

**Mid-Term Review of the UNEP-GEF Project
Sustainable Land Management in the Commonwealth
of Dominica (GEF ID: 9667)
2018 – 2023**



ECOSYSTEM DIVISION

MAY 2022



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This report has been prepared by an external consultant as part of a Mid-Term Review, which is a management-led process to assess performance at the project's mid-point. The UNEP Evaluation Office provides templates and tools to support the review process. The findings and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of Member States or the UN Environment Programme Senior Management.

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The review team would like to express gratitude to all persons met and who contributed to this review, as listed in Annex II. The review team would like to thank the project team and in particular Dr Christopher Cox (UNEP Task Manager), for his contribution and collaboration throughout the review process. Sincere appreciation is also expressed to the Project Management Unit (PMU) who, took time to provide comments to the draft report. The evaluator would also like to thank the Ministry of Blue and Green Economy, Agriculture and National Food Security (MOA), Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernization and Kalinago Upliftment (MOE), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Development (PISLM).

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

BRIEF EXTERNAL CONSULTANT(S) BIOGRAPHY

Right Angle Business Solutions, contracted as an independent reviewer, conducted the Mid-Term Review of the Sustainable Land Management in the Commonwealth of Dominica project. Right Angle Business Solutions is a regional consultancy firm with headquarters located in Trinidad and Tobago, and sub office in St. Lucia. The company's expertise ranges from project development and design, implementation, review and evaluations, audits, management consultancy, project management, and impact assessments/surveys. Mr. Colin Diaz, Managing Director/Team Lead, has extensive experience in the project management and business consultancy fields. The review team consists of various individuals with different educational and career backgrounds with expertise ranging from financial management, sustainable land management, GIS, procurement etc.

Review team

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ABOUT THE REVIEW

Joint Review: No

Report Language(s): English.

Review Type: Mid-term Review

Brief Description: The report is a management-led Mid-Term Review of a UNEP/GEF/PISLM/IICA/MOA/MOE project implemented between 2018 and 2023. The project's overall development goal was to establish landscape level planning, information and coordination framework to support sustainable agriculture and sustainable watershed management in Dominica. The review 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 review 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 and the relevant agencies of the project participating countries.

Key words: Small Island Developing States; SIDS; Small Islands; Sustainable Forest Management; Sustainable Land Management; Watershed Management; Forest management; Agriculture; Governance; Climate Change; Ecosystem Management; Land Degradation; Land Degradation Neutrality; Innovation; Training; Land Use Planning.

Primary data collection period:

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BSP	Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building
EA	Executing Agency
ECU	Environmental Coordination Unit
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographical Information System
IA	Implementing Agency
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
INRM	Integrated Natural Resource Management
LD	Land Degradation
LDFA	Land Degradation Focal Area
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOA	Ministry of Blue & Green Economy, Agriculture & National Food
MOE	Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernisation and Kalinago Upliftment
MTR	Mid Term Review
MTS	Medium Term Strategy
NAP	National Action Plan
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NPD	National Development Priorities
OECS	The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PDQ	Project Design Quality
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PISLM	Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management
PMU	Project Management Unit
POW	Programme of Work
ProDoc	Project Document
PSC	Project Steering Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-Bound
S-SC	South-South Cooperation
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION TABLE

Table 1. Project Summary

UNEP Sub-programme:	Healthy and Productive Ecosystems	UNEP Division/Branch:	Ecosystems Division
Expected Accomplishment(s):	EA (a) The health and productivity of Terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring and cross-sector collaboration frameworks at the national level EA (b) Policymakers in the public and private sectors test the inclusion of the health and productivity of ecosystems in economic decision-making	Programme of Work Output(s):	Biennia: 2018-19 Sub-programme 3: Healthy and productive ecosystems
SDG(s) and indicator(s)	SDG 1, Targets 1.1, 1.2; SDG 11, Targets 11.A, 11.B; SDG 12, Targets 12.2, 12.4; SDG 15, Targets 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4; SDG 14, Targets 14.1		
GEF Core Indicator Targets (identify these for projects approved prior to GEF-7)	Core Indicator 4.3: Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems; Target: 2,000 hectares of agricultural land and 4,000 hectares of restored watersheds		
Dates of previous project phases:	n/a	Status of future project phases:	

FROM THE PROJECT'S PIR REPORT (use latest version) :

Project Title:	Sustainable Land Management in the Commonwealth of Dominica		
Executing Agency:	PISLM Support Office		
Project partners:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernisation and Kalinago Upliftment • Ministry of Blue & Green Economy, Agriculture & National Food • IICA 		
Geographical Scope:	National		
Participating Countries:	Commonwealth of Dominica		
GEF project ID:	9667	IMIS number* ¹ :	GFL-11207-14AC0003-SB-010162
Focal Area(s):	Land Degradation	GEF OP #:	
GEF Strategic	LD-1 Program 1	GEF approval date*:	18 April 2018

¹ Fields with an * sign (in yellow) should be filled by the Fund Management Officer

Priority/Objective:	LD-2 Program 3 LD-3 Program 4		
UNEP approval date:	9 July 2018	Date of first disbursement*:	9 August 2018
Actual start date²:	8 October 2018	Planned duration:	36 months
Intended completion date*:	July 2021	Actual or Expected completion date:	July 2023
Project Type:	Mid-size Project	GEF Allocation*:	USD 1,776,484
PPG GEF cost*:		PPG co-financing*:	
Expected MSP/FSP Co-financing*:	USD 13,413,999	Total Cost*:	USD 15,190,483
Mid-term Review (planned date):	June 2021	Terminal Review/Evaluation (planned date):	December 2023
Mid-term Review (actual date):	January 2022	No. of revisions*:	n/a
Date of last Steering Committee meeting:	20 December 2021	Date of last Revision*:	n/a
Disbursement as of 30 June [2021]*:	USD 673,226.69	Date of planned financial closure*:	31 July 2023
Date of planned completion³*:	July 2023	Actual expenditures reported as of 30 June [2021]⁴:	USD 450,534.95
Total co-financing realized as of 30 June [2021]	USD 1,273,464.92	Actual expenditures entered in IMIS as of 31 December [year]*:	???
Leveraged financing:⁵			

² Only if different from first disbursement date, e.g., in cases where a long time elapsed between first disbursement and recruitment of project manager.

³ If there was a "Completion Revision" please use the date of the revision.

⁴ Information to be provided by Executing Agency/Project Manager

⁵ See above note on co-financing

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project background

1. The medium-sized project “Sustainable Land Management in the Commonwealth of Dominica” (SLMD) officially commenced in October 2018. The project aimed to assist the development and strengthening of the national and regional capacity of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in managing their land resources sustainably. Land Management is a severe issue for Dominica, given the importance of land resources to the critical economic sectors. However, land degradation (LD) in Dominica increases in severity and extent, and this degradation lowers the productive capacity of the land. Restoration of Dominica’s agriculture, forest resources, and associated livelihood depends on the capacity of the country to manage its land resources, thus making this Sustainable Land Management (SLM) effort a key factor in Dominica’s development.
2. The project's overall goal is to establish landscape level planning, information and coordination frameworks to support sustainable agriculture and sustainable watershed management in Dominica. The project comprises two components which are:
 - i. Enabling ‘whole island’ landscape framework to plan, monitor and adapt land management.
 - ii. Reducing the effects of land degradation on ecosystem services through sustainable land management.
3. The intended duration was three years, however, through one no-cost project extension will last five years with the expected completion in July 2023. The project budget is USD 15,190,483 (of which USD 13,413,999 planned is in co-financing and USD 1,776,484 is GEF funding).

This Review

4. In line with the UNEP/GEF Evaluation Policy and the UNEP/GEF Programme Manual, as well as updated guidance for reviewers, a Mid Term Review (MTR) of the project was undertaken to assess performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency) and determine the likelihood of the project achieving its intended outcomes and supporting their sustainability. The review sort to analyse whether the project is on-track; assess the achievements and challenges at mid-point, recommend corrective actions where required; and promote reflections, learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among key stakeholders of the project.
5. The Mid Term Review (MTR) was an evidence-based assessment. It relied on feedback from persons involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project, beneficiaries of project interventions, and review of available documents and findings of stakeholder interviews.
6. The Mid Term Review (MTR) for the project was conducted between January and May 2022. Aligned to the UNEP/GEF evaluation guidelines, the project was assessed with respect to a minimum set of review criteria grouped into eight categories: strategic relevance, quality of project design, effectiveness, financial management, efficiency, monitoring and reporting, sustainability and factor affecting performance and cross-cutting issues.

Key findings

7. The overall assessment of the performance of the project is graded as Moderately Satisfactory. This grading is based on the findings of the review team following review

of project documents and reports, and stakeholder's engagement and interviews. Following multiple delays in initiating project implementation, as well as the halt of project activities in 2020 and the on-going challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the project has done an excellent job in making up for lost time with substantial delivery in early 2021 and continued momentum into the later part of 2021.

