach for potential partners and capacitation beneficiaries have been developed.	<p>Not on track. CETAC will be the home for website. The project has gone almost as far as it can with developing this. Unless CETAC is strengthened (e.g. substantive Director to provide direction and drive to the organization, appropriate human resources and budget allocation, strategic plan, etc...) CETAC will not provide a sufficient basis for the AEZ Unit. Progress has been satisfactory thus far but it is been driven by the project and not by CETAC.</p>
Output 1.3 Error! Reference source not found.	<i>Indicator #6) AEZ Unit's capacity to effectively monitor land degradation parameters, ecosystem services and other agro-ecological data</i>		<u>Note:</u> LDN specific indicators to be monitored through Indicator #8		<p>There is no indicator #8 for outputs – indicator #8 relates to the outcome indicators. It should be noted that these outcome indicators do not have baselines, midterm and final targets. Which contrasts with the output indicators which have detailed and at times, prescriptive targets. Arguably this is the wrong way around and the broader outcome targets should provide the detail, whereas the outputs should allow the flexibility for adaptive management by the project management: <i>Indicator #8) Number of ha, where the general LDN goal of "achieving neutral land degradation by 2030 compared to degradation levels for 2015" is achieved by project end. The project will seek to demonstrate the effectiveness of AEZ-based SLM for achieving LDN and the and specific targets of the LDN-TSP within a shorter time span. The specific LDN targets that apply to the demo landscapes is the following:</i> 8a) Reduction of marked land degradation by around 50% compared to the reference year (2015) for land where agriculture is currently practiced.</p>

				<p>8b) Restoration of 50% of ecosystems currently degraded by unsustainable land use practices. 8c) 30% increase of soil organic carbon content (SOC) in all land classes and halving (0.4%) the current rate of deforestation throughout the country. 8d) Reinforcing information, education and awareness-raising on good land-use practices including those linked to sustainable agriculture-conservation for 80% of rural households. 8e) Reduction of 25% of livestock in areas with a strong tradition of livestock production. 8f) Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 50%.</p> <p>The MTR makes the following observation; M&E, SRF and indicators, should not be this complicated. The SRF is complicated and this should have raised a red flag during the project formulation and approval phase.</p>
6a) Functioning and coverage of the AEZ Unit monitoring system	6a) Land degradation parameters and ecosystem services baseline established through the Tracking Tool (see Annex B), but it is mostly a desk-based (not ground-truthed)	6a) Land degradation parameters (including those relevant to the LDN specific targets) and ecosystem services are monitored, at a reasonably fine-scale, within demo landscapes by the project's mid-term	6a) Approx. 356,400 ha (corresponding to the 3 target communes) regarding LDN indicators has been carried out; the Land Cover Classification and Land Degradation analyses are done for Chipipa, Alto Hama and Chongoroi	<p>Achieved. The national capacity to monitor land degradation is improved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 357 200 ha of landscapes of Chipipa, Chongoroi and Alto Hama are being monitored. • 38 737 ha aggregated from Chipipa, Chongoroi and Alto Hama has been evaluated as improved area during 2021. • The AEZ Unit management modality for work post-project on CETAC is being designed with MINAMB. <p>Sustainability guidelines for the AEZ Unit post-project are being defined aligned with MINAMB to be co-managed by CETAC and included on next budget and National Workplan</p>
6b) Number of partnerships for the networked sharing and monitoring of AEZ and LDN-relevant data developed with national institutions (including INAMET, IGCA and GSA)	6b) No partnerships exist	6b) At least 3 partnerships secured, of which at least 1 is with academia	6b) Progress with the DSAs has stalled. A change of strategy has been adopted in which MINAMB will support CETAC in signing the DSAs with target institutions.	<p>In progress. The MTR has concerns about the DSAs and the effectiveness of CETAC in its current status. There are perceptions that these DSAs are with the project when in fact they are government institution to government institution. More effort needs to be put on the DSAs with the first</p>

	and academia (FCA and IIA)				<p>step needing to address the current and future status of CETAC.</p> <p>25 partnerships were developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 institutions as trainer recipients on GIS, remote sensing, AEZ, and SLM • 22 engaged to share data.
Output 1.4 Error! Reference source not found.	<i>Indicator #7</i> Development of the Web GIS DSS of the CETAC's AEZ Unit	No DSS in place	WebGIS DSS established: <i>[interim sub-indicators]</i>	7) n/a to reporting period	
			7a) is fully operational		<p>In progress.</p> <p>Not on track according to the Project Document SRF MTR targets (7a – 7c) but planned YR 4. TE is to report and MTR is confident that the project will deliver a DSS. However, this will only cover the demo sites and will need considerable investment in ground-truthing to expand it to national coverage.</p>
			7b) is approved by users, with female users' perspective duly mainstreamed, and		As above.
			7c) its products are proved to successfully provide decision-support to at least 4 clients/beneficiaries <i>[Precise metrics and benchmarks to be informed by the user survey, which will be gender-disaggregated as applicable]</i>		<p>As above.</p> <p>4 projects are supported with the AEZ services from the AEZ Unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the Operationalization of the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy (STOSAR)"- GCP/SFS/004/EC • United States Forest Service (USFS) - Forests Training in Geospatial Technologies for Sustainable Forest Management • Faculty of agriculture science was supported with AEZ products to design the Tchandangombe Project that is an SLM initiative. • Angola initiative of "Integrated landscape management to reduce land degradation and increase community resilience in the Miombo-Mopane arid forests was supported to training stakeholders on GIS tools.

