

**Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF Project
“SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT AND CLIMATE
CHANGE MITIGATION CO-BENEFITS (SLM-CCMC)”
(GEF ID: 5698)**



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Front cover: from left to right: Vegetation Sampling in Ecuador (Source: Eleanor Milne); Land users assessing performance of Mucuna crop under conservation agriculture (Source: Kennedy Were); CBP Training 2019 UNEP Nairobi (Source: Rachel Kosse)

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Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change Co-Benefits – SLM-CCMC

5698

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The evaluator would like to express her gratitude to all persons met and who contributed to this evaluation, these persons are listed in Annex 2.

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The evaluating consultant hopes that the findings, conclusions and recommendations will contribute to the continued innovation and advancement in carbon monitoring towards a healthy, resilient home planet.

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The evaluation was conducted by Dr Justine Braby, contracted as an independent evaluator. Justine has her academic background in zoology, education and law, as well as completed courses in economic development and depth facilitation. Her professional expertise ranges from project development, implementation to evaluation of GEF and other donor-funded projects for agencies like UNEP, UNDP, FAO and IUCN. She has been focusing her expertise on evaluations and has had extensive experience in terminal evaluations spanning across the world. She has technical expertise in climate change, sustainable land management, biodiversity and ecosystem services, alternative development paradigms and economic development, coastal zone management, water resources management, protected areas, among others (including publications experience in these fields). Justine is from Namibia and currently living and working in Mexico.

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ABOUT THE EVALUATION

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Report Language(s): English.

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Brief Description: This report is a terminal evaluation of a UNEP/GEF Medium-Sized Project implemented between 2016 and 2021, entitled Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change Mitigation Co-Benefits (SLM-CCMC). The project's overall development goal was to enhance capacity and tool development toward the advancement of carbon monitoring in sustainable land management projects, thereby illustrating the climate change benefits of having healthy land. The evaluation sought to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, the GEF, other GEF Implementing Agencies, CSU, WOCAT, and the relevant agencies of the four GEF country case projects.

Key words: carbon monitoring; Greenhouse Gas monitoring; sustainable land management; land degradation neutrality; climate change mitigation; carbon sequestration; carbon stocks; technologies; tools; databases; innovation; training.

Primary data collection period: May-June 2021

Field mission dates: No field mission conducted (mainly due to COVID-19 travel restrictions)

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBP	Carbon Benefits Project
CIHEAM	International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies
CONDESAN	Consortium for Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion
CSU	Colorado State University
DEPI	Division of Environmental Policy Implementation
DEWA	Division of Early Warning and Assessment
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FAO CACILM II	Integrated Natural Resources Management in Drought-prone and salt-affected agricultural production systems in Central Asia and Turkey
FMO	Fund Management Officer
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEF STAP	Global Environment Facility Scientific Technical Advisory Panel
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GIZ	German Development Corporation
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IRD France	Research Institute for Development
KALRO	Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation
NREL	Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory
PAG	Project Approval Group
PIF	Project Initiation Form
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SLM-CCMC	Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change Mitigation Benefits
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timeable/Trackable
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UniBE	University of Bern
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WOCAT	World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION TABLE

Table 1: Project summary

GEF Project ID	5698	GEF/UNEP approval date:	28 October 2015 (as per PIR17) UNEP approval: 28 October 2015 (as per PIR18)
GEF Project Type	MSP	Executing Agency:	Science Division
Sub-programme:	Ecosystem management/ Climate Change		
GEF Focal Areas	LD1: Outcome: 1.2: Improved agricultural management. Outputs: 1.2. Types of innovative SL/WM practices introduced at field level; 1.5: Information on SLM technologies and good practice guidelines disseminated. LD4: Outcome: 4.2: Improved GEF portfolio monitoring using new and adapted tools and methodologies, Outputs: 4.2: GEF-financed projects contribute to SLM/SFM/INRM knowledge base.		
Expected Accomplishment(s):	POW 2014-2014: EA b		
PoW Output(s):	Programme of Work (2014- 2015)		
Coverage - Countries:	Ecuador, Ethiopia, Kenya South Africa,	Coverage - Region(s):	Global (Emphasis on Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, North America)
Expected Start Date:	January 2016	Actual start date:	2 February 2016
Planned completion date:	31 August 2019	Actual completion date:	31 December 2021
Total budget of project at approval:	USD 3,366,312	Total expenditure reported:	USD 1, 671, 050
GEF contribution at approval:	USD 1,804,00	First disbursement:	26 April 2016
Expected co-financing:	USD 1,311,512	Planned project duration	3 years
Secured co-financing:	USD 1,279,340	Date of financial closure:	TBD
No. of revisions:	1 budget revision	Date of last revision:	June 2020
		Mid-term review/ evaluation (actual date):	23/10/2018 (internal by Steering Committee Meeting)
Date of last Steering Committee meeting:	15 Jan 2020	Terminal Evaluation ((planned) actual date):	(August 2019) August 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and Methods of the Evaluation

1. Despite the considerable investment by GEF in sustainable land management across the world and the potential of these to benefit the climate change agenda (in terms of climate change mitigation), the capture of monitoring these benefits is still lacking.
2. The project “Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change Co-benefits (SLM-CCMC)” (GEF ID: 5698) was developed to take a targeted approach to monitoring climate change mitigation co-benefits of (GEF) projects through capacity-building and outreach.
3. The project was a medium-sized project that was a third in a phase of GEF-funded projects that started with the development of carbon monitoring tools and through this project aimed to enhance its use. The project worked with four separate GEF projects in Ecuador, Ethiopia, Kenya and South Africa.
4. The project was implemented through UNEP’s Ecosystem Division and was co-executed by the Science Division and the Colorado State University (Component 1 and 2) and World Bank (Component 3). The intended duration was three years, but through two project extensions, lasted four years and seven months. The project budget was USD 3,366,312 (of which USD 1,561, 512 was planned in-kind co-financing). In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy and the UNEP Programme Manual, as well as the updated guidance for evaluators (developed by the Evaluation Unit), the Terminal Evaluation of the SLM-CCMC project was undertaken to assess performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. As per the Terms of Reference, the evaluation has two primary purposes:
 - i. To provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and
 - ii. To promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and its project partners including Colorado State University, World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies).
5. Aligned to the UNEP Evaluation Guidelines, the project was assessed with respect to a minimum set of evaluation criteria grouped into nine categories: Strategic Relevance, Quality of Project Design, Nature of External Context, Effectiveness, Financial Management, Efficiency, Monitoring and Reporting, Sustainability and Factors Affecting Project Performance.
6. A Theory of Change was reconstructed at the Inception Phase of the Evaluation and was based on extensive desktop reviews and revisions together with project stakeholders.
7. The strategic questions set out for the evaluation, as set out in the evaluation Terms of Reference (TOR) were:
 - a. To what extent has the project achieved the enhancement of capacity of GEF project managers and selected GEF agency personnel to monitor carbon and climate co-benefits from SLM projects (Outcome 1)?

- b. To what extent are SLM projects using combined tool sets to identify appropriate carbon friendly practices? What is the added value of the linkage between the CBP tools and the WOCAT Questionnaire on SLM Technologies for (a) GEF projects, (b) other projects, (c) stakeholder groups at different scales, and how is it perceived (Outcome 2)?
- c. To what extent have GEF and other SLM project managers enhanced their understanding of the wide range of tools available – are they able to choose which ones suit their needs (Outcome 3)?
- d. To what extent has the project allowed for effective mainstreaming of carbon monitoring into the greater programmatic implementation of GEF projects and more widely beyond GEF, in general, the Global Agenda 2030) (Likelihood of Impact)?
- e. What is the contribution of this project for the common aims of the UNCCD (and UNFCCC) to identify and promote best practices for the maintenance and buildup of soil organic matter (which contributes to land degradation neutrality and carbon sequestration) (Relevance)?
- f. What adjustments, if any, were made to the project as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to what extent did the adjustments allow the project to effectively respond to the new priorities that emerged in relation to COVID-19? How did the adjustments affect the achievement of the project's expected results? (Risk – under Factors affecting Project Performance)?

The Project Context

- 8. The project objective was to “create an environment which will make it easier for land management project managers to realise the climate co-benefits of sustainable land management practices”.
- 9. Key stakeholder groups included: (a) GEF and GEF implementing agencies (IAs), (b) UNCCD, (c) GEF project managers of the specific case projects, (d) GEF and non-GEF recipients of the training and tool users, and (e) key project partners in charge of delivering the carbon monitoring tools.

Theory of Change at Evaluation

- 10. The evaluator had to reconstruct a Theory of Change in lieu of its absence in project development (although there was an overview diagram that showed some elements of a theory of change, from which the evaluator worked)¹. The Theory of Change diagram can be found in Figure 3 of this report.
- 11. The final, long-term, impact(s) of the Theory of Change is that all (GEF) SLM projects that have climate change co-benefits are using relevant carbon monitoring tools to monitor progress towards climate change mitigation and land degradation neutrality, among which the CBP tool is recognized for its value and used widely, which would feed into the

¹ The Evaluation Office of UNEP notes that TOCs have been required in UNEP project documents since 2013.

broader impact of a larger umbrella of programmes and projects “all land under human intervention is healthy and resilient and is able to sequester carbon to its highest potential”.

12. Analysis of the impact pathways was conducted in terms of the assumptions and drivers that underpin the processes in the transformation of outputs and outcomes to intermediate states to impact. Generally, the intermediate states are a result of successful demonstration, enhanced capacity of a critical mass of users, tool developers finding symbiosis and partnerships catalysing use and uptake streamlined and easy-access for users.

Evaluation Findings (see Ratings Table in Conclusions and Recommendations)

Strategic Relevance

13. The project was highly relevant in terms of the urgent and prioritised need for climate change mitigation and the important role that sustainable land management plays, as well as UNEPs priorities under its climate change and healthy ecosystems subprogrammes. The project was a product of demand coming directly from GEF Secretariat (based on responding to demand by countries and GEF agencies for streamlined methodologies for the estimation and monitoring of carbon benefits in SLM projects).

Quality of Project Design

14. Overall, the project was well-designed, although could have been more ambitious in terms of its objective and some of the outcome-level indicators, as well as the communications and sustainability aspects. Quality of Project Design is rated *Satisfactory*.

Nature of External Context

15. Generally, in terms of external context, there were no major risks considered at design that would have affected the project in any significant way; the project was global with some travel and much remote work. However, some external risks came up which affect the project, namely the COVID-19 pandemic, and to a lesser extent, geo-socio-political issues in two of the project countries (Ecuador and Ethiopia). The rating for Nature of External Context is *Moderately Favourable*.

Effectiveness

Availability of Outputs

16. Output 1.1. Assessments of C benefits made using the Simple and Detailed Assessments for GEF and non-GEF projects involved in training sessions: The project outperformed on the indicator by having four-fold more trainings; trainings were relatively successful in terms of uptake based on user-demand increasing.
17. Output 1.2. Documentation of good/best practice land management practices in terms of C benefits: 21 examples were added to the WOCAT database, as well as 14 practices from the in-depth projects, and seven additional were linked in the CBP WOCAT linkage process.
18. Output 1.3. In depth implementation of the CBPs Simple or Detailed Assessment in 5 GEF projects with the on-going support of the SLM-CCMC: Four projects ended up participating in the exercise, to varying levels of success.

19. Output 1.4. Project managers trained to document good/best land management practices, linked to CBP assessment for 5 GEF projects: All projects have uploaded case studies.
20. Output 2.1. An enhanced toolset with increased efficacy in terms of spatial data and accessibility as well as direct relevance to specific finance/certification schemes: While three countries had potentially set up some foundations toward carbon markets, there was little evidence of access at the time that this evaluation was undertaken. The guidance developed still needs to be finalised.
21. Output 2.2. An interlink between the CBP and WOCAT tools: The link and partnership made is arguably one of the biggest successes coming out of the project, enhancing demand for tool use
22. Output 2.3. A reporting database for UNEP GEF staff to use to access, store and analyse reports generated by the CBP system: The feature was developed but has not been widely used yet.
23. Output 3.1. A guideline/manual for GEF and other managers of SLM projects for choosing the most appropriate tools to measure carbon benefits and guidance note: A comprehensive report was developed. The report is not considered by the evaluator as particularly user-friendly when taking in account the end-user.
24. Output 3.2. An e-learning module to facilitate peer-learning amongst GEF managers and global knowledge sharing amongst natural resource users: An e-learning course was developed and is a useful introduction to the use of carbon tools.
25. Delivery of Outputs is rated as *Satisfactory*.

Achievement of Direct Outcomes

26. (TOC) ² Outcome 1. GEF project managers and selected agency personnel have demonstrated capacity to measure, monitor and model the carbon benefits resulting from their projects): Outcome 1 has been achieved in terms of its measurable indicator, but whether it has been achieved in terms of the Theory of Change depends on the assumption that enhanced capacity drives behaviour change. There is certainly evidence of tool use and uptake based on training events, but whether a critical mass has been reached is doubtful, although momentum is increasing through more and more demand.
27. (TOC) Outcome 2³. SLM and NRM projects use combined tools set to identify appropriate climate practices, track and report them once implemented and engage with C finance schemes when appropriate: The GEF case studies were useful and some have created some momentum on tools use beyond the project results. Combining the toolsets through CBP and WOCAT has been particularly successful. The value add to GEF is certain, although whether the GEF community see this value is questionable. For Outcome 2 to reach impact in terms of the Theory of Change depends on further engagement, more partnerships and stronger ownership from the GEF IAs, particularly UNEP.

² Revised outcome as per the Theory of Change, against which the project was evaluated against in terms of its overall achievement at outcome and impact level. See Table 3, paragraph 33 under Theory of Change for more. The original project outcome was: Enhanced capacity to measure, monitor and model carbon benefits from GEF land management projects using the CBP/WOCAT tools in several GEF agencies and for GEF project personnel.

³ Original project outcome 2: SLM and NRM projects using the combined tool set to identify appropriate C friendly practices track and report them once implemented and engage with C finance schemes where appropriate.

28. (TOC) Outcome 3⁴. GEF and other SLM project managers are able to make informed selections of tools to track carbon monitoring of their SLM project: Overall, this outcome was achieved, but a simplified, more user-friendly format for the guidance would likely have allowed for a stronger pathway to impact in the Theory of Change.

29. Achievement of Project Outcomes is *Satisfactory*.

Likelihood of Impact

30. The likelihood of achievement of overall impact, in the long-term, as a result of project outcomes achievement and causal pathways in the reconstructed Theory of Change, will be met but the speed to which will depend on the institutional support from the GEF and the IAs.

31. The CBP tool and the WOCAT tool are a powerful combination that have proved to catalyse application of the tools among projects (as seen by demand). The usefulness of the tool has been demonstrated by the project, yet the value is not visible to the entire community.⁵ While the profile of the tool has been raised among many projects from many institutions (at project level), the profile at institutional structural (and leadership level), especially among GEF and UNEP, has not been raised sufficiently for ownership/commitment to stick at these levels. GEF obviously welcomes the use of the tool by any of its projects (even though it does recommend the EX-ACT tool for e.g. PIF development), but given the investment and time it has put in (in relation to financial resources but also in terms of the STAP involvement, since the early 2000s), it is surprising to not see more structural support of the tool. UNEP as the GEF implementing agency taking this tool on from the 2000s, has also allowed its own ownership to fade (mostly likely due to initial champions of the tools retiring without sufficient handover thereby losing institutional championship) in terms of longer-term partnership at a structural level (related to its mandate of providing the means necessary to make scientifically rigorous reviews and environmental assessments of human interactions with the environment – as an example, for GEO-5, an entire Chapter was devoted to the CBP project results – one would have expected this level of engagement to continue).

32. In other words, there will be growth in this either way, and if UNEP and GEF do not take advantage of these partnerships through encouraging them by using their institutional power and weight, there will be a missed opportunity to use the effective partnerships to fast-track LDN and climate mitigation targets.

33. So, in short, the likelihood of impact being reached is high. The role of CBP as a key player in enhancing partnerships and innovation toward effective carbon monitoring is high. The speed as to which this happens will depend on where GEF and its IAs, especially UNEP as the custodian of the environment and science body⁶ (and the institution who set up the IPCC, among other UN-(environment)-related scientific bodies/institutions), support and raise the profile of its partners working on the tools.

34. Speed of moving the agenda forward towards impact will also depend on the creation and strengthening of more partnerships, the more integration, more cooperation

⁴ Original project outcome 3: Managers having enhanced understanding of the wide range of tools available (outside of and including the CBP tools) and their application contexts.

⁵ As made clear through multiple interviews particularly within GEF and UNEP and other GEF IAs.

⁶ Science body i.e. key UN environmental institution grounded on scientific rigour.

(replacing competition), the more standardized and accurate the tools will become (taking into account different contexts).

35. Achievement of likelihood of impact, as directly connected to what the project is able to control, and how it achieved it's outcomes within the move to impact of the Theory of Change is *Likely*.

36. Rating for Effectiveness is *Satisfactory*.

Financial Management

37. Adherence to UNEP's Policies and Procedures: A number of issues arose regarding the project and its lack of overall alignment – including (a) roles between the IA and the Science Division EA and its agreement with CSU (which effectively had most of the EA function), the lack of and-over of the project leading to a time where the project was orphaned, the World Bank agreement which was highly unusual, among others.

38. Completeness of Project Financial Information: The project's financial information was mostly complete with some information (such as detailed co-financing delineated between the EA and the IA) incomplete.

39. Communication between Finance and Project Management Staff: There was no real handover of the project when staff turned over, although communication improved once turn-over was completed and the new staff were on track.

40. Rating for Financial Management overall is *Moderately Satisfactory*.

Efficiency

41. Despite some minor initial delays, the project was generally well coordinated and efficient in its cost and time, and is rated as *Satisfactory*.

Monitoring and Reporting

42. Monitoring Design and Budgeting: This was generally well done at design, although the outcome-level indicators were not appropriate for outcome-level (which necessitates a deeper, more nuanced indicator, e.g. change in behaviour).

43. Monitoring of Project Implementation: The monitoring was conducted as laid out by the project document, but was further improved on through continuous learning.

44. Project Reporting: Half-year progress reports were developed throughout the project lifespan. The inception and mid-term workshop reports were strong resources for learning and monitoring projects. A final report was developed capturing key lessons.

45. Monitoring and reporting rated as *Satisfactory*.

Sustainability

46. Socio-political sustainability of the project will be impacted by COVID-19, although online training and resources have supported the move forward. The partnerships created have been strong.

47. For financial sustainability, the project has various other funding channels, although no core operational funding to keep the tools running sustainably without project-to-project basis funding.
48. Institutional sustainability varies and could be stronger in terms of UNEP support in the long-term. CSU will continue to move the tool forward and possibly innovate. Partnerships will continue based on success from the project. Some countries, like Ethiopia, are using the tool in other areas of work.
49. Sustainability is rated as *Likely*.

Factors affecting Project Performance

50. Preparation and readiness: Project built on previous two projects, and generally was strong although governance arrangements could have been laid out more strategically for longer-term ownership.
51. Quality of project management and supervision: Little to no hand-over between retiring/leaving staff and champions and new staff taking over at UNEP meant that the project was orphaned for the better part of a year. However, good overall management to get the project back on track from UNEP. Colorado State University was a very strong partner who virtually implemented the project; well-coordinated and much appreciated by project partners.
52. Stakeholder participation and cooperation: The project made a significant effort to bring on board partners within and outside of GEF.
53. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality: The project generally more focused on biophysical although could have included more gender aspects within its socio-economic data capture and training.
54. Environmental and social safeguards: No detailed social and environmental safeguarding conducted (although sufficient given expectation at GEF-5 phase), COVID-19 had some implications on project although project did well to adapt and in some cases had some positives (e.g. video training enhancing access to more people).
55. Country ownership and driven-ness: In all countries, championship was very strong in terms of project implementation and resultant sustaining of results.
56. Communication and public awareness: Outreach and communications was done even beyond the component on training and had quite some success, although not necessary within the GEF community (GEF and IAs).
57. Rating for Factors affecting Performance is *Satisfactory*.

Conclusions

58. The SLM-CCMC project, at the time of its development, was a highly relevant project that was a result of direct GEF STAP recommendations. This is also illustrated by the investment that GEF had made into the development of the tools over the phase of three projects. It *remains* a highly relevant project in terms of its place in the global arena of carbon monitoring, and the potential the CBP tools (and WOCAT linkage) have in general in terms of innovating further in the area of SLM and climate change. Despite this, and with a few exceptions in terms of (slowly rising demand in) uptake of some GEF implementing agencies at the project level, GEF and UNEP as institutions have not seen

the (continued) level of relevance it has in its future growth potential (and innovation potential) to advance movement to the relevant targets in the Global Agenda 2030.

59. The project was designed to enhance capacity among GEF IAs and beyond to use the tools, improve tools through synergies, linkages and complementarities through partnerships, and support users to be able to choose the most appropriate tools to monitor the carbon impacts of their specific SLM initiative. In short, move the agenda to capture the carbon sequestration impact and potential of improved agricultural and land use practices forward. Did it do this? The short answer is yes. Would similar results would have been achieved had the project not existed? No. The project certainly had an important place in the overall Theory of Change to move more initiatives into tracking their carbon impacts to the global climate change mitigation agenda.
60. The project overachieved in some of its outputs (particularly the training and the linkages with WOCAT), and achieved what was set out in design (although with some minor limitations to results sustainability at country-level). The project did excellently in fostering the partnerships, meeting rising demand, and as a result was able to conduct a large set of training events that in many cases led to further uptake and demand (and further training outside of the project) of the tools. The partnerships gained through this additional training brought in additional co-financing and had reach beyond the project. The other result the project excelled in is the fostering of the partnership through the linked tools of CSU and WOCAT which has laid a foundation of mutual benefit and growth in the tools, and has raised demand for both sets of tools as a result.
61. In terms of the Theory of Change, together, Outcomes 1 and 2 of the project (i.e. that training and the linked toolset) have certainly helped to grow the number of SLM project managers to use tools, but the commitment from GEF and GEF agencies to fund further training at this point is project by project based and not part of a longer term strategy. Within the UNCCD, however, there is potential through existing partnership with WOCAT and through existing discussions on collaborative efforts with CSU and WOCAT. It is clear that partnership and opportunity are growing through the interlinkages of the toolsets.
62. Partnerships, and championship, are strong factors in the results achievement (through the championship particularly of the project coordinator at CSU), and in terms of moving forward (partnerships to be fostered, and championship at the institutional level, which is there in the implementation partners CSU and WOCAT).
63. The likelihood of impact being achieved is a question of time and how the CBP and WOCAT tools can contribute to a more rapid pathway to impact. Based on the current trajectory, carbon monitoring in SLM projects will become the new normal. How quickly this happens will depend on how much GEF and IAs institutionally support, through partnerships, tools like CBP to move this agenda forward. The potential for CBP and WOCAT to be interlinked with more tools and opportunities, and the potential for innovation and broader uptake, is strong. At the moment, partnerships are growing, demand is growing, and the achieving impact is likely even without the institutional backing from GEF and UNEP. But the impact will be achieved at a greater speed and with higher levels of meeting demand for the use of the tools (and with more room opening up to allow CSU and WOCAT to focus on innovation).
64. The implementation of the project provided a few lessons to UNEP particularly in terms of its internal agreements and operations, its partnership arrangements (agreements), how the institution handles hand over of projects and suppositories of documentation

and institutional memory in terms how and why projects are placed under the leadership of certain divisions. There is a learning process in the lag time where the project was essentially “orphaned” within UNEP for a period of time in 2017/2018 until it was picked up and moved forward relatively successfully to its ultimate achievement (including the fortunate situation where the CSU partner was so engaged that the project carried on without much UNEP guidance).

65. Overall, the key achievements of the project include its results framework achievement, the strengthened partnerships, the improvement and linkages of the tools, the increasing resultant demand due to training and outreach for the use of the linked toolset, and the significant contribution it made to advancing the carbon monitoring agenda globally.

66. Overall, the project demonstrates a rating of **Satisfactory**.

Lessons Learned

67. The project, through a lessons learnt report that was co-written by the EA and partner CSU, reviewed by the IA, has already drawn out four lessons from the project (See Annex 9 for the lessons summarised from this report). This evaluation agrees with these, and will not repeat them here, other than building further on these (specifically related indirectly to the Lesson 1 – Maximising the linked toolset, and Lesson 2 – Training in the new normal).

68. The following lessons are a result of intensive discussions with project partners, extensive reviews of the project documentation (and further documentation including pre-project and relevant strategies and documents within this thematic area), combined with the evaluators expertise and experience in the area of global transformation (within climate change using sustainable land management as a driver). They are meant to be useful for future project design and implementation (GEF/UN Environment, in the three main areas: LD, CC), as well as useful for project partners in their continued work in GHG monitoring tool development and innovation.

Lesson 1: Moving from capacity development to behaviour change is important when designing and implementing training – key aspects include (a) the intention of the training, including whether it is demand-led and using practical application approaches, (b) using professionals in learning theory, (c) making the best of online tools.

Lesson 2: Strong partnerships and collaboration are worth the effort and highly rewards to developers and users, as was laid out by the partnership between CSU (CBP) and WOCAT.

Lesson 3: Institutional championship and individual championship alignment is important (specifically within UNEP).

Lesson 4: Management and communication in implementation of projects is vital.

Recommendations

69. The following recommendations are intended to enhance cooperation, sustaining of project results, and support a fast-tracked pathway towards the TOC impact.

Recommendation 1: Project partners to continue strengthening partnerships established during the project.

Recommendation 2: UNEP to develop a communication strategy to increase the visibility of the CBP and WOCAT tool within UNEP, among GEF Implementation Agencies and with other key collaborating partners.

Recommendation 3: GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit should carry out a simple internal review to check that all its ongoing projects on SLM include a focus on gender-disaggregated impacts. The lesson learning potential inherent in this exercise should be maximised.

Recommendation 4: UNEP to develop and institutionalise effective hand over mechanisms to support staff turn-over and to strengthen the institutionalisation of project memory and documentation (including the use of the centralised repository).

Recommendation 5: UNEP to develop internal communications and information exchange strategies at Sub-programme levels and incorporate them in the Programme of Work.

Recommendation 6: Any agreements signed with partners on project implementation should comply with UNEP regulations and policies, and should include substantive and transparent financial and technical report.

INTRODUCTION

1. There has been considerable investment from GEF in countries all around the world on sustainable land management projects that are directly supporting climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration and carbon stocks. While the climate change benefits are likely to be substantial, these are not fully captured, mostly because of limited access and application of suitable quantification tools to assess the carbon benefits, as well as lack of well-documented and harmonized datasets on good SLM practices.
2. The project **Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change Co-benefits (SLM-CCMC) (GEF ID 5698)** was designed to take a targeted approach to monitoring the climate change mitigation co-benefits of GEF projects through capacity-building and outreach, as well as through analysis and guidance of the wide range of tools available.
3. The project rationale was that in able to effectively capture the benefits, one has to (a) recognize, monitor and report the benefits of different practices in different situations, (b) have access to state-of-the-art carbon-accounting and SLM tools and (c) be guided on how best to select the most appropriate tool to meet the specific objectives of any project or intervention.
4. The project was a Medium-sized Project with GEF contributions coming through the Land Degradation Focal Area GEF Trust Fund Account to UNEP as the GEF Implementing Agency, through the UNEP Ecosystems Division (then the Division for Environmental Policy Implementation, DEPI). The project aligns with the Sub-Programmes SP1 (Climate Change), SP2 (Healthy and Productive Ecosystems) and SP3 (Environment under Review). The project was executed by the Division of Science, UNEP (then the Division of Early Warning Systems, DEWA) in partnership with the Colorado State University.
5. The GEF CEO formally approved the project on 28 October 2015. The UNEP Project Approval Group (PAG) Decision Sheet was signed on 11 January 2016. The UNEP Project Action Sheet, which constitutes the authority from UNEP to the Budget and Financial Management Service (BFMS) to effect disbursement and thus implementation of the project was signed on 2 June 2016.
6. The project officially started implementation 11 August 2016 and had its technical completion 28 February 2021 (4 years, 7 months), after undergoing two no-cost extensions (Planned end date: 8 December 2019; 1st Extension: 8 August 2020; 2nd Extension: 28 February 2021).
7. The project is a third in a phase of GEF-funded projects. The first project was the GEFSOC Project (2002-2005), the second was the Carbon Benefits Project (CBP) (2009-2013), and the third being this one SLM-CCMC (2016-2021). This project was also developed in relation to the GEF STAP evaluation meeting that was held after the CBP which provided recommendations as to what should be the next steps. The project was aligned to various other projects in that it contributed to support through training, e.g. the CBP and WOCAT trainings provided to the FAO CACILM II Project, UNCCD online, and other affiliated projects. The project included four case studies integrated into four separate GEF projects in Ecuador, Ethiopia, Kenya and South Africa.
8. The project budget was USD 3,366,312 of which USD 1,804,800 was the GEF allocation, and USD 1,561,512 was planned (in-kind) co-financing allocation from project partners.

9. In line with UNEP Evaluation Policy and the UNEP Programme Manual, as well as the updated guidance⁷ for evaluators (developed by the Evaluation Office), the Terminal Evaluation of the SLM-CCMC Project was undertaken to assess performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. As per the TOR, the evaluation has two primary purposes:
 - i. To provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and
 - ii. To promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and its project partners (including Colorado State University, World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies).
10. The evaluation, which is encompassed in this report, identifies lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation, and also for the future planning, evolution and uptake of the project-related tools in general.
11. The main Target audiences for the evaluation findings are:
 - GEF, for future programming and synergy (as per use of tools for project development)
 - UNEP, as the main custodian of the environment under the ONE UN and the science-policy interface in this regard, which includes, *inter alia*, the Ecosystems and Science Divisions;
 - The Project Technical Steering Committee;
 - The Colorado State University (CSU), as the university hosting the tools and as co-executing agency to the project;
 - The World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT) and its consortium, as well as LandPKS, and other partners who were involved;
 - Project managers and partners involved in the four GEF-projects;
 - The World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and all other GEF Implementing Agencies of GEF;
 - The United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification and Drought Secretariat and Country Focal Points (UNCCD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat and Country Focal Points.

⁷ Most of which was updated in 2020.

EVALUATION METHODS

12. The evaluation was conducted by an independent consultant (herein after referred to as the 'evaluator'). The evaluation took place between April and August 2021 under the management of the Evaluation Office of UNEP, based in Nairobi.
13. The evaluation employed a participatory approach with the UNEP Task Manager and the key project partners (UNEP Ecosystems and Science Divisions, and CSU) were kept informed of progress throughout the evaluation; other project stakeholders are provided with an opportunity to comment on the evaluation findings in the draft Terminal Evaluation Report.
14. In line with UNEP Evaluation Guidelines, the project was assessed with respect to a minimum set of evaluation criteria grouped into the following 9 categories: Strategic Relevance, Quality of Project Design, Nature of External Context, Effectiveness (availability of outputs, achievement of project outcomes and likelihood of impact), Financial Management, Efficiency, Monitoring and Reporting, Sustainability and the Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-cutting Issues.
15. The quality at project design was assessed during the Inception Phase of the Evaluation and can be found in the Inception Evaluation Report, available from the UNEP Evaluation Office.
16. As per UNEP guidance, the evaluation ratings are on a six point scale.⁸⁸
17. A Theory of Change was reconstructed during the Inception Phase of the Evaluation (as there was none developed during project design) based on an extensive desktop review of all project documentation, and initial interviews with key project partners. This Theory of Change was then presented and discussed with project partners involved in the evaluation, inputs and suggestions for improvement were sought, and the revised version can be found in section IV of this report.
18. The strategic questions for the evaluation related to project-outcome level, as adapted from the evaluation Terms of Reference (TOR) were:
 - a. To what extent has the project achieved the enhancement of capacity of GEF project managers and selected GEF agency personnel to monitor carbon and climate co-benefits from SLM projects (Outcome 1)?
 - b. To what extent are SLM projects using combined tool sets to identify appropriate carbon friendly practices? What is the added value of the linkage between the CBP tools and the WOCAT Questionnaire on SLM Technologies for (a) GEF projects, (b) other projects, (c) stakeholder groups at different scales, and how is it perceived (Outcome 2)?

⁸⁸ Most criteria are rated against the following points on the scale: Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU); Nature of External Context is rated from Highly Favourable (HF) down to Highly Unfavourable (HU); Sustainability and Likelihood of Impact are rated from Highly Likely (HL) down to Highly Unlikely (HU).

- c. To what extent have GEF and other SLM project managers enhanced their understanding of the wide range of tools available – are they able to choose which ones suit their needs (Outcome 3)?
 - d. To what extent has the project allowed for effective mainstreaming of carbon monitoring into the greater programmatic implementation of GEF projects and more widely beyond GEF, in general, the Global Agenda 2030) (Likelihood of Impact)?
 - e. What is the contribution of this project for the common aims of the UNCCD (and UNFCCC) to identify and promote best practices for the maintenance and buildup of soil organic matter (which contributes to land degradation neutrality and carbon sequestration), and biomass carbon changes and changes in GHG gases (Relevance)?
 - f. What adjustments, if any, were made to the project as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to what extent did the adjustments allow the project to effectively respond to the new priorities that emerged in relation to COVID-19? How did the adjustments affect the achievement of the project's expected results? (Risk – under Factors affecting Project Performance)?
19. The evaluator developed an evaluation matrix (found in Annex B of the Evaluation Inception Report) which consisted of an extended set of questions based on the above strategic considerations as well as the evaluation criteria set out in the TOR.
20. A combination of methods and tools were applied during the evaluation to collect information necessary to answer all evaluation questions in an evidence-based manner. These can be found below:
- a. Inception Stage and Document Review: This included planning of the evaluation, development of the questions, reconstruction of the Theory of Change. For the Project Design Review (which is a part of the Inception Process) all project design documentation was reviewed. The IA (Ecosystems Division), the EA (Science Division) and partner EA (Colorado State University) provided the majority of documentation during the Inception Stage and thus the evaluator undertook a thorough review of all project-related documents received. The evaluator complemented these with links, additional documentation (e.g. strategic documents, global reports, etc). The full list of documents can be found in Annex 4. The inception stage also included a few key interviews with the IA and the two EA partners. The Inception Report was developed, and included the evaluation matrix (included in Annex B of the Inception Report). At Inception stage and in consultation with the Evaluation Office, it was decided to **not conduct a country/field mission**, for two main reasons: (1) COVID-19 restrictions and safety in terms of travel, and (b) the nature of the project being a global project (with test cases whose visits would not have added significant benefit to the evaluation due to the online tool use).
 - b. Stakeholder Interviews and Email Exchanges: The evaluator conducted a series of semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders. These interviews were conducted

on Zoom Professional⁹ of which the majority was done using video unless internet bandwidth limitations necessitated the use of audio only. The selection of stakeholders to be interviewed was made by the evaluator, in agreement with the EAs and the IA. During the inception stage, the EA delivered a list of 26 stakeholders, to which the evaluator added nine in consultation with the Evaluation Office, and as a result of further recommendations during the first interviews with key project partners. A list of stakeholders is provided in Annex 2. Of the 36 stakeholders, 32 were sent interview requests via email and four (the GEF National Focal Points for the GEF Case Study Projects) were sent individual emails with a set of strategic questions. In total, 30 Zoom interviews were held (ranging from 30 minutes to 2 hours each), with some key people being interviewed more than once (usually for follow-up on specific aspects and part of validation of data as per (d) below). Of the 36 stakeholders, two requested questions to be sent via email instead (of which responses were received) and 15 were not interviewed because they either declined (four) or did not respond (13, all were sent three reminder emails spaced two weeks apart). All interviews conducted were bi-lateral and treated confidentially. In cases where the interviewer did not follow up with a second interview, further email communication took place with a small number of stakeholders (eight) to verify and/or to request updates on certain items for the evaluation (part of validation of data under (d) below).