Strategic Relevance

8. The project is highly relevant in terms of the urgent and prioritised need for land degradation mitigation and the vital role that sustainable land management plays, as well as UNEP's priorities under its healthy and productive ecosystems sub-programme. The project is consistent with global environmental needs (and global environmental benefits), aligned with GEF/UNEP mandate, UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) and its Programme of Work (POW), the Bali Strategic Plan (BSP), and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The project worked on national and regional priorities with regards land degradation. Strategic Relevance is rated as Highly Satisfactory.

Quality of Project Design

9. Quality of Project Design is rated as Satisfactory. Overall, the project was well-designed and aligned with national objectives and priorities. The results framework was well formulated with several strong points, specifically in addressing threats to watershed services and removing barriers to effective SLM. The project design adequately analysed the socio-economic, institutional and policy setting and identified the gaps and opportunities the project could target, making the outcomes highly relevant.

Effectiveness

10. Availability of Outputs is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory. Overall, the project has achieved approximately 52% of the expected output as per described below.
 - i. Output 1.1.1 – Four Parish land-use plans designed, with associated guidelines of implementation: 88% completed. Initial plan was the completion of a four Parish land-use plan however a five Parish land use plan was completed under this output.
 - ii. Output 1.1.2 - Land Information decision support system is available for use in land use planning, assessment of environmental conditions and trends, and policy development: 85% completed. Foundational activities have been completed, however, some activity progress have been delayed due to external factors. GIS capacity building workshops were also conducted with key benefactors.
 - iii. Output 1.1.3 - Multi-sector platform for land use planning developed: 67% completed. The multi-sector planning platform is noted to be completed and accessible to national stakeholders. There have been some delays in activities due to challenges with agency/focal point engagement. Policy reviews on Land Degradation in Dominica are being reviewed/in draft.
 - iv. Output 1.1.4 - At least one Protocol established for monitoring and evaluation of SLM practices: 68% completed. The rating is Satisfactory given that the project was able to develop this protocol early on based on prior work of the PISLM. Capacity to operationalize the protocol has not proceeded due to current capacity challenges.
 - v. Output 1.2.1 - One Strategic Training plan developed and implemented: 51% completed. Draft legislation now exists and the legal consultant has already commenced stakeholder consultations that will help define capacity-building

plan under this output. However, there have been delays in advancement among the lead partner agencies of government.

- vi. Output 1.2.2 - At least two knowledge publications on SLM practices disseminated within Dominica and in the sub-region: 36% completed. In-field information and knowledge still need to be gathered for this output to be realised. In-field activities have been severely hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, consultants have been engaged and are currently coordinating ways to move forward.
 - vii. Output 2.1.1 - Package of effective SLM approaches & technologies identified in collaboration with relevant national institutions: 68% completed. Foundation activities and background assessments on farming areas have been completed. SLM approaches and technologies in agriculture have been identified and work on assembling the package of SLM approaches and technologies is progressing.
 - viii. Output 2.1.2 - At least 1,500 farmers and local communities with strengthened capacities to implement SLM approaches & technologies in agriculture: 31% completed. IICA has been engaged with many consultants under the LOA with the agency. Initial assessments related to certification completed. Works are now focused on completing a manual related to best SLM practices.
 - ix. Output 2.1.3 - Output 2.1.3 - SLM approaches & technologies implemented in 4 target parishes, and lessons learned consolidated for farmers of at least 40 farms: 20% completed. Output is yet to be accomplished as many feed-in activities and outputs have not yet been realised.
 - x. Output 2.1.4 - Degraded watersheds in at least 8 villages rehabilitated with native vegetation, based on site specific rehabilitation plans developed in collaboration with local communities: 26% completed. Work under this output remains substantially not implemented given that it awaits completion of the other directly supporting activities and outputs. It should be noted that the National Reforestation Initiative is advancing.
 - xi. Output 2.1.5 - Increased public understanding and awareness of LD issues and associated SLM options, and increased support for land use regulations: 35% completed. Limited progress has been made under this output apart from initial media workshops and the preparation of outreach material and resources.
11. Achievements of project outcomes is rated as Moderately Satisfactory. The MTR verified that 61% of the activities related to achieving the project outcomes are completed. The three outcomes are:
- i. Outcome 1.1: Framework to support development, monitoring, and adaptation of land management submitted to government (88% completed). Considerable progress has been made towards this project outcome. Various stakeholders/partners interviewed believed that the project had made good progress in developing the five Parish Land Use plans and was the most important achievement of the project at mid-term and therefore had laid a foundation for further progress in the project and in the land use context. Some Capacity building activities were also achieved.
 - ii. Outcome 1.2: Institutions are capable of promoting enhanced sustainable land management in Dominica (58% completed). The project has advanced the overall capacity of the key agencies responsible for land management in Dominica. However, difficulties arising from the management protocols of the

COVID-19 pandemic coupled with some administrative challenges have slowed progress under this outcome. Work on legislative mandates continues to progress.

- iii. Outcome 2.1: Increase in the adoption of SLM practices in targeted parishes. (37% completed) Progress under this output is lacking, and there is still substantial work to be completed. IICA has been contracted to work with the MOA to meet the necessary targets under this outcome. As with the other outcome areas, the COVID-19 pandemic management protocols and institutional commitment and follow-through have created some challenges in the pace of implementation that need be addressed.

12. Achievement of likelihood of impact is rated as Moderately Likely. The project's intended achievement of outcomes has not made substantial progress, but many are on course to be delivered during the project's lifetime. Therefore, the project is on the trajectory of achieving its major global environmental objectives and yielding satisfactory global environmental benefits outlined in the TOC.

Financial Management

13. Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures is Satisfactory. The reporting from the PMU generally followed UNEP Policies and Procedures; however, the review team found that there were notable delays in reporting, as confirmed from interviews with key stakeholders/partners.
14. Completeness of Financial Information is Moderately Unsatisfactory. 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 reporting) however, there are gaps related to financial auditing and evidence of financial files/documents.
15. Communication between finance and project management staff is Satisfactory. Through interviews and stakeholder feedback, the review deduced a satisfactory level of awareness of the project's financial status between the PMU and the Task Manager. However, issues arose due to late submission in reporting and gaps in overall communication.

Efficiency

Efficiency is Moderately Unsatisfactory. The project underwent one no-cost project extension and experienced significant delays in the commencement of project execution and during implementation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At mid-term, there have been no issues related to cost-effectiveness. The realisation of co-financing was a bit slow at mid-term, possibly due to changing government priorities related to COVID-19, but this did not hinder the achieved project results at mid-term.

Monitoring and Reporting

16. Monitoring Design and Budgeting is Moderately Satisfactory. The monitoring and evaluation plan is laid out clearly in the ProDoc with dedicated budgets located in Annex G of the ProDoc. It refers to standard UNEP/GEF M&E tools (including project meetings, inception meeting and reporting, annual work plans, MTR, quarterly progress reporting, terminal evaluation, PSC meeting and reporting, PIRs, financial audits, co-financing reports as well as project publications). The project results framework presented includes SMART indicators for each expected outcome and mid-term and end-of-project targets.
17. Monitoring of Project Implementation is Moderately Unsatisfactory. Monitoring was mostly conducted as laid out by the project document. While Annual Work Plans, PIRs and Quarterly Reports were effectively prepared, it appears that these reports were not

submitted in a timely manner. Additionally, only one financial audit has taken place at mid-term. Coordination among key actors in the implementation and management of the project is limited to some extent.

18. *Project Reporting* is Satisfactory. Required project reports were developed throughout the project lifespan to mid-term, however, it must be noted that based on stakeholder interviews, project documents were not always submitted in a timely manner.

Sustainability

19. *Socio-political sustainability* is Moderately Unlikely. COVID-19 will likely continue to play a role in shaping how the work of the outcome and output activities progress, including more movement online related to meetings, forums and capacity building components.
20. *Financial sustainability* is Unlikely. There is some evidence of sustained funding of SLM interventions through Ministry funds and the assumption that financial institutions will be willing to provide credit to farmers but not at the level that would build confidence on funding predictability.
21. *Institutional sustainability* is Unlikely. The project has inherent capacity building across all activities. It has made efforts to build functional and operational capacity for SLM at the local level, including the setting up of technical training and land use plans and the intention to contribute to land tenure security for local communities, especially among women. However, there is no evidence yet of coordination among stakeholders related to the institutional or legal framework to support the sustainability of this project.

Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

22. *Preparation and readiness* is Highly Satisfactory. The project was strong although governance arrangements could have been laid out more strategically for longer-term ownership.
23. *Quality of project management and supervision* is Satisfactory. Good overall management from UNEP. However, the Project Management Unit is significantly weakened due to its limited capacity. It is unclear if the Project Steering Committee is effective at its duties, as there was only evidence of one meeting.
24. *Stakeholder participation and cooperation* is Unsatisfactory. The MTR shows major gaps in stakeholder participation and cooperation. Overall communication, mainly related to farmer and farmer group's knowledge about the project, is lacking.
25. *Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality* is Highly Satisfactory. The project has demonstrated broad willingness to ensure the role of women in SLM is strengthened and mainstreamed.
26. *Environmental and social safeguards* is Highly Satisfactory. There was a detailed social and environmental safeguarding conducted at CEO approval/endorsement. COVID-19 had some implications on the project although project did well to adapt and in some cases had some positives (e.g., reduction of carbon footprint due to online training and limited travel).
27. *Country ownership and driven-ness* is Satisfactory. The project's relevance identified during its formulation and implementation remains substantially valid. The project is designed to address the problem of LD and promote SLM practices in Dominica.