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IC-SLM-project form MINAMB, supported with products to design SLM plans and activities on Agroecological Centre of Chipipa
Output 1.5 Error! Reference source not found.	No hub for collecting AEZ data and generating AEZ products is in place				FIND OUT where this came from
Output 2.1 SLM plans: Community-level land-use plans integrating AEZ and SLM are prepared through a participatory approach (GreeNTD) in 3 Municipalities as part of a nested approach to landscape-level management	<i>Indicator #9) Local SLM plans developed with the project's assistance in the three municipalities targeted by the project, evidenced by:</i>				On track. The project has used the LADA approach in developing the plans. The communal-level plans are approved at Municipal Levels. The SLM plan has information for 3 specific zones and includes activities intended to be done in the municipality. A summary presented in an accessible framework should be develop for the community
	9a) Number of plans developed	9a) 0 plans	9a) 4 plans	3 plans are designed and approved for Chipipa	On track.
	9b) Number of people involved in preparation of the plans, of which how many are women	9b) 0 people	9b) 200 people, 40% women	9b) 623 people involved (179 are women)	Exceeded.
	9c) Number of communities involved in development of plans	9c) 0 communities	9c) 5-6 communities	9c) 9 community are involved.	Exceeded.
Output2.2 A network of AP/FFS (Agro-Pastoral & Farmer Field Schools) in 3 Municipalities is supported in implementing SLM plans and promoting SLM practices	<i>Indicator #10) Qualitative assessments of integration of the SLM plans with decision making in the three municipalities targeted by the project, evidenced by:</i>				
	10a) Levels of integration of SLM into	10a) AP/FFS currently include SLM-related topics, but not	10a) The activities of AP/FFS place strong emphasis on SLM based on AEZ products and on the 4 SLM	10a) 14 FFs are include SLM topics in their productions	Achieved. The indicator is very poorly articulated. Furthermore, it is hard to distinguish between

	the activities of the AP/FFSs.	based on AEZ products and not in a systematic manner.	plans that will exist by project midterm.		what is an "SLM-related topic" and what is an "AEZ products".
	10b) The extent to which SLM plans inform land-use allocation and management <i>[Appropriate benchmarking to developed during inception.]</i>	10b) SLM plans in Angola do not currently exist.	10b) At least 4 land-use plans will be available for informing decision-making and in the communities where they do exist, they will be used as a normative basis for decision-making.	10b) 3 SLM plans are designed and approved for Chipipa 2 SLM plans are being designed for Chongoroi.	On track. The MTR is concerned that the SLM plans will be challenging to implement without considerable and long-term support to build community institutions and internal governance in order to effectively manage common pool resources at this level and to be able to negotiate collectively with external interests.
Output 2.3 A broad training programme focused on SLM and the use of AEZ products for supporting decision-making at community-level is institutionalized and delivered	<i>Indicator #11) SLM training program implemented:</i>				
	11a) Number and type of community stakeholders trained, including a minimum number of women.	11a) 0 beneficiaries.	11a) At least 50 training participants by mid-term, of the following affiliation: civil servants, AP/FFS master trainers, EDA / IDA technician, municipal technicians, of whom at least 20% women.	11a) 140 members from FFS, 10 students from IPAT and one staff from CETAC are being trained on SLM activities	Exceeded.
	11b) Effectiveness of SLM community training and capacity building interventions, as assessed by participants through survey(s), which will be gender disaggregated as applicable.	11b) NA - assessment not yet carried out	11b) Survey(s) designed and baseline assessed	11b) 7 community are implementing the agriculture activities related to SLM training	Not assessed. The indicator refers to the effectiveness of training and capacity building. The MTR target relates to an activity. Surveys of this type are extremely hard to design and the cost of design might exceed its usefulness as an indicator. 14 communities have been trained, but it is hard to assess the effectiveness of the training at this point in time.
Output 3.1) Economic analyses on the cost of land degradation in Huambo and Benguela Provinces are carried out and disseminated among key decision makers to bring financial leverage and scale to the actions	<i>Indicator #13) Degree and coverage of assessment of economic cost of LD</i>	13) No assessment in place	13) The framework and methodology for the assessment is developed and has been applied to the 3 demo landscapes	The LD cost of Chipipa where accessed	On track but indicator is confusing. Answering this indicator would require considerable investment in a study. The project has decided to assess a number of parameters related to the savings made by reduction in inputs etc. This seems like a smart move by the project and the MTR suggests that these assessments should include farmers to increase the demonstration value of the exercise.

needed for restoring/rehabilitating land in central Angola					
	<i>Indicator #14) Number of professionals from MINAMB, MINAGRIF, MINTURI and relevant NGOs trained in lobbying and advocacy for SLM funding, including a minimum number of women</i>	14) 0 professionals trained in lobbying and advocacy for SLM funding	14) 50 professionals from MINAMB, MINAGRIF, MINTURI and relevant NGOs, among them at least 20% are women, trained in lobbying and advocacy for SLM funding	14) a training program in lobbying and advocacy for SLM is being drafted according to the identified funds	On track. The project has designed a programme. This includes: 1) Identifying main budget lines applied for SLM. 2) Training staff from administrations on how they can identify and apply their budgets for SLM activities. 2) How to draft small projects that they can submit for national budget. Other initiatives suggested such as looking at unspent budget lines which are being cut every year and changing the focus of those to fund SLM.
Output 3.2) Error! Reference source not found.	<i>Indicator #15) Number of professionals from relevant entities (in particular in MINAMB, MINAGRIF, MINTURI and relevant NGOs) trained in fundraising and resource mobilization for SLM in, including a minimum number of women</i>	15) Approx. 5 professionals from MINAMB (but not in other entities), including 1 woman (i.e. 20%) have received some training in fundraising and resource mobilization for environmental projects – e.g. GEF consultation workshops and other similar events (but not SLM specific)	15) Approx. 50 professionals from MINAMB, MINAGRIF, MINTURI, plus 2-3 relevant NGOs, among them at least 20% are women, have received focused training in fundraising and resource mobilization for SLM	15) n/a to reporting period	On track. The project is planning a high-level workshop with a small very focused group. The tor were prepared with MINAAMB which has agreed a writing agenda. MINAMB will provide the agenda.
	<i>Indicator #16) Number of supported projects to pilot and adjust the funding mechanisms for SLM</i>	16) 0 projects supported with SLM specific finance mechanisms	16) 5 projects supported with SLM specific finance mechanisms	16) n/a to reporting period	Not assessed. Training in fund management is planned.
	<i>Indicator #17) Increases in public funds mobilized for SLM (state budget earmarked for SLM)</i>	17) \$4.8 million per year (2016/2017 GoA expenditure with SLM - base year 2016 – to be confirmed/updated at inception) <i>[refer to note in item #1 in Error! Reference source not</i>	17) In average, \$5.0 million per year from various sources, or at least a 5% increase vis-à-vis baseline, in case the baseline is updated.	17) n/a to reporting period	Not assessed. Expect to report at the end of this year.