- c. Personalised email questionnaires to training recipients of Component 1: A selection of stakeholders ¹⁰who took part in the training events held as part of Component 1 of the project were sent individualised email questionnaires (with no more than three questions per person)¹¹. In each email, respondents were given the option to not respond, and it was made clear that all responses are anonymous. The questionnaire emails were sent out to: (a) 13 participants of the IFAD Rome 2017 Training Event (1 response, 3 no response, 9 emails bounced back), (b) 30 participants of the training workshops 2017 and 2018 “Foundations in Greenhouse Gas Accounting for Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Uses” in Ethiopia (6 responses, 24 no response), (c) 11 participants who attended the online training event hosted at the Science Division in Nairobi 2019 (2 responses, 9 no response), (d) 17 participants who took part in the training in Quito 2017 (17 no response).
- d. Validation of data: Once the data was gathered through the document review (a), interviews and emails (b) and questionnaires (c), this was organized according to the criteria and evaluations questions as laid out in the matrix. Where data from the three areas of collection demonstrated complementarity, these were used directly in the

⁹ A video conferencing and meeting platform under a Professional Subscription, <https://zoom.us/>

¹⁰ Gender selection of stakeholders at TE: The project itself attempted to have gender equality in the training, although it was not always in the project's direct control (at country level, while requests were made to be gender equal, selection was still made according to partner). The evaluator selected key trainings and sent out emails to the entire list of attendees. Of the lists of attendees, female/male ratios were <40%.

¹¹ Sample questions which were contextualised per individual and their professional role: (a) You were working in xxx at the time of the training, did the tools apply to your work? (b) Have you had use of the tools since you completed the training, if yes, how have you used them? (c) Would you have any feedback on the tools and the training that you might want to share now in reflection?

findings. In the cases where information did not coincide, additional interviews with relevant stakeholders (either (i) through direct follow up with the project team or core partner, or (ii) through triangulation with other stakeholders and written sources.

- e. Preliminary Findings: The evaluator developed the preliminary findings draft note and discussed these in individual interviews with the IA and EAs before submitting to the evaluation manager at the Evaluation Office, who subsequently shared the note with the key partners (IA and EAs) for comment.
 - f. Development of Terminal Evaluation Report: The evaluator developed a draft TE report and submitted it (1st) to the evaluation manager at the Evaluation Office, who reviewed it and shared it with (2nd) the IA and EAs, after which the evaluator responded and/or revised the draft for the evaluation manager to finally (3rd) share it with project stakeholders for comment. Comments were shared with the evaluator for response and/or revision for finalisation of the Terminal Evaluation Report. An evaluation bulletin/brief was developed at the final stage of the evaluation reporting process.
21. The evaluation encountered a few limitations: (a) a key project partner, the World Bank project partner who was responsible for Component 3 of the project declined to be part of the evaluation¹² which meant that the insights from a key partner could not be included (especially on a key reflection on the intention of the key output by the evaluator which is further discussed in the Effectiveness section of this report) and some financial management aspects could not be effectively delivered by the evaluator; (b) some stakeholders did not respond to interview requests (of which 2 were possibly key informants, including the World Bank partner, as well as the former Project Manager at the Science Division), and (c) low response rate from participants who were part of the training has an influence on how the training is viewed in terms of the impact it may/may not have made on participant use.
22. This evaluation was bound to the Ethical Code of Conduct as per the UNEP Evaluation policy, which includes the following key factors: (a) all interviews and information were provided in confidence and anonymously and no information can be traced back to a direct source/individual, (b) those involved in the evaluation have had the opportunity to review the evaluation findings as well as the main evaluation report, (c) the evaluator was sure to have empathy and sensitivity to different contexts and cultures in which stakeholders work. Because the project was global and science-based (carbon monitoring), there was no direct connection with marginalised or disadvantaged groups (other than the work done by the GEF case projects in which this project did not have control). The evaluator reviewed the adaptations to the socio-economic indicators of the monitoring tools to evaluate how gender-disaggregated data was effectively included based on the country work done.

¹² The World Bank representative was contacted several times and declined the opportunity to provide further information or to comment on specific questions because the representative felt that (a) the World Bank component work had been completed in 2018 and many colleagues had already moved on, (b) the outputs had been shared, reviewed by UNEP and partners, and finalised and publicly disclosed, and (c) UNEP/CSU could adequately represent the project team.

THE PROJECT

Context

23. Emissions from greenhouse gases (GHGs) from agriculture, land use, land use change, and forestry account for roughly 33% of all global GHG emissions, stemming predominantly from unsustainable land (over)use practices. As a result, it is widely acknowledged that the way in which land is used and managed by humans has a major role to play in the mitigation of global climate change.
24. When land is managed sustainably, not only are GHG emissions reduced (through the reduction of biomass burning, biomass decomposition and the breakdown of soil organic matter), but carbon is actually sequestered (through practices that increase biomass production and promote the build-up of soil organic matter).
25. The substantial climate change co-benefits associated with sustainable land management activities have been known for a long time, and GEF has been interested in the monitoring of this in the context that it has been investing in SLM projects while also having the mandate of supporting climate change mitigation.
26. A small group of scholars at Reading University and Colorado State University had been involved in development of (at the time more rudimentary, ecosystem-level) tools in the 1980s, which were undergoing evolution as agri-systems were slowly being integrated during the 1990s. The first project, the GEFSOC project (2002-2005), was a result of the request by GEF to UNEP to develop a set of tools to assess soil organic carbon stocks and changes at the national, sub-national, and regional scales, and worked in Brazil, India, Kenya and Jordan, through the Reading University. At this time, three main institutions were implementing for GEF, with their core missions separated as (a) UNEP – science/STAP, (b) UNDP – capacity building, and (c) World Bank – investment. So naturally, UNEP as the custodian for the environment and in charge of scientific integrity and publications of important reports like the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Report, was the obvious institution to implement any tools that deal with scientific monitoring of environmental change.
27. During the end of the GEFSOC project, land degradation officially became a focal area of GEF. The need to quantify carbon sequestration in SLM projects were becoming more and more relevant. This need coupled with the foundations laid in the GEFSOC project, resulted in the development and implementation of the Carbon Benefits Project (2009-2013) which aimed to develop a more standardized, readily-accessible and cost-effective tool that would be applicable (both an *ex-ante* or *ex-post* basis) for the quantification of the full range of carbon benefits that can be derived from SLM project activities, and was tested in project sites (to provide ground-truthing) in China, Brazil, Kenya and Niger/Nigeria. At the end of this project, the GEF STAP hosted an evaluation workshop, which, along with recommendations from the Terminal Evaluation of the project, suggested that a follow-on phase was necessary to create outreach and capacity-building activities among the GEF implementing agencies and other key SLM players. At the time, there were also many training requests coming in, and a rising demand for the use of the CBP tools.
28. These projects were not working in isolation, and during the lifespan of the two projects, other similar tools were being developed. In addition, the GEF implementing agencies UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank were joined by several other organisations. The Food

and Agriculture Organisation, which was smaller and relatively insignificant in terms of sustainable land management and GEF funding access in the early 2000s¹³, grew into the much larger, more significant organisation it is today, taking on the mandate of SLM in a broader sense (and as a GEF implementing agency) and were starting to gain momentum with their EX-Ante Carbon Balance Tool (EX-ACT). By the time the SLM-CCMC project was in development, the World Bank had developed a concept note proposal to conduct a tool comparison between the different tools that were being developed (which included CBP, EX-ACT, among others) to allow users the ability to best choose which suits their particular needs most.

29. As a result the GEF recommended the integration of this concept note into the SLM-CCMC project (which formed Component 3), and thus the SLM-CCMC project became a project that aimed to make it easier for project managers to realise the co-benefits of their SLM interventions, through (a) providing training and outreach for the CBP tools, (b) enhancing tools and creating partnerships of different tools to make reporting easier, and (c) conducting comparative analysis of carbon accounting tools to allow users to understand the tools available and which might fit their needs.
30. For the training and outreach, the project aimed to work with country case studies (GEF projects that were already conducting SLM interventions and were needing to know the climate co-benefits of these interventions). These are outlined in the next section but included Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Ecuador and Peru, and Brazil¹⁴.

Objectives and components

31. The Project Objective was *“create an environment which will make it easier for land management project managers to realise the climate co-benefits of sustainable land management practices”*.
32. The project was organized under three components, each of which was associated with an outcome. These are stated below in Table 2.

Table 2. SLM-CCMC Outcomes and Outputs as per approved Project Document

Component	Stated Project Outcomes	Outputs
Training and outreach for existing tools	Enhanced capacity to measure, monitor and model carbon benefits from GEF land management projects using the CBP/WOCAT tools in several GEF agencies and for GEF project personnel.	<p>1.1. Assessments of climate benefits made using Simple and Detailed Assessments for GEF and non-GEF projects involved in training sessions.</p> <p>1.2. Documentation of good/best practices land management practices in terms of climate benefits.</p>

¹³ According to GEF and other project partners, although some disagreement around its size and significance exists among partners interviewed.

¹⁴ The Project in Brazil was finally not included because it had ended before the SLM-CCMC project had started.

Component	Stated Project Outcomes	Outputs
		<p>1.3. In depth implementation of the CBP's Simple or Detailed Assessment in 5 GEF projects with the on-going support of the SLM-CCMC.</p> <p>1.4. Project managers trained to document good/best land management practices, linked to CBP assessment for 5 GEF projects.</p>
Enhancement of existing tools	SLM and NRM projects using the combined tool set to identify appropriate carbon friendly practices, track and report them once implemented and engage with climate finance schemes where appropriate.	<p>2.1. An enhanced toolset with increased efficacy in terms of spatial data and accessibility as well as direct relevance to specific finance/certification schemes.</p> <p>2.2. An interlink between CBP and WOCAT tools.</p> <p>2.3. A reporting database for UNEP GEF staff to use to access, store and analyse reports generated by the CBP system.</p>
Comparative analysis of carbon accounting tools for SLM	GEF and other managers of SLM projects have enhanced understanding of the wide range of tools available (outside of and including the CBP tools) and their application contexts.	<p>3.1. A guidance manual for GEF and other managers of SLM projects for choosing the most appropriate tools to measure carbon benefits and guidance note.</p> <p>3.2. An e-learning module to facilitate peer learning amongst GEF managers and global knowledge sharing amongst natural resource managers.</p>

Table 3. Country projects selected as part of Outcome 1

<p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <p>The Community-Based Integrated Natural Resources Management Project (CBINReMP) in Ethiopia. GEF Agency: IFAD GEF Project ID: 3367 Project ended. Here-in after referred to as the "Ethiopia Project"</p>
<u>Ecuador and Peru</u>

<p>Multiplying Environmental and Carbon Benefits in High Andean Ecosystems and its correspondence.</p> <p>GEF Agency: UNEP GEF Project ID: GFL-5060-2711-4C61</p> <p>Project ended.</p> <p>Here-in after referred to as the “ECOANDES Project”</p>
<p><u>Kenya</u></p> <p>Scaling up Sustainable Land Management and Agrobiodiversity Conservation to Reduction Environmental Degradation in Small Scale Agriculture in Western Kenya.</p> <p>GEF Agency: UNEP GEF Project ID: 5272</p> <p>Project finalizing.</p> <p>Here-in after referred to as the “Kenya Project”</p>
<p><u>South Africa</u></p> <p>Securing Multiple Ecosystems Benefit through SLM in the Productive but Degraded Landscapes of South Africa.</p> <p>GEF Agency: UNDP GEF Project ID: 5327</p> <p>Project finalizing.</p> <p>Here-in after referred to as the “South Africa Project”</p>
<p><u>Brazil</u>: NOTE: this Project ultimately was not included as a test case, because it had already finished implementation before the SLM CCMC project began.</p> <p>Rio Grande do Sul Biodiversity.</p> <p>GEF Agency: World Bank GEF Project ID: P086341-SPN-TF018171</p>

Stakeholders

33. The main stakeholder groups of the project were:

- GEF, as the key funding entity requesting the initial development of the tools, and GEF implementing agencies (most notably, UNEP, World Bank, UNDP and IFAD)¹⁵, which are the entities formulating and implementing projects under the GEF.
- UNCCD, which was a key supporting partner and a training recipient of the tools, as well as the key body overseeing global and national-level SLM toward land degradation neutrality under the Global Agenda 2030.
- GEF project managers of the specific case projects under the project, who were testing the methodologies, as well as those in addition, trained to conduct assessments.
- GEF and non-GEF recipients of training and tool users, this included people from NGOs, government ministries, academics and the private sector.
- The key project partners in charge of delivering the carbon monitoring tools (a.k.a the scientific institutions).

¹⁵ Which were the entities trained and running projects using the tools under the SLM-CCMC.

34. Stakeholder involvement and communication channels were further analysed during the evaluation, particularly in terms of sustaining the maintenance, evolution, uptake and further use of the tools. These are further discussed in the evaluation findings.
35. While the project did make an effort to disaggregate gender and allow for effective participation of women in the training, the nature of the project (mostly biophysical) did not allow for the project to have a direct influence on gender equality, *per se* at least in terms of the key stakeholder groups. In terms of the use of the tools and the capture of the data, the evaluator will elaborate further on gender integration and equality in the Findings of the evaluation report.
36. Figure 1 provides a mapping of the main stakeholder groups associated with the planned project deliverables and extension, using a power/ interest grid leading to a classification of stakeholders by the following types: *Type A*: High power/high interest (Key Player), *Type B*: High Power/Low Interest over the project (Meet their needs), *Type C*: Low power/high interest over the project (Show consideration), *Type D*: Low power/low interest over the project (Least important). The focus in this matrix is on delivery of the project outputs rather than achievement of higher level outcomes and impact. The relative 'power' of stakeholders shifts at higher levels in the results chain (see Theory of Change Section 4), and the evaluation report provides inputs in this regard.

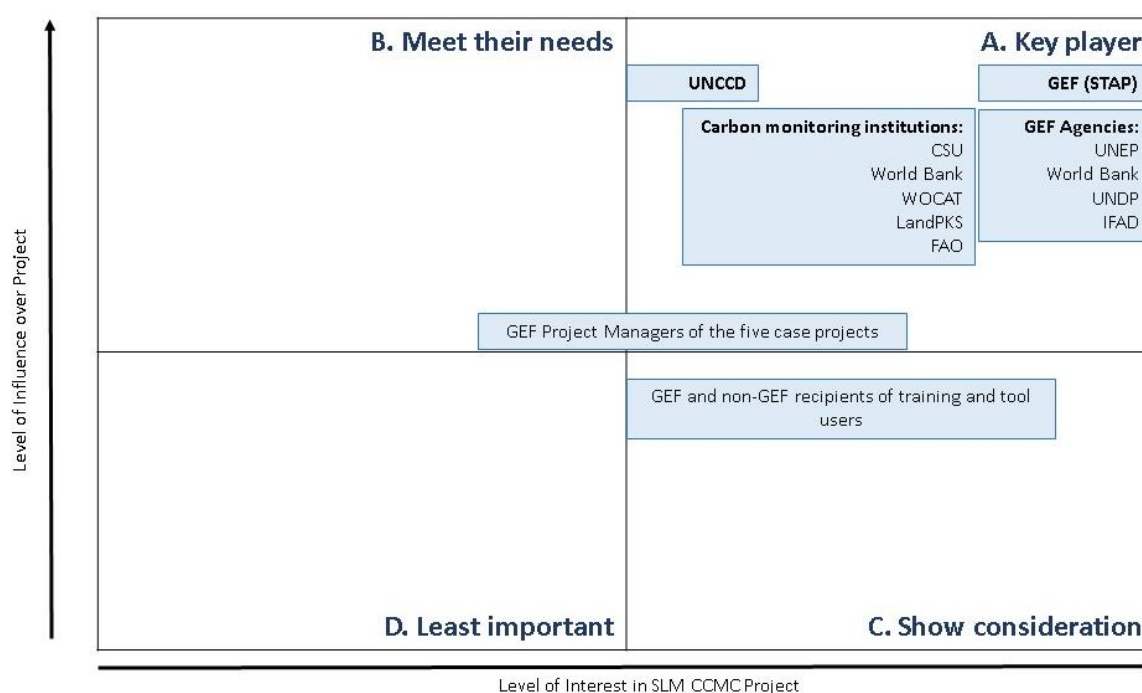


Figure 1. Overview of Project Stakeholders of the SLM-CCMC project using power interest grid

Project implementation structure and partners

37. The governance structure of the project was as follows (and can be found illustrated in Figure 3):

- i. UNEP Ecosystems Division (formerly Division of Environmental Policy Implementation, DEPI) was the **Implementing Agency** for the project. Thus, it was

responsible for coordinating activities, monitoring the implementation of UNEP's standard monitoring and reporting procedures, and transmitting financial and progress reports to the GEF.

- ii. UNEP Science Division (formerly Division of Early Warning and Assessment) was the key **Executing Agency**. The role of the Science Division was outlined through an Internal Cooperation Agreement with the Ecosystems Division (the implementing agency). The Science Division was to take responsibility for the execution of the project and its delivery through a Project Manager.
- iii. The project also had two **Partner Executing Agencies**:
 - a. **Colorado State University**, who was predominantly in charge of Components 1 and 2, but took on a co-executing role for the entire project in partnership with the Science Division (as is laid out in the Project Cooperation Agreement¹⁶ where the Science Division effectively mandated CSU as the “executing agency” for the project). A Project Manager was responsible for the project delivery on behalf of the CSU. The World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT) partnered with CSU through a sub-award agreement (with the University of Bern, which houses WOCAT), and was supposed to work with CSU on various outputs under Component 1 and 2 of the project.¹⁷
 - b. **World Bank**, whose sole responsibility was the delivery of Component 3 of the project, through an Externally Financed Output Agreement with the Science Division. In project design, the Research Institute for Development (IRD) was planned to be sub-contracted to conduct this activity; but during implementation FAO took on this role (because the key personnel in IRD moved to FAO).¹⁸
- iv. The project had a **Project Steering Committee**, which was responsible for overseeing and contributing to the successful delivery of the Project and comprised of the project key persons of the IA, the EA, CSU, World Bank, WOCAT, and a senior member of each GEF country case project.

¹⁶ Which effectively uses same wording as the Internal Agreement between the IA (Ecosystems Division) and the EA (Science Division) but as if DEWA was the IA and CSU was the EA.

¹⁷ Component 1: 1.1. Take part in selected training workshops to provide training on use of WOCAT tools; 1.2. Work with CSU to provide some support to the GEF test case projects and help them use the WOCAT tools; 1.3. Use the output from 1.1. and 1.2. to add to the WOCAT database of best SLM practices. Component 2: 1. Work with CSU to develop user-friendly interface between the SLM technology database of WOCAT and the CBP tools (Simple/Detailed Assessment) and adjust the tools to minimize overlap of data acquisition and maximise synergies; 2. Work with CSU programmers to help develop a link between the CBP Simple/Detailed Assessment for specified management practices in selection of areas and generate estimated GHG impacts; 3. Provide database information to expand list of pre-populated options of cropping, grassland and forest land systems in the CBP Simple Assessment; 4. Work with CSU to develop a specific Carbon Benefit module linked to WOCAT database to collect additional information needed for the Detailed Assessment; 5. Work with CSU to use and further populate WOCAT SLM technology online database to make predictions of above and below ground carbon stock changes, using data from the GEF case study projects and WOCAT projects in Ethiopia and Tajikistan; 6. Provide information to CSU to allow addition of a section in CBP guidance module on location, appropriate carbon friendly practices and carbon impacts.

¹⁸ This is further elaborated under E. Changes in Implementation, see also paragraph 40..

- v. For the GEF country case projects, the project manager of each individual GEF project executing agency worked closely with the Project Manager at CSU to support the delivery of the in-depth assessments under Component 1 of the project. The roles of each project manager were outlined through Service Agreements between CSU and the executing agencies for the individual projects. For Ecuador and Peru: Consortium for Sustainable Development of the Andean EcoRegion (CONDESAN); For South Africa: UNDP (the implementing agency); For Kenya: Kenya Agriculture and Livestock Research Organisation (KALRO); For Ethiopia: Amhara National Regional State, Bureau of Agriculture.

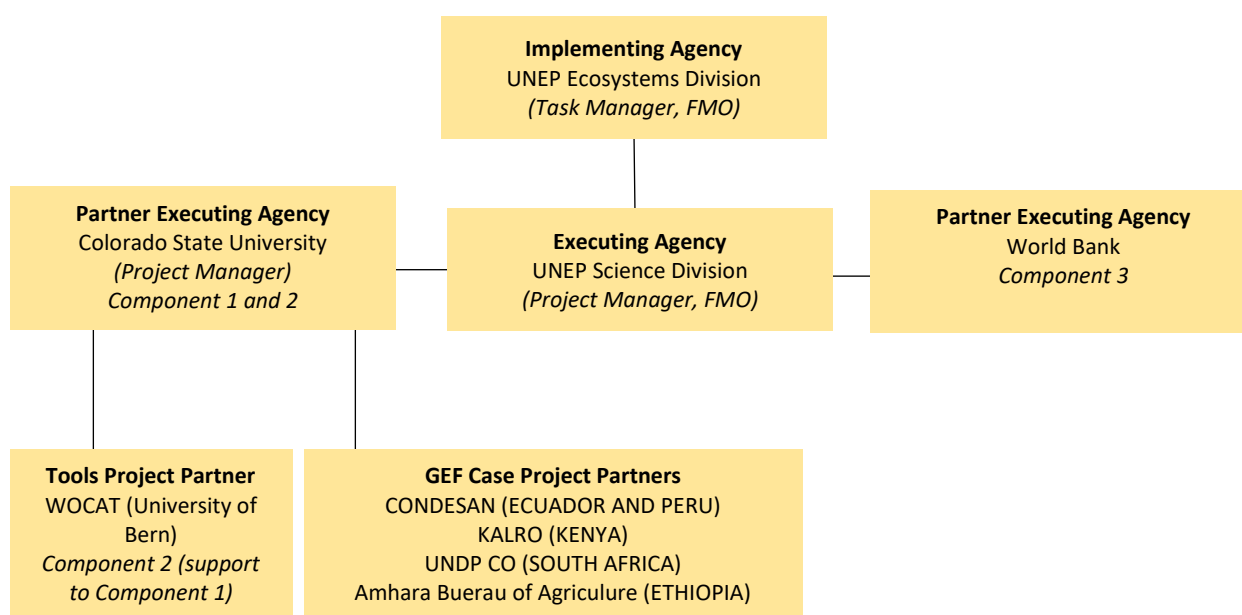


Figure 2. Simple Organigram illustrating Implementation and Governance Structure of the SLM-CCMC Project

Changes in design during implementation

38. A few changes took place during implementation of the project that warrant elaboration, these are broken up below into *output-level changes*, *partners*, and *extensions*.

39. *Output level changes:*

- a. *Four GEF country case projects instead of five as planned:* due to the delay in the project start of the SLM-CCMC, there was a mis-match in the timing with the GEF country case projects, resulting in one of the projects (the World Bank Brazil project) already having been completed by the time the SLM-CCMC started. There was an effort made to find another World Bank GEF project to work with (to have the initial IA diversity that was sought after at project design), but this effort was not successful.¹⁹

¹⁹ Interviews with project team.

- b. *Some of the training under Component 1 had to go online due to COVID-19 restrictions.* Due to COVID-19, some of the training events (notably two) were moved to online platforms in 2020.
40. *Partners:* In the project document, it was planned that IRD was to support the execution of Outputs 3.1 and 3.2 under Component 3 under the World Bank. This role was handed over to the FAO during the project, most notably because the contact person who was at IRD during project design, had moved to FAO during project implementation.
41. *Project extensions:* Two no-cost extensions were approved for the project, (i) a no-cost extension for a total of 8 months until 31 August 2020 (as per 1st amendment of the ICA between the IA and the EA), and (ii) a no-cost extension for 12 months until 31 August 2021 with technical completion date 28 February 2021²⁰ (as per 2nd amendment of the ICA between the IA and the EA).

Project financing

42. The total project budget at approval was USD 3,357,768, of which the GEF allocation was USD 1,658,300, with planned (in-kind) co-financing of USD 1,561,512.²¹
43. Total budget expenditure was USD 1,754,800²² and total co-financing realized was USD 1,528,072²³. The detailed table illustrating the actual co-financing versus planned per individual partner can be found in Annex 3.
44. The budget at design compared with expenditure is shared in Annex 3.

²⁰ There was internal budget distribution to reflect a shift of funds from the Science Division's allocation to the PCA with CSU (also being extended) to provide financial support for the extension of the existing part-time contract of the Project Manager at CSU.

²¹ Source: Project Document.

²² This figure was derived from the final expenditure statement 1 Jan 21- 31 Dec 21.

²³ Final project report.

THEORY OF CHANGE AT EVALUATION

45. The SLM CCMC project had a simplified Theory of Change (referred to as an “overview diagram” in Figure 1 of page 14 of the Project Document), which stated the move from objective through components through outcome to impact. For the purpose of informing the evaluation, the evaluator developed a reconstructed Theory of Change at Inception Stage of the evaluation process. This TOC was discussed with key stakeholders of the project and comments received were taken up, and so the TOC diagram that can be found on the next page, Figure 3 is a refined version of the one developed at Inception Stage.
46. The project objective was to **“create an environment which will make it easier for land management project managers to realise the climate change co-benefits of sustainable land management practices”**. For the purposes of the TOC, the evaluator believes that the objective is not ambitious enough given that this project is also part of an evolutionary process of tool development, and thus seems to be placed at a lower level of achievement than the outcomes. Based on the project design documentation this objective is more appropriately represented in the TOC as a driver between output 2 and 3 (and to an extent output 1) that allows for effective transition to Outcomes 2 and 3 (see Figure 2, worded as: *more streamlined, easy-access, user-friendly, supportive environment created for land management project managers*).
47. The impacts as detailed in the overview diagram in the project document were that “GEF agencies have the capacity to choose, use, and provide training on C/GHG tools” and “GEF and other SLM project managers use tools to realise and report on climate change co-benefits of SLM projects and engaging with C markets where desired”. The evaluator understands these as intermediate states, rather than longer-term impacts.
48. The evaluator has, in drafting the reconstructed Theory of Change, defined the longer-term, achievable impact, if results of the project are sustained and further catalyzed. The final impact of the TOC is thus “All (GEF) SLM projects that have climate change co-benefits are using relevant carbon monitoring tools to monitor progress towards climate change mitigation and land degradation neutrality, among which the CBP tool is recognized for its value and used widely”. This would feed into a broader impact of a larger umbrella of programmes and projects “all land under human intervention is healthy and resilient and is able to sequester carbon to its highest potential”.
49. Figure 2 describes the process and flow for the impact to be attained.
50. Analysis of the impact pathways was conducted in terms of the assumptions and drivers that underpin the processes involved in the transformation of outputs and outcomes to intermediate states to impact. The intermediate states are the transitional conditions between the project outcomes and the intended longer-lasting impact. The drivers are the significant external factors that are expected to contribute to the realization of the intended impact and which can be influenced by the project. The assumptions are the external factors that are expected to contribute to the realization of the intended impact and which are beyond the control of the project.
51. Generally, the intermediate states are a result of the increasing capacity and understanding, and access to, a harmonized and better coordinated process of carbon monitoring. The route to impact needs the strengthening and increase over time of two states, namely IS3: “GEF and GEF agencies commit funding to further training and mainstreaming to integrate carbon monitoring into SLM project design and

implementation” and IS2: “A growing number of SLM project managers (including under GEF) use tools to realize and report on cc co-benefits of SLM projects and engage with C markets where desired”.

52. The intermediate state (IS1) between the outcomes and intermediate states 2 and 3 is a result of the consolidation and strategic communication of project results and is broken down into two parts (a) “strategic communication and awareness ensure wider application of tools improved and guidance on how to apply which tools”, and (b) wider integration and partnership among tool developers. There is an assumption specific to IS1(b) that needs to be met to varying degrees for the pathway between IS1 and the two intermediate states to impact (IS2 and IS3) to be successful, and that is that *“tool developers and platform hosts find symbiosis in their relationships and want to work together to enhance synergies and cooperation”*.
53. There is an assumption between outcome 1 and IS1 that would need to be met and that is that *“enhanced understanding/capacity continues driving behaviour change toward increased application”*. There is a driver between outcome 2 and the IS2 for which the project does have control in terms of its results, and which is formulated as that *“engaging with finance schemes provides additional incentive to monitor carbon in SLM projects”*. The project aimed to support links to climate finance through its GEF country case projects – while the intended result was achieved, the success of this was variable per country with no evidence of direct climate financing coming from CBP tool use in the projects.²⁴
54. There were three project outcomes. For the purpose of the reconstruction of the Theory of Change to better understand the ambition of the project and the intended lasting results, the evaluator felt it necessary to revise the project outcomes (see Table 4).

Table 4. Revised outcomes for the purpose of the reconstruction of the TOC to guide the Terminal Evaluation of SLM-CCMC

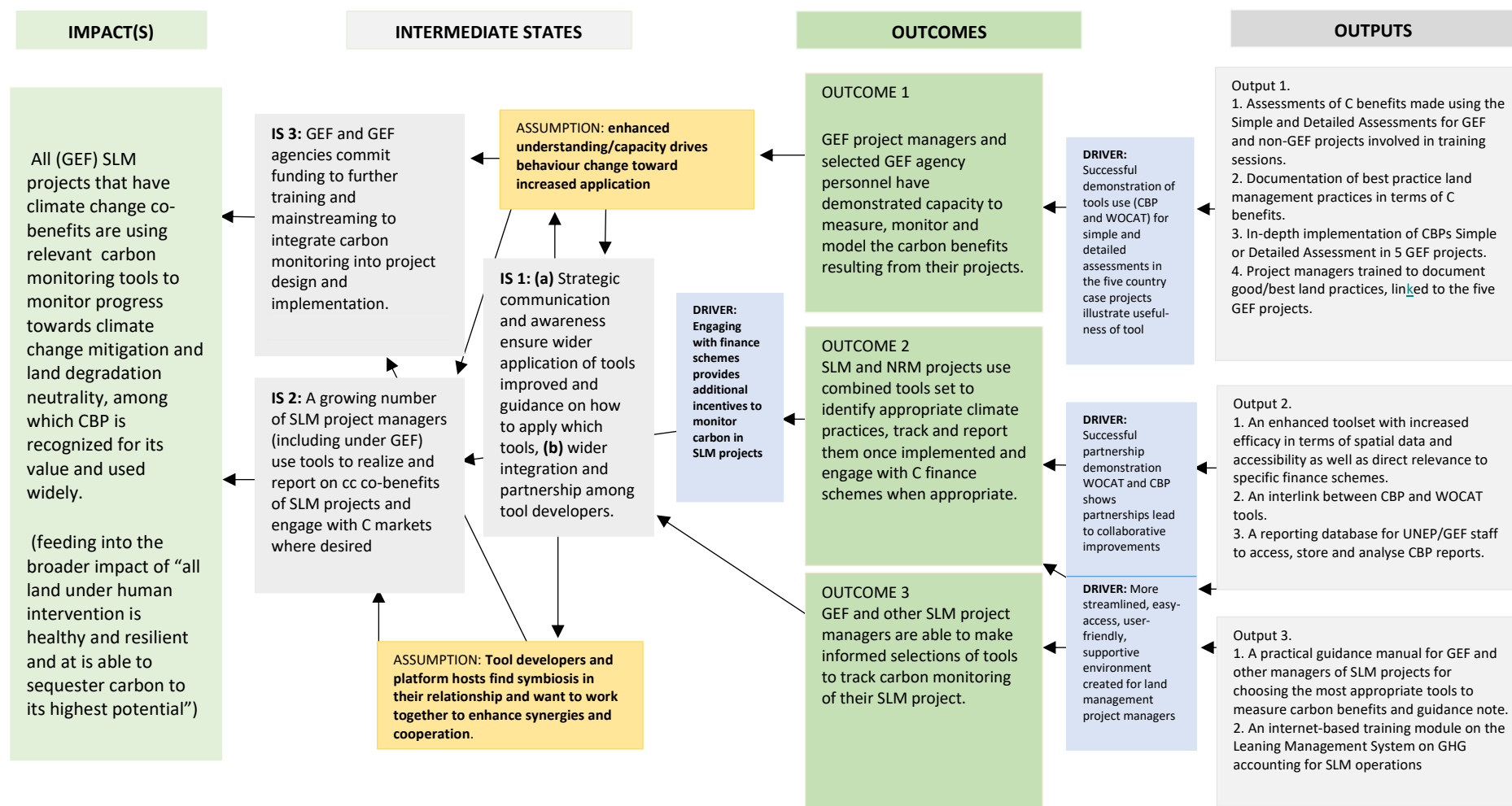
Outcome #	Project Stated Outcome	Revised Outcome for TOC	Justification for revision
Outcome 1	Enhanced capacity of GEF Project managers and selected GEF Agency personnel to measure, monitor and model carbon benefits resulting from GEF agencies and GEF.	GEF project managers and selected GEF agency personnel have demonstrated capacity to measure, monitor and model the carbon benefits resulting from their projects.	Enhanced capacity is difficult to measure and does not mean action. Demonstrated capacity signifies action based on project results – and also includes the application of what has been learned (e.g. through the GEF project case pilots).
Outcome 2	SLM and NRM projects using combined tool set to identify appropriate C practices track and report them once	<i>No change</i>	

²⁴ Source: Country-level interviews, to be further elaborated on in the Findings section below (Effectiveness, Sustainability).

	implemented and engage with C finance schemes when appropriate.		
Outcome 3	GEF and other SLM project managers have enhanced understanding of the wide range of tools available and their application contexts.	GEF and other SLM project managers are able to make informed selections of tools to track their carbon monitoring of their SLM projects.	Enhanced understanding is difficult to measure and does not allow for action based on project results. An outcome that would strengthen pathways to impact would necessitate action by project managers.

2. For the causal pathway between the outputs and the outcomes to be successful, there are three drivers:

- i. For Outcome 1, the driver includes that the *successful demonstration of tools use (CBP and WOCAT) for simple and detailed assessments in the five country case projects illustrate useful-ness* (and diversity of use and applicability).
- ii. For Outcome 2, the driver includes that the *successful partnership demonstration between WOCAT and CBP shows how partnerships can lead to collaborative improvements* and support end-user ease and access.
- iii. For Outcome 2 and 3, the driver includes a *more streamlined, easy-access, user-friendly, supportive (enabling) environment created for land management project managers* (as a result of a successful Outcome 2 namely that tool sets are enhanced, interlinked, harmonized, and Outcome 3, project managers are making informed decisions about which tools to use based on dissemination of the guidance manual and the accompanying e-learning module).

Figure 3. Reconstructed Theory of Change diagram for the SLM-CCMC Project

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Strategic Relevance

55. **Global environmental benefits:** Given the urgent and prioritised need for climate change mitigation (under the Global Agenda 2030 and the UNFCCC Paris Agreement) and the role that sustainable land management has in climate change mitigation, the project and what it aimed to achieve was of high relevance. All activities in the project aimed at supporting land managers in realizing the climate change co-benefits of sustainable land management (and natural resource management in general), mainly through building capacity and enhancing access to tools to estimate the carbon and other climate benefits derived from their sustainable land management interventions. Results are also able to feed into national greenhouse gas inventories which leads to the better overall understanding of global action in mitigating climate change.