28. Communication and public awareness is Unsatisfactory. Public awareness effects has not been effective up to mid-term. General communication of the project is lacking since some beneficiaries and the public are unaware of the project and its benefits.

Conclusions

29. Based on the findings from this MTR the project proves that performance is Moderately Satisfactory (a table of ratings against all review criteria can be found in the Conclusions section below). The project has demonstrated strong performance in GIS and development of Land Use planning maps. However, areas that would benefit from further attention are better capacity building of partner agencies, increased communication and public outreach, and better championship among government agencies to ensure future sustainability
30. Important challenges faced by the PMU and project partners during the implementation of the project included the dissolution of the ECU and the delays and interruption of activities because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. However, the project generally adapted well to these challenges.

Lessons Learned

31. Lesson 1: Aligning project objective outcomes to national priorities and engaging all relevant stakeholders establishes understanding and shared values and increases sustainability.
32. Lesson 2: Building partnerships takes time and sustained effort.
33. Lesson 3: Adequate consultation and feedback are critical in achieving project outputs and outcomes.
34. Lesson 4: Institutional championship and individual championship alignment are important.
35. Lesson 5: Management and communication in implementation of projects is vital.
36. Lesson 6: Government endorsement of a project does not necessarily mean readiness to implement Support.
37. Lesson 7: Adaptive Management and Planning is critical to projects.

Recommendations

38. Recommendation 1: Development/Improvement of a Communication Strategy among beneficiaries and stakeholders.
39. Recommendation 2: Preparation of a sound built-in exit strategy.
40. Recommendation 3: Preparation of a Public Awareness Campaign/Social Media Outreach.
41. Recommendation 4: Improvement in financial project reporting.
42. Recommendation 5: Project partners to continue strengthening partnerships established during this project.
43. Recommendation 6: Reinforcement of Management Structure at the PMU.

I. PROJECT OVERVIEW

44. Land degradation (LD), as showed by deforestation and desertification, poses a serious threat to lives and livelihoods, especially in a country like Dominica, where the livelihoods of the population are heavily tied to the productivity of the land and natural resources. Driven by development pressures, livelihood challenges, and metrological events, LD is a major concern in Dominica. The island’s steep topography and geographical location within the Atlantic hurricane belt makes the country highly vulnerable to natural disasters arising from meteorological events, which significantly magnifies the LD processes from deforestation and unsustainable agricultural practices.
45. Overcoming LD processes in the country requires that a strategic intervention is adopted in which sustainable land management (SLM) is integrated into national development priorities (NDPs). The UNEP/GEF Project “Sustainable Land Management in the Commonwealth of Dominica” (SLMD) is a catalytic intervention to address the issue of LD in Dominica. The project seeks to contribute to the mitigation of LD and promote ecosystem integrity and stability by building national and local capacity and mainstreaming SLM issues into NDPs and policies.
46. The project is a medium-sized project with GEF contributions coming through the Land Degradation Focal Area (LDFA) GEF Trust Fund Account with UNEP as the Implementing Agency (IA), aligning with the UNEP Sub-Programme 3: Healthy and Productive Ecosystem. The project was formally approved on 18th April 2018 and officially commenced on 8th October 2018. The intended completion date is July 2023, after undergoing one no-cost extension from July 2021. The project budget is USD 15,190,483 of which USD 1,776,484 is the GEF allocation, and USD 13,413,999 is planned co-financing allocation from project partners.
47. The overall objective of the SLMD project is the establishment of landscape level planning, information and coordination frameworks to support sustainable agriculture and sustainable watershed management in Dominica. The project is organised into two components, each of which was associated with outcomes and various outputs as outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2: SLMD Components, Outcomes and Outputs

Component 1: Enabling ‘whole island’ landscape framework to plan, monitor and adapt land management	
Outcome 1.1: Framework to support development, monitoring, an adaptation of land management submitted to government	Output 1.1.1 – Four Parish land-use plans designed, with associated guidelines of implementation.
	Output 1.1.2 - Land Information decision support system is available for use in land use planning, assessment of environmental conditions and trends, and policy development.
	Output 1.1.3 - Multi-sector platform for land use planning developed.
	Output 1.1.4 - At least one Protocol established for monitoring and evaluation of SLM practices.
Outcome 1.2: Institutions are capable of promoting enhanced sustainable land management in Dominica.	Output 1.2.1 - One Strategic Training plan developed and implemented (Beneficiaries: institutions with sectorial responsibilities for development and conservation, regulatory authorities, relevant CSOs, community partners; indicators: # of training sessions, # of beneficiaries, increased capacity score from 21 to 32):
	Output 1.2.2 - At least two knowledge publications on SLM practices disseminated within Dominica and in the sub- region
Component 2: Reducing the effects of land degradation on ecosystem services through sustainable land management	
Outcome 2.1: Increase in adoption of SLM practices in targeted parishes.	Output 2.1.1 - Package of effective SLM approaches & technologies identified in collaboration with relevant national institutions.
	Output 2.1.2 - At least 1,500 Farmers and local communities with strengthened capacities to implement SLM approaches & technologies in agriculture.

	Output 2.1.3 - SLM approaches & technologies implemented in 4 target parishes, and lessons learned consolidated for farmers of at least 40 farms.
	Output 2.1.4 - Degraded watersheds in at least 8 villages rehabilitated with native vegetation, based on site specific rehabilitation plans developed in collaboration with local communities.
	Output 2.1.5 - Increased public understanding and awareness of LD issues and associated SLM options, and increased support for land use regulations.

48. In line with the UNEP/GEF Evaluation Policy and the UNEP/GEF Programme Manual, as well as updated guidance for reviewers, a Mid Term Review (MTR) of the SLMD project was undertaken to assess performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency) and determine the likelihood of the project achieving its intended outcomes and supporting their sustainability. The review sort to analyse whether the project is on-track; to assess the achievements and challenges at mid-point and recommend corrective actions where required; and to promote reflections, learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among key stakeholders of the project.