		<i>found. or an explanation on the baseline.]</i>			
Output 3.3 Community-based SLM finance, public-private partnerships and targeted matching grants are designed and implemented to channel funds from various funding sources.	<i>Indicator #18) Operational status of a trust fund for community-based SLM projects is in place with solid governance mechanisms and institutional support</i>	18) No trust-fund for community-based SLM exists	18) The trust fund for SLM, whose framework, statutes and governance structure of the trust fund for community-based SLM projects have been defined, has strong institutional support and is ready to be deployed	18) n/a to reporting period	Not assessed. The MTR recommends that the project does not get involved in establishing trust funds.
	<i>Indicator #19) Number of SLM community-based projects to have received financial technical assistance or funding through the trust fund (which includes financial technical assistance)</i>	19) Number of SLM community-based projects have received /fin. technical assistance: 0 /funding via trust fund: 0	19) Number of SLM community-based projects have received /fin. technical assistance: 5 /funding via trust fund: 0	19) n/a to reporting period	As above.
	<i>Indicator #20) Number of local stakeholders benefitting from finance options for SLM, including a minimum number of female memberships</i>	20) Approx. 40 institutional stakeholders (at PPG stage), of whom 28% are women	20) Approx. 300 local stakeholders at demo landscapes level, of whom 40% are women	20) n/a to reporting period	As above. It is not clear if this includes ZAEC project fund support – in which case it should not be included. If expected from the Trust fund then it is advised that other sources of non-ZAEC project funds are sourced.

Annex 5 Rating criteria and ratings tables

GEF evaluation criteria rating table

The MTR team is required to rate the aforementioned MTR criteria for the purposes of reporting to GEF and FAO on progress to date. Ratings need to be well substantiated, based on evidence gathered from the MTR, and a summary description of this evidence should be presented in the MTR Ratings & Achievements Summary Table (Table A11.3).

The MTR team should compare their (independently derived) ratings with those of the most recent GEF project implementation review (PIR) and describe any significant discrepancies.

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 the likelihood of impact are rated from likely (L) down to highly unlikely (HU). Explanations as to how to rate the criteria of effectiveness, sustainability and factors affecting performance can be found in the corresponding sections in Table A11.3.

Table A11.3 MTR ratings and achievements summary table

GEF criteria/sub-criteria	Rating ¹⁴⁹	Summary comments ¹⁵⁰
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE		
A1. Overall strategic relevance	HS→HU	
A1.1. Alignment with GEF and FAO strategic priorities	HS→HU	
A1.2. Relevance to national, regional and global priorities and beneficiary needs	HS→HU	
A1.3. Complementarity with existing interventions	HS→HU	
B. EFFECTIVENESS		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	HS→HU	
B1.1 Delivery of project outputs	HS→HU	
B1.2 Progress towards outcomes ¹⁵¹ and project objectives	HS→HU	
- Outcome 1	HS→HU	
- Outcome 2	HS→HU	
- Etc.	HS→HU	
- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes	HS→HU	
B1.3 Likelihood of impact	Not rated at MTR	
C. EFFICIENCY		
C1. Efficiency ¹⁵²	HS→HU	
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	L→HU	
D1.1. Financial risks	L→HU	
D1.2. Sociopolitical risks	L→HU	

¹⁴⁹ See rating scheme at the end of the document.

¹⁵⁰ Include reference to the relevant sections in the report.

¹⁵¹ Assessment and ratings by individual outcomes may be undertaken if there is added value.

¹⁵² Includes cost efficiency and timeliness.

D1.3. Institutional and governance risks	L→HU	
D1.4. Environmental risks	L→HU	
D2. Catalysis and replication	HS→HU	
E. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE		
E1. Project design and readiness ¹⁵³	HS→HU	
E2. Quality of project implementation	HS→HU	
E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (BH, LTO, PTF, etc.)	HS→HU	
E2.1 Project oversight (PSC, project working group, etc.)	HS→HU	
E3. Quality of project execution	HS→HU	
E3.1 Project execution and management (PMU and executing partner performance, administration, staffing, etc.)	HS→HU	
E4. Financial management and co-financing	HS→HU	
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement	HS→HU	
E6. Communication, knowledge management and knowledge products	HS→HU	
E7. Overall quality of M&E	HS→HU	
E7.1 M&E design	HS→HU	
E7.2 M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	HS→HU	
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	HS→HU	
F. CROSS-CUTTING CONCERNS		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	HS→HU	
F2. Human rights issues	HS→HU	
F2. Environmental and social safeguards	HS→HU	
Overall project rating	HS→HU	

Rating scheme

Additional explanation on how to assess ratings for specific criteria, for example, whether they are highly satisfactory or moderately satisfactory, can be found in Tables A11.4 to A11.7.¹⁵⁴

Overall outcome ratings

MTRs should use mid-term targets per the project's logframe to assess outcome delivery. If no mid-term indicator targets are available, the MTR should base outcome ratings on an assessment of the delivery of results to date against milestones in workplans and delivery compared with end-of-project targets.

Table A11.4 How to assess ratings for specific criteria

Rating	Description
Highly satisfactory (HS)	<i>Level of outcomes achieved clearly exceeds expectations and/or there were no shortcomings</i>
Satisfactory (S)	<i>Level of outcomes achieved was as expected and/or there were no or minor shortcomings</i>
Moderately satisfactory (MS)	<i>Level of outcomes achieved more or less as expected and/or there were moderate shortcomings</i>

¹⁵³ This refers to factors affecting the project's ability to start as expected, such as the presence of sufficient capacity among executing partners at project launch.

¹⁵⁴ See further information on GEF rating scales in Annex 5: Rating scales in GEF (2017c).

Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	<i>Level of outcomes achieved somewhat lower than expected and/or there were significant shortcomings</i>
Unsatisfactory (U)	<i>Level of outcomes achieved substantially lower than expected and/or there were major shortcomings</i>
Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	<i>Only a negligible level of outcomes achieved and/or there were severe shortcomings</i>
Unable to assess (UA)	<i>The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements</i>

Source: GEF (2017c)

In line with similar guidance on the assessment of ratings for GEF terminal evaluations (GEF, 2017c), the overall rating of the outcomes of the project should be based on performance on the criteria of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. The calculation of the overall outcome rating will consider all three criteria, of which relevance and effectiveness are critical. The relevance rating will determine whether the overall outcome rating is in the unsatisfactory range (MU to HU = unsatisfactory range). If the relevance rating is unsatisfactory, the overall outcome will be unsatisfactory as well. However, where the relevance rating is satisfactory (HS to MS), the overall outcome rating could, depending on its effectiveness and efficiency rating, be either satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

Table A11.5 Factors affecting performance (*assess each element separately; M&E is treated differently*)

Rating	Description
Highly satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder engagement/communication and knowledge management and results exceeded expectations.
Satisfactory (S)	There were no or minor shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder engagement/communication and knowledge management and results meet expectations.
Moderately satisfactory (MS)	There were some shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder engagement/communication and knowledge management and results more or less meet expectations.
Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder engagement/communication and knowledge management and results were somewhat lower than expected.
Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings and quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder engagement/communication and knowledge management and results were substantially lower than expected.
Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder engagement/communication and knowledge management.
Unable to assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of design and readiness/project implementation/project execution/co-financing/partnerships and stakeholder engagement/communication and knowledge management.

Table A11.6 Monitoring and evaluation design or implementation ratings (*Overall M&E design, design and implementation assessed separately*)

Rating	Description
Highly satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation exceeded expectations.
Satisfactory (S)	There were no or minor shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation meets expectations.
Moderately satisfactory (MS)	There were some shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation more or less meets expectations.
Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation somewhat lower than expected.
Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation substantially lower than expected.
Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in M&E design or M&E implementation.
Unable to assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of M&E design or M&E implementation.

Table A11.7 Sustainability

Rating	Description
Likely (L)	There is little or no risk to sustainability.
Moderately likely (ML)	There are moderate risks to sustainability.
Moderately unlikely (MU)	There are significant risks to sustainability.
Unlikely (U)	There are severe risks to sustainability.
Unable to assess (UA)	Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability.

Annex 6 Functional efficiency

- 1. Effective management of wildlife¹⁵⁵ is best achieved by giving it focussed value for those who live with it¹⁵⁶.** People seek to manage the environment when the benefits of management exceed the costs. Simply put if the income or benefit from managing/conserving natural resources exceeds the opportunity costs of reduced harvesting, better harvesting techniques, reduced grazing, sustainable farming methods, etc.; then people will tolerate and conserve those resources. If the benefits are a substantial proportion of income then people will incorporate their management into their conventional agriculture and land use.
- 2. Differential inputs must result in differential benefits.** This principle relates to the question "value for whom?" The answer is – those who have the resources and pay for its existence. It is important to recognise that the people who we might term "local people" or "local community" are the *de facto* custodians of many of these resources and might be considered the principle beneficiary from their management in order to achieve sustainability within the system.
- 3. There must be a positive correlation between quality of management and the magnitude of benefit.** The differential input requiring differential benefit involves not only the assets and costs mentioned above, it also incorporates management costs, both quantitative and qualitative. A fundamental policy objective is to provide the motivation for good management; thus, policy should ensure that good management

¹⁵⁵ The term "wildlife" is used here to describe a broad range of resources naturally occurring which can be widened to include ecosystem services such as soil and water provisioning

¹⁵⁶ Principles for developing a sustainable use system (adapted from Murphree, M. J., Wildlife Division Support Project, CREMA Review Report No. 56. Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission, Ghana and IUCN. October 2005)

pays. Failure to encourage and reward good management will result in "mining" of the resource for short-term gain.

4. **The unit of proprietorship should be the unit of production, management and benefit.** This means that the unit of decision-making must also be the same as the unit that manages and benefits. This component is fundamental to any sustainable resource management regime. However, it is recognised that due to issues of scale and the mobile nature and temporal and spatial boundaries of wildlife resources, mechanisms that allow for collective management decisions need to be used. These mechanisms generally exist within the community and need to be identified.
5. **The unit for collective management should be as small as practicable and functionally efficient within ecological and socio-political constraints.** From a social dynamic's perspective scale is an important consideration; large-scale externally imposed structures tend to be ineffective, increasing the potential for corruption, evasion of responsibility and lethargy in respect of broad participation. Where collective management structures are based on existing collective management structures and are at a scale that ensures regular contact of the members, it becomes possible to enforce conformity to rules through peer pressure and control individual actions through collective sanction.

Annex 7 Technical versus adaptive

Technical and adaptive challenges

Technical challenges:

- A technical challenge is a challenge that can be addressed with existing expertise, protocols, and operations.
- Implementing solutions to technical challenges often falls to someone with the authority to address them.
- Technical training (i.e. using a manual and new equipment) can resolve the problem.

Adaptive challenges:

- Encounter situations for which solutions lie outside the current way of operation, and possibly, thinking.
- Applying existing procedures and understanding does not provide the solution needed.
- Stakeholders must be involved in developing and implementing solutions.
- Solutions lie not in the application of expertise, but rather from a process of learning and adapting.
- Addressing adaptive challenges requires trying solutions that are new and maybe quite different.
- Inherent in addressing adaptive challenges are the need to become comfortable with not knowing what the next move might be, dealing with uncertainty.
- It is necessary to think (institutionally, individually, collectively...) what we should continue to do, what we should start to do and, critically, what we might need to stop doing...
- Addressing adaptive challenges may require the transfer of power (the ability to make decisions and to influence future events) from one party to another.
- Normally require expert thinking, which is the ability to solve non-rule-based problems.
- Adaptive challenges require time for adaptive solutions to have an effect and stakeholders cannot expect to react too quickly because of the discomfort that comes with not knowing.