A.1. Alignment to UNEP MTS and POW

56. In relation to UNEP's priorities, the project aligned to Subprogramme Climate Change: Expected Accomplishment B, Output (b) (3): technical support provided to countries to develop tools, plans and policies for low-emission development.²⁵ The project at design was relevant to UNEP's PoW (2014-15) by contributing to the guidance provided by UNEP to countries on carbon stock management in terrestrial ecosystems for stronger and multiple benefits.

57. The project also contributed to Subprogramme Healthy and Productive Ecosystems by providing tools and trainings on tools which can help to monitor key indicators of healthy terrestrial ecosystems (namely carbon stock in soils and biomass).

58. The project aligned to the Bali Strategic Plan²⁶ in that it focused mostly on outreach and capacity development on the use of carbon monitoring tools in SLM projects globally, but with a focus on developing countries (in terms of the GEF country case projects). The project contributed to more guidance and training resources than was initially planned, more trainings held, and further carbon and greenhouse gas assessments made (as well as tool enhancements). South-south cooperation was relevant particularly in the trainings and opportunities for sharing of best practices in the uploading onto databases (e.g. WOCAT).

59. Alignment to UNEP MTS and POW is Highly Satisfactory.

A.2. Alignment to Donor/Strategic Priorities

60. While the project demonstrated relevance to the climate change area, the project was aligned to Land Degradation (LD) focal area of GEF (where also the entire GEF allocation came from). It was aligned to this focal area through promoting sustainable land management through recognition of the climate change co-benefits it achieves. It addressed various objectives of the GEF-5 LD focal area, but the most direct contribution by the project was to increase capacity to apply adaptive management tools in SLM.

²⁵ Indicator of Achievement (i) increase in the number of countries supported by UNEP that make progress in adopting and/or implementing low greenhouse gas emission development plans, strategies and/or policies.

²⁶ The Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building, a framework for strengthening the capacity of governments in developing countries, developed and came into force 2005.

61. Alignment to donor priorities in terms of focal area is Highly Satisfactory.

A.3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities

62. The relevance of the tool at the regional and national level is high given the reporting procedures outlined under A.4. as an example. Environmental priorities in particular is of relevance because of the co-benefits attributed to the project.

63. The relevance of the tool to the outcomes of the four GEF case study projects varied because projects were selected and came in through the following criteria (1) diversity of GEF implementing agencies (to have a wide spectrum of agencies to cover more agency exposure to the CBP tool, and (2) that carbon monitoring and reporting was an obligation within the project. The responsibility of selection of GEF projects was given to the GEF implementing agencies except in the case of Kenya where project members had already worked with KALRO and thus had an existing relationship. As a result, while the tool was relevant to all projects at least in terms of its reporting obligations, the level of relevance was higher in e.g. Kenya and Ethiopia, with ECOANDES counterparts claiming that the tool was “heavy for the level of detail they could use/more science than was necessary”²⁷ and South Africa counterparts feeling that there was not enough communication at entry-point (this within their specific project’s IA, UNDP) in them being selected and it not being clear the broader context as to how the two projects fit together.²⁸

64. Rated as Satisfactory.

A.4. Complementarity with existing interventions

65. The project was highly relevant in the context of the UNCCD land degradation neutrality context, specifically that countries have committed to implementing SLM and thus the need to effectively measure, monitor and report on the climate change mitigation co-benefits of those activities. The project provided a toolset which helps address this need, but also included socio-economic tools which can be used to address gender inequalities in the uptake and implementation of SLM technologies. The project is also part of the 4 per 1000 initiative (which seeks to promote agriculture and its role in fighting climate change and supporting food security). In addition, the new national reporting cycle for UNCCD (2021/22) will require geo-spatial mapping where CBP is a highly appropriate tool for such a purpose.

66. The project has been part of an evolving process of learning as-you-go development of greenhouse gas accounting tools, among which partners have been involved since the beginning (some specific individuals having been leading tool development since the first notions sprouted in the 1980s). This said, the project needs to be seen in the context of other tools, e.g. FAO’s EX-ACT, which to some has become a favourable tool in some GEF implementing agencies (even GEF itself has promoted the use of EX-ACT in PIF development, for instance)²⁹. UNEP, while championing the tool since its initial development in the early 2000s, has also not used it as widely institutionally as one would expect. The fact that the evolving co-development over three projects has not resulted in larger-scale ownership with the GEF and the UNEP contexts, makes one contemplate the

²⁷ Interviews with project stakeholders ECOANDES project.

²⁸ Interviews with project stakeholders South Africa project.

²⁹ Despite the simple assessment of CBP being appropriate at that level.

relevance of the tool to these institutions in light of the other tools available (in this context, most notably EX-ACT).

67. While the project certainly had an important alignment and was of value to the UNFCCC, the link is not made (at least not as was made with UNCCD), which may be more a result of the disconnect from the level of UNFCCC rather than the project's lack of engagement.

68. Rated as Satisfactory.

Rating for Strategic Relevance: Highly Satisfactory

Quality of Project Design

69. Generally, the project was well-designed. Baselines were detailed, and points of departure were clearly laid out.

70. *Project Preparation and Readiness*: Generally, the project document was well-laid out, although would have been improved through the elaboration of the problem analysis. The baseline scenario was concisely outlined including the business-as-usual versus the alternative scenarios. It also provided the history and context of the previous two projects and how the SLM-CCMC was building on these foundations. There was no clear and outlined stakeholder consultation description even though it was clear from the depth of the project document that this must have been done at PPG phase.

71. *Intended Results and Causality at Project Design*: At GEF-5, a Theory of Change was not part of the project design template, although this project did include a simplified version of one ("overview diagram"). Although this was the case, the project logical framework was not sufficiently ambitious enough given the amount of foundation already laid by previous projects as well as the potential for the project to achieve beyond the project-stated outcomes. The narrative of the outputs and activities as well as the logical framework was clear.

72. *Logical Framework and Monitoring*: Output indicators were mostly SMART. Outcome-level indicators could have been more relevant or appropriate (illustrating actual behaviour change). The monitoring plan and budget were well laid out.

73. *Governance and Supervision Arrangements*: Generally, governance and supervisions were laid out well in the project document.

74. *Partnerships*: Despite no detailed capacity assessment being conducted, there were detailed comparative advantages laid out, as well as the demonstration of leadership in the field. The design made effort to streamline and include as many GEF implementing agencies as partners as were interested.

75. *Learning, Communication and Outreach*: Given the importance of this project, the evaluator would have expected to see a more robust and strategic knowledge management approach (this was laid out well in the narrative and its results framework, but not in terms of sustaining project results). The project had adequate communication planned in terms of its overall coordination approach, although this was not detailed in the Prodoc under its own section, and could have been arguably added into the section "Dissemination Strategy".

76. *Financial Planning/Budgeting*: The project budget was well laid out, although a resource mobilisation strategy to sustain project results was lacking.

77. *Efficiency*: The project was realistic in terms of its duration and costing (although perhaps some dependence on the start date of the GEF country case projects which in practice resulted in the loss of one project when the start of the SLM-CCMC was delayed).
78. *Sustainability/Replication and Catalytic Effects*: The project document had a section on sustainability, although there was not enough strategic thought put into the actual mechanisms to take up the project results after project closure.
79. *Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps*: All issues covered by the GEF STAP review were addressed in the final project document, although the evaluator considers a lack of a sustainability strategy as one weakness (considering this project was a product of longer-term investment from GEF).

Rating for Project Design: Satisfactory

Nature of the External Context

80. Generally, at project design, there were no major risks considered that would affect the project in any significant way. It was a global project, with travel and in-depth (mostly remote) work through GEF projects being implemented in four countries. However, some unexpected risks came up to which the project had to adapt.
81. The *COVID-19 pandemic* affected the project during its implementation in 2020, mostly through (a) moving some of the training online and thereby reducing travel (which had some positive spin-off results, including training videos now accessible to a wider audience), and (b) some delays in terms of field work in western Kenya where ultimately the Project Coordinator from the Science Division was not able to visit. The pandemic also had a role to play in the request for the second project extension. This said, there were no significant impacts of the pandemic in terms of achievement of project results. The project team was adaptive and flexible with arrangements (moving online seemed to be done effortlessly and innovatively, using opportunities available in an efficient and effective manner; budget revisions were done to allow for effective extension of the project³⁰, etc).
82. For two of the GEF country case projects, there were in-country geo-political issues:
- Ecuador* has been going through social unrest which, in 2019, caused the country to go into a stand-still, and there was a change in government in early 2021. This did not necessarily affect the small contribution the project made in terms of achievement of results, but certainly it affected the loss of certain opportunities and linkages, longer-term buy-in from government officials who were trained, and responsiveness in the evaluation of the project from ECOANDES stakeholders.
 - Ethiopia* is undergoing a political crisis, with ongoing riots across the country, including in the project region (Amhara region). Based on interviews with project stakeholders, it was difficult to do field visits, and some difficulties were faced with rolling internet blackouts which sometimes made communication difficult. This said, the resilience of the project team of the Ethiopia project appears strong given that these crises did not affect the enthusiasm to achieve the results of the monitoring, nor for the SLM-CCMC to conduct multiple trainings (as part of project,

³⁰ See under financial management below.

as well as additional trainings due to opportunistic partnerships with e.g. USAID) which has also led to wider uptake of the tool beyond the case study project.³¹

83. Overall, the project faced some unexpected threats, but managed to adapt and be flexible in the face of these. Note: the rating for Nature of external context is not included in the overall rating for the project.

Rating for Nature of the external context: Moderately Favourable

Effectiveness

Availability of Outputs

Output 1.1. Assessments of C benefits made using the Simple and Detailed Assessments for GEF and non-GEF projects involved in training sessions.

84. The project outperformed on the measurable indicator of five workshops with ultimately 16 training events being held.³² It was expected that 70% of participants of the five workshops would actively be using the tools post-workshop (measured by 6 months after use). In fact, the final project report states that between 30-50% of the participants from the 16 workshops were actively using the tools as a result of the workshops.
85. Feedback collected by the project after the training captured positive responses to the training, particularly in relation to the quality and professionalism in which the training took place. Generally, respondents had improved learning outcomes when relatable case studies were used and/or when they were using their own data.³³
86. The evaluator requested feedback from participants who engaged in the training and was not able to confirm the 30-50% usage of the tools through the engagement with participants post-project, mainly because responses were scattered and limited.³⁴ More anecdotal records from this process show that for some training there has been more uptake than for others. Particularly, the Ethiopia USAID Greenhouse Gas Accounting training made some longer-term impact: out of the 7 respondents who responded (from the list of 30 contacted), 4 have used the tools in their work (ranging from government departments, academic research institutes and private sector/NGO). The only response from the IFAD 2017 training claimed that s/he had not applied the tool to her/his work. The Kenya online training, the only respondent claimed that they do not remember the tools. For the Kenya training in 2018, some uptake of the tools has been made, particularly in the two universities (Masinde University (where the tool is used to train students) and Maseno University), and KALRO continue using the tool (and in fact have been helping other projects on the use of the tool).³⁵ The UNCCD training in 2017 may have not had much response, but one respondent in particular did share the importance and continued partnership between UNCCD, WOCAT and CBP for the use of the tools.

³¹ Further discussed under Sustainability.

³² Final project report.

³³ Review of feedback forms from training events.

³⁴ See under Evaluation Methodology above.

³⁵ Interviews with Kenya project team.

87. Another way to verify uptake and growth of the use of tools through the training (although this is likely also a product of other forms of outreach) is the tools use statistics on the CBP platform (and WOCAT), both of which have grown in users. For CBP, there has been a 27-60% increase in tool use over the project period (from 2017:970; 2018: 1235; 2019: 1549; 2020: 1459), with a rise in countries from 120 to 159 (33% increase) using the tool.³⁶ The capacity building (this output) was part of a broader communication/outreach of the project (which is discussed in more detail under the Communication and Outreach section under V. Factors affecting Performance and Cross-cutting Issues of the Findings section of this report) that are considered drivers to the growth in user numbers.
88. Longer-term engagement in terms of training requests made to CSU/WOCAT during the project has been fostered through e.g. the Environmental Defence Fund who requested some training to be done for their target groups in 2019³⁷, through CIHEAM Spain with whom the project did training as part of the Zaragoza GHG summer school,³⁸ which has formed part of their programme run yearly. The engagement through the training that was provided by the project to the CACILM II FAO project (a regional project in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan led by FAO) has continued in terms of the use of the CBP and WOCAT tools in the project.³⁹
89. Overall, the evaluator believes, based on the evidence from interviews, participant training responses, and training event documentation, that the project did very well to supply the demand and conduct training in a diverse set of contexts. Whether the target audience (i.e. mainly GEF personnel) was reached is questionable, but without a doubt a much wider stakeholder audience has been reached and demand continues to grow to learn about and use the tools, which is a testament to the usefulness and interest by land managers in the tools (and particularly the combination tool set WOCAT and CBP).⁴⁰

Output 1.2. Documentation of good/best practice land management practices in terms of C benefits

90. This output was also overachieved in terms of its indicator (21 examples versus the planned 15 of good practice added to the WOCAT database). During the project, 14 practices were added from the in-depth projects, and seven additional were linked in the CBP WOCAT linkage process.⁴¹
91. In addition, the linkage for the two tools between WOCAT and CBP have also allowed ~700 best practices to be imported into the CBP for GHG analysis.⁴²

Output 1.3. In depth implementation of the CBPs Simple or Detailed Assessment in 5 GEF projects with the on-going support of the SLM-CCMC

92. Of the five projects that were selected to take part in this project, the World Bank (IA) Rio Grande do Sul Biodiversity Project (5327) had already ended by the time the SLM-CCMC project started.⁴³ As a result, at the start of the SLM-CCMC, the project requested the

³⁶ Data received from CSU on user analytics.

³⁷ EDF respondent claimed that the tools were very appropriate to their work at the time the training was conducted, but that their needs had expanded and thus they had shifted to other tools in the meantime (currently using the Fable Calculator).

³⁸ Online Advanced Course: Greenhouse gas assessment and mitigation in agriculture: concepts, methods and simulation tools. <https://edu.iamz.ciheam.org/AssessmentAndMitigation/en/>, last accessed 1 July 2021.

³⁹ Interviews with CSU and WOCAT, as well as review of lists and correspondence with CACILM II FAO project.

⁴⁰ Interviews with CSU and WOCAT, data of online use, respondents from training events, project stakeholders in general. See list of new projects partnerships under the Sustainability section of the Findings in the TE report.

⁴¹ Final project report.

⁴² Final project report.

⁴³ Due to delays in project start.

World Bank to find another project that was aiming to do carbon reporting to fill this gap, but this proved unsuccessful, and the project moved forward with four, instead of five projects.⁴⁴

93. According to the project final report, all four projects collated baseline activity data and used this to make *ex ante* GHG assessments. All also collated ongoing project data and have used this to make *ex post* estimates. All projects incorporated collection of activity and factor data needed for the CBP tools into their monitoring plans.
94. *Ethiopia Project*: The SLM-CCMC project worked with IFAD as the IA to find a suitable project and the Ethiopian project was thus selected.⁴⁵ The project was already half-way through its implementation when the SLM-CCMC started. The project's aim was to conduct ecosystem and watershed management activities to improve resilience of communities, improve grazing land and crop productivity and halt land degradation in Bahir Dar. The SLM-CCMC project came in at the end and supported the project by providing training on the CBP tools to estimate the GHG impacts of their interventions on selected sites and to document project technologies in WOCAT (which also included training). The project staff continue to use the tools for their work beyond the project closure.⁴⁶
95. Additional (unplanned) training took place through a USAID-funded project where two workshops took place on the "Foundations in Greenhouse Gas Accounting for Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Uses: Mechanisms for Measurement, Reporting and Verification", one in September 2017 and one in January 2018 (where participants came back with their data to do applied use and training). Some participants have continued using the tools within institutions like the Ethiopian Environment and Forest Research Institute (full use), in the Central Statistics Agency (attempted use with difficulty associated with application of tools to national-level data), Amhara Regional State (partial use in training field operators).
96. *Kenya Project*: The project was selected as a result of a standing partnership between CSU and KALRO.⁴⁷ Due to various previous interventions on SLM in western Kenya, the project initially carried out an analysis of SLM practices which had already been tried and tested in the region. The CBP tools were used as part of the process to identify potential SLM technologies which could be scaled up, which were then used to report on the on-going C and GHG benefits of the technologies.⁴⁸ Project respondents maintained that the tools (CBP and WOCAT) were highly relevant to the Kenya project, and supported the project in identifying which technology was appropriate for which area. In fact, there was also a major cost reduction thanks to the tools, which, according to respondents, would have meant much more field work and associated costs. The project respondents also highlighted the CBP tool being "appealing in terms of its simplicity".⁴⁹
97. Training was conducted for the project team, which included a larger number of institutions which were directly or indirectly involved in the Kenya project. Some of the participants in this training have continued using the tools (particularly in the two

⁴⁴ Interviews with core project team.

⁴⁵ Interviews with project team.

⁴⁶ Interviews and document review of Ethiopia Project.

⁴⁷ Interview with core project team member.

⁴⁸ Project Lessons Learnt Report, Chapter 4.

⁴⁹ Interviews with Kenya Project Team.

Universities Masinde and Maseno).⁵⁰ Online training was also conducted in 2018, but there was no response confirming continued use of tools beyond the training.

98. *ECOANDES Project*: The project was selected through UNEP (as the IA) Programme Officer for South America who was overseeing a CONDESAN executed project that needed to do carbon reporting.⁵¹ The project aimed to enable integrated ecosystem management in the high Andes in Ecuador and Peru, by introducing SLM practices at five project sites, and develop capacity and tools to help implement and report on integrated ecosystem management (including tools that supported Payment for Ecosystem Services). The project chose three sites in Ecuador to estimate the impact of their SLM practices on carbons stocks and GHG emissions using the CBP tools.⁵²
99. Training was provided to a large set of stakeholders (within and outside of the project) through a workshop in Quito in 2017.⁵³ In addition, two project team members visited CSU for 10 days to finalise the CBP tool work together with the trainers.⁵⁴ One project team member actually did his Masters Thesis through the project using the CBP tools.⁵⁵
100. None of the participants from the workshop responded to the email questionnaire, and the core project team (except one individual) did not respond or refused to participate in the evaluation, so it is difficult to ascertain any tool uptake beyond the project (although the evaluator was told that the previous Project Coordinator may be continuing use of the tools at the University de las Americas, but this could not be confirmed)⁵⁶. Social unrest and government turnover may have had some role to play in some synergies, uptake, and climate finance opportunities being missed.⁵⁷
101. *South Africa Project*: The project was chosen through the Regional Technical Advisor of UNDP because it had a carbon monitoring element (although not in its project outputs).⁵⁸ The project aimed to build capacity of rural communities and selected government departments for the adoption of SLM, and adopting SLM practices through improved agricultural practices (in the first site) through restoring native vegetation (in the second site). Two test sites were chosen for carbon tracking and reporting using the CBP tools, in both sites the CBP tools were successfully used to estimate the impact of the SLM practices on carbons tocks and GHG emissions.⁵⁹
102. There was one training to core project team members, and CSU thereafter visited several times to support the application of the tools. Project respondents saw the tool as not directly linked to the project in terms of outputs, but definitely fed into the monitoring process. An opportunity was missed (at the level of UNEP-UNDP relation, not in terms of CSU project management) to further integrate the tool into the use at the UNDP country office. Some project respondents (in the IA/UNDP) claimed that they had not been involved (at the lower levels of implementation) in the decision-making process (i.e. they felt it was a top-down approach) to involve the SLM-CCMC part in the South Africa Project and the role had not been effectively communicated and there was

⁵⁰ Interviews with Kenya Project Team.

⁵¹ Interview with core project team member.

⁵² Project Lessons Learnt Report, Chapter 4.

⁵³ Workshop Participant List, Quito 2017.

⁵⁴ Interviews with various project partners.

⁵⁵ Review of Masters Thesis and Interview.

⁵⁶ This could not be confirmed because the project manager declined to take part in the evaluation.

⁵⁷ Evaluator opinion based on interviews and project documentation.

⁵⁸ Interview with core project team member.

⁵⁹ Project Lessons Learnt Report, Chapter 4.

a lack of understanding that there was the idea to encourage uptake of the tools. This being said, it was highlighted that it was a good opportunity to demonstrate two UN agencies working together (i.e. UNEP and UNDP).⁶⁰ The Rhodes University as executing agency for the project, while finding the tool interesting and having had some engagement in other departments within the university, is unlikely to take up the tool use formally.⁶¹ The Livinglands (the community partner in the field) had an intern who participated in training and was responsible for data collection for the application of the tool has moved on (already in 2018) and thus there is no institutional memory nor further engagement on the tool beyond the project.⁶²

103. It is unlikely that the tool will be taken up post-project unless an intervention is made within the UNDP Country Office at the end of the project to discuss how the CBP tools can be further integrated (including connections being made with the UNCCD Focal Point).

Output 1.4. Project managers trained to document good/best land management practices, linked to CBP assessment for 5 GEF projects

104. WOCAT (with CSU) provided training and project-duration support to all four GEF country case projects. In one particular case, in Ethiopia, there was in-depth support (mainly because the WOCAT founder lives in Ethiopia and could easily connect to do training), although in all cases projects were fully supported to upload their best cases.⁶³
105. All projects have uploaded examples of best practice to the WOCAT database (at time of evaluation, Kenya was still uploading an additional best practice example).⁶⁴

Output 2.1. An enhanced toolset with increased efficacy in terms of spatial data and accessibility as well as direct relevance to specific finance/certification schemes

106. New features were added to the toolset including (a) a feature to allow detailed assessment users to submit any new emission factors to a database available to other users, (b) enhanced reports produced, (c) guidance to deal with leakage (which was feedback from some of the training workshops), (d) enhanced mapping features added, and (e) new forestland and woody biomass calculations added.⁶⁵
107. The guidance to highlight how the Detailed Assessment could be used in carbon markets and certification schemes is still ongoing as process has been impacted by COVID (mostly as a result of time constraints due to COVID complications on the project manager at CSU who was responsible for finalising the guidance). The guidance is currently in final draft form and is sitting for review with VERRA (Verified Carbon Standard). Personnel changes in VERRA and other priorities have delayed the review process. A recent positive outcome is that a new staff member at VERRA who was trained in CBP tools previously (and has worked with CSU colleagues on the 4 per 1000

⁶⁰ Interview with UNDP CO as IA and project team members.

⁶¹ Interview with project partners.

⁶² Email communications with Livinglands and interviews with project team. Livinglands claimed that they never received the tool and that the dissemination and use of the tool was part of Rhodes University responsibility.

⁶³ Interviews with country projects and WOCAT partners, documents review.

⁶⁴ A full list can be found in the final project report.

⁶⁵ Final project report, which includes detailed list of all features added.

initiative of UNCCD) is likely to support in finalising the guidance and explore further guidance on using the CBP tools alongside newer verified carbon standard protocols.⁶⁶

108. The project was adaptive and reflexive in terms of taking up recommendations from the GEF country case projects to improve the use and reporting process of the CBP tools (and the link to WOCAT).⁶⁷ In addition, translations have been done (often through successful partnerships) for the toolsets into Spanish, French, Italian, Russian, Amharic.⁶⁸
109. The final project report states that the three countries (ECOANDES, South Africa and Kenya) had used the CBP output to apply for climate finance (ECOANDES and South Africa having had planned links in project design). The evaluator could not find the evidence of post-project uptake through her interviews with country partners. For ECOANDES, there was potential for linking up to the Green Climate Fund on another project, but apparently this was not followed up on by project partners.⁶⁹ This said, the project engaged, through its own project outputs, in payment for ecosystem services options, including C estimates which were made using the CBP tools.⁷⁰ For South Africa, there was no attachment to climate finance, according to the project partners (nor will there be follow up), although in the South Africa project final report it did say that the team at Baviaanskloof (one of the two sites) had set up the necessary institutional arrangement for potential carbon trading. For Kenya, there was potential, but concrete connections had not been made.⁷¹

Output 2.2. An interlink between the CBP and WOCAT tools

110. According to project documents, as well as interviews with project partners, the link (and partnership between the institutions) made between the CBP and WOCAT tool was very successful and has laid a foundation for further partnerships, streamlining and integrating of tools for ease and access to the end-user.
111. Not only has the CBP and WOCAT integrated toolset been used in all four GEF country case studies, but has also been used in projects in the WOCAT network including activities in Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Ethiopia and Turkey. Requests for information and training on the combined toolset are being received on a regular basis including requests from UNCCD, IFAD, GIZ, FAO and CARITAS.⁷²
112. The link of the toolset has also enhanced demand for use in both organisations.⁷³

Output 2.3. A reporting database for UNEP GEF staff to use to access, store and analyse reports generated by the CBP system

113. A feature was developed to allow GEF Agency Programme Officers to view output from multiple summary reports produced by the CBP system. The output can also be assessed by different criteria (e.g. all GHG benefits from projects in a given country or GEF focal area). The feature is ready to use within the UNEP system and some effort

⁶⁶ Email correspondence project team.

⁶⁷ Interviews with all project partners in relation to output

⁶⁸ Interviews with CSU and WOCAT.

⁶⁹ Based on the interviews with project partners, which were limited because the evaluator could not follow up with CONDESAN on the

⁷⁰ Final project report.

⁷¹ Interviews with project partners.

⁷² Final project report, including verified through interviews, two projects Congo Project, and the CARITAS have been or are about to be signed.

⁷³ Based on interviews with CSU and WOCAT.

has been made within UNEP to encourage its use (with limited success at time of evaluation).

114. Other GEF agencies are able to use it, but this depends on a list of suitable contacts being sent to CSU to allow access. While the request has been made by UNEP to the other agencies, no response has yet been given by any other agencies.⁷⁴
115. Based on interviews and feedback, the evaluator is not convinced of its use unless there is strategic outreach placed on this. Some respondents within UNEP maintained that the over-burden of tool use and database reporting coupled with many programme officers being comfortable with using e.g. EX-ACT, has resulted in limited interest to use the feature, even though it may save time in the longer-term (if more people used it).⁷⁵

Output 3.1. A guideline/manual for GEF and other managers of SLM projects for choosing the most appropriate tools to measure carbon benefits and guidance note

116. A comprehensive report was completed, as well as an accompanying guidance note, on “Carbon Accounting Tools for Sustainable Land Management”. Eighteen GEF projects were analysed separately across ten commonly used carbon accounting tools (including CBP and EX-ACT), which included the Brazil Rio Grande project that was initially supposed to be included as one of the GEF country case projects.
117. The FAO was finally sub-contracted by World Bank⁷⁶ to complete the analysis. Of the tools, EX-ACT came out as the most appropriate and relevant in the majority of the projects, with CBP being second (in most cases, with some exceptions). While the report was fully reviewed by all partners and no respondents revealed any errors in the analysis nor had major comments on the conclusions of the assessment, the process of using FAO (as the host of the EX-ACT tool) to conduct an objective analysis among all the tools does have potential for conflict of interest.
118. While the report is comprehensive and of good quality and provides a strong analysis across a wide range of GEF projects, the evaluator (after speaking to a variety of project partners, including the GEF, CSU, UNEP, and some country partners) is not convinced the format is particularly friendly for the end-user in terms of deciding what particular tool to use for her/his project. As a result, while the report and its guidance note might be useful to selected audiences, the value add (given the fact the GEF had developed a guidance on this in the form of a decision-tree several years ago (which might be outdated) and the UNCCD Science Policy Interface (SPI) report⁷⁷ is also a comparison of tools for LDN practitioners), to the end-user is questionable, and in fact the evaluator would not call it a Guidance Manual (perhaps a “guidance report” is more accurate).⁷⁸

Output 3.2. An e-learning module to facilitate peer-learning amongst GEF managers and global knowledge sharing amongst natural resource users

⁷⁴ Interviews with UNEP.

⁷⁵ Interviews with UNEP and other project partners.

⁷⁶ The evaluator did not see any sub-contracts and is making an assumption without having been able to speak to the World Bank about the formal arrangements.

⁷⁷ “Realising the Carbon Benefits of Sustainable Land Management Practices: Guidelines for estimation of soil organic carbon in the context of land degradation neutrality planning and monitoring” https://knowledge.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2019-10/191016_EN_UNCCD_SPI_2019_Report_1_1_Web.pdf, last accessed 2 July 2021.

⁷⁸ Feedback from the World Bank was that the guidance manual was careful to take into consideration the complexity and need for expertise in carbon accounting, and thus the importance of experience with carbon calculators, academic background, etc. The evaluation tool for comparison was carefully designed to capture these important issues. The World Bank has a guidance manual specifically for EX-ACT which, according to them, has helped scaled up its application across the world. The Guidance Manual from the SLM-CCMC is seen as a nice complement for this manual.

119. The course “Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tools for Sustainable Land Management”, as a supplement to the guidance report of Output 3.1., is a helpful tool in helping SLM practitioners understand the different tools, and as such, is considered a successful completion of the output as was planned.
120. Those who have completed the course have found it useful as an introduction to the different tools to measure GHG benefits.⁷⁹ With more promotion of the course through UNEP and its networks, World Bank, CSU, and others, there could be greater use of the course.

OVERALL AVAILABILITY OF OUTPUTS FINDINGS

121. Overall, the project achieved as per what was expected at design, with some achievements outperforming the indicators particularly in terms of the training and tool support and enhancement (including the linkage of the tools WOCAT and CBP). While the outputs related to the training of the CBP tool and particularly the linkage between the tools WOCAT and CBP will sustain post-project, some other outputs are not secured in terms of their long-term use (e.g. 1.3, 2.3., 3.1).
122. Stakeholder engagement was strong through the use of outputs (with a few minor exceptions which are arguably not within the project’s control), and in fact in most cases the project partners tried to engage and or welcome any new engagement throughout the project lifespan, answering multiple demand-led requests for training and support to the use of the tools in various projects.
123. Availability of Outputs is rated as *Satisfactory*.

Achievement of Project Outcomes

124. The achievement of the project’s objective, namely to “create an environment which will make it easier for land management project managers to realise the climate change co-benefits of sustainable land management practices” was evaluated based on the three outcomes of the project.
125. Outcome 1: GEF project managers and selected agency personnel have demonstrated capacity to measure, monitor and model the carbon benefits resulting from their projects⁸⁰

Strategic Question: *to what extent has the project achieved the enhancement of capacity of GEF project managers and selected GEF agency personnel to monitor carbon and climate co-benefits from SLM projects?*

126. As per the logical framework indicator for this outcome, the final project report showed 353 people had been trained from 5 GEF agencies and other non-GEF agencies and institutions.
127. Based on extensive interviews, feedback of workshop reviews and responses from participants who did training, as well as an investigation into the use of the tools for the GEF Country Case projects, the following findings are presented:

⁷⁹ Feedback on the course on the course website, <https://olc.worldbank.org/content/greenhouse-gas-accounting-tools-sustainable-land-management-self-paced>, last accessed on 2 July 2021.

⁸⁰ The project likelihood of impact and overall achievement of outcomes was measured against the TOC outcomes. The original project outcome 1 was Enhanced capacity to measure, monitor and model carbon benefits from GEF land management projects using the CBP/WOCAT tools in several GEF agencies and for GEF project personnel.

- (a) the project was successful in conducting as many trainings as it could, trainings were of high quality and generally capacity was raised among those who attended;
- (b) generally, the training that was demand-led, and the training that was applied (e.g. through use of real life examples and cases or through data application by the participants themselves), were generally more successful in terms of uptake;
- (c) even-though the capacity of project managers had been raised through the training, the training did not seem to have a great impact on increasing the use of the tools among the GEF agencies generally, which seemed to depend more on the relevance of the CBP tool to the work of the participant and/or their interest/barriers to changing tools if they were already using other tools;⁸¹
- (d) the project was successful in enhancing the capacity of all GEF country case project SLM practitioners, although further uptake and use has depended on individuals and their line of work post-project (in some cases, capacity has been built and catalysed across networks such as in Ethiopia and Kenya, and in others, like South Africa capacity does not seem to have created any changes in terms of institutional uptake or further use of tools beyond the training and the project);
- (e) the user number of registrations on both the CBP and the WOCAT databases and platforms have increased during the project and it is very likely a result of the training (and outreach), but direct evidenced links cannot be made;⁸²
- (f) an unexpected positive result of the COVID-19 moving some of the training online in 2019 and 2020 meant that it became more accessible to those who would otherwise not have been able to attend, and additionally the training also was uploaded as a video onto the CSU website which has resulted in longer-term use of online learning resources to allow new users to “train themselves”;
- (g) the UNCCD has been trained, and because of its existing relationship with the WOCAT, is likely to continue supporting the further use and uptake of the tools (although there was no confirmation as to what shape this partnership and the use of the tools for the reporting cycle, for instance, would take);
- (h) as a result, the evaluator would see the project outcome has having been achieved specifically in regard to enhanced capacity among those trained (not necessarily in terms of demonstrated capacity of a critical mass and particularly GEF agency personnel, which is discussed below).

128. Outcome 1 is an important step towards the intermediate states (IS1, 2 and 3)⁸³ but its pathway to these states depends on the assumption that enhanced capacity drives behaviour change toward increased application and use. There certainly is evidence of

⁸¹ In some cases, e.g. FAO country office requests with CSU for the use of the CBP (Source: interviews with CSU), there has been interest in using the EX-ACT tool some individuals at UNEP using the tools (Source: UNEP). Generally those who have been using tools for a while, and particularly GEF project developers who have been using e.g. EX-ACT for a while, have more resistance trying another tool (if it works for them, there is not incentive to change (source: interviews with GEF agency personnel). In addition, the feature to support programme managers has not been used by any GEF IA personnel (as of yet).

⁸² Links cannot be made due to privacy issues although the timing coincides with the project, see figures and percentage increases under Output 1.1. under Availability of Outputs above.

⁸³ IS1: (a) Strategic communication and awareness ensure wider application of tools improved and guidance on how to apply which tools, (b) wider integration and partnership among tool developers; IS 2: A growing number of SLM project managers (including under GEF) use tools to realize and report on co-benefits of SLM projects and engage with C markets where desired; IS 3: GEF and GEF agencies commit funding to further training and mainstreaming to integrate carbon monitoring into project design and implementation.

uptake based on training events (through the findings reflected above), but there is also a question of the ratio of those trained versus the ratio of use. The evaluator is unconvinced that a critical mass of those trained (say, more than 70%) has resulted in the longer-term use of the tools. Additionally, the outcome was specific to GEF project managers, and success was higher in terms of enhanced capacity for uptake among non-GEF actors. However, and generally, the increasing demand to CSU and WOCAT to do the training, as well as the increased user registration, implies that there is a growing number of interest that has the potential of becoming a critical mass over the medium-term.

129. In addition, those participants who have taken the tools on board, have done so enthusiastically, and integrated them, as well as in some cases, provided further training and outreach of the tools. The evaluator also opines that the intermediate states will be further supported by the success of Outcome 2, which, together with Outcome 1, have led to a greater potential to move to the intermediate states.