Stakeholders Participation

49. The targeted stakeholder groups of the project are as outlined below.

Table 3: Targeting Stakeholders

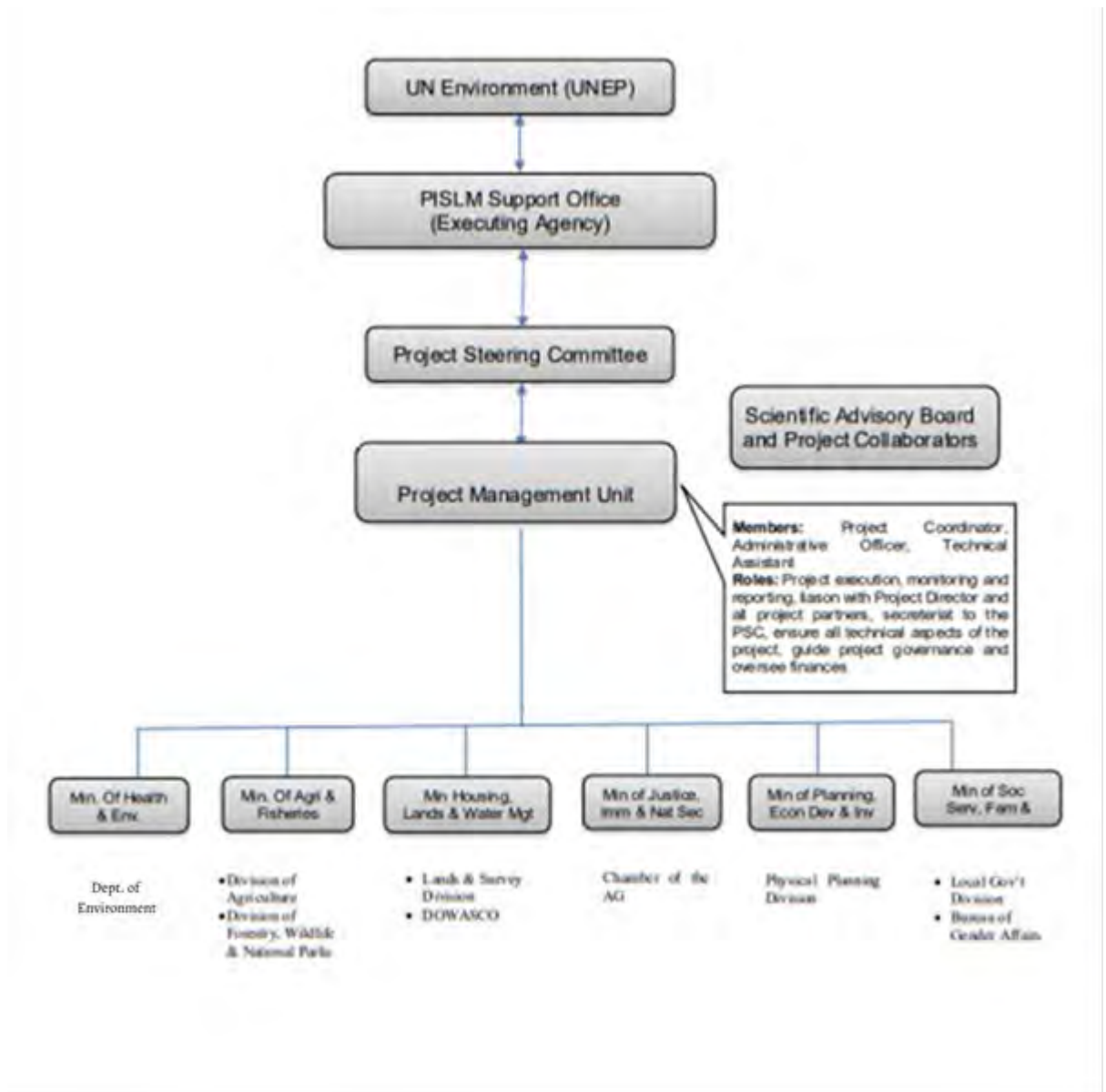
Stakeholders	Roles in Project Implementation
Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernisation and Kalinago Upliftment (MOE)	Lead implementing agency. National coordination of government agencies and other stakeholders.
The Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management (PISLM)	Executing Agency (EA) and office for the project. Leading role in developing and implementing knowledge management tools and awareness raising programs for the project.
Ministry of Blue & Green Economy, Agriculture & National Food (MOA)	The Department of Forestry, Wildlife and National Parks (DFWNP) to oversee plant selection and reforestation efforts to support watershed restoration. The Division of Agriculture to take the leading role in implementing appropriate SLM approaches and technologies and providing extension services to promote SLM in agricultural landscapes.
Ministry of Finance	Fund authorization.
Ministry of Housing, Lands and Water Resource Management	Data on Lands (private & public); Land use regulation.
Ministry of Justice, Immigration and National Security	Establishing the legal status of farm plots selected for SLM interventions and for assisting with land tenure certification.
Physical Planning Division	Together with the Division of Lands and Surveys, aid in developing planning, mapping, and regulatory strategies.
Bureau of Gender Affairs	Identifying, ensuring and monitoring women's participation in Project activities.
Dominica Water and Sewerage Company Limited (DOWASCO)	Guidance in the reforestation of water catchment areas, as well as monitoring and reporting on sediment and nutrient loads in streams.
Dominica Electricity Services (DOMLEC)	The agency has an interest in the flow of rivers from which it takes water for hydro generation.
The Kalinago Council	Collaborative support and partnership in the implementation of SLM approaches within the Kalinago reserve.
Caribbean Community Secretariat - CARICOM	Regional framework within which this project can collaborate with similar initiatives, and facilitate the dissemination of project results
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)	Capacity building to farmers and agricultural extension staff on the use of soil conservation and farming techniques
Dominica Organic Agricultural Movement (DOAM)	Technical support to the project
Dominica Conservation Association	Assistance with technical and community support to the project's

Stakeholders	Roles in Project Implementation
(DCA)	implementation, particularly in support of the rehabilitation of degraded watershed areas.
Dominica National Council of Women (DNCW)	Assistance in mainstreaming gender into the activities of the project.
Farmers and Farmer Organizations	Main beneficiaries of the project; through use demonstration plots that use SLM approaches, training on SLM approaches in order to replicate activities on their own farms and provide feedback on the benefits and performance of the SLM approaches adopted.

Implementation Structure

50. The details of the project's governance structure are as listed below. An illustration of the implementation structure can also be seen in Figure 1 below.
- i. UNEP as the IA: Responsible for coordinating activities, monitoring the implementation of UNEP's standard monitoring and reporting procedures, and transmitting financial and progress reports to GEF.
 - ii. PISLM as EA: Responsible for the overall execution of the project through a National Project Coordinator (NPC) in the established Project Management Unit (PMU) in Dominica. A Project Steering Committee (PSC) was set up, composed of representatives of the stakeholders to provide advice and direction to project oversight and overall guidance, and the facilitation of inter-ministerial coordination, and project monitoring and evaluation.
 - iii. The actual field implementation of the project was to be conducted by consultants contracted by the PMU because they have the requisite expertise.

Figure 1: SLMD Implementation Structure



Changes in design during implementation

51. A few changes took place during the implementation of the project that warrants elaboration. These changes include changes in the delivery of output-level activities, partner relationships and extensions.
52. *Output level changes:* The global COVID-19 Pandemic presented a massive challenge to the project implementation as the Government of Dominica enforced a countrywide lockdown order starting in early 2020. Given the restrictions of physical assemblies, innovation with respect to the conduct of virtual meetings and online training (notably for training under Component # 1) was required. Deliverables not requiring field travel were accomplished via virtual means, and as a result, the project has focused on non-field work and travel-related activities.
53. *Partners:* The project encountered an approximate 6-month delay at the beginning of the implementation of activities (when the PMU was hired). A major component of that delay was the administrative changes with respect to the dissolution of the ECU, and

the project had to await the policy/institutional guidance for oversight. The ECU was intended to support the execution of the project, however; with its dissolution, this role was handed over to the MOE. (role of project oversight and strategic direction; allowed for closer working relationship with national collaborators and stakeholders). Setbacks also occurred in the procurement of consultants due to UNEP’s recommendation to merge the consultant’s Terms of Reference (TOR) for both the SLMD and Strengthening Resilience Projects.

54. *Project extensions:* The project underwent one no cost extension. The project was expected to be completed by July 2021; however, through one no cost extension, the project will now be completed by July 2023.

55. **Project Financing**

56. The project cost anticipated in the project document (ProDoc) is US 15,190,483, encompassing GEF funding of USD 1,776,484 (12 % of total) and co-financing of USD 13,413,999. Table 4 shows an overview of the project finance and budget allocations by component including the expenditure ratio. Anticipated co-financing comprised in-kind contributions from the MOE totalling USD 200,345, and grants from other sources, including the EA, MOA and MOE, totalling USD 13,213,654 (see table 5).

Table 4: Expenditure by Outcome/Output

Component/sub-component/output <i>All figures as USD</i>	Estimated cost at design			Actual Cost/ expenditure	Expenditure ratio <i>(actual/ planned)</i>
	GEF	COFINANCING	TOTAL		
Component 1	492,500.00	2,283,589.00	2,776,089.00	276,134.95	0.099
Component 2	1,018,685.00	10,660,065.00	11,678,750.00	174,400.00	0.015
Project Management	157,699.00	450,345.00	608,044.00		
Monitoring & Evaluation	107,600.00	20,000.00	127,600.00		
TOTAL	1,776,484.00	13,413,999.00	15,190,483.00	450,534.95	0.030

Table 5: Co-financing Table

Co-financing (Type/Source)	Government		Other*			Total		Total Disbursed
	Planned	Actual		Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	
<i>All figures as USD</i>								
Grants	MOE (PSIP) – Pilot Project Climate Resilience	7,000,000.00		PISLM	400,000.00		7,400,000.00	1,073,119.9
	MOA	5,813,654.00					5,813,654.00	

In-kind support	<i>MOE</i>	200,345.00					200,345.00		200,345.00
Totals		13,013,999.00					13,413,999.00		1,273,464.9

II. REVIEW METHODS

57. The review took place between January and May 2022. The MTR aimed at collecting and analysing data in a systematic manner to ensure that all the findings, conclusions and recommendations were substantiated by evidence.
58. The review team used a mixed method approach to conduct the MTR. In this instance, the review team found it appropriate to apply a sequential mixed methods approach, which allowed the assessment of the project's quantitative data and results (explanatory), and qualitative data and results (exploratory) leading to interpretation to inform the thematic ratings. The review employed both primary data sources (interviews) and secondary data sources (project documents and reports) and reviewed qualitative and quantitative data for the purpose of triangulation.
59. Using a mixed methods approach allowed the review team to corroborate quantitative and qualitative data and enhance credibility by understanding the full context from stakeholders' perspectives, increasing the diversity of views. The quantitative data was largely drawn from the project documents and different methodologies were combined to gather representative and reliable information in order to evaluate the project against the results framework provided in the ProDoc, to analyse lessons learned, and to formulate conclusions and recommendations.
60. A combination of methods and tools were used during the review to collect information necessary to answer all evaluation questions in an evidence-based manner.
 - i. Document Review: A home-based desk review of basic documentation and literature provided by the PMU and obtained through web searches. This included planning of the review and development of the questions for the questionnaires and interviews. The full list of documents reviewed can be found in Annex III.
 - ii. Stakeholder Interviews: The review team conducted a series of semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders and partners. These interviews were conducted via Zoom⁶ of which the majority was done using audio only to not have any internet bandwidth limitations. The review team made the selection of stakeholders and partners to be interviewed in agreement with the PMU. A list of all stakeholders and key partners interviewed is provided in Annex II.
 - iii. Field Visit: a field visit to Dominica was undertaken to conduct interviews and administer questionnaires to the relevant key stakeholders and beneficiaries of the project, visit local communities and analyse findings. All review questions (Interviews and questionnaires) can be found in Annex VIII.
 - iv. Draft reporting phase: the review team collated and consolidated the emerging results from each data collection activity and a draft report was submitted on May 29, 2022 according to the guidelines provided in the TOR organised around the prescribed evaluation criteria.
 - v. Final reporting phase: following comments received between August 25, 2022 and September 7, 2022, the final report was prepared and submitted on September 9, 2022.