Adapted from: Heifetz, Ronald A.; Leadership Without Easy Answers (Belknap/Harvard University Press, 1994)

Annex 8 Risk assessment

	Risk	Rating ¹⁵⁷	Mitigation	Mitigation reported (PIR 2022)	MTR assessment
1	Municipal, provincial and national authorities involved by the process may not realize the project's importance, thus not being sufficiently motivated to effectively "own" the project and work towards a common vision. Lack of effective and timely cooperation between different stakeholders / entities, hindering the delivery of expected results.	High	Effective communication strategies must be deployed from the outset to ensure that relevant stakeholders realize the strategic importance of the project for Angola's long-term sustainable development. Structured partnerships promote project ownership and also foresee communication flows that promote a sense of inclusion among stakeholders.	A link has been established with the relevant stakeholders and the focal points are designed to follow the project actions. Monthly and trimestral reports are shared with MCTA and all PSC members. The PSC works also as an important space to discuss project implementation.	High This is partly a function of the implementation modality. It is also important to recognise that the mitigation of this risk might place a considerable burden on the PCU, especially the NPC who would need to undertake considerable lobbying and awareness raising to build the sorts of networks and professional and institutional relationships. Mitigation of this risk could also have included identifying a national champion to promote the project and its objective as well as the EZ Unit in CETAC, this might have been the Director of CETAC.
2	The proposed fit of the AEZ Unit at CETAC fails to work as it should due to the difficulty of CETAC's management model in hosting an independent technical unit. This would disturb the capacitation strategy set in place, putting at the risk the its objectives and the project's long-term sustainability.	Low	The PSC would intervene to assess the situation and propose mitigation measures to resolve potential tensions within CETAC's management.	The AEZ Unit is working and some CETAC's staff are integrated into the capacity's programs.	High This was an un-necessary risk because these conditions should have been put in place as a condition of the project. Resolving this issue would/will have budget implications. CETAC will need to be strengthened otherwise the AEZ Unit's sustainability is extremely vulnerable.
3	Remote locations causing problems with personnel, logistics, maintenance, etc. Delays and difficulty in keeping up with the planning of the activities under Component 2. Delays and difficulty in keeping up with the planning of the activities under Component 2. Difficulty in reaching and implementing local SLM agreements. Delays and difficulty in keeping up with the planning of the activities under Component 2.	Low	The selection of communities sought to minimize this risk by using ease of access as one of the factors for the final shortlist. Local professionals and those of the AEZ Unit will be supported on the ground by the municipal administrations and respective infrastructure in the targeted project areas.	Target communities were selected based on, <i>inter alia</i> , ease of access.	Low This doesn't really equate to a risk. Consider removing it for efficiency.
4	New practices might clash with local cultures, resulting in slow adaptation of actions (gender, new forms of management, more effective management, alternative use of resources...).	Low	The project will address this risk by joint planning, implementation and, monitoring and evaluation in order to create project ownership from the start. Only practices with high social acceptance that meet stakeholders' needs and	The Lada-Assessment, and GreeNTD methodology are being applied and useful to understand culture differences and find common ground through the negotiated agreements.	Low The MTR notes that this risk does not identify the issue of collective management of common pool resources, but rather seeks to frame the risk of introducing technical fixes to an unknowing constituency. It does not address the complexity which may include internal and

¹⁵⁷ The rating here is used from the PIR June 2022. Risks are not properly rated in the Project Document.

	Risk	Rating ¹⁵⁷	Mitigation	Mitigation reported (PIR 2022)	MTR assessment
	Difficulty in reaching and implementing local SLM agreements.		cultural habits will be promoted by the AP/FFSs. The GreeNTD methodology will take cultural differences into consideration and will seek to find common ground through the negotiated agreements.		external constraints that prevent communities and farmers sustainably managing ecosystem goods and services.
5	Degradation of ecosystem due to droughts and climate shocks. Extreme climatic or environmental conditions may prevent the implementation of the SLM plans as expected.	Low	Project level emergency actions will be discussed and planned with participatory methods as part of the SLM plans, which will consider different environmental scenarios, including the occurrence of extreme events. Appropriate linking with on-going emergency / post-emergency initiatives will improve responses to those risks.	The SLM plans and the capacitation on SLM methodology are taking in account drought and climate risks in target zones.	High/Medium In the sense that given climate change at present agriculture is vulnerable to the high levels of uncertainty and within a project timeframe which might very optimistically expect just three growing seasons, there was a high probability of an unusual climate event. Long term the project seeks to reduce these risks to farmers, but for the purpose of implementing the project this should have been at least Moderate if not High. Planning and empowering local communities to participate in planning processes will increase resilience (<i>"resilience is determined not only by a systems ability to buffer or absorb shocks, but also by its capacity for learning and self-organisation to adapt to change"</i> ¹⁵⁸ .) just as long as the communities are able to influence the planning process.
6	Difficulty in successfully integrating the proposed synergetic activities of this project with those of the other relevant projects because cross-sectoral and institutional collaboration is more of an exception than the rule. The project fails to achieve the expected synergies with other past and ongoing initiatives.	High	Involvement and mobilization of local administrations and the management teams of other projects. Implementation arrangements will include strategies to minimize and mitigate this risk. In addition, during the PPG stage, a concerted effort was carried out in terms of: (i) identifying and listing relevant baseline and related initiatives, as well as opportunities for technical integration with relevant projects; (ii) conducting a thorough Capacity Needs Assessment; (iv) involving stakeholders and documenting; (iv) reassessing the presence of indigenous people in project demo landscapes, which showed to be 'not confirmed' – and hence with a decreased socio-environmental risk; (v) applied all due diligence and safeguards till the	Local administrations are mobilized and involved in the project interventions. The implementation strategies are applied to minimize the risk of droughts and climate shocks. (i) the IC-SLM project was identified as a relevant initiative to coordinate with in Chipipa; (ii) the needs of capacities were assessed and two capacity-building programs on SLM practices, and water and seed management were designed for different stakeholders; (iii) no indigenous people were identified in target project zones	High The risk, mitigation and (PIR) mitigation are confusing. This risk is related to risk 1 with similar mitigation measures or through addressing the institutional arrangements during the design. National ownership and a national champion to promote and drive the AEZ Unit and its work as well as identifying future synergies and opportunities might be a more plausible mitigation by the project. A clearer statement of risk might be more useful – there is a very poor legacy of past projects and collaborative governance is challenging. AEZ and SLM will need to be promoted by high-level decision-makers at a political level.

¹⁵⁸ Gunderson, L.H. and Holling, C.S. Eds. (2002). Panarchy: Understanding transformations in human and natural systems. Washington, DC. Island Press.