Outcome 2: SLM and NRM projects use combined tools set to identify appropriate climate practices, track and report them once implemented and engage with C finance schemes when appropriate)

Strategic question: *To what extent are SLM projects using combined tool sets to identify appropriate C practices? What is the added value of the linkage between the CBP tools and the WOCAT Questionnaire on SLM Technologies for (a) GEF projects, (b) other projects, and (c) stakeholder groups at different scales, and how is it perceived?*

130. According to the final project report, all GEF test case projects have made *ex ante* GHG assessments using the CBP tools and used the tools to create GHG assessments for current activities. They have used the tools output to report back to GEF agencies and to choose C friendly best practices. The final report also states that three countries have engaged, or started engaging, in climate finance schemes, using the CBP and WOCAT tools.⁸⁴ Other GEF and non-GEF SLM managers from training events are using the CBP tools to report to other agencies (using the example of UNCCD).
131. Combining the toolsets of CBP and WOCAT, according to interviews with respondents and evidence of resultant demand, requests, and uptake, is arguably a case for a best practice of integration and synergy for further partnerships to learn from and join to integrate the tools for more effective and coordinated efforts in supporting SLM reporting on multiple benefits.
132. For the specific GEF Country Case projects, the combined toolset proved useful and added value for the projects, in particular a project like the Kenya project, was an exemplary case of optimal use of the combined toolset.
133. The value add for GEF projects in general is certain, although whether the GEF community (i.e. GEF and the IAs) see this value is questionable. So far, there has been interest at a project-by-project basis (some demand can be seen within the WOCAT network), and not from a more coordinated approach, which is unfortunate given that this was a GEF project where one would expect more championship and uptake.

⁸⁴ Other than the output for the ECOANDES looking at PES schemes, evidence for this could not be found through the evaluation.

134. The value add for the other projects and stakeholders in general who are interested in SLM is clear from the increased demand throughout the project and since the combined toolset to actually do them both (CBP and WOCAT). Both CSU and WOCAT have been receiving requests, and more best practices have been added to the database. The linked toolset is of high value to the SLM network and in terms of connecting in to the climate change mitigation benefits (among other benefits).
135. For Outcome 2 to reach the intermediate states is driven by how much engagement the project has done in connecting with possible financing schemes to enhance incentives. The evaluator is unconvinced that this was effectively done across the four case projects (which may not have been in the project's ultimate control given the political upheaval in two of the countries, and much of the engagement needing to be done at GEF country case project level). That said, the pathway to the intermediate states is not contingent on meeting this driver, necessarily. The combined toolset has certainly enabled the further ability for strategic awareness to ensure wider use and application of the tools, as well as provided the community with an exemplary case of how partnership and collaboration can enhance synergies and collaboration and has the potential for catalyse more partnerships (already being done in the case of e.g. LandPKS who are already working with WOCAT on another GEF project). The likelihood that CSU will become an institutional member of WOCAT is high and that the institutional partnership of further evolving the tools as one set will take place.⁸⁵
136. Certainly, the combined toolset will also continue encouraging a growing number of SLM project managers to use the tools and realise and report on the benefits and enhance sharing among the community on best practice technologies. More funding more GEF and GEF agencies has not been seen outside of the project-by-project basis.
137. Given the above findings, the evaluator is of the opinion that this outcome has been achieved.

Outcome 3: GEF and other SLM project managers are able to make informed selections of tools to track carbon monitoring of their SLM project)

Strategic question: *To what extent have GEF and other SLM project managers enhanced their understanding of the wide range of tools available – are they able to choose which ones suit their needs?*

138. The final report states that the practice manual and guidance note and e-learning have been well used with 303 downloads for the full report, 126 for the guidance note, and that feedback on the course website has been positive which it states as evidence of enhanced understanding of the range of tools available. The evaluator tends to disagree, based on interviews and having reviewed the manual and accompanying resources herself, in addition to the fact that the indicator does not measure actual enhanced understanding (downloads of a document do not translate into enhanced understanding – this requires more steps in this process).
139. The manual, being seen as how it adds value to the existing reviews of carbon monitoring tools out there, certainly does have a niche. The evaluator opines that the GEF as a potential end-user may be able to use the report to identify the usefulness

⁸⁵ Interviews with WOCAT and CSU.

and applicability of the different tools within the GEF context (it having analysed 18 GEF projects using each of 10 tools per project).

140. However, the evaluator is not convinced that this has necessarily provided the SLM practitioner community with a practical guidance manual, that is easy to use and simple (cognizant that this depends on the background of the user and the technically demanding nature of the content), that allows the practitioner to make the best choice as to what suits their particular project (for instance, a decision tree/ yes-no framework might be best suited to this task). There are various assessment tables, step-by-step process for selecting a GHG calculator, a table of recommended tools when considering land use change scenarios, but these read more like a comparative assessment versus practical guide manual for a decision-maker.
141. As seen within a package of available guidance materials (including those outside of this project), GEF and other project managers do have enough material to make a decision as to which tool is most appropriate.
142. Overall, this outcome was achieved, but a simplified, more user-friendly format for the guidance manual would likely have allowed for a stronger pathway to the intermediate states of the Theory of Change pathways to impact.
143. Overall, for the three outcomes, the drivers from outputs to outcomes held, with the exception that the output 3 could have been more user-friendly (although the e-learning module did achieve this but could have been better promoted) which may have increased the driver for the project outcome 3 to be achieved in such a way that would have strengthened the pathways to the intermediate states.
144. Achievement of Outcomes is rated as *Satisfactory*.

Likelihood of Impact

Strategic question: *To what extent has the project allowed for effective mainstreaming of carbon monitoring into the greater programmatic implementation of GEF projects and more widely beyond GEF, in general, the Global Agenda 2030?*

145. Given the urgent need for climate mitigation, the role of land management in mitigating and adapting to climate change, and the trajectory of more and more capture of climate benefits of SLM projects, the question here is not necessarily about the likelihood of achievement of overall impact (***all (GEF) SLM projects that have climate change co-benefits are using relevant carbon monitoring tools to monitor progress towards climate change mitigation and land degradation neutrality***) - indeed this is the trajectory either way based on conversations with project partners. The question the evaluator is more focused on here, is how quickly this can be achieved, how much the project has catalysed this move to impact, and what role the CBP tools (and the integrated WOCAT and CBP toolset) have in achieving the impact with the timeframe of the Global Agenda 2030.
146. The project certainly has made strong contributions (as evidenced in the narrative above, under paragraphs 129 and 135), toward the intermediate states within the bigger pathways of carbon tool integration into SLM projects.
147. The CBP tool and the WOCAT tool are a powerful combination that have proved to catalyse application of the tools among projects (as seen by demand). The usefulness of the tool has been demonstrated by the project, yet the value is not visible to the

entire community.⁸⁶ While the profile of the tool has been raised among many projects from many institutions (at project level), the profile at institutional structural (and leadership level), especially among GEF and UNEP, has not been raised sufficiently for ownership/commitment to stick at these levels. GEF obviously welcomes the use of the tool by any of its projects (even though it does recommend the EX-ACT tool for e.g. PIF development), but given the investment and time it has put in (in relation to financial resources but also in terms of the STAP involvement, since the early 2000s), it is surprising to not see more structural support of the tool. UNEP as the GEF implementing agency taking this tool on from the 2000s, has also allowed its own ownership to fade (mostly likely due to initial champions of the tools retiring without sufficient handover thereby losing institutional championship) in terms of longer-term partnership at a structural level (related to its mandate of providing the means necessary to make scientifically rigorous reviews and environmental assessments of human interactions with the environment – as an example, for GEO-5, an entire Chapter was devoted to the CBP project results – one would have expected this level of engagement to continue).

148. It is highly likely that the CBP tool linked with WOCAT (and growing into more partnerships), given the potential/room for growth and enhancement that the tool has in its structural flexibility, will grow and innovate into something technologically more advanced than similar tools. Already the spatial mapping aspect is something that the UNCCD is looking into for its next reporting cycle, and in terms of potential collaboration in support of LDN transformative projects and programmes, as part of supporting target 15.3 of SDG15.⁸⁷ The kind of forward-looking plans that CSU has in relation to bringing together big data and technologies (e.g. possibly even Google data sets) will further drive innovation and enhance user access and global knowledge on carbon sequestration data and potential of healthy lands.
149. There is strong support to this from other partners and this is driving a whole new alignment and through sharing users will further expand (e.g. LandPKS which is already linked to WOCAT through other projects). Other examples are of the request to work on creating a hybrid of the COMET (the US government tool which is a dynamic model that has much more advanced options due to larger and longer-term datasets available such as measuring in any given land what might be the better crop to grow to capture carbon, modelling plant growth, etc) with the CBP tool and working with developing countries on this to capture more knowledge and understanding of climate mitigation.⁸⁸ Countries like Tunisia, Colombia and Qatar have directly engaged with CSU and WOCAT to support them in the use of the toolset (all coming with their own funding).
150. In other words, there will be growth in this either way, and it would be in the best interest of UNEP and GEF to take advantage to support the effective partnerships to further fast-track LDN and climate mitigation targets.
151. So, in short, the likelihood of impact being reached is high. The role of CBP as a key player in enhancing partnerships and innovation toward effective carbon monitoring is high. The speed as to which this happens will depend on where GEF and its IAs support

⁸⁶ As made clear through multiple interviews particularly within GEF and UNEP and other GEF IAs.

⁸⁷ <https://www.unccd.int/actions/ldn-programme/ldn-transformative-projects-and-programmes>, last accessed 2 July 2021.

⁸⁸ Interviews with CSU.

and raise the profile of its partners working on the tools. This is particularly true of UNEP as the custodian of the environment and science body⁸⁹ [and the institution who set up the IPCC, among other UN-(environment)-related scientific bodies/institutions].

152. Speed of moving the agenda forward towards impact will also depend on the creation and strengthening of more partnerships, the more integration, more cooperation (replacing competition), the more standardized and accurate the tools will become (taking into account different contexts).
153. Achievement of likelihood of impact, as directly connected to what the project is able to control, and how it achieved its outcomes within the move to impact of the Theory of Change is *Likely*.

Rating for Effectiveness: Satisfactory

Financial Management

Adherence to UNEP's Policies and Procedures

154. The following findings (and background information) pertain to the adherence to UNEP's Policies and Procedures with regard the financial management of this project:
 - (a) The roles of financial reporting were defined in the Internal Cooperation Agreement (ICA) between the Implementing Agency (IA) – the Ecosystems Division – and the Executing Agency (EA) – the Science Division. The FMO would release the money to the EA, which would then sub-contract the CSU (through a Partnership Cooperation Agreement, PCA) and World Bank (through an Externally Financed Output Agreement, EFOA) to carry out the project activities.
 - (b) As a result, CSU and World Bank would do financial reporting to the EA (Science Division), the EA would be responsible for financial reporting to the IA (Ecosystems Division), and the IA would be responsible for financial reporting to GEF.
 - (c) The reporting from the CSU partner generally followed UNEP Policies and Procedures other than some delays in reporting (mostly to do with signature waits causing little lags and adding up) which was not overall significant in terms of financial management. When there was a handover in the project, there was virtually no financial information available and the FMO (both IA and EA) taking over had to scramble to find reporting on expenditure and disbursements for the first half of the project. Expenditure reporting shows (generally) expenditure as per project plan, with some exceptions toward the end of the project where the project justifiably shuffled funds around to allow for the extension and continued management by CSU. Generally, there were no complaints regarding delayed payments (this could not be verified as original disbursements were not available outside of the PIR reporting), nor were there delays in expenditure reporting generally (bi-yearly). Expenditure was generally within the approved budget.
 - (d) The World Bank had an agreement that the evaluator finds highly unusual and goes against UNEP Policies and Procedures "Agreement by UNEP to Reimburse the World Bank to the SLM-CCMC Externally Financed Output", which stated two

⁸⁹ Science body (used by some key UNEP former staff) i.e. key UN environmental institution grounded on scientific rigour.

notable things: (1) that no reporting was necessary by the Bank other than the “standard EFO” reports⁹⁰, and (2) that if the Bank decides that for any reason whatsoever, that the outputs cannot be achieved, it is the sole discretion of the bank as to what portion of the funds are reversed (under good faith). When the EA FMO came in, and because of the obligation for transparent reporting for all components under GEF requirements and UNEP Policy, the FMO attempted to follow up with the Bank for financial reporting to which she was re-directed to the initial agreement. As a result, and in the most appropriate manner of procedural follow-up and being advised by UNON that for projects where one does not have the financial reports, one can apply for a “notional claim”, the FMO approached the Corporate Services Division and received a notional claim to sign off on the USD 475,000 that was disbursed to the Bank based on the completion of the two outputs under this Component.⁹¹ The project has not been penalized for this lack of financial documentation in this evaluation. However, as it does not conform to international best practices the case is brought to the attention of UNEP and a recommendation made to clarify/confirm the general guidance on partner financial reporting to all staff.

- (e) The roles between the IA, the EA and the partner (CSU) were sometimes blurred. The PCA between the CSU and the EA, and the ICA between the EA and the IC are extremely similar and there may have thus been overlap in functions between the EA and the partner. In addition, when the project was in a standstill (when there was turnover in the project, the Project Manager position was empty when the role of Land Management Expert in Science disappeared with the retirement of the person in that role and so the project was effectively orphaned at Science Division until a position was made available for a Project Coordinator to take on the project activities and resume the role of the EA). During this time there was confusion from the CSU partner as to whom at UNEP should be liaised with, and this could have resulted in the IA having to take on direct communication with the CSU instead of the procedure of EA and its partners, and EA and IA communication. From a policy and procedure point of view, the firewall was thus not always there in terms of clear roles and responsibilities.

155. The FMOs who inherited the project took on the responsibility of following procedures under difficult circumstances and the evaluator is sure that lessons were learnt from this process. Once these stepped in, there was good overall procedural flow. However, with some of the issues (like project handover, and roles and procedures vis project losing its home when certain individuals left means there is some sort of a lack of following overall procedure when handover needs to happen), for these reasons rated *Moderately Satisfactory*.

Completeness of Project Financial Information

156. The project’s financial management is as complete as it can be within the requirements of financial reporting for the time period it was in (i.e. the requirements of GEF/UNEP

⁹⁰ The World Bank Correspondent maintained that two were EFO reports were submitted (30 April 2017 and 28 June 2018), although the Evaluator was only provided with the last one. The EFO report is a one-page document that is high-level in that it reflects only the total amount and which output had been achieved (yes/no).

⁹¹ Notional documents were shared at the finalisation stage of the TE report and provided sufficient evidence to justify the notional claim; although the World Bank respondent presumably had delivered the first EFO report and progress report (at end of Year 1), these were not among the documents shared by the UNEP EA/Science Division.

reporting). The evaluator did not receive the final financial report; however did receive the final expenditure report Jan 2021-December 2021.

157. There was not sufficient co-financing information from the UNEP EA in terms of contributions and expenditure. UNEP contributions were reported as USD 257,000 total (as the IA). While UNEP as the IA reported on co-financing contributions, the EA did not have co-financing planned in this project, yet there was co-financing in terms of staff time, and other in-kind contributions from the Science Division that were not reflected.⁹² In fact, at least USD 58,000 in cash was contributed by the Science Division to fill the role of Project Coordinator in the last year of the project (which was taken from another project). Otherwise, co-financing was well reported for the partners.
158. Audit reports were made available (for CSU, not for others).⁹³
159. The project underwent two no-cost extensions, for which the amendments of the relevant agreements were made available. The second extension came with a budget revision (in 2020), where some funds from the EA were allocated to CSU to keep the project manager on board for the duration of the 12 month extension.⁹⁴
160. Tables of financial expenditure to budget, as well as co-financing, can be found in Annex 3.
161. With regard to the World Bank agreement, and lack of project financial information, this cannot be faulted the financial management team. However, a recommendation is made here to ensure UNEP follows its own policies upon signing agreements with partners (irrelevant of the stature of the partner), and if such a case occurs, that it goes through its legal division, and finance and budget division, to make sure the house is protected.
162. Completeness of project financial information is rated as *Moderately Satisfactory*.

Communication Between Finance and Project Management Staff

163. The project went through a stagnant period when key personnel from Science and Ecosystems (task managers and project manager, as well as FMOs) either retired or moved on and there was no handover (at least in terms of financial reporting). The EA FMO inherited the project in 2018 and had to make an effort to find the financial report (in some instances having to go to the partner CSU to track original records). The IA FMO joined in 2019 and also did not have a strong hand over in terms of the information and decisions that had been taken prior to her joining.⁹⁵
164. This was highlighted as a significant problem to the financial reporting (including the adherence to policies and procedures as mentioned above). Particularly paragraph 154 (d) and (e) under Adherence to Policies and Procedures is linked to communications, which includes the difficulty in understanding why certain decisions were made because there was no communication in the hand over or proper handover of reporting, as well as the hand over causing a lag in communication between UNEP and the partners.

⁹² Interview with Science Division FMO, a final co-financing document was provided to the evaluator, which states the contribution from UNEP was USD 257, 732, no delineation between the IA and the EA.

⁹³ Audit reports, interviews.

⁹⁴ Budget revision documentation, interviews with project team.

⁹⁵ Interviews with both FMOs.

165. Once the project was inherited and taken over by the relevant FMOs within the IA and the EA, there was generally effective communication between the two, as well as within the institution between the Task Manager and the FMO in IA and the Project Manager and Coordinator within the EA.
166. Between the IA and EA, in terms of the internal nature, there was some overlap felt in communication between the partners and the IA where the EA felt that partners should have gone through the EA instead. This may have been a result in the initial lag time in the turn-over of staff (as mentioned above).
167. Communication between finance and project management staff is rated as *Moderately Satisfactory*.

Rating for Financial Management: Moderately Satisfactory

Efficiency

168. *Time*: The project was delayed by one year for two reasons (1) legal issues that caused a lengthy backwards and forwards between UNEP and CSU that lasted a year, and (2) general (and usual) lag time in project approval.⁹⁶ As a result, one of the GEF Country Case projects had already finished by the time the project started (Brazil), and another was half-way through (Ethiopia) although no significant impacts were felt in results achievement through this delay.
169. The project underwent two project extensions, the first was an extension from original project end date of 8 December 2019 to 8 August 2020 (technical) (justification: country projects were still busy and needed support), and the second up until 21 February 2021 (with formal project closure 30 September 2021) based mainly upon COVID-19 delays both in the global aspects and at country level.⁹⁷
170. A general delay in the project (as was already outlined in Financial Management above) will be discussed in more detail under Quality of Management and Supervision below.
171. *Cost-effectiveness*: The project was highly cost-effective, made good use of co-financing, created synergies for mutual benefits, and generally built on existing initiatives. In addition, due to high demand, often training events that were requested came with their own funding. There was strong budget flexibility, especially in terms of COVID-19, that when there was a need to extend, the budget was taken from travel (which was not used) to be able to keep the CSU project manager on board for the additional year.

Rating for Efficiency: Satisfactory

Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring Design and Budgeting

172. Monitoring (and its budget) at design stage could have been improved in only one way: outcome-level indicators could have focused on measuring deeper impact (i.e.

⁹⁶ Interview with project designers and project team.

⁹⁷ Interviews and extension documentation – amendments to agreements.

behaviour change) rather than focusing merely on the number of participants exposed to trainings etc.

173. The monitoring and evaluation plan is laid out in Table B of the project document with dedicated budgets (including for project meetings, inception meeting and reporting, in-house MTR, progress reporting, monitoring visits, and terminal evaluation as well as the project terminal report).
174. The project logical framework did not have dedicated gender indicators, but did highlight the equality of all training events (which subsequently the project appropriately achieved). The evaluator also opines given the mandate of the project as a purely scientific project focusing on GHG sequestration tools fore-most, the monitoring of gender was always going to be limited at design. The project document did qualitatively state the use and adaptation of socio-economic tools (as a way to deal with the needs of different communities working in SLM) which is a small sub-part of the project.
175. Monitoring design and budgeting is rated as *Satisfactory*.

Monitoring of Project Implementation

176. Monitoring was conducted as laid out by the project document, but was improved on through continuous learning and sharing of project implementation throughout the project allowed for flexibility and adaptiveness in project implementation (especially with regard to the technical aspects of the project).
177. The project also delivered a lessons learnt publication (as part of reporting below) that allowed for the project to capture some of the implementation and technical aspects to be learnt from. Here the project also reflected on how gender and marginalised groups could have been integrated (and could be further) into the adaption of the socio-economic tools (as part of the greater GHG tool set).
178. Indicators were effectively reported on with data evidenced in the quarterly and PIR reporting. For the trainings, data was disaggregated by gender and gender equality was reasonably represented.⁹⁸
179. Budgets were reasonably spent according to the M&E plan set out at design.
180. The lack of hand over meant that some monitoring may have fallen aside during 2017/2018, and the project experienced delays, even though the project manager from CSU carried the project forward and took initiative over and above the role to champion the project.
181. Monitoring of project implementation is rated as *Satisfactory*.

Project Reporting

182. Half-yearly progress reports were developed throughout the project lifespan.⁹⁹ Partner reports were submitted regularly and as expected. No regular progress reports were

⁹⁸ Reviews of quarterly and PIR reporting.

⁹⁹ Review of half yearly progress reports of SLM-CCMC project.

received from World Bank (although this was not a prerequisite in the agreement signed with the EA).¹⁰⁰ The final project report was very detailed with annexes outlining specific tasks and additional achievements above the indicators. A glossy report was commissioned and finalised toward the end of the project that included detailed lessons learnt and recommendations for further uptake.

183. As mentioned above, gender disaggregation and equality was reported on sufficiently in the PIRs and quarterly reports. A strong element of learning about gender was included in the lessons learnt report and will have a sustaining effect on the further development of the socio-economic tools; the project did well to work with the Gender Unit to allow for enhanced capacity for gender-integrative implementation.
184. Project reporting is rated as *Satisfactory*.

Rating for Monitoring and Reporting:	Satisfactory
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Sustainability

Socio-political Sustainability

185. COVID-19 will likely continue to play a role in shaping how the work of the tools progress, including more movement online. However, there are sufficient online training tools and resources which are already being used (along with support by CSU) to deal with the demand coming in.
186. Stakeholder awareness and interest has been raised, particularly through the training, the outreach (covered under Communication below) and through the linking of the WOCAT and CBP tools which has raised a lot of demand for the toolset. The amount of project support requests coming in is testament to the value add that the linked toolset brings.
187. The level of ownership by GEF is minimal especially considering the long-term financial and technical investment it has provided to the project and its former projects since the early 2000s. The support to the tool exists in terms of GEF projects being able to use it for development or implementation.
188. At country level, some further uptake as taken place (Ethiopia and Kenya) across networks and institutions and this will likely continue. In Ecuador it is not clear how much project results will be sustained, and in South Africa it is unlikely any will be sustained.¹⁰¹ More country-level ownership and integration has been elaborated on under paragraph 200 under Institutional Sustainability.
189. Socio-political sustainability is rated as *Likely*.

Financial Sustainability

190. Currently, the CBP tools are maintained through a small COF at CSU which is not sustainable. CSU is engaging with various partners to seek funding to continue the tool. At the moment this funding is at a project-by-project basis and thus core operating costs are not included. In addition, demand requests that don't come with their own

¹⁰⁰ According to the World Bank respondent, one progress report was submitted to UNEP in April 2017 (end of Year 1). The evaluator was not provided with this report.

¹⁰¹ See under Likelihood of Impact, and Availability of Outputs.

- funding at the moment are being dealt with out of pocket (in terms of time and resources spent by the former project manager who is not a staff member of CSU).
191. One opportunity for funding is with USDA which is project specific and geared towards the evolution of the tools and use in developing countries. Some other requests have coming with funding from e.g. Tunisia, Colombia and Qatar, to use the tools.
 192. Ongoing work with WOCAT is also funded through projects (including through FAO, CALRIM, GIZ, and others).
 193. A longer-term funding strategy would need to be put in place for some core funding to allow for ongoing maintenance and updating of the CBP tools site, as well as to meet the raising demand for training, especially from developing countries.
 194. More funding would be needed (and has not been secured) to upgrade tool database architecture, work on user-friendly, better-performing dynamic models (like the COMET tool) and have innovation in the system (through apps, google data inclusion, etc). The strategy for this work exists and some partial funding (through, e.g. USDA, has been secured).
 195. Given the fact the lack of sustainability exit strategy and the insecurity of dedicated secured funding, but having some funding opportunities in place, financial sustainability is rated as *Moderately Likely*.

Institutional Sustainability

196. The sustainability of the project varies institutionally, and while partnerships have been fostered and will occur organically, more needs to be done to strengthen the network and especially the partnership at GEF and GEF Implementing Agency level to continue supporting and growing the toolsets. A recommendation to this effect is made in the final section of this report. The institutional sustainability is described per institution below.
197. **UNEP:** The use of the toolset will continue to be championed through some individuals in the Science Division, as well as in the Ecosystems Division. However, there is no planned hosting of CBP tools in Science Division through e.g. financing commitment to IT maintenance or training of tool as was hoped by some project partners and the UNEP staff who were part of the longer-term process in developing the tools and who retired during the project implementation. The use of tools by project and programme managers depends more on individual interest although champions in both divisions continue to support and advocate its use. Given the nature of the organisation (predominantly an institution with a rigorous science background that should be supporting scientific developments in the interface between science and policy/decision-making), and the value addition of the tool within the Theory of Change and the bigger agenda, it would be beneficial to take on some ownership of the tool within UNEP, at least in support of its partner CSU, in the longer-term. A recommendation to this effect has been made.
198. **CSU:** The university has been maintaining the CBP tools online through a small core operating fund (not necessarily sustainable in the long-term) within responsible department at CSU, and continues to seek funding (none committed at time of evaluation); as mentioned under financial sustainability above there are funding opportunities through project-level initiatives (including growth and advancement of tool, e.g. through USDA funding).

199. **Partnerships:** The linkage of WOCAT and CSU is strong and symbiotic and will continue at institutional level – many projects are coming in as a result of this interlinkage (due to benefits of linking to both). In addition, WOCAT and LandPKS more structurally integrated, with LandPKS potential for further linkages with CBP tools through CSU. There has also been a lot of foundation built on fostering the partnership with the UNCCD and its work as previously mentioned under the Effectiveness section of this report.
200. **At country level:** In Ethiopia, strong engagement by CSU and additional trainings held with USAID project meant wider application of tools in different institutions and areas. In the ECOANDES project, there may be use of tools within CONDESAN and other institutions, but this could not be confirmed. In Kenya, within KALRO and within two universities, there has been engaged uptake (and training) on the tools. In South Africa, it is unlikely that institutional integration of the toolset will be done unless the South Africa project puts in a strategy before project closing.
201. Institutional sustainability is rated as *Likely*.

Rating for Sustainability: Likely

Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-cutting Issues

Preparation and readiness

202. The project document built on two previous projects and laid out a sound plan building on previous foundations. The choice of GEF Country Case projects depended on the entry point with the selected Implementation Agency (the project sought diversity in order to have more IAs exposed to the CBP and WOCAT tools) and the relevance to the tool use; generally this was good, but also meant that there was some top-down approaches (like in the case of South Africa where the initial understanding of the fit between projects was not fully understood).
203. The Component 3 was not part of initial proposal design and was a result of combining two proposals which seemed feasible in theory but the evaluator is not convinced of its practicality based on the feedback from various respondents.
204. The logical framework (with the exception of outcome-level indicators) was sound and was realistically measurable and achievable. Activities were built on previous foundations and thus the results framework was realistic and lent a strong point of departure to the project.
205. Risk identification and environment and social safeguards presented in the project document were satisfactory for what was expected by GEF-5 projects at the time. The project was designed with flexibility which allowed the project partners to be able to adapt if risks and adaptation mechanisms as a result were pretty good in that they allowed for the project to adapt pretty well to COVID-19 limitations and shocks.
206. Governance and implementation structure was laid out in the project document, and legal agreements were in place at the beginning of the project. However, in terms of governance, the inclusion of Science Division as the EA would have been more appropriate if it had been aligned institutionally and not to a particular person (which resulted in lack of handover when that person left); in addition the roles of the two executing partners were not clear given that the ICA between the IA and the EA

internally at UNEP was virtually the same agreement as the PCA between the EA and CSU.

207. Staffing was ready to go at the beginning of the project but eminent retirement of key staff at UNEP could have been considered in design and hand over strategies could have been planned already at the beginning in anticipation of this.
208. Partners selection was robust in terms of partner capacity to implement, including at GEF project case level. A steering committee was established at the beginning of the project and was adequately represented by all project partners (at country level this included project coordinators for the different GEF case projects).
209. The PRC recommendation response was adequately addressed and fully taken into consideration in project implementation (as were the recommendations made by the GEF STAP during the evaluation meeting of the previous project – these were integrated into project design of the SLM-CCMC project).
210. An inception meeting took place at the beginning of the project, and funds were disbursed within 6 months of project approval.¹⁰²
211. Given the above considerations, Preparation and readiness is rated as *Satisfactory*.

Quality of project management and supervision

UNEP/Implementing Agency

212. The Ecosystem Division was the Implementing Agency of the project. The Executing Agency was also within UNEP but sitting in another Division (Science Division).
213. There was some turn over (when the initial Task Manager retired, who had championed the work on CBP since its inception in the early 2000s) and when this turn over happened, there was not as much technical background to the project. The new Task Manager came in later (some lag time occurred) and found the project orphaned at the time within the Executing Agency (which had also undergone staff turnover, and the loss of a position, discussed below). By this time, the project partner (CSU) had been executing the project without much UNEP guidance and when there was no response and the partner was unsure who at UNEP was assigned to the project, actually made the decision to fly to Nairobi to find out what was going on in terms of the governance of the project.
214. The new Task Manager did an effective job at providing leadership for the project to get back on the road and deliver on its planned outcomes, including through backstopping and making sure that the Executive Agency used appropriate resources to put a project coordinator in place.
215. As a result of the project being orphaned for a period of time (between 2017 and 2018), the CSU became accustomed to dealing with the Ecosystems Division, and the firewall between the IA and EA did experience some breakdowns¹⁰³.
216. The IA (and the EA) could have been more effective at sharing and communications within UNEP (as an example, the Climate Change Sub-programme Coordinator had not

¹⁰² PIR 2016.

¹⁰³ The CSU often was more of an executing agency, there was a lot of direct communication between the IA and CSU, with continued consultation with the EA.

heard of the project). The task manager put in a lot of effort to increase project relevance in the institution and within other GEF IAs (as did the project coordinator in the EA), although this may have come in a little late. The task manager did a good job at adapting to taking on a project that was lacking in ownership at UNEP and moving it forward, as well as increasing its visibility through the commissioning of the Lessons Learnt report.

217. The IA approved two no-cost extensions, and for the second made sure that the Science Division put aside co-financing and reshuffled the budget in order to manage the project for an additional year.
218. IA is rated as *Moderately Satisfactory*.

Executing Agency and Partners

219. The Executing Agency was placed under the responsibility of Thematic Assessments in the Science Division. At the time of project design and approval, the idea was that (given the mandate of UNEP to do science and policy interface, and the fact that the CBP project was successful within the UNEP structure – leading to a Chapter in the GEO-5 as well as a whole journal at the time dedicated to it with the authors coming primarily from the project and UNEP) the tools should be taken up and owned by UNEP as UNEP has the comparative advantage. At the time the position of Programme Officer in the LD Focal Area was within DEWA and the person in this role was a soil scientist who was championing the tools, and thus was the project manager for the project. However, the person resigned in 2017 and the position was removed and there was no hand over of the project. As a result, in 2018, it was placed on a project manager's desk who deprioritized it, and as a result there was no formal supervision of the partners (at the time the World Bank component had already ended, so that only left CSU).
220. The project manager kept the project going until supervision was restored when the Task Manager at the IA and the Project Manager at EA came on board (Head of the Thematic Assessments) and followed up and had discussions as to what should be done to continue the project and supervise CSU to finalise results (CSU in the meantime had carried on the project so in terms of results achievement there was not much affected) and in 2019 the gap was filled through a UNV as project coordinator, after which things ran much more smoothly even if the higher level championship for the project was not what it was when it first started.
221. The lack of hand over meant that no one at Thematic Assessments truly understood why it was placed there (the project does not fall within its mandate). While the Science Division team finally did a pretty effective job at managing the project to completion, there is no real ownership (beyond the enthusiasm of the project coordinator) or capacity to take on the tools within the Thematic Assessments Unit beyond project closure.
222. Steering Committee meetings were held once a year to keep the project on track, except for the time where there was a gap as discussed above. All members were generally present (including the World Bank).
223. From **CSU**: The CSU, and particularly the project coordinator, did an impressive job at holding the project together and going out of her way to make sure results were achieved even when there was not much supervision. There was strong overall coordination of the project and support to country case projects throughout project

lifespan by CSU. As mentioned, the project coordinator from CSU carried the project from start to finish excellently and is referred to by all project partners as the key driver to the project's implementation success.

224. WOCAT partnership with CSU was strong throughout the project and has laid foundations for sustaining of partnership beyond project closure, LandPKS alignment and also laid foundations for further partnership and work beyond project
225. The World Bank (as the executing partner for the Component 3) partnered with FAO (changed from IRD France, i.e. the task moved with the person who moved from IRD to FAO), had generally good collaboration, some feedback from stakeholders not fully understanding the component integration with the other components of the project, there is very little knowledge about how the project was managed from the World Bank side because the counterpart declined to take part in the evaluation, and there was an agreement that excepted the World Bank from any reporting duties to this project.
226. In terms of the country level partners (connected also to attainment of project results): (a) *Ethiopia, IFAD CBINReMP*: this project was already at mid-term when the SLM-CCMC project engaged (due to delays at start of SLM-CCMC), however implementation and use of tools helpful to project, good and regular communication with CSU and particularly WOCAT support; (b) *Ecuador and Peru, UNEP ECOANDES*: partnership and support from CSU to CONDESAN good, tools used for project; (d) *Kenya, KALRO SLM Small-scale agri*: strong collaboration with CSU, used as a good practice example in training of other partners; and (e) *South Africa, UNDP Ecosystems benefit through SLM*: good support and collaboration with CSU, although some communication issues at the beginning, most likely within the higher levels of UNEP and UNDP that did not allow for the project on the ground to fully feel included in the decision making process around the tool use.
227. The rating for the executing agency and partners is *Moderately Satisfactory*.
228. Project management and supervision is rated as *Moderately Satisfactory*.

Stakeholder participation and cooperation

229. The project, particularly through CSU, made a significant effort to bring on board partners within and outside of GEF. CSU also did a pretty good job at taking into consideration the needs of SLM-affected communities (through the recommendations made by the project coordinators implementing the country case study projects) into the socio-economic tools.
230. Strong partnership between CSU and WOCAT, as mentioned above under other sections under Findings, have the potential to further build on collaborative efforts. These also include partnerships and support to other projects and institutions, like FAO, UNCCD, GIZ, country-level direct engagements, and more.
231. Some challenges exist in garnering interest within the UNEP house, some gaps exist in communication here, as well as among other implementing agencies in the interest and engagement of the tools.
232. Stakeholder participation and cooperation is rated as *Satisfactory*.

Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

233. The project, in its design, attempted to work through some superficial indicators of gender quality in the training. The project was not designed with a gender-focus as it was biophysical in nature. However, the differentiated roles of men and women, as well as the differentiated access (and voice) across sustainable land management programmes in the world are highly relevant.
234. The project worked with the Gender and Safeguards Unit to review its lessons learnt report, and as a result included a lesson that increases the focus on gender-disaggregated impacts in future technical projects through an adjustment in the socio-economic tools as part of the toolset of CBP and WOCAT.
235. Gender disaggregation and equality was reported on through the project implementation period. A strong element of learning about gender was included in the lessons learnt report and will have a sustaining effect on the further development of the socio-economic tools.
236. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity is rated as *Moderately Satisfactory*.