⁶ A video conferencing and meeting platform, <http://zom.us/>

61. In alignment with the UNEP Evaluation Guidelines, the project was assessed with a minimum set of evaluation criteria grouped into the following eight (8) categories: Strategic Relevance, Quality of Project Design, Effectiveness, Financial Management, Efficiency, Monitoring and Reporting, Sustainability, factors affecting performance and cross-cutting issues. As per UNEP guidance, the evaluation ratings are on a six-point scale.
62. The strategic questions for review related to the project-outcome level, as adapted from the review TOR were:
- i. Under Monitoring and Reporting/Monitoring of Project Implementation: What is the performance at the project's mid-point against Core Indicator Targets?
 - ii. Under Factors Affecting Performance/Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation: What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program?
 - iii. Under Factors Affecting Performance/Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality: What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding gender-responsive measures and any intermediate gender result areas?
 - iv. Under Factors Affecting Performance/Environmental and Social Safeguards: What has been the experience at the project's mid-point against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval?
 - v. Under Factors Affecting Performance/Communication and Public Awareness: What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding the implementation of the project's Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions.
63. Some critical elements must be considered in reading this report for the way in which they have affected the review process and findings:
- Initial difficulties with the availability and timely submission of project documents to the review team delayed the start of the MTR from approval of the Inception report.
 - Difficulties were met in setting up interviews with stakeholders/partners for various reasons. This extended the time required to facilitate interview/receive feedback from various stakeholder/partners. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, issues such as high infection rates (among stakeholders, PMU and review team) caused further delays in accessing the relevant resources and personnel during the MTR.
 - Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not initially possible for the review team to undertake a country visit because of travel restrictions. Interviews were conducted virtually using the Zoom platform with minor interruptions in the network connection during calls. During the data collection period, it became clear that contacting certain stakeholder groups (mainly farmers and government officials) was becoming a troublesome task mainly to network connectivity issues, government official being unavailable due to cabinet meetings, and the general lack of ability to contact these stakeholders. As such an urgent field mission was requested by the review team seeing that the feedback from key stakeholders/partners of the project was missing which greatly affected the ability of the review team to effectively rate the evaluation criteria.

- The review team was unable to receive feedback from government stakeholders. Due to cabinet meetings, government officials were unavailable, and interviews could not be facilitated. However, feedback was not received after attempts to contact them via telephone and email. Therefore, the MTR does not include feedback from key government representatives.

The review was bound to the Ethical Code of Conduct as per the UNEP/GEF Evaluation Policy. Throughout the review and in the compilation of the Final MTR efforts have been made to represent the views of both mainstream and more marginalised groups. Data were collected with respect for ethics and human rights issues. All pictures were taken, and other information gathered after prior informed consent from people, all interviews and information were provided in confidence and anonymously and no information can be traced back to a direct source/individual. All information was collected according to the UN Standards of Conduct.

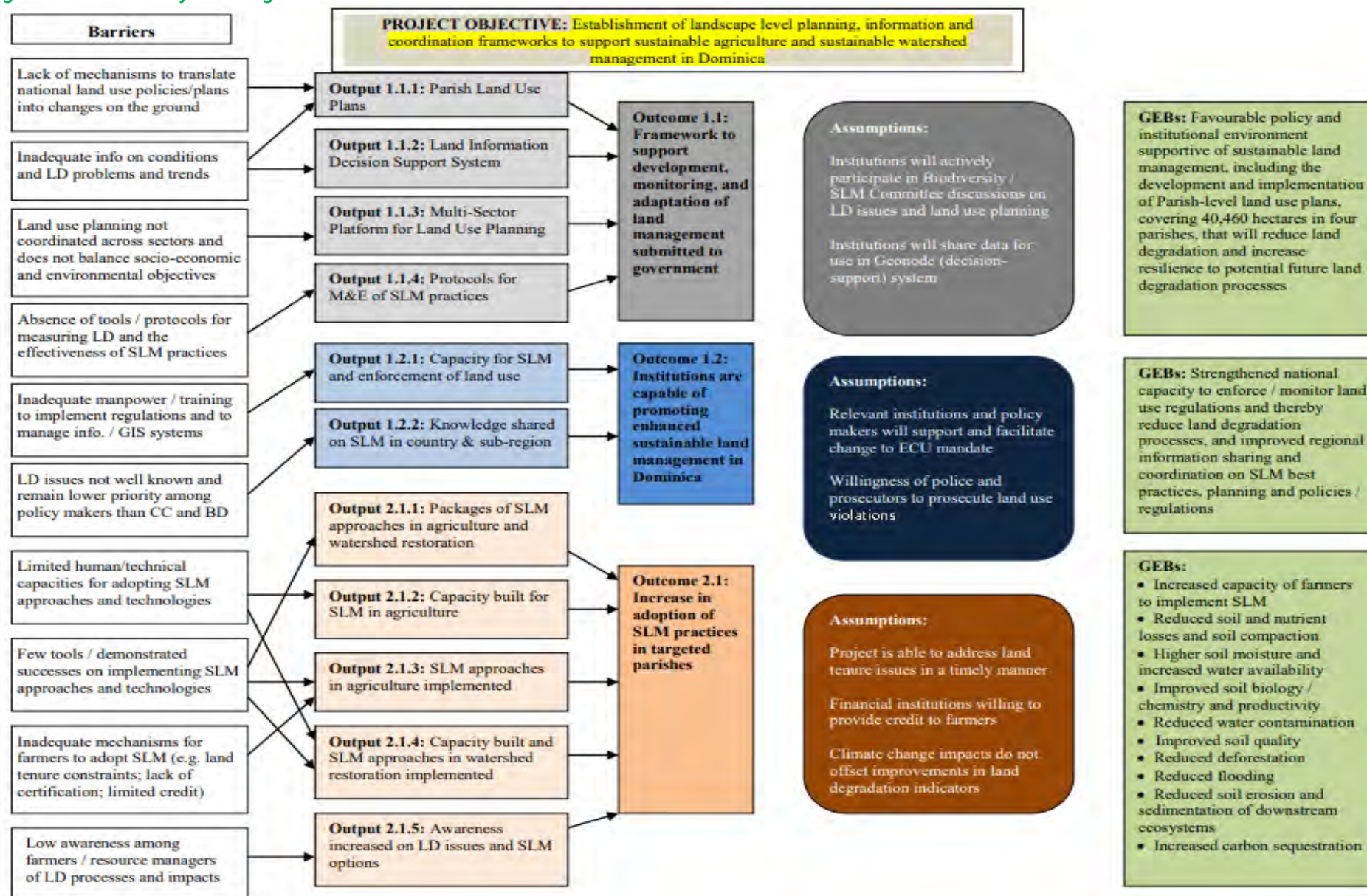
III. THEORY OF CHANGE

Theory of Change at Review

64. A Theory of Change (TOC) explains the process of change by outlining causal linkages in a project, i.e., its outputs, project outcomes, 'intermediate states', and long-lasting outcomes. The identified changes are mapped as a set of interrelated pathways, with each pathway showing the required outcomes in a logical relationship with respect to the others, and with a broad chronological flow. The assumptions and drivers that influence the project at project design still hold therefore the TOC at project design is still valid and remain unchanged. Overall, the TOC, as depicted in Figure 2 below, has provided a reasonable articulation of the nature of the problem at hand, the needed long-term solutions, structural barriers to the application of such solutions and solution pathways that the project should undertake. The planned objective and three outcomes are logical responses to the barriers identified.
65. The two project components have a good balance of enabling interventions and direct actions. To address LD through SLM, it is necessary to have a strong capacity and a coherent policy framework with relevant regulatory and non-regulatory instruments. Component 1 targeted enabling a whole island landscape framework to plan, monitor, and adapt land management, which are all essential for effective SLM. Component 2 is largely a suite of direct actions and capacity-building initiatives to reverse LD, improve and protect rangelands, reduce degradation of watershed services in forests, improve agricultural practices for higher productivity per unit area and reduce deforestation. These actions should ultimately lead to improved community livelihoods. The review team acknowledges that the project indicators and targets were generally SMART.
66. The evaluation concluded that the choice of components and respective outcomes is appropriate. The design presented a simplified results chain describing key linkages from outputs to three articulate outcomes, and the related global environmental benefits. The interactions with project stakeholders during the review showed that the TOC is a useful tool for discussion-based analysis and learning that engages project stakeholders in the identification of issues, assumptions and necessary (intermediate) changes to achieve impact. It also assists in the identifying and planning of synergies between project activities and components.
67. Analysis of the impact pathways was conducted in terms of the assumptions and drivers that underpin the processes in the transforming of outputs and outcomes from intermediate states to impacts. Generally, the intermediate states result from 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.
68. The long-term solution envisioned under this project is to incorporate agricultural, forestry and other resource management practices in Dominica into an integrated land management model that reduces land degradation, as characterized by loss of productivity and ecosystem degradation, through the adoption of production systems that are resilient to the significant weather conditions/events to which the country is subjected to. However, a number of barriers exist to implementing this solution, as described below:
 - i. Lack of mechanisms to translate national land use policies/plans into changes on the ground.
 - ii. Inadequate info on conditions and LD problems and trends.