	Risk	Rating ¹⁵⁷	Mitigation	Mitigation reported (PIR 2022)	MTR assessment
			project could then be classified as E&S compliant and 'low risk'.		
7	The project's core contributions are not sufficiently linked to and integrated with initiatives and projects that would should use and build on this project's achievements (AEZ system and products, SLM plans, capacitation, financial mechanisms). The project contributions may end up being poorly integrated and underused, rendering the project one more isolated initiative without far-reaching or long-lasting impact.	Low	The PSC and PMU will systematically work towards the maximization of synergies and linkages with other projects and with the Angolan administrative and planning system to make sure that the projects outputs build on and built on (i.e. put to use) by other initiatives. Pro-active efforts towards stakeholder engagement will be applied during implementation, not least also building from the sound baseline of information contained in the CNA and in other PPG studies, all of which are duly reflected in the content of the FAO GEF PRODOC.	During PSC meetings, information was shared on other similar and complementary initiatives to elicit synergies and linkages. The PMU has been liaising with other projects and the ZAEC outputs (e.g. GIS tools) have been capitalized upon by other projects.	This risk is very similar and could be combined with risk 6. The reported mitigation would place a considerable burden on the PCU. Furthermore, the project is directly implemented which may militate against integration to other initiatives. Similarly, a national and substantive champion would improve the ownership and integration of the project results.
8	The existence of many actors involved in land management renders SLM and planning initiatives administratively complex and difficult to address in an organized way. Too many actors and institutions claim to be excluded from project related decision-making, resulting in their unwillingness to collaborate or facilitate the proposed processes, putting the achievement of project outcomes at risk.	Moderate	The project will address this risk through well-structured and inclusive project management, making sure that all relevant actors are at least informed of the project's implementation steps and processes prior to their occurrence and as they take place. Part of this strategy may be implemented through the national AEZ outreach online platform by including a webpage with updated information on the planned project interventions, making them accessible to any interested stakeholder.	The relevant actors at national and local levels are identified and frequently informed of the project implementation. The online platform is to be launched at CETAC webpage to make all information accessible.	Moderate However, the MTR again stresses that this places the initiative on the PCU and while it has been very good at this it is critical that there is a substantive legacy plan in place well before the project ends.
9	Not in Project Document. Volatility in farm input prices/ adjustments in farm subsidies/ subsidies				Moderate Volatility in farm input markets. Fuel, and the prices of other farm inputs may fluctuate. In the long term, the project is aimed at reducing dependency on external inputs. However, in the meantime this could influence the project in the short term. For instance, rising prices may cause farmers to price water and other inputs more cautiously and provide an incentive for SLM, on the other hand market distortions such as subsidies may militate against farming according to the ecological constraints.

Annex 9 Key respondents

Date	Name	Organisation	Position	Location	No.
22-May	Cesar Pakissi	FAO	National Project Coordinator	Luanda	No.
	Miguel Watanga	FAO	Programme Assistant		
	Penda Ndombe				
23-May	Security briefing (UN)				
24-May	Ernesto Sousa		IDE Minagrif	Luanda	
	Pierre Bégat	FAO	FLO	on line	
	Matieu Henry	FAO	LTO		
	Fly Huambo				
25-May	CETAC	CETAC Facult of Agronomy Science	Manuel Colomgo	Huambo	
	Andrea Njamba		Lecturer	Huambo	
	Jose Pedro João		Deputy Dean	Huambo	
	Romilson Madruga		Deputy Dean	Huambo	
	Project Team	FAO		Huambo	
	André Siinela	Agroecologist Consultant		Huambo	
	Filipe Mutumba	Agroecologist Consultant		Huambo	
	Luís Miapia	Agroeconomist Consultant		Huambo	
	Sérgio Kussumua	GIS and Remote sense Consultant		Huambo	
	José Caela	GIS and Remote sense Consultant		Huambo	
	Nilton André	GreeNTD National Project Coordinator		Huambo	
	César Pakissi	Project office Assistent		Huambo	
	Domingos Watela			Huambo	
	Justo Chindunda	Driver		Huambo	
	FFS		Ngunga	FFS-Leaders, members and master trainer	Ngunga
		Lomanda II	FFS-Leaders, members and master trainer	Lomanda II	20
26-May	Domingo Cardoso	IDA	Technician	Chingoroi	
	Letra Fort				
27-May	FFS	Uvombo	FFS-Leaders and master trainer	Chongori	12
	FFS	Chitata	FFS-Leaders and master trainer	Chongori	3
	FFS	Cambandi II	FFS-Leaders and master trainer	Chongori	8
28-May	TEAM SESSION			Lobito	
29-May	Fly Luanda				
	Gherda Barreto	FAO	Representative	Luanda	
	Anastacio Roque	FAO	Programme Officer	Luanda	
	Josina Amado	FAO		Luanda	
	Ronnie Brathwaite	FAO	LTO		
Antonio Mele	FAO	LTO team			

Goms Muanza	INAMET	Deputy Dean	Luanda
Luís Constantino	MINAMB	Deputy Dean	Luanda
Elizeth Diogo	MAT	Deputy Dean	Luanda

Annex 10 Documents reviewed

ZAEC Project Document
PPR 06-07/2020; 07-12/2020; 01-06/2021; 07-12/2022
PIR July 2021- 06/2022
PIF
Co-financing letters
STAP Review
Table of Responses
GEFSEC Review
AWP/B
ZAEC Concept Note
FAO Guide to mainstreaming gender in FAO's project cycle
FAO Policy on Gender Equality PPP
Acordo de integração programática entre o Projecto ZAEC e o CETAC, 12 May 2021
Acordo relativo à utilização das instalações do CETAC afectas ao Projecto de Gestão Sustentável de Terras na Região Central de Angola/ ZAEC, 12 May 2022(?)
Project Inception Report, Office Memorandum, 21/05/2021
https://www.fao.org/3/cb7099en/cb7099en.pdf

Annex 11 MTR itinerary

HOUR	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
Date: Sunday, May 21, 2023		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrival of the Consultant team and ZAEC NCP at Luanda 	, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
Date: Monday, May 22, 2023		
09:00 – 12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with the FAOAO Luanda offices 	Penda, Miguel, Josina, Helinton, César Pakissi and, Francis Hurst
14:00- 17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with FAO Representative 	Gherda Barreto and Anastácio Gonçalves
Date: Tuesday, May 23, 2023		
09:00- 17:00	Meeting with MINAMB	, Francis Hurst, Penda, Miguel and César
Date: Wednesday, May 24, 2023		
10:00-12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traval Luanda - Huambo 	, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
14:30 - 17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with CETAC, GPAGRSC and others stakeholders (IDA, FCA, ISCED-Hbo, ADRA, ADMH, IGCA) 	Amilcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
Date: Thursday, May 25, 2023		
8:00-11:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit to agroecological perimeter at Ngunga and Lomanda II – Chipipa 	Amilcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi

11:00 – 17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to Chongoroi – Benguela 	Amilcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
Date: Friday, May 26, 2023		
09:00 - 10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtesy greetings to Municipal administration of Chongoroi-Benguela 	Amilcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
10:00 – 12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with the IDA – Chongoroi – Benguela 	Amilcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
Date: Saturday, May 27, 2023		
9:00- 12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit to Uvombo- and other FFS-Chongoroi 	Amilcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
12:00 – 18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trip to Benguela 	Amilcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
Date: Sunday, May 28, 2023		
9:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return trip to Luanda 	Amilcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst and César Pakissi
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date: Monday, May 29, 2023 		
8:00 am to 17:00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with MINAMB and ZAECs focal point on MINAGRIF, MINOPOT, IGCA, INAMET, Instituto de Geológico, INRH, MAT, MESCTI and Representante das organizações da Sociedade Civil 	Amílcar Salumbo , Francis Hurst, Penda, Miguel and César
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date: Tuesday, May 30, 2023 		
8:00 am to 17:00 am	Meeting with MINAMB and ZAECs focal point on MINAGRIF, MINOPOT, IGCA, INAMET, Instituto de Geológico, INRH, MAT, MESCTI and Representante das organizações da Sociedade Civil	Amílcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst, Penda, Miguel and César
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date: Tuesday, May 31, 2023 		
8:00 am to 17:00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with MINAMB and ZAECs focal point on MINAGRIF, MINOPOT, IGCA, INAMET, Instituto de Geológico, INRH, MAT, MESCTI and Representante das organizações da Sociedade Civil 	Amílcar Salumbo, Francis Hurst, Penda, Miguel and César
Wednesday: June 1, 2023		
	Return trip to Lisboa	Francis Hurst
	Return trip to Huambo	Amilcar and César

Annex 12 Indicator analysis Description	Indicator	MTR Target	End of Project Target	MTR SMART Analysis					MTR assessment
	Indicators			S	M	A	R	T	
	Objective indicators								
Objective: Error! Reference source not found.	Indicator 1: Number of project beneficiaries, of which women:								
	1a): Indirect beneficiaries in Wider Landscape (provincial level): /Huambo (rural communes only) /Benguela (no coastal municipalities only, rural communes)	1a) Approx.: /Huambo 1 million rural inhabitants, 52% women /Benguela 400 thousand rural pop., 52% women	1a) Approx.: /Huambo 1 million rural inhabitants, 52% women /Benguela 400 thousand rural pop, 52% women	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	Indicators 1a) to 1d) are the lower end of SMART compliance. While the indicators and targets do provide a measure of the extent of the project they do not provide a measure of the quality and impact in terms of prevention of land degradation. That is; there is an assumption that by participating in the project and benefiting from the project there is a positive impact in reducing negative land use practices. Furthermore, the term "indirect beneficiaries" is broad and all-encompassing and lacks relevance with AEZ and SLM in terms of "benefits". Even though there is some compliance, the indicators themselves do not reflect the objective
	1b): Indirect beneficiaries in demo landscapes: rural population of selected communes: / Alto Hama (Londuimbali) / Bailundo (Bailundo) / Chongoroi (Chongoroi).	1b) Demo landscapes: <u>Communes of:</u> / Alto Hama: 9165 / Bailundo: 0 / Chongoroi: 0	1b) Demo landscapes: <u>Communes of:</u> / Alto Hama: 9165 / Bailundo: 0 / Chongoroi: 0	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	
	1c): Direct beneficiaries in demo sites: population of selected communities served by AP/FFSs.	1c) Demo sites: 1250 of which 50% are women in 7 selected communities	1c) Demo sites: up to 1500 of which 50% are women in approximately 15 selected communities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	1d): Direct beneficiaries of capacity building programs other than AP/FFS (including staff from extension services and public institutions, technicians, academics, decision makers and entrepreneurs).	1d) At least 200 individual stakeholders engaged by the project including 25% women as a minimum	1d) At least 300 individual stakeholders engaged by the project including 25% women as a minimum	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Indicator 2: Area (ha) targeted by the project for the implementation of SLM frameworks and the integration of SLM into prevalent agricultural practices:								

Annex 12 Indicator analysis Description	Indicator	MTR Target	End of Project Target	MTR SMART Analysis					MTR assessment
	Indicators			S	M	A	R	T	
	2a): At the Wider Landscape's (macro) level, development of a support mechanism for SLM: Approximate area coverage (in millions of ha) for the project's a broad target for demonstrating the integration of AEZ into decision-making for SLM and LDN	2a) 6.1 million ha coverage for 'The Wider Landscape' in Huambo and Benguela provinces / The AEZ system constitutes a nascent fine scale DSS and support mechanism for integrating SLM practices across landscapes and in multiple scales and entry points in the two provinces.	2a) Within the Wider Landscape, the AEZ support mechanism is fully consolidated with the continued integration of SLM across landscapes, in multiple scales and entry points, including through FFSs/APFs and targeted capacity building of land use planners and local stakeholders.	X	X	Q	Q	Q	The term "development of a support mechanism for SLM" and the MTR target term "the AEZ system constitutes a nascent fine scale DSS and support mechanism" as well as the final target "the AEZ support mechanism is fully consolidated with the continued integration of SLM across landscapes" would benefit from "un-picking" the "support mechanism" components and measuring those. The MTR notes that an indicator should not be this difficult to understand.
	2b) Demo landscapes: Area within which integrated landscape management practices are adopted by local communities – assessed as the application of INRM practices in demo sites	2b) Approx. 400,000 ha of 3 Demo landscapes are surveyed, with LDN indicators monitored and INRM practices initiated on the ground in: / Alto Hama 57,055 ha / Chongoroi 286,532 ha / Bailundo: 84,112 ha ----- Total: 409,699 ha Rounded-off to 400,000 ha for monitoring purposes.	2b) In approx. 400,000 ha of demo landscapes, the project has influenced planners, land users, local communities and investors to adopt and integrate SLM in landscape-level management practices and monitor LDN indicators through the application of a nested approach to AEZ.	X	X	Q	Q	Q	Indicator and targets are not precise. It is not clear whether LDN indicators (cover, soil organic carbon and production) are to be monitored or whether their monitoring is sufficient without change in the values.
	None	2c) Estimated projections for demo sites: - 6,881 ha of agricultural lands - 7,800 ha of rangelands Total: up to 14,670 ha Considered as 11,000 ha as the mid-term target.	2c) Up to 14,000 ha (in total and rounded down), where 'Vegetative cover (natural & cultivated cover) is stabilized and regenerated at micro-landscape level (demo sites) managed through the project						As above – it is not clear whether this related to indicator 2b) or there is an indicator missing.
Component 1: Agroecological zoning (AEZ) integrated planning	Outcome 1 Indicators			S	M	A	R	T	