Environmental and social safeguards

237. The project focused on environmental health through incentivising SLM projects working on multiple benefits.
238. There was at the time no environmental and social safeguard for the development of the project.¹⁰⁴ There is unlikely a risk to environmental maladaptation as a result of the project. There are risks to sustaining environmental results of the countries, but these fall within the limits of the GEF projects focusing on each country and not on this global project that was specific to tool enhancement and use.
239. The project did face COVID-19 (an essentially social and environmental problem) and did a pretty good job at mitigating this risk.
240. The project partners and UNEP had minimal travel and many meetings and support was done online, when CSU (and UNEP) did visit countries, as much as possible was done to maximise on the visit (including field visits, additional support, additional trainings). Environmental (specifically carbon) footprint was further minimised when a lot of training was moved online and travel in general was limited due to COVID-19 restrictions.
241. Environmental and social safeguards rated as *Satisfactory*.

Country ownership and drivenness

242. Other than a small set of case studies that formed part of a larger capacity building and outreach, the country did not have a focus on country-level drivenness and ownership, as it was a global project.
243. That said, the ownership and further use of the tools is discussed in the sections under Effectiveness and Sustainability above. As mentioned, particularly in some countries, e.g. Kenya and Ethiopia, evidenced further uptake and use of tools.

¹⁰⁴ The Evaluation Office of UNEP notes that Safeguards have been required in UNEP project documents since 2011.

244. Strong demand from countries and projects has been evidenced through requests coming in to CSU and WOCAT (as well as increased online data on user numbers); potential avenues of collaboration with UNCCD e.g. through national reporting cycle (2021-2022) due to existing relationship with WOCAT and CBP linkage as well as the aim for the next reporting cycle to include spatial information) which could further country-level engagement.
245. Some plans to advance and innovate, including looking into deploying dynamic modelling in developing countries, remote systems data simulation techniques, individual farmers access to actually have it (i.e. the dynamic modelling) working in developing countries which might also engage more countries.
246. Country ownership and drivenness is rated as *Satisfactory*.

Communication and public awareness

247. Communication and outreach were integrated into component 1 through training, in component 2 through the open access to the tools (WOCAT and CBP), and component 3 through the e-learning and manual.
248. Outside of the results framework, the project made an effort to do a lot of outreach, including through reports,¹⁰⁵ articles,¹⁰⁶ e-learning and training videos,¹⁰⁷ presentations at various events,¹⁰⁸ and brochures, and sharing of the guidance manual and the e-learning link for tool selection.

¹⁰⁵ United Nations Environment Programme Nairobi (2021). Learning to Manage Land Sustainably with Climate Change Mitigation Co-benefits: Lessons from the Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change Mitigation Co-benefits (SLM-CCMC) Project; "Toudert, Anass; Braimoh, Ademola; Bernoux, Martial; St-Louis, Maylina; Abdelmagied, Manar; Bockel, Louis; Ignaciuk, Adriana; Zhao, Yuxuan. 2018. Carbon Accounting Tools for Sustainable Land Management. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/31062> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO."; "Toudert, Anass; Braimoh, Ademola; Bernoux, Martial; St-Louis, Maylina; Abdelmagied, Manar; Bockel, Louis; Ignaciuk, Adriana; Zhao, Yuxuan. 2018. Greenhouse Gas Accounting for Sustainable Land Management : Quick Guidance for Users. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/31063> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO."

¹⁰⁶ Online article: 'Learning to use the land so it produces fewer greenhouse gases' outlining work in Components 1 and 2 of the project was published on the UNEP website www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/learning-use-land-so-it-produces-fewer-greenhouse-gases and the GEF website <https://www.thegef.org/news/learning-use-land-so-it-produces-fewer-greenhouse-gases>

SLM-CCMC project work featured in: Voices from the Land: Restoring soils and enriching lives. UNEP 2019. Available from: [Voices from the land: Restoring soil and enriching lives | UNEP - UN Environment Programme](#)

The Carbon Benefits project - Kakamega-Nandi Landscape in Western Kenya. K. Were and G. Ayaga. Available from [Western-Kenya-SLM.pdf \(colostate.edu\)](#)
The Carbon Benefits Project – Two Contrasting Sites in The Eastern Cape, South Africa by Rebecca Powell. Available from [Two-sites-in-the-Eastern-Cape.pdf \(colostate.edu\)](#)

¹⁰⁷ Greenhouse gas accounting tools for sustainable land management – self paced. [Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tools for Sustainable Land Management \(Self-paced\) | World Bank Group](#)

CBP online training videos (English) [The Carbon Benefits Project Online Training 5 - 6 - YouTube](#)

CBP online training videos (Russian)

[Carbon Benefits Project training Russian Day 1 Углеродные льготы Проект подготовки Русский день 1 - YouTube](#)

[Carbon Benefits Project training Russian 2 Углеродные льготы Проект подготовки Русский день 2 - YouTube](#)

[Carbon Benefits Project training Russian Day 3 Углеродные льготы Проект подготовки Русский день 3 - YouTube](#)

CBP Power point training videos in English, French, Spanish and Russian available from the Resources page of the CBP website [Quick Guide – CBP \(colostate.edu\)](#)

¹⁰⁸ Milne E. The Carbon Benefits Project. Tools to estimate the climate change mitigation co-benefits of land management projects. NASA Carbon Monitoring System Policy Speaker Series, invited presentation. Nov 30th 2016. Recording available at [CMS - the NASA Carbon Monitoring System](#)

Milne, Paustian and Easter. 2017. Estimating soil organic carbon changes: Is it feasible? Keynote presentation given at The Global Symposium on Soil Organic Carbon. FAO Rome, Italy, 21-23rd March 2017.

Milne, Paustian and Easter on behalf of the SLM-CCMC project team. 2018. Overview of the CBP tools (and linkages to WOCAT & LandPKS) presentation for the 4p1000 Scientific Committee

.....for a future collaboration 12th December 2018

Milne, Paustian and Easter on behalf of the SLM-CCMC project team. 2018. Overview of the CBP tools (and linkages to WOCAT & LandPKS). Presentation at the 4 per 1000 3rd FORUM of PARTNERS Katowice, Poland 13th December 2018 in the session 'Monitoring and Reporting of soil organic carbon for climate change mitigation and adaptation benefits at multiple levels' (on the sidelines of the UNFCCC COP24).

A presentation giving an overview of the SLM-CCMC project was given by Rachel Kosse in a UNEP hosted land degradation webinar as part of the GEO-6 webinar series in August 2019. The CBP tools (with particular emphasis on the dynamic modeling option) were presented by the CSU coordinator at the 'UK Satellite SOC meeting' at The University of Leeds on Sept 30th. As a result the CBP tools have been used in Leeds University research projects.

The SLM-CCMC was involved in 4 side events at the UNCCD COP meeting in Delhi, September 2019. This included the projects own side event 'Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change Mitigation Co-benefits - The CBP, WOCAT, LandPKS linked toolset' Side Event: Friday Sept 6th, 18.00 – 20.00. This was designed specifically to showcase outputs from the project and involved 4 presentations from three project partners.

The SLM-CCMC project also gave a presentations at:

UNCCD COP14 Side event: The IFAD side event 'Sustainable transition from shifting cultivation to climate resilient and land degradation neutral farming practices in the uplands of South and Southeast Asia'

UNCCD COP14 Side event: Conservation International's side event: 'We now have targets but how do we achieve LDN? Decision support tools for planning and monitoring'

UNCCD COP14 Side event: Decision support for mainstreaming and scaling out sustainable land management to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality

E. Milne, M. Easter, K. Paustian, B. Sutton, G. Dheenadayan Sivakami, K. Brown & A. Swan. 2020. Tools for agriculture, land and climate change. Colorado State University International Symposium. 26th February 2020.

Webinar on World Soil Day January 2021: Managing soils for a sustainable - a toolset. future – Organised by Nicole Harari and Tatenda Lemann available at

<https://www.wocat.net/library/media/232/> and [Managing soils for a sustainable future – a toolset - YouTube](#)

February 2020: UNCCD – WOCAT2020+ exchange in Bonn

February 2020: GIZ – WOCAT2020+ exchange in Bonn

249. The project also produced a lessons learnt report of which the launch will be organised through the EA where the project will also celebrate project achievements at project closure, and disseminate the lessons learnt report (both soft and hard copy) through all UNEP networks and partner networks.
250. All this outreach has had value creation because requests and online users have increased multi-fold as a result of the training and outreach. And through partnerships and linkages, CBP was featured in a book that UNCCD did about soil organic carbon, along with many other requests for chapter contributions, practical guides, tool feature requests, etc.
251. Despite all the value that the project has been able to create outside of UNEP and GEF, it is interesting to see that this has not been taken up within the institution (this could be a product of institutional memory challenges, championship at specific levels within the institutions, internal communications, among others).
252. From an effort and resulting demand point of view, communication and public awareness is rated as Highly Satisfactory.

Rating for Factors Affecting Performance: Satisfactory

CBP Tools are included in the standard WOCAT presentation, which is used for various WOCAT trainings, workshops, meetings, task forces etc. Attendance/representation.

The CSU coordinator attended the 'Certification in developing countries' workshop at the Overseas Development Agency in London, UK on Sept 3rd 2019, during which she had the opportunity to raise awareness of the SLM CCMC project and CBP tools.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

253. SLM-CCMC project, at the time of its development, was a highly relevant project that was a result of direct GEF STAP recommendations.¹⁰⁹ It remains a highly relevant project in terms of its place in the global arena of carbon monitoring, and the potential the CBP tools (and WOCAT linkage) have in general in terms of innovating further in the area of SLM and climate change. Despite this, and with a few exceptions in terms of (slowly rising demand in) uptake of some GEF implementing agencies at the project level, it appears that GEF and UNEP as institutions have not continued to see the level of relevance it has in its growth potential to advance movement to the relevant targets in the Global Agenda 2030.¹¹⁰
254. The project was designed to enhance capacity among GEF IAs and beyond to use the tools, improve tools through synergies, linkages and complementarities through partnerships, and support users to be able to choose the most appropriate tools to monitor the carbon impacts of their specific SLM initiative. In short, move the agenda to capture the carbon sequestration impact and potential of improved agricultural and land use practices forward. Did it do this? The short answer is yes. Would similar results would have been achieved had the project not existed? No. The project certainly had an important place in the overall Theory of Change to move more initiatives into tracking their carbon impacts to the global climate change mitigation agenda.¹¹¹
255. The project overachieved in some of its outputs (particularly the training and the linkages with WOCAT), and achieved what was set out in design (although with some minor limitations to results sustainability at country-level)¹¹². The project did excellently in fostering the partnerships, meeting rising demand, and thus was able to conduct a large set of training events that in many cases led to further uptake and demand (and further training outside of the project) of the tools. The partnerships gained through this additional training brought in additional co-financing and had reach beyond the project. The other result the project excelled in is the fostering of the partnership through the linked tools of CSU and WOCAT which has laid a foundation of mutual benefit and growth in the tools, and has raised demand for both sets of tools as a result.¹¹³
256. In terms of the Theory of Change, together, Outcomes 1 and 2 of the project (i.e. that training and the linked toolset) have certainly helped to grow the number of SLM project managers to use tools, but the commitment from GEF and GEF agencies to fund further training at this point is project by project based and not part of a longer term strategy. Within the UNCCD, however, there is potential through existing partnership with WOCAT and through existing discussions on collaborative efforts with CSU and WOCAT. It is clear that partnership and opportunity is growing through the interlinkages of the toolsets.

¹⁰⁹ See paragraph 92 and generally Project Context.

¹¹⁰ See Strategic Relevance, as well as Likelihood of Achievement of Impact under Findings Section.

¹¹¹ See Project Design, Effectiveness sections.

¹¹² Which is not specific to achievement of outputs but to sustainability.

¹¹³ See Effectiveness sections.

257. Partnerships, and championship, is a strong factor in the results achievement (through the championship particularly of the project coordinator at CSU), and in terms of moving forward (partnerships to be fostered, and championship at the institutional level, which is there in the implementation partners CSU and WOCAT).
258. The likelihood of impact being achieved is a question of time and how the CBP and WOCAT tools can contribute to a more rapid pathway to impact. Based on the current trajectory, carbon monitoring in SLM projects will become the new normal. How quickly this happens will depend on how much GEF and IAs institutionally support, through partnerships, tools like CBP to move this agenda forward. The potential for CBP and WOCAT to be interlinked with more tools and opportunities, and the potential for innovation and broader uptake, is strong. At the moment, partnerships are growing, demand is growing, and the achieving impact is likely even without the institutional backing from GEF and UNEP. But the impact will be achieved at a greater speed and with higher levels of meeting demand for the use of the tools (and with more room opening up to allow CSU and WOCAT to focus on innovation).¹¹⁴
259. The implementation of the project provided a few lessons to UNEP particularly in terms of its internal agreements and operations, its partnership arrangements (agreements), how the institution handles hand over of projects and suppositories of documentation and institutional memory in terms how and why projects are placed under the leadership of certain divisions. There is a learning process in the lag time where the project was essentially “orphaned” within UNEP for a period of time in 2017/2018 until it was picked up and moved forward relatively successfully to its ultimate achievement (including the fortunate situation where the CSU partner was so engaged that the project carried on without much UNEP guidance).
260. Overall, the key achievements of the project include its results framework achievement, the strengthened partnerships, the improvement and linkages of the tools, the increasing resultant demand due to training and outreach for the use of the linked toolset, and the significant contribution it made to advancing the carbon monitoring agenda globally.
261. The table below provides a summary of the ratings and findings discussed in Chapter 0 (Findings). Overall, the project demonstrates a rating of **Satisfactory**.

¹¹⁴ See Likelihood of Impact.

Table 5. Summary of project findings and ratings of the SLM-CCMC Project

Criterion <i>The criterion rating and the overall project rating is based on the automatic calculations based on the Weighting of Ratings table in the UNEP Evaluation Guidance package.</i>	Summary Assessment	Rating
A. Strategic Relevance	High relevance in terms of GEBs, global climate change and SLM agenda (LDN), Global Agenda 2030 (particularly in monitoring achievement of targets), alignment to UNEP priorities strong, relevant to regional and national priorities depending on country level interest, strong alignment with demand in terms of complementarity but relevance in view of other tools and value add not as visible as it should be in GEF IA context.	HS
<i>1. Alignment to MTS and POW</i>	Aligned to EA Subprogramme Climate Change (b)3 – technical support to countries to develop tools, also contributed to Healthy Ecosystems Subprogramme	HS
<i>2. Alignment to Donor/GEF strategic priorities</i>	Strongly aligned to LD focal area through direct contribution increasing capacity (also aligned to CCM focal area)	HS
<i>3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities</i>	Project level relevance for the Country Projects varied, but generally well aligned.	S
<i>4. Complementarity with existing interventions</i>	Strong alignment to existing interventions although visibility and value within UNEP and GEF not as high as it could be.	S
B. Quality of Project Design	Generally, project was well designed, built on strong foundations, attempted to enhance synergies and partnerships, outcome level indicators could have been better (and in some ways more ambitious) but results framework otherwise good.	S
C. Nature of External Context	No major risks at project design, during implementation faced COVID-19, as well as two countries facing social unrest and political issues (not weighted in rating)	MF
D. Effectiveness	Project achieved its results framework, although the speed and innovation in moving to impact will depend on strengthening the partnership from UNEP side.	S
<i>1. Availability of outputs</i>	With minor limitations, all outputs availability and in some cases overachieved on targets.	S
<i>2. Achievement of project outcomes</i>	Overall, for the three outcomes the drives from outputs to outcomes held, outcomes were achieved, with some minor weaknesses in outcome 3, and move to intermediate states likely based on outcome success.	S
<i>3. Likelihood of impact</i>	Impact likely but timing and support of partnerships is important (especially institutional support from UNEP).	L
E. Financial Management		MS
<i>1. Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures</i>	Some issues with the roles in terms of the governance structure, some adherence issues in terms of signed agreements and reporting, overall good recovery by new FMO in completing	MS

Criterion <i>The criterion rating and the overall project rating is based on the automatic calculations based on the Weighting of Ratings table in the UNEP Evaluation Guidance package.</i>	Summary Assessment	Rating
	good .procedure towards the end of the project despite complications half-way through.	
2. Completeness of project financial information	Detailed co-financing information from EA is lacking, no financial information from one partner (although this is not included in the rating because the FMO followed correct procedure under a difficult circumstance).	MS
3. Communication between finance and project management staff	Generally good communication, with some issues relating to lack of coherence in roles and internal firewalls.	MS
F. Efficiency	Project faced some delays (mostly due to its case projects not finalising, and due to COVID-19), some delays generally, overall very good cost-effectiveness, good use of synergies and partnerships.	S
G. Monitoring and Reporting		S
1. Monitoring design and budgeting	Good plan although some weaknesses in the results framework indicators.	S
2. Monitoring of project implementation	Generally good monitoring as per plan, with some things falling through cracks during handover, good flexibility and adaptiveness.	S
3. Project reporting	Generally good reporting, minutes of SC, PIRs, available, lack of handover presented some problems.	S
H. Sustainability		L
1. Socio-political sustainability	COVID-19 likely to play a role, although sufficient online training videos available. Stakeholder interest and demand large, strong partnerships built between CSU, WOCAT and others outside of project. At country level varied uptake.	L
2. Financial sustainability	Generally, tools likely to be sustained at least project by project basis, although core funding would improve operational function and open up more opportunities for innovation and this has not been secured.	ML
3. Institutional sustainability	Strong in CSU, WOCAT and in the partnerships created with other partners. Strong championship among some individuals within UNEP, but institutionally not “owned” in terms of long-term structural partnerships, GEF support in terms of welcoming tools use but not structural long-term support either.	L
I. Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues¹¹⁵	Generally, well implemented in terms of factors affecting performance, with some limitations in the governance and management of the project.	S
1. Preparation and readiness	Generally, well prepared building on previous projects, governance and implementation structure laid out but should have been aligned	S

¹¹⁵ While ratings are required for each of these factors individually, they should be discussed within the Main Evaluation Report as cross-cutting issues as they relate to other criteria. Note that catalytic role, replication and scaling up are expected to be discussed under effectiveness if they are a relevant part of the TOC.

Criterion <i>The criterion rating and the overall project rating is based on the automatic calculations based on the Weighting of Ratings table in the UNEP Evaluation Guidance package.</i>	Summary Assessment	Rating
	institutionally and not individually based on expertise (to maintain institutional memory).	
2. Quality of project management and supervision	Started off strong, had some dead time where project went through staff turnover, and then new task manager picked up, project was without UNEP guidance during this time	MS
<i>UNEP/Implementing Agency</i>	As above	MS
<i>Partners/Executing Agency</i>	As above for EA, for implementing partner CSU very strong.	MS
3. Stakeholder participation and cooperation	Strong partnerships fostered through project, good involvement of stakeholders generally.	S
4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity	In terms of what the project could achieve in this regard it made a sufficient effort, especially towards the lessons learnt reflection on gender.	MS
5. Environmental and social safeguards	No real risk of maladaptation in this project, COVID-19 and some other potential social risks did a good job at mitigating.	S
6. Country ownership and driven-ness	Strong country ownership and demand outside of the project logical framework through partnerships strengthening and synergies built, within GEF country case studies varying levels of ownership in terms of sustaining project results.	S
7. Communication and public awareness	Really strong efforts made in communications and awareness, project did its best to capitalise on the opportunities to provide outreach and awareness, strong training element.	HS
Overall Project Rating	Project achieved what it set out to achieve, despite some difficulties in management faced, sustaining project results are likely but partnership strengthening would enhance and speed up the move to impact.	S

Lessons learned

262. The project, through a lessons learnt report that was co-written by the EA and partner CSU, reviewed by the IA, has already drawn out four lessons from the project (See Annex 9 for the lessons summarised from this report). This evaluation agrees with these, and will not repeat them here, other than building further on these (specifically related indirectly to the Lesson 1 – Maximising the linked toolset, and Lesson 2 – Training in the new normal).
263. The following lessons are a result of intensive discussions with project partners, extensive reviews of the project documentation (and further documentation including pre-project and relevant strategies and documents within this thematic area), combined with the evaluators expertise and experience in the area of global transformation (within climate change using sustainable land management as a driver). They are meant to be useful for future project design and implementation (GEF/UN Environment, in the three main areas: LD, CC), as well as useful for project partners in their continued work in GHG monitoring tool development and innovation.

Lesson 1: Moving from capacity development to behaviour change – how to make the link

264. The training element of the project was successful in terms of the professionalism, technical quality and facilitation. The increasing demand and requests for more (some of it coming with its own funding backing) is an indicator of the success of the training and the toolset in general.
265. But some training has been more effective in terms of actual uptake of the tool than others. Some of the training was meant to merely be part of an introduction and thus enhance awareness.
266. As a result, the intention of each training event is of particular importance, both in tailoring the training itself, but also in terms of who is invited as a participant. (Sometimes invitees are not in the direct control of the project, but then it is important that communication is clear so that the right people attend).
267. If the intention is to create awareness for a particular purpose, like in the case of this project, allow programme managers to further encourage project developers and implementers to use the tool, then the main focus should be on what the tool can offer that would make it (a) vital to use, and (b) easy to use.
268. If the intention is to train in order for the tool to be used by the participant (and thus have a growing mass of people capturing data and measuring carbon sequestration and other targets as a result), then it was found that the following created more successful uptake:
- (i) if it was demand-led, then uptake is more likely because the participants come in with the intention of using it,
 - (ii) selection of participants is important in terms of the relevance of their work to the actual use of the tool (and if they were to move institution, would they carry the tool with them?),
 - (iii) strong case study examples that can be used (e.g. in this project, the use of the Kenya project was of high value to the participants), or even better direct application themselves (as in the USAID Ethiopia training where participants went away having participated in the first training and came back with their own data sets for the second training which saw more response and take up from participants).
269. In the training, **using professionals in learning theory** in the curriculum development and subsequent training may also make the tools more accessible to a broader group of people and also advance learning more rapidly for non-experts.
270. Another lesson coming from the project having to move online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was that training events could be more widely accessible to people who would not have been able to attend under normal circumstances. In addition, video recording also allows more people to access learning resources in their own time.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ This comes with the caveat that learning theory generally maintains that learning is more personalised when done face to face but this depends on the individualised learning (everyone learns differently).

271. **Online can be powerful** in terms of creating longer term tools that can be accessed, widening access to more people, but perhaps some things are lost that – personalised touch, etc learning by doing with teacher.

Lesson 2: Strong partnerships and collaboration are worth the effort and highly rewarding to developers and users – finding mutual benefits

272. As referred to multiple times in this report, the partnership and linked dataset between CBP and WOCAT was one of the most successful results of the project.
273. This achievement is a strong reflection of a symbiotic relationship built on collaborative efforts (that were not simple, but worth the effort). It has not only made it easier for the end-user to get multiple benefits from the use of the combined toolset, but also has open doors for bringing together networks and thus further partnerships which have opened doors to possible innovations.
274. These kind of examples of partnerships are an illustration that collaboration is always the most effective way forward in efficiency and effectiveness in the fast-tracking the achievement of the SDGs.

Lesson 3: Institutional championship and individual championship alignment is important

275. This particular project had a case where it had some senior scientists in UNEP who saw the value of this project and championed it for almost two decades, but that championship was lost when the people left. The whole project lost track and was regained in terms of achieving its results, but the longer-term vision and championship was lost.
276. Revisiting core missions and keeping institutional championship aligned to this is important even when there is a turn-over. While strategies may change and thematic areas may be reshuffled, core mission/mandate should not change unless there is a massive global shift. Environment using scientific rigor is part of UNEP's core mandate, and its main goals include the analysis and assessment of the environment, and the interlinkage of environmental assessment with policy decision-making.

Lesson 4: Management and communication in implementation of projects is vital

277. Some lessons were learnt by UNEP through the implementation of this project from a governance and management perspective. Some overlap in mandate existed (when it came to e.g. communications and guidance between IA, EA and partners), and this overlap becomes necessary when there is a gap that needs to be filled, but once equilibrium is restored in terms of the governance and especially the firewall set up between IA and the EA (within UNEP).
278. More detail in agreements can provide more clarity in the roles among partners (here the evaluator is referring to the Internal Cooperation Agreement between the Implementing Agency and the Executing Agency being almost identical to the Partnership Cooperation Agreement between the Executing Agency and CSU).
279. Hand over is important, and good structures in place support improved hand overs (e.g. better internal communication, enforced use of centralised repositories).
280. Overall, effective, transparent communication is an essential element in all of this. Good adaptation, reflexive thinking was a result of new staff at the IA and EA communicating effectively and in partnership putting in place strategies and

operations to get the project up and running and coordinated by UNEP until successful completion.

Recommendations¹¹⁷

281. The following recommendations are intended to enhance cooperation, sustaining of project results, and support a fast-tracked pathway towards the TOC impact. They are divided as per the following: (a) Partner Recommendations – recommendations that pertain to partners of the project, (b) Project-level Recommendations – recommendations to UNEP that pertain specifically to the SLM-CCMC project, and (c) UNEP-wide recommendations – recommendations that were picked up as a result of the evaluation of the SLM-CCMC project but that pertain to UNEP operations and procedures in general.

(a) Partner Recommendations:

Recommendation #1:	<p>Project partners to continue strengthening partnerships established during this project:</p> <p>a) CSU to become an institutional member of WOCAT, and continue collaborating on joint projects,</p> <p>b) CSU and WOCAT (submit a new proposal with) continue strengthening partnership with LandPKS,</p> <p>c) CSU and WOCAT to initiate a meeting with UNCCD to discuss opportunities for collaboration with UNCCD (including through the new reporting cycle, and through their transformative programmes work),</p> <p>(e) UNEP, CSU and WOCAT to engage with UNFCCC to see possible linkages and areas of collaboration.</p>
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation¹¹⁸:	Partnerships and collaboration will be a significant driver in producing the kind of transformation in climate change and SLM that is necessary if we want to meet the targets of the Global Agenda 2030. The project proved that more success can be achieved through linking the toolsets and working together.
Priority Level¹¹⁹:	Opportunity for improvement
Type of Recommendation¹²⁰	Partners
Responsibility:	UNEP GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit (IA)

¹¹⁷ Please see the “Guidance for Evaluation Managers and Evaluation Consultants on Presentation and Quality of Recommendations within a Main Evaluation Report” among the evaluation tools.

¹¹⁸ The same challenge/problem can lead to a recommendation of more than one type, i.e. one or more of the following: Project Level, UNEP-wide or Partners recommendation.

¹¹⁹ Critical, Important or Opportunity for Improvement.

¹²⁰ Project Level, UNEP-Wide or Partners recommendation.

	Note: Compliance with recommendations directed towards Partners is only monitored at the level of 'effectively conveying' the recommendation to the Partner. The IA is therefore responsible for conveying this recommendation to the Partner.
Proposed implementation time-frame:	December 2021

(b) Project-level Recommendations:

Recommendation #2:	<p>UNEP to develop a communication strategy to increase the visibility of the CBP and WOCAT tool within UNEP, among GEF Implementation Agencies and with other key collaborating parties</p> <p>This would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Identifying the best institutional home within UNEP for the work and deciding where it could be best popularised/led from (its origin was under Thematic Assessments/Science Division – this may or may not be the best future location?) b) GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit (and the Ecosystems Division) holding consultations to share learning and to discuss future support to the tool/CSU partners with all UNEP Sub-Programme Coordinators, TEEB Unit (in connection with TEEB Agrifood), and other relevant Divisions and Programmes. c) Consideration of other collaboration opportunities, including with FAO for the more rapid advancement of carbon monitoring in land management (including protected areas, agriculture, reforestation, other SLM, etc). d) UNEP supporting CSU in getting the list of names for the platform/feature.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) One of the key results of the project was to enhance tool use among GEF IAs, including the development of a platform for GEF IAs to use for their reporting (to access, store, analyse reports) b) Considering its mandate on environmental assessment and environment under review, UNEP, as the body that links science to policy, needs to align itself to toolsets that are of scientific rigour and quality, and that advance the environmental aspects of the Global Agenda 2030 forward. c) As part of this (and direct GEF demand to UNEP), the project was a long-term investment in time and resources by UNEP which was championed by senior scientists who have since left but the legacy of the work (including in GEO-5) continues. d) Under this legacy, and considering the fact that carbon monitoring is becoming a big, global issue, UNEP should

	continue raising the profile of the partners with which it has long-standing relationships (i.e. CBP and the role it can play in innovating and fast-tracking pathways to impact).
Priority Level:	Important
Type of Recommendation	Project level
Responsibility:	GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit, along with Science Division
Proposed implementation time-frame:	December 2021

(c) UNEP-wide Recommendations:

Recommendation #3:	GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit should carry out a simple internal review to check that all its ongoing projects on SLM include a focus on gender-disaggregated impacts. The lesson learning potential inherent in this exercise should be maximised.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	While the technical nature of this project gave it little opportunity to influence gender disaggregated approaches, the cause-and-effect dynamics in land management are socially gendered. The potential benefits that gender-responsive approaches can bring and the human rights risks that land management projects must avoid are important results that land management projects should address.
Priority Level:	Critical
Type of Recommendation	Project Level
Responsibility:	GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit
Proposed implementation time-frame:	June 2022

Recommendation #4:	UNEP to develop and institutionalise effective hand over mechanisms to support staff turn over and to strengthen the institutionalisation of project memory and documentation (including the use of the centralised repository).
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	When staff leave or move within UNEP, the information and aims/missions should not be leaving with them, there should be institutional retainment to increase efficiency, implementation of strategy, and effectiveness of UNEP.
Priority Level:	Important
Type of Recommendation	UNEP-Wide and Project

Responsibility:	UNEP and Science Division
Proposed implementation time-frame:	December 2021

Recommendation #5:	UNEP to develop internal communications and information exchange strategies at Sub-programme levels and incorporate them in the Programme of Work.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Projects that may be of importance across programmes are being lost due to inadequate communication and/or systems thinking across the institution; For programmatic synergy, it is important to take a systems approach to change. In terms of climate change mitigation, projects that develop ways in which to track the efficacy of interventions and how far we are coming in terms of the targets we set for ourselves need to form part of a larger system of rapid and urgent change. How projects like this can be supporting other areas of work across the UNEP should be capitalized on to enhance efficiency and cooperation.
Priority Level:	Important
Type of Recommendation	UNEP-Wide
Responsibility:	UNEP (Policy and Programme Division)
Proposed implementation time-frame:	December 2021

Recommendation #6:	Any agreements signed with partners on project implementation should comply with the Guidelines on the Use of Legal Instruments¹²¹, and should use its own legal agreement templates and not that of the vendors (as was the case in this project where a World Bank agreement was signed). This includes substantive and transparent financial and technical reporting.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	The agreement that the project had with the World Bank absolved the bank of any real responsibility in terms of financial or progress reporting other than the delivery of the output (to which they were not even held accountable under the agreement). In this case, it worked because outputs were achieved in line with what was planned. But because UNEP is ultimately responsible, as the Implementing Agency, of the funds dispersed from the GEF, it should not enter into legal agreement that would render the institution vulnerable.
Priority Level:	Important

¹²¹ https://login.microsoftonline.com/0f9e35db-544f-4f60-bdcc-5ea416e6dc70/saml2?ssso_reload=true (Guidelines accessible to UNEP staff)

Type of Recommendation	UNEP-Wide and Project
Responsibility:	UNEP and Science Division
Proposed implementation time-frame:	December 2021

ANNEX I. RESPONSE TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Table 6: Response to stakeholder comments received.