- iii. Land use planning not coordinated across sectors and does not balance socio-economic and environmental objectives.
- iv. Absence of tools / protocols for measuring LD and the effectiveness of SLM practices.
- v. Inadequate manpower / training to implement regulations and to manage info. / GIS systems.
- vi. LD issues not well known and remain lower priority among policy makers.
- vii. Limited human/technical capacities for adopting SLM approaches and technologies.
- viii. Few tools / demonstrated successes on implementing SLM approaches and technologies.
- ix. Inadequate mechanisms for farmers to adopt SLM (e.g. land tenure constraints; lack of certification; limited credit)
- x. Low awareness among farmers / resource managers of LD processes and impacts

Figure 2: SLMD Theory of Change



IV. REVIEW FINDINGS

A. Strategic Relevance

Alignment to UNEP's UNEP Medium Term Strategy⁷ (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities

69. Alignment to UNEP MTS and POW is Highly Satisfactory. In relation to UNEP's priorities, the project aligned to Sub-programme 3 - Healthy and productive ecosystems. The project is aligned with Expected Accomplishment A: The health and productivity of terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring and cross-sector collaboration frameworks at the national level and Expected Accomplishment B: Policymakers in the public and private sectors test the inclusion of the health and productivity of ecosystems in economic decision-making (Biennial PoW 2018-2019; Project Implementation Report [PIR] 2021).
70. The project contributes to Sub-programme 3 by providing tools, training and knowledge exchange that can aid in the assistance of assessing, monitoring and maintaining the health and productivity terrestrial ecosystems and by encouraging the strengthening of partnerships across sectors giving rise to opportunities to link ecosystem management in decision-making across these various sectors.
71. The project aligns to the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building (BSP) in that it has a focus on outreach and capacity development on the use of SLM tools thereby contributing to more guidance and training resources. South-South Cooperation (S-SC) is relevant particularly in the trainings and opportunities for sharing of best practices.

Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partners Strategic Priorities

72. Alignment to GEF priorities in terms of focal areas is Highly Satisfactory. The project is consistent with GEF-6 (relevant at the time of project design) LDFA Strategy where the goal is to arrest and reverse global trends in LD, specially desertification and deforestation through investments in good practice and enabling conditions conducive to SLM. The SLMD project responds to the below listed LDFA objectives and program priorities
 - LD-1: Maintain or improve flow of agro-ecosystem services to sustain food production and livelihoods
 - Program 1: Agro-ecological Intensification
 - LD-2: Generate sustainable flows of ecosystem services from forests, including in drylands
 - Program 3: Landscape Management and Restoration
 - LD-3: Reduce pressures on natural resources by managing competing land uses in broader landscape
 - Program 4: Scaling-up sustainable land management through the Landscape Approach

⁷ 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>.

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

73. The project was formulated and commenced at a time of significant shifts in the global discourse on SLM and the urgent need for national and international commitment to increase participation in environmental management and finance for natural resource management. The project objectives and outcomes align with global and regional concerns on SLM as well as international conventions and agreements in which Dominica is a signatory. These include, but are not limited to, the Convention on Biological Diversity, UN Framework Convention of Climate Change, UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and UN Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.
74. The SLMD project is highly relevant within the context of the implementation of the UNCCD and the GEF as a financial instrument to implement the convention. The project will contribute to the strategic objectives of the 10-year strategic plan of the UNCCD, which are to: i) improve the living conditions of affected populations; (ii) improve the condition of affected ecosystems; (iii) Generate global benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD and iv) to mobilize resources to support implementation of the Convention through building effective partnerships between national and international actors. The project will promote awareness raising and education on SLM using science, technology, and knowledge and catalyse support for combating land degradation.
75. The project is consistent with the goals of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Barbados and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) 2012 to 2016. Particularly, Outcome 1: Environment, energy, climate change and disaster risk reduction, which is designed to “enhance the capacity of Barbados and the countries of the OECS to effectively manage natural resources and build resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change and anthropogenic hazards, improve energy efficiency and use of renewable energy as part of the region’s energy mix, and improve the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks for environmental governance” and it calls for countries to address “a number of environmental sustainability issues including, inter alia, the integration of climate change and disaster risk reduction into development planning, response and recovery; establishing a framework to enable the region to better address issues relating to biotechnology and bio-safety; strengthening national land use policies and administrative systems; and creating a framework for the establishment of green economy transformation in Barbados and the OECS.
76. Dominica’s National Action Programme to Combat Land Degradation (2004) identifies specific priorities to strengthen land use planning and policies and to implement land degradation mitigation measures. The project will address issues identified as cause for concern such as deforestation, erosion, poor drainage, flooding, lack of awareness and education, lack of enforcement of existing legislation, and sedimentation and siltation. These issues will be addressed through integrated land use planning and management, institutional strengthening, public education and awareness, and stakeholder participation in watershed and forest management. Activities under this project will support and facilitate several primary Result Areas identified in Dominica’s Agriculture Disaster Risk Management Plan 2014-2019. These include Result Area 3 (Building resilience for sustainable livelihoods in the agriculture sector, with particular focus on smallholders), which project activities in SLM for agriculture will support, and Result Area 4 (Preparedness, response and rehabilitation) which project activities for watershed restoration will support.
77. The project is in line with Dominica’s National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2014-2020), which call for “the conservation and sustainable management of

Dominica’s terrestrial and marine biodiversity to ensure intra- and inter-generational equity.” The plan includes priorities, strategies and action for the conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources and the promotion of “sound and sustainable agricultural practices and technology within existing agricultural, human capital to minimize the loss of agro-biodiversity and reduce vulnerability to desertification, soil loss, and the contamination of water resources.” In addition, the country’s Low Carbon Climate Resilient Development Strategy and the Strategic Program for Climate Resilience are designed to facilitate Dominica’s transformation into a low-carbon climate-resilient economy while addressing pressing development, livelihood and poverty issues confronting the country. Finally, the proposed project is also in line with the outcome document of the Third International Conference on SIDS—Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, which sets out a programme for the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States. The Government of Dominica has endorsed and adopted the SAMOA Pathway.

78. The relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Priorities are Highly Satisfactory.

Complementarity with Existing Interventions/Coherence

79. Some previous and ongoing initiatives in Dominica have interlinked objectives with this project and will contribute to strengthening the data available for Dominica in relation to specific environmental issues. The SLMD project will build on the results and lessons learned of several previous initiatives related to SLM. These include the UNDP-GEF SLM project (2008-2012), which dealt with developing an Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) approach. The lessons learnt from the INRM project, for example, generated significant community support and ownership for land use planning and SLM practices through community involvement and education on SLM issues, were used to guide field-based activities under Component 2 of this project. The GEF-UNEP project “Support to Dominica for development of National Action Program aligned to the UNCCD 10 Year Strategy and Reporting Process under UNCCD”, aids in identifying key issues that this project was designed to address. The outcomes from the SLM project was also built from the GEF-funded Special Program on Adaptation to Climate Change (SPACC) (2007-2011), which helped Dominica, Saint Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines to implement pilot adaptation measures addressing the impacts of climate change on their natural resources, focused on biodiversity and land degradation along coastal and near coastal areas.

80. During implementation of this project, there were a number of GEF supported initiatives that were very relevant to this project. Namely:

- The GEF-UNDP project “Supporting Sustainable Ecosystems by strengthening the Effectiveness of Dominica’s Protected Area System” (2015-2019).
- The GEF-IUCN Land Degradation Neutrality - Target Setting Process
- Strengthening resilience of agricultural lands and forests in the Aftermath of Hurricane Maria.

81. Complementarity with existing interventions/coherence is Highly Satisfactory.

Rating for Strategic Relevance: Highly Satisfactory

B. Quality of Project Design

82. Quality of Project Design is rated as Satisfactory (See Project Design Quality [PDQ] in Annex VIII). This is a well-structured project that is very much aligned with national

objectives and priorities. The project design is well conceived, and the ProDoc is comprehensive. The review team believes that the results framework was well formulated with several strong points specifically in addressing threats to watershed services and removing barriers to effective SLM. The project design adequately analyzed the socio-economic, institutional and policy setting and identified the gaps and opportunities the project could target, making the outcomes highly relevant while increasing the success potential and effectiveness of the project. The desire for capacity building such as farmer training is a necessity in a country highly dependent on agriculture but with a limited number of trained farmers and extension officers. The training and capacity building at the community level will encourage stakeholder participation and ownership.