Annex 12 Indicator analysis Description	Indicator	MTR Target	End of Project Target	MTR SMART Analysis					MTR assessment
	Indicators			S	M	A	R	T	
Outcome 1: Error! Reference source not found.	Indicator 1: Achievement of measures of institutional sustainability regarding national capacity for agroecological zoning (AEZ) and integrated planning by project end. The benchmarks will include the following:	None	None						
	3a) Capacity developed of CETAC's staff members, including women, to conduct the work of the AEZ Unit [related to outputs 1.2 and the job shadowing activities, and output 1.5 on the broader institutional training and networking.]								No targets given. Without the targets the term "capacity" lacks clarity. There are well-used capacity development scorecards which can be used to measure capacity.
	3b) Post-project management modality worked out			X	X	X	X	X	Indicator is a target or a poorly articulated activity.
	3c) Number of partnerships developed			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	3d) Services of the AEZ Unit delivered for other projects / initiatives			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	This presumably would be services provided by the AEZ Unit to other projects/ initiatives.
	3e) Number of people trained in the AEC Chipipa in collaboration with the ICE-SLM project, among them % of women who meet same qualifications criteria as men for selection			Q	✓	✓	✓	✓	A simple gender disaggregation would be sufficient. It is not clear what is meant by "meeting the same qualifications criteria".
	3f) Number and profile of the users of the AEZ system (gender disaggregated, if possible, to anonymously collect data on it)			Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	No targets given. The "profile" of users would need to be determined in the target at least. The gender disaggregation is not precise. Data such as this should be gender disaggregated as a matter of course and not "if possible".
Component 2: Sustainable management and rehabilitation of landscapes	Outcome 1 Indicators			S	M	A	R	T	
Outcome 2: Error! Reference source not found.	Indicator #8) Number of ha, where the general LDN goal of "achieving neutral land degradation by 2030 compared to degradation levels for 2015" is achieved by project end. The project will seek to demonstrate the	None given	8a) Reduction of marked land degradation by around 50% compared to the reference year (2015) for land where agriculture is currently practiced	X	X	X	X	X	Targets are ambiguous. "Marked land degradation" is not specific. The DSS presumably can measure LD, but detecting change in this timeframe and attributing

Annex 12 Indicator analysis Description	Indicator	MTR Target	End of Project Target	MTR SMART Analysis					MTR assessment
	Indicators			S	M	A	R	T	
	effectiveness of AEZ-based SLM for achieving LDN and the and specific targets of the LDN-TSP within a shorter time span. The specific LDN targets that apply to the demo landscapes is the following:								this to a project intervention is not plausible. It is also probably not achievable given that the first year of any project will be setting in place the framework. Given that these activities would be with the community and FFS the second year would be putting these in place, the third year/planting season soil might be turned any change would be expected from just one growing season – it is neither achievable nor realistic and the timeframe is implausible.
			8b) Restoration of 50% of ecosystems currently degraded by unsustainable land use practices	X	X	X	X	X	As above. Restoration of ecosystems is open-ended and 50% of an ecosystem is not something that is measurable. Noted that the 2022 PIR is using the MT target "Approx. 400,000 ha of demo landscapes, where improved practices are in the process of being applied" for indicators 8b) to 8f).
			8c) 30% increase of soil organic carbon content (SOC) in all land classes and halving (0.4%) the current rate of deforestation throughout the country	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	There are two separate targets, both them are unachievable within a project timeframe.
			8d) Reinforcing information, education and awareness-raising on good land-use practices including those linked to sustainable agriculture-conservation for 80% of rural households	X	X	X	X	X	This is an activity, 80% does not make it a target.

Annex 12 Indicator analysis Description	Indicator	MTR Target	End of Project Target	MTR SMART Analysis					MTR assessment
	Indicators			S	M	A	R	T	
			8e) Reduction of 25% of livestock in areas with a strong tradition of livestock production	Q	Q	X	Q	X	The "areas with a strong tradition of livestock" lacks clarity. The reduction of livestock by 25% would require a profound understanding of the social, economic and ecological factors, this implausible. It is specific, it is measurable (given an understanding of the social, economic and ecological drivers), it is relevant, but it naive.
			8f) Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 50%.	X	X	X	X	X	There are no baselines or MTR targets. Without a baseline it is not possible to validate the indicator. Presumably there is a 2015 baseline?
Component 3 Economic and financial leverage approaches to SLM	Outcome 1 Indicators			S	M	A	R	T	
Outcome 3 Error! Reference source not found.	<i>Indicator #12) Increase in overall investment (both public and private funds) mobilized for SLM</i>		Key target benchmark: Key-decision makers have a solid understanding of how to bring financial leverage and scale to SLM initiatives, resulting in the active mobilization and deployment of investment at both landscape and community level.	Q	Q	Q	Q	Q	As a broad indicator this makes sense, but to unpacked this is an enormous undertaking. However, the target is not fit for purpose. "Solid understanding" is ambiguous and hard to measure. Therefore, all other criteria are questionable.
	<i>[From Tracking tool, GEF Outcome Monitoring concerning LD1 and LD3, item [iii.] Increased investments in integrated landscape management, measured as 'Increased resources flowing to INRM and other land uses form diverse sources']</i>	\$4.8 million per year (2016/2017 GoA expenditure with SLM - base year 2016 – to be confirmed/updated at inception).	None						Would need a target or at least a level of increase in order to judge impact. MTR can assess impact based on reasonably objective expectations. This indicator has now been replaced by the GEF 7 Core Indicators.