Reviewer Comment	Evaluator Response	Evaluation Office Response
<i>IA (UNEP Ecosystems Division)</i>		
Para 204: IA role was that of facilitating a response from the EA in line with its responsibilities, so we do not see any breakdown of the firewall in terms of functions.	<p>The agreement was between the EA and CSU. While the IA did a good job at facilitating, sometimes this was more direct than merely facilitating. In the opinions of some respondents, this lead to the EA becoming virtually redundant. In terms of documentation, there was an agreement between the IA and EA (Science) and then an agreement between the EA and CSU in which it was stated that the EA was named the IA and CSU was the EA. In some other documentation there were co-executing agencies.</p> <p>The IA facilitated communication, but at what point is it directly responding when the direct response/communication should have sat with Science? The evaluator understands that at some point there was a level of confusion as to whom was coordinating this project the project coordinator from CSU flew to Nairobi to speak directly. There were also instances where the FMO had to go to CSU to get project-level financial information.</p> <p>This is <i>not</i> a result of any “over-stepping” of the IA (in fact, it was necessary at times in the project to step in and do direct communication), but ideally it should not have had to do this.</p> <p>A footnote has been added.</p> <p><i>Footnote 103: The CSU often was more of an executing agency, there was a lot of direct communication between the IA and CSU, with continued consultation with the EA.</i></p>	Accepted, (now para 214, footnote 103)
<i>The GEF</i>		
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Para 14: “The project was a product of demand coming directly from GEF” , consider adding: “responding to demand by countries and GEF agencies for streamlined methodologies for estimation and monitoring of carbon benefits in SLM projects”. (Without the addition it would sound as if the GEF makes top-down decisions, however, in fact we are responding to the needs of our clients)	In agreement with reviewer and changed to: <i>14. The project was a product of demand coming directly from GEF Secretariat (based on responding to demand by countries and GEF agencies for streamlined methodologies for the estimation and monitoring of carbon benefits in SLM projects).</i>	Accepted
Para 33: “...and if UNEP and GEF do not take advantage of these partnerships through encouraging them by using	Rephrased paragraph to:	Accepted

Reviewer Comment	Evaluator Response	Evaluation Office Response
<p>their institutional power and weight, there will be a missed opportunity....” Consider rephrasing as a recommendation, highlighting the opportunities (as opposed to paint the negative picture of a missed opportunity).</p>	<p><i>In other words, there will be growth in this either way, and it would be in the best interest of UNEP and GEF to take advantage to support the effective partnerships to further fast-track LDN and climate mitigation targets.</i></p>	
<p>Para 59: “.....it is a missed opportunity that GEF and UNEP as institutions have not seen the level of relevance it has in its growth potential to advance movement to the relevant targets in the Global Agenda 2030.” I find it very harsh to blame the GEF for a “missed opportunity” after we have invested almost \$4 million over two phases into the development of the CBP. The GEF is by design a financing institution, and we should be measured on the yardstick of financing, and not on tasks that we can hardly influence the way we are set up. How, exactly, and through which channels could the GEF Secretariat advance the movement to the relevant targets in the Global Agenda 2030? That is beyond our scope and mandate.</p>	<p>The evaluator did speak to its relevance to GEF in terms of the development of tools, and was actually referring to the continued and future relevance. There was a great investment, but there does not seem any form of other “lifting” or support to the tools beyond the closure of this project. For instance, in project development <i>in general for SLM projects</i>, GEF recommends using the EXACT tool when making carbon monitoring estimates at project design, and while the CBP tool can be used and will be accepted by GEF for projects developed that include carbon monitoring, there is no real (based on evidence during the evaluation) ownership saying “look, we invested in the development of the tool, it is very useful and we endorse it and encourage its use”, especially given what the tool is able to achieve in its potential and innovation.</p> <p>The GEF indicator framework is designed to monitor (tangible) progress in its projects that it funds so that it can see that investment has been effectively spent against the SDG agenda. How that monitoring is done (scientific rigour) determines the actual and realistic contributions made by these investments.</p> <p>Both within UNEP and GEF, it did not seem obvious from the evidence obtained during the evaluation, that the relevance in terms of the future of the CBP was clear for either institution; like there had been a drop in interest in both (in comparison to the high level of interest previously, i.e. GEF STAP review meeting in the design of the SLM-CCMC project, and UNEP taking on more institutional-embedding of the tool – or aiming to) by the end of the project, even though the tool remains highly relevant given the level of demand for it (largely outside of the GEF agencies).</p> <p>If one of the main aims of the project was for GEF agencies to take on the tool, why was there not more centralised backing to do this?</p> <p>Paragraph has been edited to clarify point as a result of reviewer’s comment:</p> <p><i>59. The SLM-CCMC project, at the time of its development, was a highly relevant project that was a result of direct GEF STAP recommendations. This is also illustrated by the investment that GEF had made into the development of the tools over the phase of three projects. It remains a highly relevant project in terms of its place in the global arena of carbon</i></p>	<p>Accepted</p>

Reviewer Comment	Evaluator Response	Evaluation Office Response
	<i>monitoring, and the potential the CBP tools (and WOCAT linkage) have in general in terms of innovating further in the area of SLM and climate change. Despite this, and with a few exceptions in terms of (slowly rising demand in) uptake of some GEF implementing agencies at the project level, GEF and UNEP as institutions have not seen the (continued) level of relevance it has in its future growth potential (and innovation potential) to advance movement to the relevant targets in the Global Agenda 2030.</i>	
Parag 251 (Conclusions): same comment as above.	See above, and changed to the following: 251. "...it appears that GEF and UNEP as institutions have not continued to see the level of relevance it has in its growth potential to advance movement to the relevant targets in the Global Agenda 2030."	Accepted
<i>World Bank:</i>		
<p>My first high-level comment, from a user perspective is that the review assumes that carbon accounting can be undertaken by all resource managers without the requisite training or background. However, most of these tools, including CBP are highly skill demanding and require focused training. The technical nature of the subject was highlighted in our report, but this fact is missing in the Terminal Review.</p> <p>The starting point for making the tools user-friendly is to simplify the tools to encourage many users. The good news is that there is a lot of momentum on sustainable land management, nature-based solutions, food systems development, and soil organic C management, among others that would generate demand for carbon accounting</p>	<p>The evaluator does not fully agree; the project focused very much on capacity building and training for what was a relatively complex tool (made as accessible to the end user as possible without losing its scientific rigour), and in no part of the evaluation is it implied that carbon accounting could automatically be taken up by any resource manager (in fact, the review stated based on evidence from the country case studies showed all but one person who needed rigorous, context-specific training – which was very successfully done – to be able to conduct any of the monitoring work). The project did a lot in terms of simplification and user-access and friendliness to strike a strong balance between access and rigour.</p> <p>If the comment is referring to the review of the manual in particular, there may be more merit. But it was considered that a resource manager (presumably one who is an SLM expert) should be able to make an informed choice about which tool to consider in terms of monitoring their particular project, the evaluator would think that this could be a simple exercise to start with, and, depending on the nature of the project would need the accompanying level of training on carbon accounting (depending on how much expertise and experience the end user has).</p>	No edit to the report required.
My second high level comment is that a strong communication strategy is urgently needed to promote the visibility of the tool. The strategy should target key players in both the public and private sectors implementing nature-based solutions and carbon finance projects.	Good point, and has been highlighted more strongly in the recommendations, see Recommendation 2 under para 279.	Accepted, Recommendation 2, page 71

Reviewer Comment	Evaluator Response	Evaluation Office Response
Para 28: Not quite. Tools comparison has always been a part of Component 3 activities	<p>Tools comparison was core part of Component 3, but according to the project designers (i.e. UNEP and CSU), there was a merger where the entire component 3 was added to the original proposal.</p> <p>The paragraph (28 and 29) now mentions <i>“the GEF recommended the integration of this concept note into the SLM-CCMC project (which formed Component 3), and thus the SLM-CCMC project became a project that aimed to make it easier for project managers to realise the co-benefits of their SLM interventions”</i></p>	Accepted (para 29)
Para 37: The key personnel in IRD involved joined the FAO and contributed to Component 3.	<p>The footnote of paragraph 37 (ii) explains that the details of this is further elaborated under “Changes in Implementation” where the personnel change is discussed in detail. However, a small section has been added here too now:</p> <p><i>“but during implementation FAO took on this role (because the key personnel in IRD moved to FAO)”</i></p>	Accepted (para 37, iii, ii)
Para 40: This is the correct situation that should be reconciled with footnote 18.	Reconciled.	Noted
Para 116: Fifteen projects were evaluated?	Eighteen projects, rectified.	Noted
Para 118: Might be useful to clarify in the Terminal Review report who the evaluator discussed with as project partners. Academic background, experience with C calculators? The evaluation tool for comparison was carefully designed to capture these important issues. The WB has a guidance manual specifically for EX-ACT which has helped scaled up its application across the world. The Guidance Manual from the SLM-CC is a nice complement for this manual. The next stage of SLM-CC should focus on disseminating the outputs given the salient importance of C mitigation currently.	<p>Paragraph 118, the institutional partners have been listed <i>“(after speaking to a variety of project partners, including the GEF, CSU, UNEP, and some country partners)”</i>, along with an additional footnote sharing the feedback from World Bank on this matter (Footnote78).</p> <p>The recommendation on communication that the reviewer made earlier has been added and includes the disseminating of project outputs.</p>	Accepted
Para 120: May find it useful to state in the Terminal Review that UNEP and other partners could also promote these outputs within their networks.	<p>This has been done in several parts of the report (how and how more it could be done, including under sustainability sections and recommendations).</p> <p>Added <i>“With more promotion of the course through UNEP and its networks, World Bank, CSU, and others, there could be greater use of the course.”</i> In paragraph 120.</p>	Accepted
Para 140: There is indeed a decision tool in the report. It works to help users identify the best tools for proposed	There are various tables, including process for selecting a GHG calculator, a table or recommended tools when considering land use scenarios, but	Accepted

Reviewer Comment	Evaluator Response	Evaluation Office Response
<p>SLM operations. The full report also includes a decision framework to answer commonly encountered questions in land-based mitigation projects. These are some of the features that people have found useful.</p>	<p>overall the report is a (very well done) comparative analysis of tool use across different GEF projects, and the reader would have to go through a lot to be able to use it as a guidance manual for any particular project. Paragraph has been edited:</p> <p><i>140. However, the evaluator is not convinced that this has necessarily provided the SLM practitioner community with a practical guidance manual, that is easy to use and simple (cognizant that this depends on the background of the user and the technically demanding nature of the content), that allows the practitioner to make the best choice as to what suits their particular project (for instance, a decision tree/ yes-no framework might be best suited to this task). There are various assessment tables, step-by-step process for selecting a GHG calculator, a table of recommended tools when considering land use change scenarios, but these read more like a comparative assessment versus practical guide manual for a decision-maker.</i></p>	
<p>Para 143: Output 3 includes an e-learning module to guide tool selection, and should be promoted among natural resources managers. The full report also includes a number of steps that iteratively leads to using a tool or tools for a task. It is important to state that background preparation of the project manager is also important. C accounting can be technically demanding. This is explained in the report.</p>	<p>Changed:</p> <p><i>143. Overall, for the three outcomes, the drivers from outputs to outcomes held, with the exception that the output 3 could have been more user-friendly (although the e-learning module did achieve this but could have been better promoted) which may have increased the driver for the project outcome 3 to be achieved in such a way that would have strengthened the pathways to the intermediate states.</i></p>	Accepted
<p>Para 154.d: Not correct! Two Standard EFO reports were indeed submitted to UNEP per agreement: the first on April 30, 2017; and the last on June 28, 2018.</p>	<p>The evaluator has followed up several times and finally received the folder "Notional Claim" from the UNEP EA in which one EFO report (the final one) was included.</p> <p>Some minor edits have been made to reflect this evidence in para 154, d, and a footnote has been added to this effect:</p> <p><i>Footnote 90: The World Bank Correspondent maintained that two were EFO reports were submitted (30 April 2017 and 28 June 2018), although the Evaluator was only provided with the last one. The EFO report is a one-page document that is high-level in that it reflects only the total amount and which output had been achieved (yes/no).</i></p>	Accepted
<p>Para 182: Not correct! Per EFO agreement, the World Bank submitted progress report to UNEP at the end of Year 1 (April 2017).</p>	<p>The evaluator was not provided with the progress report.</p> <p>Paragraph 182 has been edited based on reviewer comment. A footnote has been added to this effect.</p> <p><i>Footnote 100: According to the World Bank respondent, one progress report was submitted to</i></p>	Accepted

Reviewer Comment	Evaluator Response	Evaluation Office Response
	<i>UNEP in April 2017 (end of Year 1). The evaluator was not provided with this report.</i>	
<i>WOCAT</i>		
Para 197: A link to the e-learning tool developed by the World Bank can also be made available on UNEP and other partners' websites	The link has been provided in the Terminal Evaluation and was reviewed – a statement of the communication of this has been added under Communication and Awareness para 246.	Accepted
I was just wondering why in Recommendation 1 "Continue Strengthening partnerships and finding ways to connect" (Page 68) only UNCCD was mentioned, while the other Rio Conventions (mainly UNFCCC) are missing	This was specifically done because there had already been quite a strong relationship built with UNCCD that could be further catalysed on. The evaluator has no problem with capitalising on any opportunities to strengthen the links and work with the UNFCCC in similar ways. See recommendations to this effect (Recommendation 1).	Accepted, Recommendation 1
Para 67: In the Evaluation findings (Abstract 67, page 36) it is mentioned that "...the project certainly had an important alignment and was of value to the UNFCCC, the link is not made (at least not as was made with UNCCD)...". Therefore, I think it is important to also find new opportunities for collaboration with UNFCCC. Perhaps UNEP could take a role in supporting such a collaboration? Maybe also with the idea of strengthening the linkage of related activities of the three Rio Conventions?	Indeed this was mentioned, and agreed with evaluator that a recommendation to this effect could be added as per above (Recommendation 1).	Accepted, Recommendation 1
If it is not too late, it would be nice if the collaboration with UNFCCC could be added to the Recommendations.	See above.	Noted
Para 55: and on Page 35, Abstract 55 there is a "0" missing: "under the Global Agenda 2030 and the UNFCCC Paris Agreement"	Rectified.	Noted
<i>Executing Agency (UNEP Science Division)</i>		Noted
Can the header be updated from 'UN Environment' to 'UNEP'?	Logos on front page UNEP.	Correct logos in place.
Acknowledgements: Since UNEP is listed for Victoria and CSU mentioned for Eleanor, I think it would be good to add UNEP before project coordinator and project manager to make it clear.	Agreed and rectified.	Noted
Table 1: 'Planned completion date' not sure if this is a typo on the copy I'm review, but it says: '32 August 2019' in the 2018 PIR is says '31 August 2019'	Rectified.	Noted

Reviewer Comment	Evaluator Response	Evaluation Office Response
Table 1: Date of last revision says 'Jun' since the other months are written in full, I think it should be 'June'	Rectified.	Noted
Pg 10: Typo, please change 'tool sis' to 'tool is'	Rectified.	Noted
In paragraph 62 and 63 the 'is' in the last sentence of 62 and first of 63 both seem to be referring to 'partnership and opportunity' and 'partnerships, and championships' respectively, which are plural so suggest to change to are and in 63 this means also deleting 'a' and changing 'factor' to 'factors'	Agreed and rectified.	Noted
Paragraph 62 the 'is' in the second sentence refers to 'priorities' which is plural, so suggest to change 'is' to 'are'	Agreed and rectified.	Noted
Paragraph f states '2019 and 202' and there are two paragraphs labelled f, please change the second one to h	Rectified.	Noted
Paragraph 141 change 'decisions' to 'decision' or delete 'a'	Rectified.	Noted
Paragraph c in the final expenditure report, the over-expenditure has been addressed.	Final report now seen by evaluator, and overexpenditure has been deleted.	Noted
Paragraph 157 co-financing reports were provided so I don't think the information is lacking and there was planned co-financing at CEO Endorsement from Science Division, the actual co-financing in the reports includes all staff time and relevant figures.	<p>The evaluator is basing this data on what has been received as well as interviews with the Science FMO. If there is such information where the EA co-financing has indeed been reported in detail, then please do provide this documentation. The co-financing planned was the amount provided from UNEP IA, in a letter/memorandum of USD 250,000 all under DEPI (now Ecosystems), appended to the project document and in the high-level budgets of the prodoc and CEO endorsement.</p> <p>A final co-financing document was provided to the evaluator, which states the contribution from UNEP was USD 257, 732, no delineation between the IA and the EA. What remains missing is what exact co-financing came for the EA and what came from IA.</p>	Noted
Paragraph 218, I think 'Task Manager' should be 'Project Manager' here, unless it refers to IA task manager, in which case I think it should be more clear.	Rectified.	Noted
Recommendation 3 – well noted on the meeting, but I'm not positive if it will be possible in September with some colleagues on leave. Is it at all possible to extend the deadline?	This recommendation has been modified to be more practical, and includes a communication strategy and consultations to be held under the responsibility of the GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit.	Noted

Reviewer Comment	Evaluator Response	Evaluation Office Response
Recommendation 4 “who” is not specific, so I’m not sure who would actually take action on this recommendation.	All recommendations have been modified, including recommendation 4. UNEP-wide recommendations are under the responsibility of UNEP and responsible units will be agreed upon in the implementation plan.	Noted
Table 12 should read ‘Science’ division, not ‘Ecosystems’	There is no Table 12, page 79 is Table 7 and the evaluator cannot find where the error was made, all Science Division and Ecosystems Division seem to be correct.	Table 11 edited
<i>Ethiopia Project Stakeholder</i>		
<p>WOCAT Training Event: Documentation of SLM Technologies For Carbon Benefit Assessment. Bahir Dar, Ethiopia on 22-26 October 2018</p> <p>By Hans Hurni, University of Bern, Switzerland. Organized by Colorado university.</p>	This was outlined already under Paragraph 104.	Noted
These were done collaboration with the IFAD GEF project ‘Community-Based Integrated Natural Resources Management Project (CBINReMP). The aim of the CBINReMP was to halt the degradation of natural resources, improve grazing land and crop productivity, increase the livelihood base of the farmers and reduce climate vulnerability through integrated ecosystem and watershed management. The SLM-CCMC project worked with CBINReMP personnel in Bahir Dar towards the end of the project to provide training on CBP tools to estimate the GHG impacts at selected sites and to document project technologies in WOCAT.	The projects under each country were included in the project background and under the effectiveness sections of the report.	Noted
Annex 2: Please rectify table with position and institution.	Rectified.	Noted

ANNEX II. STAKEHOLDER LIST

Table 7. Stakeholders engaged for the SLM-CCMC Terminal Evaluation (stakeholders marked as “none” under zoom/email column were unable to take part in the evaluation either because (a) they were too busy, (b) declined to take part without giving reason, or (c) did not respond to email requests).

Name of stakeholder	Institution	Affiliation/Role in Project	Zoom interview/Email	Date(s) of interview	Additional engagement
Johan Robinson	UNEP	Portfolio Manager for GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit (Ecosystems Division)	Zoom Interview	22-Jun	Alternative/ additional correspondence
Mohamed Sessay	UNEP	Chief of GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit (2015-2017) (Ecosystems Division)	Zoom Interviews	7-May / 24-Jun	Additional email follow-up and interview
Victoria Luque	UNEP	Task Manager (August 2018-current) (Ecosystems Division)	Zoom Interviews	19-May/24-Jun	Additional email follow-up and interviews
Niklas Hagelberg	UNEP	Sub-programme Coordinator, Climate Change	Zoom Interview	17-Jun	Additional email follow up
Edoardo Zandri	UNEP	Head of Big Science Branch (Science Division)	Email correspondence		
Maarten Kappelle	UNEP	Head of Thematic Assessments Unit of Big Science Branch (Science Division) and Project Manager (2019-current)	Zoom Interview	25-May	Additional email follow up
Rachel Kosse	UNEP	Project Coordinator (2019-current)	Zoom Interviews	19-May/24 June	Additional email follow up
Florence Kahiro	UNEP	Science Division FMO	Zoom Interview	29-Jun	Additional email follow-up
Rachel Kagiri	UNEP	Ecosystems Division FMO	Zoom Interview	24-Jun	Additional email follow-up
Gemma Shepherd	UNEP	Land Management Scientist Post (Science Division), Project Manager (2015-2017)	None		
Sean Khan	UNEP	Programme Officer, Thematic Assessments, Big Science Branch,	None		

Name of stakeholder	Institution	Affiliation/Role in Project	Zoom interview/Email	Date(s) of interview	Additional engagement
		(Science Division), Project Manager (2018) Science Division			
Eleanor Milne	CSU	Project Coordinator Components 1 & 2, CSU	Zoom Interviews	8-Jan/19-May/ 1-Jun/22-June	Additional email follow-up
Keith Paustian	CSU	Tool developers, Principal Investigator for CSU	Zoom Interview	4-Jun	Additional email follow-up
Mark Easter	CSU	Tool developers, Technical Lead, CSU	Zoom Interviews	21-May/ 7-June	Additional email follow-up
Ben Sutton	CSU	Tool developers, Senior Programmer, CSU	None		
Tatenda Lemann	UniBE	Sub-contracted by CSU (WOCAT partner), Coordinator for WOCAT	Zoom Interview	28-May	Additional email follow-up
Hanspeter Liniger	UniBE	Sub-contracted by CSU (WOCAT partner), Principal Investigator for WOCAT	None		
Ademola Braimoh	The World Bank, Component 3	Lead for Component 3	None		
Ulrich Apel	The GEF	LD Focal Point, The GEF	Zoom Interview	26-May	
Barron Orr	UNCCD	UNCCD Lead LD Scientist	None		
GEF country Case Studies					
Lehman Lindeque	UNDP South Africa and the University of Rhodes, 'Project: 'Securing multiple-ecosystems benefit through SLM in the productive but degraded landscapes of South Africa'	UNDP Project Officer	Zoom Interview	3-Jun	

Name of stakeholder	Institution	Affiliation/Role in Project	Zoom interview/Email	Date(s) of interview	Additional engagement
Rebecca Powel		GEF Project Coordinator	Zoom Interview	7-Jun	
Zaheer Fakir		GEF Focal Point South Africa	None		
Justine Rud and Justin Grid	Livinglands	NGO implementer	Email contact		Email follow up
George Ayaga	KALRO, 'Scaling up sustainable land management and agro-biodiversity conservation to reduce environmental degradation in small scale agriculture in Western Kenya'	KALRO Project Coordinator	Zoom Interview	10-Jun	
Kennedy Were		KALRO Technical Lead and Expert	Zoom Interview	10-Jun	
Christopher Kiptoo		GEF Focal Point Kenya	None		

Name of stakeholder	Institution	Affiliation/Role in Project	Zoom interview/Email	Date(s) of interview	Additional engagement
Francisco Cuesta	CONDESAN, 'Multiplying environmental and carbon benefits in the high Andean ecosystems'	GEF Project Coordinator	None		
Raul Galeas		SLM Specialist	Zoom Interview	7-Jun	
Jose Luis Naula		GEF Focal Point Ecuador	None		
Martha Carolina Cuba Villafuerte de Cronkleton		GEF Focal Point Peru	None		
Robert Hofstede		Terminal Evaluator for the project	Zoom Interview	2-Jun	
Markos Wondie Minale	Amraha National Regional State, Bureau of Agriculture, Bahi Dar, IFAD GEF Project, 'Community-based integrated natural resources management project'	Project Coordinator	None		
Bekalu Bitew	Bahir dar POLY TVET College	Instructor and SLM Specialist	Zoom Interview	3-Jun	
Jeff Herrick	LandPKS	Colorado University Boulder, LandPKS, in charge of aligning LandPKS tool with CPB tools and WOCAT	Zoom Interview	8-Jun	
Training Recipients					
Kritee Kritee	Environmental Defence Fund	Scientist at EDF (CBP Training Recipient)	Email		
Sara Minelli	UNCCD	Programme Officer at UNCCD (CBP Training Recipient)	Emails	Answered	Emailed questions and follow-up emails

Name of stakeholder	Institution	Affiliation/Role in Project	Zoom interview/Email	Date(s) of interview	Additional engagement
9 Persons	IFAD Rome Training 2017	Training Recipients	Emails - 1 response		
30 persons	Ethiopia GHG	Training Recipients	Emails – 6 responses	6 responses	
11 persons	Kenya Online Training 2019	Training Recipients	Emails – 2 responses	2 responses	
17 persons	Ecuador Training 2017	Training Recipients	Emails – 0 responses	0 responses	

ANNEX III. PROJECT BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

Table 8: Expenditure by Outcome for the SLM-CCMC project

Component/sub-component/output <i>All figures as USD</i>	Estimated cost at design (USD) Source: (PRODOC)/Original Budget ¹²²	Actual Cost/ expenditure (USD)	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)
Component 1 / Outcome 1	(540,000)/483,692 from GEF 565,000 from co-financing Source: Prodoc	GEF: 453,006 Co-finance: 181,438	GEF: 0.9365 Co-finance: 0.3211
Component 2 / Outcome 2	(644,800)/699,608 from GEF 438,072 co-f Source: Prodoc	GEF: 743,044 Co-finance: 140,677	GEF: 1.1147 Co-finance: 0.3211
Component 3 / Outcome 3	(500,000)/475,000 from GEF 500,000 co-f Source: Prodoc	GEF: 475,000 Co-finance: 160,564	GEF: 1.0000 Co-finance: 0.3211

* **Note:** the GEF amount for each component on the Project Document differs from the original budget excel received from the Science Division FMO, because expenditure was against the original budget, these were the figures used to compare spending against.

** **Note:** The UNEP templates for co-finance do not break down the expenditures in their respective components. As a result, the FMO used the original ratio between the components to break down the total co-finance into the 3 components.

*****Note:** These GEF expenditures and co-finance do not relate to any UNEP expenditures and are purely relating to the Partner Executing Agencies (Colorado State and World Bank).

Table 9. Financial Management Table of the SLM-CCMC project

Financial management components:		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
1. Completeness of project financial information¹²³:			
Provision of key documents to the evaluator (based on the responses to A-G below)		HS	
A.	Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines)	Yes	Yes, well outlined at design, including separate excel budget
B.	Revisions to the budget	Yes	Yes, well communicated
C.	All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA)	Yes	n/a
D.	Proof of fund transfers	Yes	n/a
E.	Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind)	Yes	Generally, co-financing was well-documented,

¹²² The amount in the prodoc does not coincide with the amount in the

¹²³ See also document 'Criterion Rating Description' for reference

Financial management components:		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
			including additional co-financing secured (although more detailed costs not provided)
F.	A summary report on the project's expenditures during the life of the project (by budget lines, project components and/or annual level)	Yes, by budget from GEF but not for co-financing	Final report was still pending at time of this draft, so FMO gave figures needed to complete the table 9
G.	Copies of any completed audits and management responses (<i>where applicable</i>)	Yes	Audit report for CSU
H.	Any other financial information that was required for this project (list): <i>legal letters of delayed funds disbursement between UNEP and Executing Agency</i>	No	n/a
Any gaps in terms of financial information that could be indicative of shortcomings in the project's compliance ¹²⁴ with the UNEP or donor rules		No	n/a
Project Manager, Task Manager and Fund Management Officer responsiveness to financial requests during the evaluation process		HS	Response good, but documents not all centralized (not part of rating, but needs to be mentioned)
2. Communication between finance and project management staff		S	
Project Manager and/or Task Manager's level of awareness of the project's financial status.		S	Strong level of awareness of project financials by FMO and TM
Fund Management Officer's knowledge of project progress/status when disbursements are done.		MS	Was not able to verify project status when FMO came in 2018, new FMO was not given a handover of the project and needed to search in unconventional places for financial reporting that should have been in a centralized place, from 2018 once FMO had everything, very good handle on the budget and control of disbursements – rating weighted more towards 2018 on wards
Level of addressing and resolving financial management issues among Fund Management Officer and Project Manager/Task Manager.		MS	FMO had two main issue to deal with: (a)

¹²⁴ Compliance with financial systems is not assessed specifically in the evaluation. Nevertheless, if the evaluation identifies gaps in the financial data, or raises other concerns of a compliance nature, a recommendation should be given to cover the topic in an upcoming audit, or similar financial oversight exercise.

Financial management components:	Rating	Evidence/ Comments
		the World Bank never provided financial reporting for its Component and (b) some late funding reporting from the partners – both processes were dealt with well
Contact/communication between by Fund Management Officer, Project Manager/Task Manager during the preparation of financial and progress reports.	MS	Some overlap in IA and EA roles, although communication between FMOs at UNEP and partners good, and within UNEP good
Overall rating	MS	Overall, the financial reporting was organised and complete given the lack of handover of the project (and incomplete-ness of initial financial reporting that had to be recovered)

Table 10. Co-financing Table for the SLM-CCMC project

Co-financing (Type/Source)	UNEP own Financing (US\$1,000)		Other* (US\$1,000)		Total (US\$1,000)		Total Disbursed (US\$1,000)
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	
– In-kind support	250,000	257,000	1,311,512	1,270,340	1,561,512	1,528,072	
– Other (*)							
-							
Totals							

Table 11. Co-financing committed versus actual per partner for the SLM-CCMC project

Committed	Actual co-financing
UNEP: In-kind Science Division USD 250,000	UNEP: In-kind Science Division USD 257, 732
Third-party In-kind: Colorado State University USD 501,512 World Bank USD 500,000 WOCAT (University of Bern) USD 250,000 Eco&Sols USD 60,000	Third-party In-kind: Colorado State University USD 482,679 World Bank USD 500,000 (no reporting from World Bank) WOCAT (University of Bern) USD 253,100 USAID 27,729

Committed	Actual co-financing
	USAID USD 4,150 EDF USD 2,682
Total: USD 1,561,512	Total: \$1,528,072

* Executing Agency no reflection of co-financing, although there was at least: Cash: Science Division + ~USD 58,000 - Final year of position of Project Coordinator, + additional staff time (former Task Manager, etc)

ANNEX IV. LIST OF DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Documents reviewed for the SLM-CCMC Terminal Evaluation include:

- Evaluation Terms of Reference
- GEF MSP SLM CC Project Document and Annexes
- GEF Submission and Review Documentation
- Project PIRs
- Lessons Learnt Report
- All project agreements and amendments thereof
- Progress Reports
- Initial Budget Plans
- Financial Reporting, including co-financing and final expenditure report
- GEF case project documentation including Terminal Evaluations and/or Mid-term Reviews of the GEF case projects
- Distribution strategy
- Project reporting in PIMs, all PIRs
- Component-related outputs
- Steering Committee written reports
- Country reporting
- Training reporting
- No-cost extension requests and approval documentation

ANNEX V.EVALUATION BULLETIN

Appendix to the final report.

ANNEX VI. BRIEF CV OF CONSULTANT

Name Justine Braby
Nationality Namibia (and Germany)
Languages English, German, (learning Spanish)

Academic Qualifications

PhD Zoology, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa, June 2011

Postgraduate Diploma (International) Environmental Law, University of Cape Town, February 2007

Postgraduate Certificate Education (Senior Phase and Further Education), University of Cape Town, December 2005

Bachelor of Science (Zoology), University of Cape Town, December 2004

[Training certificate in the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity, GIZ and Government of Namibia (2011)]

Summary of Professional Background

Professional expertise ranges from project development, implementation to evaluation of GEF and other donor-funded projects for agencies like UNDP, UN Environment, FAO and IUCN; communication strategy development, implementation and evaluation for various institutions; capacity-building interventions and facilitation of participatory processes; development of NAPAs, national development plans, strategies and action plans. Justine has thematic expertise and extensive experience in international environmental law (reporting and implementation), climate change (adaptation mostly), sustainable land management, biodiversity and ecosystem services, alternative development paradigms (alternative economics), coastal zone management, water resource management, and renewable energy as it pertains to climate change. She has worked for African governments and international and national development agencies all over Africa, and had experience working in several countries in Latin America, Europe, and Asia.

Regional Experience

Africa (West, East, South, Central), Latin America, Europe, Asia

Professional Associations

Appointee to the High Level Panel on the Economy advising the President of Namibia (2019-2020)

Steering Committee Member of the Balaton Network on Sustainability (www.balatongroup.org)

Steering Committee Member of the Namibia Small Grants Programme

Advisory Panel Member of the NUST PAC Regional and Rural Development Honours Programme

BIOPAMA Regional Advisor (2019)

Member and Task Force Member of the Wellbeing Economy Africa Research Action Network (www.we-africa.org)

Core Team Member of the Research Group of the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (www.wellbeing-economy.org)

Founder of the Namibia Youth Coalition on Climate Change (www.youthclimate-namibia.org)

Climate Change Focal Point and Member of the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (www.iucn.org/cec)

Roster of Experts of UNDP Biodiversity and Sustainable Land Management Portfolio

Publications experience

Wellbeing Economy, Climate Change Adaptation, Community Resilience, Communication, Education and Public Awareness, Zoology, Marine Biology, Ecology, Alternative Economics/Beyond GDP

ANNEX VII. EVALUATION TORS (WITHOUT ANNEXES)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF project
Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change Mitigation Co-Benefits (SLM-CC)
 and GEF ID 5698

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary

GEF Project ID:	5698	Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change Mitigation Co-Benefits (SLM-CC)		
Implementing Agency:	UNEP Ecosystems Division (formerly DEPI)	Executing Agency:	UNEP Science Division (formerly DEWA) – overall coordination. <u>Components 1 and 2</u> led by Colorado State University <u>Component 2</u> involving a sub-contract to WOCAT. <u>Component 3</u> led by the World Bank.	
Relevant SDG(s) and indicator(s):	SDGs: 1, 2,5,11 and15; Targets: 1.4; 2.4; 5.a; 11.3; and 151; Indicators: 1.4.2; 2.4.1; 5.a.1; 11.3.1; 15.1.1; 15.2.1; 15.3.1			
Sub-programme:	Climate Change	Expected Accomplishment(s):	EA B: Indicator of Achievement: (i). Output (b) (3)	
UNEP approval date:	11/01/2016 (by the Project Approval Group)	Programme of Work Output(s):	POW output 3.4: Fostering low carbon development, NAMAs and Technology Planning.	
GEF approval date:	28/10/2015	Project type:	Medium Size Project	
GEF Operational Programme #:		Focal Area(s):	Land Degradation	
		GEF Strategic Priority:	LD-4	
Expected start date:	January 2016	Actual start date:	11/08/2016	
Planned completion date:	31/08/2019	Actual operational completion date:	28/02/2021	
Planned project budget at approval:	USD 1,804,800	Actual total expenditures reported as of [date]:	USD 1,419,709 *(30 June 2019)	
GEF grant allocation:	USD 1,804,800 (Oct 28 2015 letter)	GEF grant expenditures reported as of [date]:	USD 1,419,709	
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	N/A	Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:	N/A	
Expected Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	USD 1,561,512 (ICA Feb 2 2016)	Secured Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	USD 1,561,512	
First disbursement:	26/10/2016 (CSU)	Planned date of financial closure:	31/08/2021	
No. of formal project revisions:		Date of last approved project revision:		
No. of Steering Committee meetings:		Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last: 15/01/2020	Next:
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (planned date):	23/10/2018	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	23/10/2018	

Terminal Evaluation (<i>planned date</i>):	From August 2020?	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	
Coverage - Country(ies):		Coverage - Region(s):	Global (Emphasis on Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, North America)
Dates of previous project phases:	Carbon Benefits Project (CBP): GEF ID 3449 (2009- 13) GEFSOC Project (2002-05)	Status of future project phases:	CBP and WOCAT trainings being provided to FAO CACILM II Project, UNCCD online and other affiliated projects. Concept note from 2018/19 still in circulation for possible funding.

Project rationale

2.1 The project responds to commitments made under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). The UNFCCC requires all parties to formulate and implement programmes containing measures to mitigate climate change. Specifically, article 4, paragraph 1(d) records the objective: “[To] promote sustainable management, and promote and cooperate in the conservation and enhancement, as appropriate, of sinks and reservoirs of all GHGs not controlled by the Montreal protocol, including biomass, forests as well as other terrestrial ecosystems.” In addition, the UNCCD aims to identify and promote best practices for the maintenance and buildup of soil organic matter which, in turn, contributes to the mitigation of desertification and drought in addition of the sequestration of atmospheric carbon.

2.2 Emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) from agriculture, land use, land use change and forestry account for approximately 33% of all global emissions with root causes being an increasing global demand for food and fibre coupled with unsustainable land management practices. It is therefore widely acknowledged that the way in which land is used and managed has a major role to play in the mitigation of global climate change. Sustainable Land Management (SLM) has the potential to reduce GHG emissions by reducing emissions from biomass burning, biomass decomposition and the breakdown of soil organic matter (SOM), as well as to sequester carbon through practices that increase biomass production and promote the build-up of SOM. Together these bring substantial climate change co-benefits. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) finances a wide range of SLM activities in developing countries from reforestation and agro-forestry projects, to projects that protect wetlands or foster sustainable farming methods.

2.3 While the carbon benefits of these and other non-GEF SLM project are likely to be considerable, one of the barriers to the assessment of global carbon benefits resulting from SLM is access to, and the application of, suitable quantification tools and well-documented and harmonized datasets on SLM practices.

2.4 The project was designed to take a targeted approach to monitoring the climate change mitigation co-benefits in GEF projects. The project rationale was based on the recognition that in order to realize climate change co-benefits of sustainable land management activities, managers across various GEF agencies need to: a) be able to recognize, monitor and report the benefits of different practices in different situations; b) have access to state of the art (existing and newly-developed) carbon-accounting and SLM tools and c) be guided on how best to select the most appropriate tool to meet their specific objectives. The project includes, therefore, the enhancements of existing CBP tools¹²⁵, alignment of tools with carbon-certification schemes and with the aim of the UNCCD aim to achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030, links between tools and mobile data gathering technologies and an analysis of carbon accounting tools based on a review of 20 World Bank projects from across the globe.

¹²⁵ These tools are derived from a previous GEF-Funded project, Carbon Benefits Project (CBP): Modeling, Measurement and Monitoring. GEF ID 3449. Operational between 2009 and 2013.

2.5 Geographically the project intended to focus on regions that had not received training under a previous GEF-funded project (Carbon Benefits Project (CBP): Modeling, Measurement and Monitoring. GEF ID 3449 Completed in 2013). UNEP Science Division, formerly DEWA, was the Executing Agency for this project). This led to a focus on work and people in Eurasia, the Indian sub-continent, southern Africa and West Africa for the substantive components. The World Bank project spans a wider geographic range that can be considered global. Some of the participants in training events were expected to be personnel within agencies such as UNEP, UNDP, IFAD, FAO, ADB and IUCN and are, therefore, likely to be widely distributed geographically.

Project objectives and components

3.1 The main objective of the project is to create an environment which will make it easier for land management project managers to realize the climate change co-benefits of sustainable management practices. The project aims to meet common needs by a) training approx. 30 project managers from at least 5 GEF agencies and the UNCCD to use existing tools (Carbon Benefit Project - CBP and World Overview of conservation Approaches and Technologies - WOCAT Tools) and b) supporting the 'in-depth' use of the CBP tools in five GEF projects, all of which are committed to using the CBP Simple or Detailed Assessment. The results framework is presented in Table 2, below.