83. The project document was well-laid out, there was the presence of a clear situational and stakeholder analysis. The baseline scenario was concisely outlined including the business-as-usual versus the alternative scenarios. There was no clear and outlined stakeholder consultation description during the project design process even though it was clear from the depth of the project document that this must have been done at inception phase. Governance and supervisions were laid out well in the project document. The ProDoc seems to outlines the roles and responsibilities of partners based on their capability.
84. At GEF-6, a TOC was part of the project design template, and this was included in the ProDoc. Overall, the TOC has provided a reasonable articulation of the nature of the problem at hand and the needed long-term solutions. The planned objective and three outcomes are logical responses to the barriers identified, however, a monitoring element between the training component and the intended uptake of activities by the beneficiaries should have been established in the timeframe. Output indicators were mostly SMART. Some baseline information in relation to key performance indicators notably for Component 2 were not indicated. However, targets were identified for indicators of outputs and outcomes. The monitoring plan and budget were also laid out in the ProDoc.
85. Risks are appropriately identified. The potentially negative environmental, economic and social impacts of the project are identified and mitigation strategies are adequate and is not anticipated to cause significant consumption of resources to warrant a negative environmental foot-print. The project document had a section on sustainability; however, there is no evidence of an appropriate exit strategy. The project presents strategies to promote/support scaling up as relates to replication in the other six parishes in Dominica.

Rating for Quality Design: Satisfactory

C. Effectiveness

Availability of Outputs

86. Availability of Outputs is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory. Overall, the project has achieved approximately 51% of the expected output. As seen in Table 6 below, an exceptional number of activities under outputs 1.1.1 to 1.1.4 have either been completed or almost completed. Most notably is the five Parish land use plan (Parishes: St. David, St. Patrick, St. Paul, St. George and St. Joseph.)
87. Output 1.1.1 – Four Parish land-use plans designed, with associated guidelines of implementation: 88% completed. This output was overachieved, as the initial plan was the completion of a four Parish land-use plan however a five Parish land use plan was completed under this output.

88. Output 1.1.2 - Land Information decision support system is available for use in land use planning, assessment of environmental conditions and trends, and policy development: 85% completed. Foundational activities have been completed, however, some activity progresses have been delayed due external factors. GIS capacity building workshops were also conducted with key benefactors.
89. Output 1.1.3 - Multi-sector platform for land use planning developed: 67% completed. The multi-sector planning platform is noted to be completed and accessible to national stakeholders. There have been some delays in activities due to challenges with agency/focal point engagement. Policy reviews on LD in Dominica are being reviewed/in draft.
90. Output 1.1.4 - At least one Protocol established for monitoring and evaluation of SLM practices: 68% completed. The rating is **S** given that the project was able to develop this protocol early on based on prior work of the PISLM. Capacity to operationalize the protocol has not proceeded due to current capacity challenges.
91. Output 1.2.1 - One Strategic Training plan developed and implemented: 51% completed. Draft legislation now exists, and the legal consultant has already commenced stakeholder consultations that will help define capacity-building plan under this output. However, there have been delays in advancement among the lead partner agencies of government.
92. Output 1.2.2 - At least two knowledge publications on SLM practices disseminated within Dominica and in the sub-region: 36% completed. In-field information and knowledge still need to be gathered for this output to be realised. In-field activities have been severely hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, consultants have been engaged and are currently coordinating ways to move forward.
93. Output 2.1.1 - Package of effective SLM approaches & technologies identified in collaboration with relevant national institutions: 68% completed. Foundation activities and background assessments on farming areas have been completed. SLM approaches and technologies in agriculture have been identified and work on assembling the package off SLM approaches and technologies are progressing.
94. Output 2.1.2 - At least 1,500 farmers and local communities with strengthened capacities to implement SLM approaches & technologies in agriculture: 31% completed. IICA has been engaged along with a number of consultants under the LOA with the agency. Initial assessments related to certification completed. Works are now focused on the completion of a manual related to best SLM practices.
95. Output 2.1.3 - SLM approaches & technologies implemented in 4 target parishes, and lessons learned consolidated for farmers of at least 40 farms: 20% completed. Output yet to be accomplished as many feed-in activities and output have not yet been realized.
96. Output 2.1.4 - Degraded watersheds in at least 8 villages rehabilitated with native vegetation, based on site specific rehabilitation plans developed in collaboration with local communities: 26% completed. Work under this output remains substantially not implemented given that it awaits completion of the other directly supporting activities and outputs. It should be noted that the National Reforestation initiative is advancing. Although the PIR 2021 states that Activity 2 is 70 % completed, consultation with the PMU set the actual completion at 15%.
97. Output 2.1.5 - Increased public understanding and awareness of LD issues and associated SLM options, and increased support for land use regulations: 35% completed. Limited progress has been made under this output apart from initial media workshops and the preparation of outreach material and resources.

Table 6: Implementation progress towards delivery of outputs

Outputs/Activities	Implementation status as of 30 June 2021)	Average % Completed
Output 1.1.1: Four(five) Parish land-use plans designed, with associated guidelines of implementation		88%
1. Development of a framework / guidelines for developing Parish land use plan.	100%	
2. Development of at 5 Parish land use plans.	75%	
Output 1.1.2: Land Information decision support system is available for use in land use planning, assessment of environmental conditions and trends, and policy development		85%
1. Inputting information on LD trends / conditions, changes in areas where SLM practices are implemented, and other information.	80%	
2. Capacity building to the GIS / data management units of the Physical Planning Department, the Land and Survey Department, and the ECU.	90%	
Output 1.1.3: Multi-sector platform for land use planning developed		67%
1. Establish a multi-sector planning platform.	100%	
2. Facilitate communication among biodiversity/sustainable land Management Committee members.	55%	
3. Analysis of the impacts of relevant national policies of land degradation conditions and trends.	45%	
Output 1.1.4: At least one Protocol established for monitoring and evaluation of SLM practices		68%
1. Establish protocols for monitoring and evaluation of SLM practices.	95%	
2. Capacity building for resource managers and information experts on the use of the protocols.	40%	
Output 1.2.1: One Strategic Training plan developed and implemented		51%
1. Review and strengthening of existing and draft legislation related to land and resource use and management.	100%	
2. National validation consultations on improved legislation / regulations, then submitted to the Cabinet for formal approval.	70%	
3. Capacity building program for regulatory authorities (in particular the ECU), law enforcement agencies and courts.	0%	
4. Capacity building program for CSOs.	15%	
5. Strengthen the overall legal mandate of the ECU.	70%	
Output 1.2.2: At least two knowledge publications on SLM practices disseminated within Dominica and in the sub-region		36%
1. Guidelines/handbook of SLM approaches to land use planning developed and used (incorporated into sectorial policies).	30%	
2. SLM practices and methodologies integrated into the work program of other Ministries - Works, Water, Housing, Tourism, and distributed to relevant institutions (farmer's association, NGOs etc.) in Dominica.	60%	
3. Disseminate lessons learned and best practices on SLM approaches to resource managers, policy makers and CSOs / community leaders.	30%	
4. Share lessons learned with other GEF-supported SLM projects in sub-region.	25%	
Output 2.1.1: Package of effective SLM approaches & technologies identified in collaboration with relevant national institutions		68%
1. Undertake soil analyses of farming areas	100%	
2. Identify a package of SLM approaches and technologies in agriculture.	80%	
3. Package of SLM approaches and technologies for the restoration of degraded watersheds .	25%	

Output 2.1.2: At least 1,500 farmers and local communities with strengthened capacities to implement SLM approaches & technologies in agriculture		31%
1. Capacity building on the use of soil conservation and farming techniques.	45%	
2. Legal and technical support to farmers for land tenure.	15%	
3. Legal and technical support to farmers for farm certification.	50%	
4. Assist farmers in gaining access to credit to implement SLM approaches.	15%	
Output 2.1.3: SLM approaches & technologies implemented in 4 target parishes, and lessons learned consolidated for farmers of at least 40 farms		20%
1. Assist farmers in practicing sustainable land management in diversified crop production.	20%	
2. Follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of SLM approaches and provision of guidance on remedial actions.	20%	
Output 2.1.4: Degraded watersheds in at least 8 villages rehabilitated with native vegetation based on site specific rehabilitation plans developed in collaboration with local communities		26%
1. Build capacity of community groups through training and provision of basic tools.	30%	
2. Reforestation and agroforestry activities.	15%	
3. Establishment of buffer zones for highly vulnerable areas and planting of cover vegetation in buffer zones.	30%	
4. Improvements to drainage and water quality monitoring (e.g. of agricultural chemicals, sediment loads).	30%	
Output 2.1.5: Increased public understanding and awareness of LD issues and associated SLM options, and increased support for land use regulations		35%
1. Development and implementation of a national public education and awareness programme on Sustainable Land Management.	30%	
2. Community-based education programme on socio-economic benefits of SLM practices.	40%	

Achievement of Project Outcomes

98. Achievements of project outcomes is rated as Moderately Satisfactory. Based on the review of the activities, PIRs and discussion with stakeholders involved in implementation, the MTR verified that 61% of the activities related to achieving the project outcomes are completed. The extent to which the outcomes of the project were achieved is summarised in the table 7 below. There are three main results expected from the project. These are:
- iv. Outcome 1.1: Framework to support development, monitoring, and adaptation of land management submitted to government (*88% completed*).
 - v. Outcome 1.2: Institutions are capable of promoting enhanced sustainable land management in Dominica (*58% completed*).
 - vi. Outcome 2.1: Increase in the adoption of SLM practices in targeted parishes. (*37% completed*).
99. Outcome 1.1: Framework to support development, monitoring, and adaptation of land management submitted to government. Considerable progress has made towards this project outcome. Various stakeholder/partners interviewed believed that the project had made good progress in terms of the development of the five Parish Land Use plans and was the most important achievement of the project at mid-term and therefore had laid a foundation for further progress in the project and in the land use context. The capability to support spatial-based land management planning based on the GIS platform enhancement has had reasonable progress. The multi-sectoral national land use planning platform has been established and the project will continue

to make inputs toward its operation. A monitoring and evaluation tool has been developed and is being incorporated into the work of the multi-sector planning

Outcomes	Indicators	% Completed	Average % Completed
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platform and the operationalization of the land information system.