Table 2: Results Framework, Project Document, Annex A.

Project Objective:
To create an environment which will make it easier for land management project managers to realise the climate change co-benefits of sustainable land management practices.
Component 1: <i>Training and outreach for existing tools</i>
Outcome 1
Enhanced capacity to measure, monitor and model carbon benefits from GEF land management projects using the CBP/WOCAT tools in several GEF agencies and for GEF project personnel.
Outputs
1.1 Assessments of C benefits made using the Simple and Detailed Assessments for GEF and non-GEF projects involved in training sessions.
1.2 Documentation of good/best practice land management practices in terms of C benefits.
1.3 In depth implementation of the CBP's Simple or Detailed Assessment in 5 GEF projects with the on-going support of the SLM CCMC.
1.4 Project managers trained to document good/best land management practices, linked to CBP assessment for 5 GEF projects
Component 2: <i>Enhancement of existing tools</i>
Outcome 2
SLM and NRM projects using the combined tool set to identify appropriate C friendly practices track and report them once implemented and engage with C finance schemes where appropriate.
Outputs
2.1 An enhanced toolset with increased efficacy in terms of spatial data and accessibility as well as direct relevance to specific finance/certification schemes
2.2 An interlink between the CBP and WOCAT tools
2.3 A reporting database for UNEP GEF staff to use to access, store and analyse reports generated by the CBP system.
Component 3: <i>Comparative analysis of C accounting tools for SLM</i>
Outcome 3
GEF and other managers of SLM projects have enhanced understanding of the wide range of tools available (outside of and including the CBP tools) and their application contexts.
Outputs
3.1. A guideline/manual for GEF and other managers of SLM projects for choosing the most appropriate tools to measure carbon benefits and guidance note.
3.2 An e-learning module to facilitate peer learning amongst GEF managers and global knowledge sharing amongst natural resource managers

Table 3: Five GEF-funded projects supported by this project to use tools

The Community-Based Integrated Natural Resources Management Project (CBINReMP) in Ethiopia, GEF agency IFAD, GEF project ID 3367 Mid Term Review available.
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Multiplying Environmental and Carbon benefits in High Andean Ecosystems and its correspondence (Ecuador and Peru), GEF agency UNEP, GEF project ID GFL-5060-2711-4C61 Terminal Evaluation available.
Scaling Up Sustainable Land Management and Agrobiodiversity Conservation to Reduction Environmental Degradation in Small Scale Agriculture in Western Kenya. GEFSEC ID 5272. GEF Agency UNEP. GEFSEC ID 5272.
Securing Multiple Ecosystems Benefit through SLM in the Productive but Degraded Landscapes of South Africa. GEF Agency UNDP. GEF Project ID 5327.
Rio Grande do Sul Biodiversity. GEF Agency World Bank. GEF Project ID P086341-SPN-TF018171

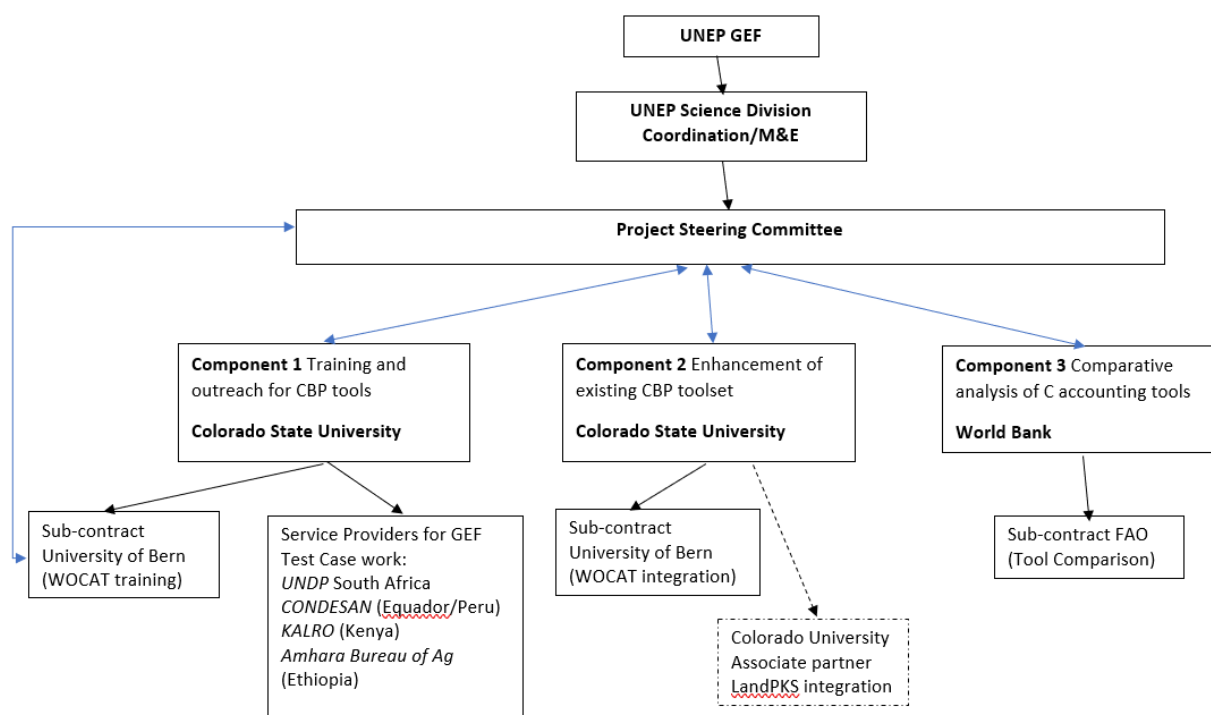
Executing Arrangements

4.1 The project was designed to be managed by UNEP Ecosystem Division (formerly DEPI) as the Implementing Agency and executed by UNEP Science Division (formerly DEWA). At the time of design a UNEP Project Coordinator was intended to report to UNEP Ecosystem Division who would then report to the GEF Task Manager.

4.2 Colorado State University (CSU) was intended to be the lead institution for Components 1 & 2 and to engage a Project Manager to coordinate all scientific and financial matters relating to these 2 components. CSU was expected to report to UNEP Science Division and subcontract WOCAT to carry out specific tasks on Components 1 and 2. LandPKS was also expected to work with CSU and WOCAT without a sub-contract. CSU was also intended to be responsible for sub-contracting the lead institutions responsible for the 5 GEF test case projects. These sub-contracts were expected to be devised individually and take into account any budget the projects had already committed to the monitoring and reporting of carbon impacts.

4.3 The World Bank (WB) was intended to be the lead institution for Component 3 and to report to UNEP Science Division. The WB was also to work with IRD France on Component 3.

4.4 A project steering committee comprising of one senior member of each of the project partners was intended to guide the project and review all outputs before final release.



Project Cost and Financing

5.1 The project received a grant from the GEF with a value of USD 1,804,800 and co-financing contributions (in kind only) to a total value of USD 1,561,512. The total value of the project is therefore USD 3,366,312.

Source	Value (USD)
GEF Trust Fund (USD)	1,804,800
In Kind Colorado State University	501,512

In Kind UNEP	250,000
In Kind World Bank	500,000
In Kind University of Bern (WOCAT)	250,000
In Kind Eco & Sols	60,000

Implementation Issues

6.1 No significant implementation issues are recorded in the annual Progress Implementation Reports although some delays were experienced due to the retirement of key staff and delays in starting some of the in-country projects being used as case studies. It is noted that one no cost extension was requested to end December 2019 and that some activities in a country-level project have not been completed at the time of writing these TOR (July 2020).

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Objective of the Evaluation

7.1 In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy¹²⁶ and the UNEP Programme Manual¹²⁷, the Terminal Evaluation is undertaken at completion of the project to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and [main project partners]. Therefore, the evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation, especially for the second phase of the project, where applicable

Key Evaluation Principles

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

8.2 The “Why?” Question. As this is a terminal evaluation and a follow-up project is likely [or similar interventions are envisaged for the future], particular attention will be given to learning from the experience. Therefore, the “Why?” question should be at the front of the consultants’ minds all through the evaluation exercise and is supported by the use of a theory of change approach. This means that the consultant(s) needs to go beyond the assessment of “what” the project performance was and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of “why” the performance was as it was. This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project.

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

8.4 Communicating evaluation results. A key aim of the evaluation is to encourage reflection and learning by UNEP staff and key project stakeholders. The consultant(s) should consider how reflection and learning can be

¹²⁶ <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/policies-and-strategies>

¹²⁷ <https://wecollaborate.unep.org>

promoted, both through the evaluation process and in the communication of evaluation findings and key lessons. Clear and concise writing is required on all evaluation deliverables. Draft and final versions of the main evaluation report will be shared with key stakeholders by the Evaluation Manager. There may, however, be several intended audiences, each with different interests and needs regarding the report. The consultant(s) will plan with the Evaluation Manager which audiences to target and the easiest and clearest way to communicate the key evaluation findings and lessons to them. This may include some, or all, of the following; a webinar, conference calls with relevant stakeholders, the preparation of an evaluation brief or interactive presentation.

Key Strategic Questions

9.1 In addition to the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 10 below, the evaluation will address the strategic questions listed below. These are questions of interest to UNEP and to which the project is believed to be able to make a substantive contribution:

What is the added value of the linkage between the CBP tools and the WOCAT Questionnaire on SLM Technologies for a) GEF Projects b) other projects c) stakeholder groups at different scales, and how is it perceived?

What is the contribution of this project for the common aims of the UNCCD and UNFCCC to identify and promote best practices for the maintenance and buildup of soil organic matter which, in turn, contributes to the mitigation of desertification and drought in addition of the sequestration of atmospheric carbon?

In what ways, and to what extent, can the project results support new and ongoing initiatives, programs, and decades (e.g. 4p1000 initiative, the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration)?

What adjustments, if any, were made to the project as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 situation, and to what extent did the adjustments allow the project to effectively respond to the new priorities that emerged in relation to COVID-19? How did the adjustments affect the achievement of the project's expected results, as stated in its original results framework?¹²⁸

Evaluation Criteria

10.1 All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Sections A-I below, outline the scope of the criteria and a link to a table for recording the ratings is provided in Annex 1). A weightings table will be provided in excel format (link provided in Annex 1) to support the determination of an overall project rating. The set of evaluation criteria are grouped in nine categories: (A) Strategic Relevance; (B) Quality of Project Design; (C) Nature of External Context; (D) Effectiveness, which comprises assessments of the availability of outputs, achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact; (E) Financial Management; (F) Efficiency; (G) Monitoring and Reporting; (H) Sustainability; and (I) Factors Affecting Project Performance. The evaluation consultant(s) can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate.

Strategic Relevance

10.2 The evaluation will assess 'the extent to which the activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor'. The evaluation will include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UNEP's mandate and its alignment with UNEP's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. Under strategic relevance an assessment of the complementarity of the project with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups will be made. This criterion comprises four elements:

Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy¹²⁹ (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW)

¹²⁸ Sub-questions may include: How relevant were the activities added in response to the COVID-19 pandemic? How coherent with the initial project design are the COVID-19 related activities, added in XXX 2020? What were the specific challenges to the COVID-19 activities? What are the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 related activities? Could they be replicated?

¹²⁹ UNEP's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UNEP's programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UNEP's thematic priorities, known as Sub-programmes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes, known as Expected Accomplishments (EAs), of the Sub-programmes. <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/our-evaluation-approach/un-environment-documents>

10.3 The evaluation should assess the project's alignment with the MTS and POW under which the project was approved and include, in its narrative, reflections on the scale and scope of any contributions made to the planned results reflected in the relevant MTS and POW.

Alignment to Donor/GEF Strategic Priorities

10.4 Donor, including GEF, strategic priorities will vary across interventions. UNEP strategic priorities include the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building¹³⁰ (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The BSP relates to the capacity of governments to: comply with international agreements and obligations at the national level; promote, facilitate and finance environmentally sound technologies and to strengthen frameworks for developing coherent international environmental policies. S-SC is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries. GEF priorities are specified in published programming priorities and focal area strategies.

Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities

10.5 The evaluation will assess the extent to which the intervention is suited, or responding to, the stated environmental concerns and needs of the countries, sub-regions or regions where it is being implemented. Examples may include: national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies or Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) plans or regional agreements etc.

Complementarity with Existing Interventions

10.6 An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization¹³¹, took account of ongoing and planned initiatives (under the same sub-programme, other UNEP sub-programmes, or being implemented by other agencies) that address similar needs of the same target groups. The evaluation will consider if the project team, in collaboration with Regional Offices and Sub-Programme Coordinators, made efforts to ensure their own intervention was complementary to other interventions, optimized any synergies and avoided duplication of effort. Examples may include UN Development Assistance Frameworks or One UN programming. Linkages with other interventions should be described and instances where UNEP's comparative advantage has been particularly well applied should be highlighted. *Factors affecting this criterion may include:*

Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity
Country ownership and driven-ness

Quality of Project Design

10.7 The quality of project design is assessed using an agreed template during the evaluation inception phase, ratings are attributed to identified criteria and an overall Project Design Quality rating is established (www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/our-evaluation-approach/templates-and-tools). This overall Project Design Quality rating is entered in the final evaluation ratings table as item B. In the Main Evaluation Report a summary of the project's strengths and weaknesses at design stage is included, while the complete Project Design Quality template is annexed in the Inception Report. *Factors affecting this criterion may include (at the design stage):*

Stakeholders participation and cooperation
Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

C. Nature of External Context

10.8 At evaluation inception stage a rating is established for the project's external operating context (considering the prevalence of conflict, natural disasters and political upheaval¹³²). This rating is entered in the final evaluation ratings table as item C. Where a project has been rated as facing either an Unfavourable or Highly Unfavourable external operating context, and/or a negative external event has occurred during project implementation, the

¹³⁰ <http://www.unep.fr/ozonaction/about/bsp.htm>

¹³¹ A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

¹³² Note that 'political upheaval' does not include regular national election cycles, but unanticipated unrest or prolonged disruption. The potential delays or changes in political support that are often associated with the regular national election cycle should be part of the project's design and addressed through adaptive management by the project team.

ratings for Effectiveness, Efficiency and/or Sustainability may be increased at the discretion of the evaluation consultant and Evaluation Manager together. A justification for such an increase must be given.

D. Effectiveness

Availability of Outputs¹³³

10.9 The evaluation will assess the project's success in producing the programmed outputs and achieving milestones as per the project design document (ProDoc). Any formal modifications/revisions made during project implementation will be considered part of the project design. Where the project outputs are inappropriately or inaccurately stated in the ProDoc, reformulations may be necessary in the reconstruction of the TOC. In such cases a table should be provided showing the original and the reformulation of the outputs for transparency. The availability of outputs will be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality, and the assessment will consider their ownership by, and usefulness to, intended beneficiaries and the timeliness of their provision. The evaluation will briefly explain the reasons behind the success or shortcomings of the project in delivering its programmed outputs and meeting expected quality standards.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Preparation and readiness

Quality of project management and supervision¹³⁴

Achievement of Project Outcomes¹³⁵

10.10 The achievement of project outcomes is assessed as performance against the project outcomes as defined in the reconstructed¹³⁶ Theory of Change. These are outcomes that are intended to be achieved by the end of the project timeframe and within the project's resource envelope. As with outputs, a table can be used where substantive amendments to the formulation of project outcomes is necessary. The evaluation should report evidence of attribution between UNEP's intervention and the project outcomes. In cases of normative work or where several actors are collaborating to achieve common outcomes, evidence of the nature and magnitude of UNEP's 'substantive contribution' should be included and/or 'credible association' established between project efforts and the project outcomes realised.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Quality of project management and supervision

Stakeholders' participation and cooperation

Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

Communication and public awareness

Likelihood of Impact

10.11 Based on the articulation of long-lasting effects in the reconstructed TOC (i.e. from project outcomes, via intermediate states, to impact), the evaluation will assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts becoming a reality. Project objectives or goals should be incorporated in the TOC, possibly as intermediate states or long-lasting impacts. The Evaluation Office's approach to the use of TOC in project evaluations is outlined in a guidance note available on the Evaluation Office website, <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation> and is supported by an excel-based flow chart, 'Likelihood of Impact Assessment Decision Tree'. Essentially the approach follows a 'likelihood tree' from project outcomes to impacts, taking

¹³³ Outputs are the availability (for intended beneficiaries/users) of new products and services and/or gains in knowledge, abilities and awareness of individuals or within institutions (UNEP, 2019)

¹³⁴ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP.

¹³⁵ Outcomes are the use (i.e. uptake, adoption, application) of an output by intended beneficiaries, observed as changes in institutions or behavior, attitude or condition (UNEP, 2019)

¹³⁶ All submitted UNEP project documents are required to present a Theory of Change with all submitted project designs. The level of 'reconstruction' needed during an evaluation will depend on the quality of this initial TOC, the time that has lapsed between project design and implementation (which may be related to securing and disbursing funds) and the level of any formal changes made to the project design.

account of whether the assumptions and drivers identified in the reconstructed TOC held. Any unintended positive effects should also be identified and their causal linkages to the intended impact described.

10.12 The evaluation will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute to, unintended negative effects. Some of these potential negative effects may have been identified in the project design as risks or as part of the analysis of Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards.¹³⁷

10.13 The evaluation will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role or has promoted scaling up and/or replication¹³⁸ as part of its Theory of Change and as factors that are likely to contribute to longer term impact.

10.14 Ultimately UNEP and all its partners aim to bring about benefits to the environment and human well-being. Few projects are likely to have impact statements that reflect such long-term or broad-based changes. However, the evaluation will assess the likelihood of the project to make a substantive contribution to the long-lasting changes represented by the Sustainable Development Goals and/or the intermediate-level results reflected in UNEP's Expected Accomplishments and the strategic priorities of funding partners.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Quality of Project Management and Supervision (including adaptive management)

Stakeholders participation and cooperation

Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

Country ownership and driven-ness

Communication and public awareness

E. Financial Management

10.15 Financial management will be assessed under three themes: adherence to UNEP's financial policies and procedures, completeness of financial information and communication between financial and project management staff. The evaluation will establish the actual spend across the life of the project of funds secured from all donors. This expenditure will be reported, where possible, at output level and will be compared with the approved budget. The evaluation will verify the application of proper financial management standards and adherence to UNEP's financial management policies. Any financial management issues that have affected the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance will be highlighted. The evaluation will record where standard financial documentation is missing, inaccurate, incomplete or unavailable in a timely manner. The evaluation will assess the level of communication between the Project/Task Manager and the Fund Management Officer as it relates to the effective delivery of the planned project and the needs of a responsive, adaptive management approach.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Preparation and readiness

Quality of project management and supervision

F. Efficiency

10.16 The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project delivered maximum results from the given resources. This will include an assessment of the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution. Focussing on the translation of inputs into outputs, cost-effectiveness is the extent to which an intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its results at the lowest possible cost. Timeliness refers to whether planned activities were delivered according to expected timeframes as well as whether events were sequenced efficiently. The evaluation will also assess to what extent any project extension could have been avoided through stronger project management and identify any negative impacts caused by project delays or extensions. The evaluation will describe any cost or time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and

¹³⁷ Further information on Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards (ESES) can be found at <http://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/8718>

¹³⁸ *Scaling up* refers to approaches being adopted on a much larger scale, but in a very similar context. Scaling up is often the longer-term objective of pilot initiatives. *Replication* refers to approaches being repeated or lessons being explicitly applied in new/different contexts e.g. other geographic areas, different target group etc. Effective replication typically requires some form of revision or adaptation to the new context. It is possible to replicate at either the same or a different scale.

agreed project timeframe and consider whether the project was implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternative interventions or approaches.

10.17 The evaluation will give special attention to efforts made by the project teams during project implementation to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities¹³⁹ with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency. The evaluation will also consider the extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint.

10.18 The factors underpinning the need for any project extensions will also be explored and discussed. As management or project support costs cannot be increased in cases of 'no cost extensions', such extensions represent an increase in unstated costs to implementing parties.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Preparation and readiness (e.g. timeliness)

Quality of project management and supervision

Stakeholders participation and cooperation

G. Monitoring and Reporting

10.19 The evaluation will assess monitoring and reporting across three sub-categories: monitoring design and budgeting, monitoring implementation and project reporting.

Monitoring Design and Budgeting

10.20 Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART¹⁴⁰ results towards the provision of the project's outputs and achievement of project outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender, vulnerability or marginalisation. In particular, the evaluation will assess the relevance and appropriateness of the project indicators as well as the methods used for tracking progress against them as part of conscious results-based management. The evaluation will assess the quality of the design of the monitoring plan as well as the funds allocated for its implementation. The adequacy of resources for mid-term and terminal evaluation/review should be discussed if applicable.

Monitoring of Project Implementation

10.21 The evaluation will assess whether the monitoring system was operational and facilitated the timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period. This assessment will include consideration of whether the project gathered relevant and good quality baseline data that is accurately and appropriately documented. This should include monitoring the representation and participation of disaggregated groups (including gendered, vulnerable and marginalised groups) in project activities. It will also consider how information generated by the monitoring system during project implementation was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensure sustainability. The evaluation should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring were used to support this activity.

Project Reporting

10.22 UNEP has a centralised project information management system (Anubis) in which project managers upload six-monthly progress reports against agreed project milestones. This information will be provided to the Evaluation Consultant(s) by the Evaluation Manager. Some projects have additional requirements to report regularly to funding partners, which will be supplied by the project team (e.g. the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool for GEF-funded projects). The evaluation will assess the extent to which both UNEP and donor reporting commitments have been fulfilled. Consideration will be given as to whether reporting has been carried out with respect to the effects of the initiative on disaggregated groups.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Quality of project management and supervision

Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity (e.g disaggregated indicators and data)

H. Sustainability

¹³⁹ Complementarity with other interventions during project design, inception or mobilization is considered under Strategic Relevance above.

¹⁴⁰ SMART refers to results that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented. Indicators help to make results measurable.

10.23 Sustainability¹⁴¹ is understood as the probability of project outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the intervention. The evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the endurance of achieved project outcomes (ie. 'assumptions' and 'drivers'). Some factors of sustainability may be embedded in the project design and implementation approaches while others may be contextual circumstances or conditions that evolve over the life of the intervention. Where applicable an assessment of bio-physical factors that may affect the sustainability of project outcomes may also be included.

Socio-political Sustainability

10.24 The evaluation will assess the extent to which social or political factors support the continuation and further development of project outcomes. It will consider the level of ownership, interest and commitment among government and other stakeholders to take the project achievements forwards. In particular the evaluation will consider whether individual capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

Financial Sustainability

10.25 Some project outcomes, once achieved, do not require further financial inputs, e.g. the adoption of a revised policy. However, in order to derive a benefit from this outcome further management action may still be needed e.g. to undertake actions to enforce the policy. Other project outcomes may be dependent on a continuous flow of action that needs to be resourced for them to be maintained, e.g. continuation of a new resource management approach. The evaluation will assess the extent to which project outcomes are dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained. Secured future funding is only relevant to financial sustainability where the project's outcomes have been extended into a future project phase. Even where future funding has been secured, the question still remains as to whether the project outcomes are financially sustainable.

Institutional Sustainability

10.26 The evaluation will assess the extent to which the sustainability of project outcomes (especially those relating to policies and laws) is dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance. It will consider whether institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. are robust enough to continue delivering the benefits associated with the project outcomes after project closure. In particular, the evaluation will consider whether institutional capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Stakeholders participation and cooperation

Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity (e.g. where interventions are not inclusive, their sustainability may be undermined)

Communication and public awareness

Country ownership and driven-ness

Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

(These factors are rated in the ratings table but are discussed within the Main Evaluation Report as cross-cutting themes as appropriate under the other evaluation criteria, above. Where the issues have not been addressed under other evaluation criteria, the consultant(s) will provide summary sections under the following headings.)

Preparation and Readiness

10.27 This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project (ie. the time between project approval and first disbursement). The evaluation will assess whether appropriate measures were taken to either address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. In particular the evaluation will consider the nature and quality of engagement with stakeholder groups by the project team, the confirmation of partner capacity and development of partnership agreements as well as initial staffing and financing arrangements. (Project preparation is included in the template for the assessment of Project Design Quality).

Quality of Project Management and Supervision

¹⁴¹ As used here, 'sustainability' means the long-term maintenance of outcomes and consequent impacts, whether environmental or not. This is distinct from the concept of sustainability in the terms 'environmental sustainability' or 'sustainable development', which imply 'not living beyond our means' or 'not diminishing global environmental benefits' (GEF STAP Paper, 2019, Achieving More Enduring Outcomes from GEF Investment)

10.28 In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping and supervision provided by UNEP.

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

Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

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

Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity

10.31 The evaluation will ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on the human rights-based approach (HRBA) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Within this human rights context the evaluation will assess to what extent the intervention adheres to UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment¹⁴².

10.32 In particular the evaluation will consider to what extent project implementation and monitoring have taken into consideration: (i) possible inequalities (especially those related to gender) in access to, and the control over, natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of disadvantaged groups (especially women, youth and children) to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of disadvantaged groups (especially those related to gender) in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation.

Environmental and Social Safeguards

10.33 UNEP projects address environmental and social safeguards primarily through the process of environmental and social screening at the project approval stage, risk assessment and management (avoidance, minimization, mitigation or, in exceptional cases, offsetting) of potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with project and programme activities. The evaluation will confirm whether UNEP requirements¹⁴³ were met to: *review* risk ratings on a regular basis; *monitor* project implementation for possible safeguard issues; *respond* (where relevant) to safeguard issues through risk avoidance, minimization, mitigation or offsetting and *report* on the implementation of safeguard management measures taken. UNEP requirements for proposed projects to be screened for any safeguarding issues; for sound environmental and social risk assessments to be conducted and initial risk ratings to be assigned are evaluated above under Quality of Project Design).

10.34 The evaluation will also consider the extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint.

Country Ownership and Driven-ness

10.35 The evaluation will assess the quality and degree of engagement of government / public sector agencies in the project. While there is some overlap between Country Ownership and Institutional Sustainability, this criterion focuses primarily on the forward momentum of the intended projects results, ie. either a) moving

¹⁴²The Evaluation Office notes that Gender Equality was first introduced in the UNEP Project Review Committee Checklist in 2010 and, therefore, provides a criterion rating on gender for projects approved from 2010 onwards. Equally, it is noted that policy documents, operational guidelines and other capacity building efforts have only been developed since then and have evolved over time. https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7655/-Gender_equality_and_the_environment_Policy_and_strategy-2015Gender_equality_and_the_environment_policy_and_strategy.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

¹⁴³ For the review of project concepts and proposals, the Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) was introduced in 2019 and replaced the Environmental, Social and Economic Review note (ESERN), which had been in place since 2016. In GEF projects safeguards have been considered in project designs since 2011.

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

Communication and Public Awareness

10.36 The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of: a) communication of learning and experience sharing between project partners and interested groups arising from the project during its life and b) public awareness activities that were undertaken during the implementation of the project to influence attitudes or shape behaviour among wider communities and civil society at large. The evaluation should consider whether existing communication channels and networks were used effectively, including meeting the differentiated needs of gendered or marginalised groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project the evaluation will comment on the sustainability of the communication channel under either socio-political, institutional or financial sustainability, as appropriate.

Section 3. EVALUATION APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

The Terminal Evaluation will be an in-depth evaluation using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used as appropriate to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is highly recommended that the consultant(s) maintains close communication with the project team and promotes information exchange throughout the evaluation implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the evaluation findings. Where applicable, the consultant(s) will provide a geo-referenced map that demarcates the area covered by the project and, where possible, provide geo-reference photographs of key intervention sites (e.g. sites of habitat rehabilitation and protection, pollution treatment infrastructure, etc.)

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

A desk review of:

Relevant background documentation;

Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval);

Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework and its budget;

Project reports such as six-monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence and including the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool etc.;

Project outputs;

Mid-Term Review or Mid-Term Evaluation of the project;

Evaluations/reviews of similar projects.

Interviews (individual or in group) with:

UNEP Task Manager (TM);

Project management team, including the Project Manager within the Executing Agency;

UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO);

Portfolio Manager and Sub-Programme Coordinator, where appropriate;

Project partners;

Relevant resource persons.

Surveys [provide details, where appropriate]

Field visits: Decisions regarding field visits will be made during the inception phase and take due account of the current coronavirus pandemic.

Other data collection tools [provide details, where appropriate]

Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

The evaluation team will prepare:

Inception Report: (see Annex 1 for links to all templates, tables and guidance notes) containing an assessment of project design quality, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, project stakeholder analysis, evaluation framework and a tentative evaluation schedule.

Preliminary Findings Note: typically in the form of a powerpoint presentation, the sharing of preliminary findings is intended to support the participation of the project team, act as a means to ensure all information sources have been accessed and provide an opportunity to verify emerging findings. In the case of highly strategic project/portfolio evaluations or evaluations with an Evaluation Reference Group, the preliminary findings may be presented as a word document for review and comment.

Draft and Final Evaluation Report: (see links in Annex 1) containing an executive summary that can act as a stand-alone document; detailed analysis of the evaluation findings organised by evaluation criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations and an annotated ratings table.

Two Evaluation Briefs, (a 2-page overview of the evaluand and key evaluation findings; a 4-6 page overview of a small portfolio of projects on SLM) for wider dissemination through the UNEP website may be required. This will be discussed with the Evaluation Manager no later than during the finalization of the Inception Report.

Review of the draft evaluation report. The evaluation team will submit a draft report to the Evaluation Manager and revise the draft in response to their comments and suggestions. Once a draft of adequate quality has been peer-reviewed and accepted, the Evaluation Manager will share the cleared draft report with the Task Manager and Project Manager, who will alert the Evaluation Manager in case the report contains any blatant factual errors. The Evaluation Manager will then forward revised draft report (corrected by the evaluation consultant(s) where necessary) to other project stakeholders, for their review and comments. Stakeholders may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions as well as providing feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons. Any comments or responses to draft reports will be sent to the Evaluation Manager for consolidation. The Evaluation Manager will provide all comments to the evaluation consultant(s) for consideration in preparing the final report, along with guidance on areas of contradiction or issues requiring an institutional response.

Based on a careful review of the evidence collated by the evaluation consultants and the internal consistency of the report, the Evaluation Manager will provide an assessment of the ratings in the final evaluation report. Where there are differences of opinion between the evaluator and the Evaluation Manager on project ratings, both viewpoints will be clearly presented in the final report. The Evaluation Office ratings will be considered the final ratings for the project.

The Evaluation Manager will prepare a quality assessment of the first draft of the main evaluation report, which acts as a tool for providing structured feedback to the evaluation consultants. The quality of the final report will be assessed and rated against the criteria specified in template listed in Annex 1 and this assessment will be appended to the Final Evaluation Report.

At the end of the evaluation process, the Evaluation Office will prepare a Recommendations Implementation Plan in the format of a table, to be completed and updated at regular intervals by the Task Manager. The Evaluation Office will track compliance against this plan on a six-monthly basis for a maximum of 18 months.

Evaluation Consultant

For this evaluation, the evaluation team will consist of a Principal Evaluator who will work under the overall responsibility of the Evaluation Office represented by an Evaluation Manager, Janet Wildish, in consultation with the UNEP Task Manager, Victoria Pandero,, Fund Management Officer, Rachel Kagiri, and the Sub-programme Coordinators of the Climate Change Sub-programme, Niklas Hagelberg. The consultant will liaise with the Evaluation Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the evaluation. It is, however, each consultant's individual responsibility to arrange for their visas and immunizations as well as to plan meetings with stakeholders, organize online surveys, obtain documentary evidence and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The UNEP Task Manager and project team will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the evaluation as efficiently and independently as possible.

The Principal Evaluator will be hired over a period of 5 months (1st March to 31st July 2021) and should have the following: a university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other relevant political or social sciences area is required and an advanced degree in the same areas is desirable; a minimum of 7 years of technical / evaluation experience is required, preferably including evaluating large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; and a good understanding of sustainable land management issues is desired. English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat.

For this consultancy, fluency in oral and written English is a requirement. Working knowledge of the UN system and specifically the work of UNEP is an added advantage. The work will be home-based with possible field visits.

The Principal Evaluator will be responsible, in close consultation with the Evaluation Office of UNEP for overall management of the evaluation and timely provision of its outputs, described above in Section 11 Evaluation Deliverables, above. The consultant will ensure that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered.

Specific Responsibilities for Principal Evaluator:

The Principal Evaluator will be responsible, in close consultation with the Evaluation Manager, for overall management of the evaluation and timely provision of its outputs, described above in Section 11 Evaluation Deliverables.

More specifically:

Inception phase of the evaluation, including:

- preliminary desk review and introductory interviews with project staff;
- draft the reconstructed Theory of Change of the project;
- prepare the evaluation framework;
- develop the desk review and interview protocols;
- draft the survey protocols (if relevant);
- develop and present criteria for country and/or site selection for the evaluation mission;
- plan the evaluation schedule;
- prepare the Inception Report, incorporating comments until approved by the Evaluation Manager

Data collection and analysis phase of the evaluation, including:

- conduct further desk review and in-depth interviews with project implementing and executing agencies, project partners and project stakeholders;
- (where appropriate and agreed) conduct an evaluation mission(s) to selected countries, visit the project locations, interview project partners and stakeholders, including a good representation of local communities. Ensure independence of the evaluation and confidentiality of evaluation interviews.
- regularly report back to the Evaluation Manager on progress and inform of any possible problems or issues encountered and;
- keep the Project/Task Manager informed of the evaluation progress.

Reporting phase, including:

- draft the Main Evaluation Report, ensuring that the evaluation report is complete, coherent and consistent with the Evaluation Manager guidelines both in substance and style;
- liaise with the Evaluation Manager on comments received and finalize the Main Evaluation Report, ensuring that comments are taken into account until approved by the Evaluation Manager
- prepare a Response to Comments annex for the main report, listing those comments not accepted by the evaluation consultant and indicating the reason for the rejection; and
- (where agreed with the Evaluation Manager) prepare an Evaluation Brief (2-page summary of the evaluation and the key evaluation findings and lessons)

Managing relations, including:

- maintain a positive relationship with evaluation stakeholders, ensuring that the evaluation process is as participatory as possible but at the same time maintains its independence;
- communicate in a timely manner with the Evaluation Manager on any issues requiring its attention and intervention.

Schedule of the evaluation

The table below presents the tentative schedule for the evaluation.

Table 3. Tentative schedule for the evaluation

Milestone	Tentative Dates
Evaluation Initiation Meeting	
Inception Report	
Evaluation Mission	
Telephone interviews, surveys etc.	
Powerpoint/presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations	

Draft report to Evaluation Manager (and Peer Reviewer)	
Draft Report shared with UNEP Project Manager and team	
Draft Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	
Final Report	
Final Report shared with all respondents	

Contractual Arrangements

Evaluation consultants will be selected and recruited by the Evaluation Office of UNEP under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) on a “fees only” basis (see below). By signing the service contract with UNEP /UNON, the consultant(s) certify that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of the contract) with the project’s executing or implementing units. All consultants are required to sign the Code of Conduct Agreement Form.

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

Schedule of Payment for the [Evaluation Consultant/Principal Evaluator]:

Deliverable	Percentage Payment
Approved Inception Report (as per annex document 7)	30%
Approved Draft Main Evaluation Report (as per annex document 13)	30%
Approved Final Main Evaluation Report	40%

Fees only contracts: Air tickets will be purchased by UNEP and 75% of the Daily Subsistence Allowance for each authorised travel mission will be paid up front. Local in-country travel will only be reimbursed where agreed in advance with the Evaluation Manager and on the production of acceptable receipts. Terminal expenses and residual DSA entitlements (25%) will be paid after mission completion.

The consultants may be provided with access to UNEP’s Anubis information management system and if such access is granted, the consultants agree not to disclose information from that system to third parties beyond information required for, and included in, the evaluation report.

In case the consultants are not able to provide the deliverables in accordance with these guidelines, and in line with the expected quality standards by the UNEP Evaluation Office, payment may be withheld at the discretion of the Director of the Evaluation Office until the consultants have improved the deliverables to meet UNEP’s quality standards.

If the consultant(s) fail to submit a satisfactory final product to UNEP in a timely manner, i.e. before the end date of their contract, the Evaluation Office reserves the right to employ additional human resources to finalize the report, and to reduce the consultants’ fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the Evaluation Office to bring the report up to standard.

ANNEX VIII. QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE TERMINAL REVIEW REPORT

Evaluand Title:

Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change Mitigation Co-Benefits (SLM-CCM) GEF ID: 5698

All UNEP evaluations are subject to a quality assessment by the Evaluation Office. This is an assessment of the quality of the evaluation product (i.e. evaluation report) and is dependent on more than just the consultant's efforts and skills.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Substantive Report Quality Criteria		
<p>Quality of the Executive Summary:</p> <p>The Summary should be able to stand alone as an accurate summary of the main evaluation product. It should include a concise overview of the evaluation object; clear summary of the evaluation objectives and scope; overall evaluation rating of the project and key features of performance (strengths and weaknesses) against exceptional criteria (plus reference to where the evaluation ratings table can be found within the report); summary of the main findings of the exercise, including a synthesis of main conclusions (which include a summary response to key strategic evaluation questions), lessons learned and recommendations.</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>This section provides a good summary of the contents of the report and contains reference to (and hotlink for) the completed Ratings Table.</p>	5.5
<p>I. Introduction</p> <p>A brief introduction should be given identifying, where possible and relevant, the following: institutional context of the project (sub-programme, Division, regions/countries where implemented) and coverage of the evaluation; date of PRC approval and project document signature); results frameworks to which it contributes (e.g. Expected Accomplishment in POW); project duration and start/end dates; number of project phases (where appropriate); implementing partners; total secured budget and whether the project has been evaluated in the past (e.g. mid-term, part of a synthesis evaluation, evaluated by another agency etc.)</p> <p>Consider the extent to which the introduction includes a concise statement of the purpose of the evaluation and the key intended audience for the findings?</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All necessary elements covered.</p>	5.5
<p>II. Evaluation Methods</p> <p>A data collection section should include: a description of evaluation methods and information sources used, including the number and type of respondents; justification for methods used (e.g. qualitative/quantitative; electronic/face-to-face); any selection criteria used to identify respondents, case studies or sites/countries visited; strategies used to increase stakeholder engagement and consultation; details of</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Solid methods section. Noted that the science-based nature of the project (carbon monitoring) limited its capacity to demonstrate gender responsiveness.</p>	5

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
<p>how data were verified (e.g. triangulation, review by stakeholders etc.).</p> <p>Methods to ensure that potentially excluded groups (excluded by gender, vulnerability or marginalisation) are reached and their experiences captured effectively, should be made explicit in this section.</p> <p>The methods used to analyse data (e.g. scoring; coding; thematic analysis etc.) should be described.</p> <p>It should also address evaluation limitations such as: low or imbalanced response rates across different groups; gaps in documentation; extent to which findings can be either generalised to wider evaluation questions or constraints on aggregation/disaggregation; any potential or apparent biases; language barriers and ways they were overcome.</p> <p>Ethics and human rights issues should be highlighted including: how anonymity and confidentiality were protected and strategies used to include the views of marginalised or potentially disadvantaged groups and/or divergent views. Is there an ethics statement?</p>	<p>See footnote 10 on Gender representation in training (40% women)</p> <p><i>Note that this report was finalized before UNEP Evaluation Office disseminated new guidance on the Methods sections.</i></p>	
<p>III. The Project</p> <p>This section should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Context:</i> Overview of the main issue that the project is trying to address, its root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being (i.e. synopsis of the problem and situational analyses). • <i>Results framework:</i> Summary of the project's results hierarchy as stated in the ProDoc (or as officially revised) • <i>Stakeholders:</i> Description of groups of targeted stakeholders organised according to relevant common characteristics • <i>Project implementation structure and partners:</i> A description of the implementation structure with diagram and a list of key project partners • <i>Changes in design during implementation:</i> Any key events that affected the project's scope or parameters should be described in brief in chronological order • <i>Project financing:</i> Completed tables of: (a) budget at design and expenditure by components (b) planned and actual sources of funding/co-financing 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All elements covered at appropriate level of detail.</p> <p>Co-financing table, as well as expenditure vs budget, is Annex 5.</p>	5
<p>IV. Theory of Change</p> <p>The <i>TOC at Evaluation</i> should be presented clearly in both diagrammatic and narrative forms. Clear articulation of each major causal pathway is expected, (starting from outputs to long term impact), including explanations of all drivers and assumptions as well as the expected roles of key actors.</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>The TOC is well reconstructed, including Assumptions and Drivers and discussing causal pathways.</p>	5.5

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
<p>This section should include a description of how the <i>TOC at Evaluation</i>¹⁴⁴ was designed (who was involved etc.) and applied to the context of the project? Where the project results as stated in the project design documents (or formal revisions of the project design) are not an accurate reflection of the project's intentions or do not follow UNEP's definitions of different results levels, project results may need to be re-phrased or reformulated. In such cases, a summary of the project's results hierarchy should be presented for: a) the results as stated in the approved/revised Prodoc logframe/TOC and b) as formulated in the <i>TOC at Evaluation</i>. The two results hierarchies should be presented as a two-column table to show clearly that, although wording and placement may have changed, the results 'goal posts' have not been 'moved'.</p>	<p>In this report the Evaluation Team tried displaying the Impact on the left as this is supposed to be the starting point for a project design/TOC and the English language is read from left to right. A benefit of this approach is to emphasise reading of the impact expected.</p> <p><i>Note that this TOC was finalized before UNEP Evaluation Office disseminated new guidance on including Human Rights assumptions/drivers in TOCs.</i></p>	
<p>V. Key Findings</p> <p>A. Strategic relevance:</p> <p>This section should include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UNEP's mandate and its alignment with UNEP's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. An assessment of the complementarity of the project at design (or during inception/mobilisation¹⁴⁵), with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups should be included. Consider the extent to which all four elements have been addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW) ii. Alignment to Donor/GEF Strategic Priorities iii. Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities iv. Complementarity with Existing Interventions 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All elements are well covered.</p>	5
<p>B. Quality of Project Design</p> <p>To what extent are the strength and weaknesses of the project design effectively <u>summarized</u>?</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Well summarised.</p>	5

¹⁴⁴ During the Inception Phase of the evaluation process a *TOC at Evaluation Inception* is created based on the information contained in the approved project documents (these may include either logical framework or a TOC or narrative descriptions), formal revisions and annual reports etc. During the evaluation process this TOC is revised based on changes made during project intervention and becomes the *TOC at Evaluation*.

¹⁴⁵ A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
C. Nature of the External Context For projects where this is appropriate, key <u>external</u> features of the project's implementing context that limited the project's performance (e.g. conflict, natural disaster, political upheaval ¹⁴⁶), and how they affected performance, should be described.	Final report: Appropriately addressed.	5
D. Effectiveness (i) Outputs and Project Outcomes: How well does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the a) availability of outputs, and b) achievement of project outcomes? How convincing is the discussion of attribution and contribution, as well as the constraints to attributing effects to the intervention. The effects of the intervention on differentiated groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation, should be discussed explicitly.	Final report: Good (balanced, well-reasoned etc) assessments of performance at output and outcome level. Some of the strategic questions from the TOR are addressed in this section.	5.5
(ii) Likelihood of Impact: How well does the report present an integrated analysis, guided by the causal pathways represented by the TOC, of all evidence relating to likelihood of impact? How well are change processes explained and the roles of key actors, as well as drivers and assumptions, explicitly discussed? Any unintended negative effects of the project should be discussed under Effectiveness, especially negative effects on disadvantaged groups.	Final report: Useful analysis of likelihood of impact.	5.5
E. Financial Management This section should contain an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under financial management and include a completed 'financial management' table. Consider how well the report addresses the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adherence</i> to UNEP's financial policies and procedures • <i>completeness</i> of financial information, including the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used • <i>communication</i> between financial and project management staff 	Final report: All elements adequately covered. Receiving financial/reporting information for this evaluation took time and some information only arrived in response to the full draft of the report. This suggests that the institutionalisation/central storage of this information would benefit from strengthening.	4.5

¹⁴⁶ Note that 'political upheaval' does not include regular national election cycles, but unanticipated unrest or prolonged disruption. The potential delays or changes in political support that are often associated with the regular national election cycle should be part of the project's design and addressed through adaptive management of the project team.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
<p>F. Efficiency</p> <p>To what extent, and how well, does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of efficiency under the primary categories of cost-effectiveness and timeliness including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implications of delays and no cost extensions • Time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe • Discussion of making use during project implementation of/building on pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. • The extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint. 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All elements well covered.</p>	5
<p>G. Monitoring and Reporting</p> <p>How well does the report assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring design and budgeting (<i>including SMART results with measurable indicators, resources for MTE/R etc.</i>) • Monitoring of project implementation (<i>including use of monitoring data for adaptive management</i>) • Project reporting (<i>e.g. PIMS and donor reports</i>) 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All elements well covered</p>	5
<p>H. Sustainability</p> <p>How well does the evaluation identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of achieved project outcomes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-political Sustainability • Financial Sustainability • Institutional Sustainability 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Detailed discussion</p>	5.5
<p>I. Factors Affecting Performance</p> <p>These factors are <u>not</u> discussed in stand-alone sections but are integrated in criteria A-H as appropriate. Note that these are described in the Evaluation Criteria Ratings Matrix. To what extent, and how well, does the evaluation report cover the following cross-cutting themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and readiness 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All sub-categories are effectively summarised (some Gender content is under Monitoring and Reporting)</p>	5

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of project management and supervision¹⁴⁷ • Stakeholder participation and co-operation • Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity • Environmental and social safeguards • Country ownership and driven-ness • Communication and public awareness 		
VI. Conclusions and Recommendations i. Quality of the conclusions: The key strategic questions should be clearly and succinctly addressed within the conclusions section. It is expected that the conclusions will highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the project and connect them in a compelling story line. Human rights and gender dimensions of the intervention (e.g. how these dimensions were considered, addressed or impacted on) should be discussed explicitly. Conclusions, as well as lessons and recommendations, should be consistent with the evidence presented in the main body of the report.	Final report: Major insights developed during the report are brought together here in a coherent manner.	5
ii) Quality and utility of the lessons: Both positive and negative lessons are expected and duplication with recommendations should be avoided. Based on explicit evaluation findings, lessons should be rooted in real project experiences or derived from problems encountered and mistakes made that should be avoided in the future. Lessons are intended to be adopted any time they are deemed to be relevant in the future and must have the potential for wider application (replication and generalization) and use and should briefly describe the context from which they are derived and those contexts in which they may be useful.	Final report: Relevant lessons are presented	5
iii) Quality and utility of the recommendations: To what extent are the recommendations proposals for specific action to be taken by identified people/position-holders to resolve concrete problems affecting the project or the sustainability of its results? They should be feasible to implement within the timeframe and resources available (including local capacities) and specific in terms of who would do what and when. At least one recommendation relating to strengthening the human rights and gender dimensions of UNEP interventions, should be given.	Final report: Recommendations are actionable and include Partner, Project and UNEP-wide recommendations.	5.5

¹⁴⁷ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
<p>Recommendations should represent a measurable performance target in order that the Evaluation Office can monitor and assess compliance with the recommendations.</p> <p>In cases where the recommendation is addressed to a third party, compliance can only be monitored and assessed where a contractual/legal agreement remains in place. Without such an agreement, the recommendation should be formulated to say that UNEP project staff should pass on the recommendation to the relevant third party in an effective or substantive manner. The effective transmission by UNEP of the recommendation will then be monitored for compliance.</p> <p>Where a new project phase is already under discussion or in preparation with the same third party, a recommendation can be made to address the issue in the next phase.</p>		
VII. Report Structure and Presentation Quality		
i) Structure and completeness of the report: To what extent does the report follow the Evaluation Office guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included and complete?	Final report: Follows UNEP Evaluation Office preferred structure and guidelines, as available at the time of writing the report.	5.5
ii) Quality of writing and formatting: Consider whether the report is well written (clear English language and grammar) with language that is adequate in quality and tone for an official document? Do visual aids, such as maps and graphs convey key information? Does the report follow Evaluation Office formatting guidelines?	Final report: Well-written. Visual material was constrained by the lack of field visits.	5
OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING		5.2

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1. The overall quality of the evaluation report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.

At the end of the evaluation, compliance of the evaluation process against the agreed standard procedures is assessed, based on the table below. *All questions with negative compliance must be explained further in the table below.*

Evaluation Process Quality Criteria	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Independence:		
1. Were the Terms of Reference drafted and finalised by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
2. Were possible conflicts of interest of proposed Evaluation Consultant(s) appraised and addressed in the final selection?	Y	

3. Was the final selection of the Evaluation Consultant(s) made by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
4. Was the evaluator contracted directly by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
5. Was the Evaluation Consultant given direct access to identified external stakeholders in order to adequately present and discuss the findings, as appropriate?	Y	
6. Did the Evaluation Consultant raise any concerns about being unable to work freely and without interference or undue pressure from project staff or the Evaluation Office?		N
7. If Yes to Q6: Were these concerns resolved to the mutual satisfaction of both the Evaluation Consultant and the Evaluation Manager?	N/A	
Financial Management:		
8. Was the evaluation budget approved at project design available for the evaluation?	Y	
9. Was the final evaluation budget agreed and approved by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
10. Were the agreed evaluation funds readily available to support the payment of the evaluation contract throughout the payment process?	Y	
Timeliness:		
11. If a Terminal Evaluation: Was the evaluation initiated within the period of six months before or after project operational completion? Or, if a Mid Term Evaluation: Was the evaluation initiated within a six-month period prior to the project's mid-point?		
12. Were all deadlines set in the Terms of Reference respected, as far as unforeseen circumstances allowed?	Y	
13. Was the inception report delivered and reviewed/approved prior to commencing any travel?	N/A	
Project's engagement and support:		
14. Did the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and identified project stakeholders provide comments on the evaluation Terms of Reference?	Y	
15. Did the project make available all required/requested documents?	Y	
16. Did the project make all financial information (and audit reports if applicable) available in a timely manner and to an acceptable level of completeness?	Some late material	
17. Was adequate support provided by the project to the evaluator(s) in planning and conducting evaluation missions?	N/A	
18. Was close communication between the Evaluation Consultant, Evaluation Office and project team maintained throughout the evaluation?	Y	
19. Were evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations adequately discussed with the project team for ownership to be established?	Y	
20. Did the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and any identified project stakeholders provide comments on the draft evaluation report?	Y	
Quality assurance:		
21. Were the evaluation Terms of Reference, including the key evaluation questions, peer-reviewed?	Y	
22. Was the TOC in the inception report peer-reviewed?	Y	
23. Was the quality of the draft/cleared report checked by the Evaluation Manager and Peer Reviewer prior to dissemination to stakeholders for comments?	Y	

24. Did the Evaluation Office complete an assessment of the quality of both the draft and final reports?	Y	
Transparency:		
25. Was the draft evaluation report sent directly by the Evaluation Consultant to the Evaluation Office?	Y	
26. Did the Evaluation Manager disseminate (or authorize dissemination) of the cleared draft report to the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and other key internal personnel (including the Reference Group where appropriate) to solicit formal comments?	Y	
27. Did the Evaluation Manager disseminate (or authorize dissemination) appropriate drafts of the report to identified external stakeholders, including key partners and funders, to solicit formal comments?	Y	
28. Were all stakeholder comments to the draft evaluation report sent directly to the Evaluation Office?	Y	
29. Did the Evaluation Consultant(s) respond adequately to all factual corrections and comments?	Y	
30. Did the Evaluation Office share substantive comments and Evaluation Consultant responses with those who commented, as appropriate?	Y	

Provide comments / explanations / mitigating circumstances below for any non-compliant process issues.

<u>Process Criterion Number</u>	<u>Evaluation Office Comments</u>

ANNEX IX. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE SLM-CCM LESSONS LEARNT REPORT

Table 12. Lessons derived from the report entitled “Learning to Manage Land Sustainably with Climate Change Mitigation Co-benefits: Lessons from the Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change Mitigation Co-benefits (SLM-CCMC) Project”

Lessons	Description
Lesson 1: Maximizing use of the linked toolset	The toolset accessibly provides users with ability to plan, monitor and report on GHG co-benefits of SLM activities. Link between WOCAT and the CBP tools allows anyone who documents an SLM practice in WOCAT to estimate how that practice might impact climate change. Toolset has potential for establishing a data base providing carbon friendly practices but requires long-term institutional support.
Lesson 2: Training in the New Normal	The technical training program run by the SLM-CCMC project on the use of CBP, WOCAT and their linkages was very successful. Four training events carried important lessons. Online sessions were satisfactory as everyone got a chance to attend. Trainings were available online and translated. Future trainings should be made available in an online library, translated in different languages to accommodate COVID-19 restrictions. The SLM-CCMC project group continue to offer trainings on the linked toolset.
Lesson 3: Raising awareness	The training and outreach program increased awareness of the GHG mitigation co-benefits of sustainable land management. Awareness should be routinely embedded in the design of new SLM projects. Comparative analysis of GHG tools for land management and the e-learning module developed by Component 3 of the project made it easier to choose appropriate tools for different types of projects and activities.
Lesson 4: Further emphasis on gender	Future technical projects providing tools for GEF SLM projects such as SLM-CCMC should increase the focus on gender-disaggregated impacts.

ANNEX X. GEF PORTAL INPUTS

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

Table II: GEF portal inputs

<p>Question: What was the performance at the project's completion against Core Indicator Targets? (For projects approved prior to GEF-7¹⁴⁸, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided¹⁴⁹).</p>
<p>Response: (Might be drawn from Monitoring and Reporting section) As this requirement was only brought in once this Terminal Evaluation had been started, the Evaluation Report does not address it. The Project Team will need to complete this in the GEF Portal.</p>
<p>Question: What were the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR? (This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval)</p>
<p>Response: (Might be drawn from Factors Affecting Performance section) The project, particularly through CSU, made a significant effort to bring on board partners within and outside of GEF. CSU also did a pretty good job at taking into consideration the needs of SLM-affected communities (through the recommendations made by the project coordinators implementing the country case study projects) into the socio-economic tools.</p> <p>Strong partnership between CSU and WOCAT, as mentioned above under other sections under Findings, have the potential to further build on collaborative efforts. These also include partnerships and support to other projects and institutions, like FAO, UNCCD, GIZ, country-level direct engagements, and more.</p>
<p>Question: What were the completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas? (This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent)</p>
<p>Response: (Might be drawn from Factors Affecting Performance section) The project, in its design, attempted to work through some superficial indicators of gender quality in the training. The project was not designed with a gender-focus as it was biophysical in nature. However, the differentiated roles of men and women, as well as the differentiated access (and voice) across sustainable land management programmes in the world are highly relevant.</p> <p>The project worked with the Gender and Safeguards Unit to review its lessons learnt report, and as a result included a lesson that increases the focus on gender-disaggregated impacts in future technical projects through an adjustment in the socio-economic tools as part of the toolset of CBP and WOCAT.</p>
<p>Question: What was the progress made in the implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval? The risk classifications reported in the latest PIR report should be verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned</p>

¹⁴⁸ The GEF is currently operating under the seventh replenishment period of the GEF Trust Fund covering the period July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2022. The GEF Portal Reporting Guide for FY20 Reporting Process indicates that GEF-6 projects that have yet to map existing indicators to GEF-7 Core Indicators need to do so at MTR stage or (if already there) at the time of the TE.

¹⁴⁹ This is not applicable for Enabling Activities

taken to address identified risks assessed. *(Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant during this review should be shared with the Task Manager for uploading in the GEF Portal)*

Response: *(Might be drawn from Factors Affecting Performance section)*

The project focused on environmental health through incentivising SLM projects working on multiple benefits.

There was at the time no environmental and social safeguard for the development of the project.¹⁵⁰ There is unlikely a risk to environmental maladaptation as a result of the project. There are risks to sustaining environmental results of the countries, but these fall within the limits of the GEF projects focusing on each country and not on this global project that was specific to tool enhancement and use.

The project did face COVID-19 (an essentially social and environmental problem) and did a pretty good job at mitigating this risk.

The project partners and UNEP had minimal travel and many meetings and support was done online, when CSU (and UNEP) did visit countries, as much as possible was done to maximise on the visit (including field visits, additional support, additional trainings). Environmental (specifically carbon) footprint was further minimised when a lot of training was moved online and travel in general was limited due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Question: What were the challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions? *(This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval)*

Response: *(Might be drawn from Factors Affecting Performance section)*

Communication and outreach was integrated into component 1 through training, in component 2 through the open access to the tools (WOCAT and CBP), and component 3 through the e-learning and manual.

Outside of the results framework, the project made an effort to do a lot of outreach, including through reports, articles, e-learning and training videos, presentations at various events, and brochures, and sharing of the guidance manual and the e-learning link for tool selection.

The project also produced a lessons learnt report of which the launch will be organised through the EA where the project will also celebrate project achievements at project closure, and disseminate the lessons learnt report (both soft and hard copy) through all UNEP networks and partner networks.

All this outreach has had value creation because requests and online users have increased multi-fold as a result of the training and outreach. And through partnerships and linkages, CBP was featured in a book that UNCCD did about soil organic carbon, along with many other requests for chapter contributions, practical guides, tool feature requests, etc.

Despite all the value that the project has been able to create outside of UNEP and GEF, it is interesting to see that this has not been taken up within the institution (this could be a product of

¹⁵⁰ The Evaluation Office of UNEP notes that Safeguards have been required in UNEP project documents since 2011.

institutional memory challenges, championship at specific levels within the institutions, internal communications, among others).

Question: What are the main findings of the evaluation?

Response:

The SLM-CCMC project, at the time of its development, was a highly relevant project that was a result of direct GEF STAP recommendations. It remains a highly relevant project in terms of its place in the global arena of carbon monitoring, and the potential the CBP tools (and WOCAT linkage) have in general in terms of innovating further in the area of SLM and climate change. Despite this, and with a few exceptions in terms of (slowly rising demand in) uptake of some GEF implementing agencies at the project level, it appears that GEF and UNEP as institutions have not continued to see the level of relevance it has in its growth potential to advance movement to the relevant targets in the Global Agenda 2030.

The project was designed to enhance capacity among GEF IAs and beyond to use the tools, improve tools through synergies, linkages and complementarities through partnerships, and support users to be able to choose the most appropriate tools to monitor the carbon impacts of their specific SLM initiative. In short, move the agenda to capture the carbon sequestration impact and potential of improved agricultural and land use practices forward. Did it do this? The short answer is yes. Would similar results would have been achieved had the project not existed? No. The project certainly had an important place in the overall Theory of Change to move more initiatives into tracking their carbon impacts to the global climate change mitigation agenda.

The project overachieved in some of its outputs (particularly the training and the linkages with WOCAT), and achieved what was set out in design (although with some minor limitations to results sustainability at country-level) . The project did excellently in fostering the partnerships, meeting rising demand, and as a result was able to conduct a large set of training events that in many cases led to further uptake and demand (and further training outside of the project) of the tools. The partnerships gained through this additional training brought in additional co-financing and had reach beyond the project. The other result the project excelled in is the fostering of the partnership through the linked tools of CSU and WOCAT which has laid a foundation of mutual benefit and growth in the tools, and has raised demand for both sets of tools as a result.

In terms of the Theory of Change, together, Outcomes 1 and 2 of the project (i.e. that training and the linked toolset) have certainly helped to grow the number of SLM project managers to use tools, but the commitment from GEF and GEF agencies to fund further training at this point is project by project based and not part of a longer term strategy. Within the UNCCD, however, there is potential through existing partnership with WOCAT and through existing discussions on collaborative efforts with CSU and WOCAT. It is clear that partnership and opportunity is growing through the interlinkages of the toolsets.

Partnerships, and championship, is a strong factor in the results achievement (through the championship particularly of the project coordinator at CSU), and in terms of moving forward (partnerships to be fostered, and championship at the institutional level, which is there in the implementation partners CSU and WOCAT).

The likelihood of impact being achieved is a question of time and how the CBP and WOCAT tools can contribute to a more rapid pathway to impact. Based on the current trajectory, carbon monitoring in SLM projects will become the new normal. How quickly this happens will depend on how much GEF and IAs institutionally support, through partnerships, tools like CBP to move this agenda forward. The potential for CBP and WOCAT to be interlinked with more tools and opportunities, and the potential for innovation and broader uptake, is strong. At the moment, partnerships are growing, demand is growing, and the achieving impact is likely even without the institutional backing from GEF and UNEP. But the impact will be achieved at a greater speed and with higher levels of meeting demand for the use of the tools (and with more room opening up to allow CSU and WOCAT to focus on innovation).

The implementation of the project provided a few lessons to UNEP particularly in terms of its internal agreements and operations, its partnership arrangements (agreements), how the institution handles hand over of projects and suppositories of documentation and institutional memory in terms how and why projects are placed under the leadership of certain divisions. There is a learning process in the lag time where the project was essentially “orphaned” within UNEP for a period of time in 2017/2018 until it was picked up and moved forward relatively successfully to its ultimate achievement (including the fortunate situation where the CSU partner was so engaged that the project carried on without much UNEP guidance).

Overall, the key achievements of the project include its results framework achievement, the strengthened partnerships, the improvement and linkages of the tools, the increasing resultant demand due to training and outreach for the use of the linked toolset, and the significant contribution it made to advancing the carbon monitoring agenda globally.

ANNEX X: EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The strategic questions set out in the evaluation TOR are highlighted (orange shading).

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Means of Verification
Criterion A: Strategic Relevance		
A.1. Alignment to MTS and POW	Fit to UNEP mandate – qualitative	Comparison of ProDoc and annual reports with UNEP MTS and PoWs, PIMS, interview with Task Manager
1. Were the project objectives and outcomes consistent with UNEP's Medium Term Strategy, its Sub-programmes and Expected Accomplishments, as well as the PoWs? What were the linkages?	Alignment and continuation to MTS and PoWs (2014-15, check also 2016-17,2017-18) – qualitative, possible indicators in PIMS	
A.2. Alignment to Donor/Strategic Priorities	Level of alignment GEF	Comparison of ProDoc and annual reports (possibly interview with Project Manager, UNEP Divisions)
2. Was the project aligned to GEF FAs and Strategic Areas?		
A.3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities	Descriptive input on match, evidence of stakeholders' participation and cooperation; ownership	GEF case project manager interviews, assessment of <u>ownership</u>
3. Did the project respond to the environmental concerns and needs of the countries?		
A.4. Complementarity with existing interventions	Evidence of appropriate actions (discussions, adaptation of strategies, collaboration etc)	Review of project documents, interviews with partners
4. To what extent did the project take account of ongoing and planned initiatives (under the same sub-programme, other UNEP sub-programmes, GEF projects in other countries) that address similar needs of the same target groups.		
5. Were cross cutting issues including human rights and gender equality adequately considered in project design and implementation?	Qualitative	Project documents, interviews / questionnaires with country level and other internal/ external stakeholders, project products (studies, guidelines)

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Means of Verification
6. What is the contribution of this project for the common aims of the UNCCD and UNFCCC to identify and promote best practices for the maintenance and buildup of soil organic matter (which contributes to land degradation neutrality and carbon sequestration)? (linked to relevance)	Qualitative	Interviews with project partners, possible interviews with UNCCD and UNFCCC Sec
Criterion B. Quality of Project Design	See quality of design matrix attached – Annex A	
Criterion C. Nature of External Context		
7. Did the political, environmental, social or institutional context change during the project implementation and how did the project adapt to this? (related to COVID-19, but not exclusively)	Descriptive; potential to measure effect in months of delay	Interviews with key project partners
Criterion D. Effectiveness		
D1. Availability of Outputs		
Availability of outputs	Logframe indicators	PIMs, annual reporting, final project report, as well as interview with project leaders and partners
8. Was the project successful in producing its programmed outputs and milestones as per the ProDoc and workplan, as well as its usefulness and timeliness?		
9. What were the reasons behind any failures/successes of the project in producing its different outputs?	Consider preparation and readiness; quality of project management and supervision, external context	Interviews with all project partners involved in implementation
10. Were stakeholders appropriately involved in producing programmed outputs?	Stakeholder participation and cooperation	Interviews with cross section of internal and external stakeholders (particularly GEF Agencies and GEF project managers – those involved in training)

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Means of Verification
D2. Achievement of Project Outcomes		
11. To what extent has the project achieved the enhancement of capacity of GEF project managers and selected GEF agency personnel to monitor carbon and climate co-benefits from SLM projects (Outcome 1)?	Logframe indicators	PIMS reporting, interviews
12. To what extent are SLM projects using combined tools sets to identify appropriate C practices? What is the added value of the linkage between the CBP tools and the WOCAT Questionnaire on SLM Technologies for (a) GEF projects (b) other projects (c) stakeholder groups at different scales, and how is it perceived? (Outcome 2)?	Logframe indicators	PIMS reporting, discussions with partner implementers and Steering Committee members,
13. To what extent have GEF and other SLM project managers enhanced their understanding of the wide range of tools available – are they able to choose which ones suit their needs? (Outcome 3)?	Qualitative, Logframe indicators	Survey of training, interviews with project partner implementers
D3. Achievement of likelihood of impact To what extent has the project allowed for effective mainstreaming of carbon monitoring into the greater programmatic implementation of GEF projects and more widely beyond GEF, in general, the Global Agenda 2030? (related to impact)	Consideration of Theory of Change including assumptions and drivers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders participation and cooperation • Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity • Country ownership and driven-ness • Communication and public awareness • Catalytic role and replication 	Interviews project team, partners,

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Means of Verification
E. Financial Management		
E.1. Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures 14. How did the financial reporting and management adhere to the policies and procedures of UNEP? 15. The evaluation will also address the two areas identified in the TOR (E.2. completeness of financial information; E.3. communication between financial and project management staff)	Descriptive with reference to norms as benchmarks	Interviews with Task Manager, FMO, Starfish Review of contracts /agreement Financial reports
16. Were there any aspects of financial management that affected project performance?	Descriptive, with reference to timing	Interviews with Task Manager/FMO Interviews with Implementing Partners Review of income
F. Efficiency		
17. To what extent did the project build on existing institutions, lessons of other initiatives and ongoing projects (how well did the project align to the greater programmatic approach i.e. follow on from previous projects)?	Descriptive	Background documentation, partner interviews
18. To what extent did the project leverage efforts of partners and of possible champions towards achievement of its outcomes, impact and sustainability	Qualitative	Interviews with partners, Technical Steering Committee
19. What have been the main reasons for delay/changes in implementation, if any? What lessons can be learnt from this? To what extent did the delays have an impact on the delivery of project outcomes?	Comparison of actual and planned deliverables timing	Interviews with Project implementers, Members of Steering Committee Review of documentation related to extensions
20. Were financial means sufficient to deliver planned project outputs?	Review of income and expenditure relative to original budget	Review of income and expenditure relative to original budget

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Means of Verification
21. Were available human resources (skills, number) sufficient to deliver planned project outputs in a timely manner?	Review of staffing arrangements relative to original plans and to actual requirements	Review of staffing arrangements relative to original plans and to actual requirements (check with UNEP and CSU)
G. Monitoring and Reporting		
1. Project reporting		
22. To what extent have UNEP reporting requirements been fulfilled	Comparison of actual reporting to requirements	Availability of reporting
2. Monitoring Design and Budgeting		
23. What tools and procedures are in place for project monitoring?	Availability of logframe, PIMS, workplans, roles of oversight bodies	Availability of monitoring tools, interviews with Project Team
3. Monitoring Implementation		
24. How has monitoring been conducted, and how have results been used to adapt implementation approach?	Review of monitoring practice Review of oversight arrangements	Availability of monitoring results, project team interviews, Steering Committee
H. Sustainability		
H.1. Socio-political sustainability		
25. Are there any social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impact?	Qualitative	Interviews with Steering Committee, key agencies, project implementers
26. Is the level of ownership by GEF sufficient to allow for the project results to be sustained?	Qualitative	Interviews with Steering Committee, key agencies, project implementers, particularly GEF
27. Are there sufficient government and other stakeholder awareness, interests, commitment and incentives to mainstream carbon monitoring?	Qualitative	Interviews with Steering Committee, key agencies, project implementers

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Means of Verification
H.2. Financial sustainability		
28. To what extent are the continuation of project results (direct outcomes) and the eventual impact of the project dependent on financial resources?	Qualitative	Interviews with Steering Committee, key agencies, project implementers
29. What is the likelihood that adequate financial resources will be or will become available to use capacities built by the project?	Qualitative, possible data on onward funding	Interviews with Steering Committee, key agencies, project implementers
H.3. Institutional sustainability		
30. To what extent is the sustainability of the results and onward progress towards impact dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance?	Qualitative	Interviews with Steering Committee, key agencies, project implementers
I. Factors Affecting Project Performance (x-cutting in narrative of above)		
I.1. Preparation and readiness (included in design)		
I.2. Quality of Project Management and Supervision		
31. Was leadership and (adaptive) direction towards achieving planned outcomes sufficient in the project? (includes Steering Committee)	Qualitative, adaptation mechanism	Interviews with all project implementers
32. What adjustments, if any, were made to the project as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to what extent did the adjustments allow the project to effectively respond to the new priorities that emerged in relation to COVID-19? How did the adjustments affect the achievement of the project's expected results? (related to risk, particularly for learning for future projects which will be faced with more and more global risk factors).	Qualitative, adaptation mechanism	Interviews with all project implementers

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Means of Verification
I.3. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation		
33. What has been the degree and effectiveness of partnership collaboration with stakeholders? What are the opportunities to engage with more stakeholders?	Participation and involvement, ownership, qualitative	Interviews with all project implementers
I.4. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity		
34. Were cross cutting issues including human rights and gender equality adequately considered in project design and implementation?		
I.4. Communication and Public Awareness		
35. What was the level of learning and sharing among project partners?	Qualitative	Interviews with project implementers
36. What public awareness activities took place, and how effective were they in supporting the realization (and further sustaining) of project results?	Level of events, event impact	Interviews with project implementers
I.5. Environmental and social safeguards		
37. To what extent did the project adhere to the environmental and social safeguards laid out in UNEP policy?		
I.6. Country ownership and drivenness/championship		
38. To what extent has the project created opportunities for particular individuals or institutions (champions) to catalyse change (without which the project would not have achieved its results)?	Level of national and global leadership	Interviews
39. Did the projects successfully test carbon monitoring? Are other national-level projects taking on the tools as a result of project intervention?	Level of success in testing in 4 case studies	Interviews

Main Evaluation Criteria / Questions	Evaluation Indicators	Means of Verification
40. Are there lessons and experience coming out of the project that are replicated and scaled up? What are the factors that may influence replication and scaling up of project experience and lessons?	Qualitative	Interviews