100. Outcome 1.2: Institutions are capable of promoting enhanced sustainable land management in Dominica. The project has advanced the overall capacity of the key agencies responsible for land management in Dominica. However, difficulties arising from the management protocols of the COVID-19 pandemic coupled with some administrative challenges have slowed progress under this outcome. Work on legislative mandates continues to progress. The EA has been collaborating with other similar type projects in the region to advance the multi-sectoral planning platform for SLM.
101. Outcome 2.1: Increase in adoption of SLM practices in targeted parishes. Progress under this output is lacking, and there is still substantial work to be completed. IICA has been contracted to work with the MOA to meet the necessary targets under this outcome. Baseline activities have been completed, and farmers have been somewhat engaged. The draft of the package of SLM practices for review and validation is close to delivery, and after that roll-out, testing and validation at the field level. As with the other outcome areas, the COVID-19 pandemic management protocols and institutional commitment and follow-through have created some challenges in the pace of implementation that need to be addressed.

Table 7: Implementation progress towards delivery of outcomes

Outcome 1.1: Framework to support development, monitoring, and adaptation of land management negotiated and submitted to government	# of parish land use plans developed and in use to support SLM approaches	90%	88%
	Use of land information decision support system to support SLM measures	90%	
	Use of a multi-sector planning platform guiding land use planning and management in Dominica	75%	
	Use of protocols for monitoring and evaluation of SLM practices	95%	
Outcome 1.2: Institutions are capable of promoting enhanced sustainable land management in Dominica	Increase in score on Capacity Development Scorecard	75%	58%
	Improved legislation / regulations to support SLM	60%	
	Knowledge on SLM practices disseminated in the sub-region	40%	
Outcome 2.1: Increase in adoption of SLM practices in targeted parishes	# of hectares in 4 parishes being managed using SLM measures for agriculture	40%	37%
	Reduced land degradation on 30 farms, as measured by: Grass barriers (sq. meters); Functioning windbreaks (sq. meters); Trenches (cubic meters); Pesticide use (litres); Fertilizer use (kgs); Water harvesting capacity (cubic meters)	30%	
	# of farmers in project area with secure land tenure	45%	
	# of certification systems in Dominica focused on SLM measures	35%	
	# of farmers with access to credit to adopt SLM approaches / technologies	30%	
	Restored watershed functioning in 3 watersheds (Coulibistrie, Salisbury, La Plaine) covering 4,000 ha on Crown Lands, measured by: Increased forest cover (ha.); Increased grass cover (ha.); Increased agroforestry (# of trees planted); Improved water quality (ppm of phosphates, nitrates, etc.); Reduced sediment loads (tons/acre/year)	40%	

Achievement of Likelihood of Impact

102. Achievement of likelihood of impact is rated as Moderately Likely.

The project's intended achievement of outcomes has not made substantial progress, but many are on course to be delivered during the lifetime of the project. Therefore, the project is on the trajectory of achieving its major global environmental objectives and yielding satisfactory global environmental benefits outlined in the TOC. The successful attainment of outcomes under this project will aid in the significant potential for upscaling SLM planning, approaches and technologies to other areas within Dominica through the replication of best practices in the other country Parishes.

Rating for Effectiveness: Moderately Satisfactory

D. Financial Management

103. Financial management seems to be sound; however, expenditure appears to be slow. This is mainly due to delays in the recruitment of consultants and the delays caused by COVID-19. As of June 2021, the project has spent USD 450,534.95, which 3 % of the project budget. Tables of financial expenditure to budget and co-financing can be found in Annex IV and Annex V, showing the financial management table.

Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures.

104. Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures is rated as Satisfactory.
105. The reporting from the PMU generally followed UNEP Policies and Procedures; however, the review team found that there were notable delays in reporting, as confirmed from interviews with key stakeholders/partners. There is evidence of initial budgets and regular budget revision, as seen in the Budget Revision documents reviewed. Periodic expenditure reports from July 2018 to June 2021 were also revised and deemed adequate. However, the review team did not see expenditure by components listed in the documents. There was also only one audit report that was seen for the project (dated 2020). Therefore, an updated audit is recommended at this time.

Completeness of Financial Information

106. Completeness of Financial Information is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory.
107. 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 reporting).
108. One audit report was reviewed for the project period to date which outlined some areas of concern such as: lack of payment descriptions for some transactions; missing honoured cheques; lack of visibility on existing bills/invoices and a lack of authorization limits for a range of funds that are to be utilized. This audit report was dated October 6, 2020. The review team is unsure if these concerns were rectified as there was no evidence of such.
109. Documents received for review included the initial budget, budget revisions, periodic expenditure reports (summary) for July 2018 through June 2021, audited statement of comprehensive income for year end 31 December 2019 and the management letter with notes and recommendations, and project cost with co-financing at design. Documents such as any relevant legal agreements and proof of fund transfer were not seen or submitted.

Communication Between Finance and Project Management Staff

110. Communication between finance and project management staff is rated as Satisfactory.
111. Through interviews and stakeholder feedback, the review deduced that there was a satisfactory level of awareness of the project's financial status between the PMU and the Task Manager. However, issues did arise due to late submission of reports. There is feedback/contact between the PMU and Task Manager, however, there are noted delays in response times from the PMU. Gaps in overall communication is clear.

Rating for Financial Management: Moderately Satisfactory

E. Efficiency

112. Efficiency is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory.
113. The project underwent one no-cost project extension from the original project end date of July 2021 to July 2023. The project experienced significant delays in the commencement of project execution and during implementation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

114. The SLMD project started late due to gap between approval and initial release of funds. The initial start date of February 2018 was changed to October 2018. Further setbacks were experienced in procurement of consultants due to UNEP's recommendation to merge TORs for both the SLMD and "Strengthening Resilience" project to streamline the number of consultancies and to better utilize resources given the overlaps of both projects.
115. Delays were also experienced in the early implementation of the project due to issues with institutional partnerships. Initially, the relationship between ECU and PSILM resulted in issues that warranted the decision to vacate the ECU offices setting back the project for three (3) months. Further delays occurred in November and December 2018 due to political and administrative issues linked to ECU and the ECU was subsequently dissolved and the project portfolio absorbed by the MOE. The project had to await the policy/institutional guidance for oversight.
116. Project activities were halted due to the COVID-19 pandemic as per global and national management protocols for the greater part of 2020. Given the restrictions on physical assemblies, virtual meetings and trainings were required. Deliverables and project activities that required field work could not be adequately completed so the majority of deliverables achieved dealt with non-field related work.
117. The allocation of funding across the outputs was based on the contextual analysis and substantive consultation, UNEP knowledge base, government and GEF guidelines and templates for project cost-estimating. The general observation from this MTR is that the project applied best practices in financial resource allocation and spending and implemented optimal project management. However, the completion of activities was not within the estimated timeline. Cost effectiveness: At mid-term there has been no issues related to cost effectiveness. The one extension requested had no additional associated cost. The realisation of co-financing was a bit slow at mid-term possibly due to changing government priorities at the time related to COVID-19 but this did not hinder the achieved project results at mid-term. Interviews with key stakeholders noted that while there may be some challenges moving forward with co-financing owing to the ongoing pandemic, there is still a level of optimism that the co-financing commitments will be realised.

Rating for Efficiency: Moderately Unsatisfactory

F. Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring Design and Budgeting

118. Monitoring Design and Budgeting is rated as Moderately Satisfactory.
119. The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan are laid out clearly in the ProDoc with dedicated budgets located in Annex G of the ProDoc. It refers to standard UNEP/GEF M&E tools (including project meetings, inception meeting and reporting, annual work plans, MTR, quarterly progress reporting, terminal evaluation, PSC meeting and reporting, PIRs, financial audits, co-financing reports, as well as project publications). The project results framework presented includes SMART indicators for each expected outcome and mid-term and end-of-project targets.

Monitoring of Project Implementation

Strategic Question: What is the performance at the project's mid-point against Core Indicator Targets?

120. Monitoring of Project Implementation is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory.

121. Monitoring was mostly conducted as laid out by the project document. While Annual Work Plans, PIRs and Quarterly Reports were effectively prepared, these reports were not submitted in a timely manner. Additionally, only one financial audit has taken place at mid-term.
122. The PSC was set up to provide technical support and monitor project implementation, thereby ensuring that the project activities match national priorities and realities and outputs and outcomes satisfy the GEF agreement. PSC was carded to meet bi-annually. However, only one meeting was held based on reviewing the submitted meeting minutes and feedback from stakeholder interviews. Failure of the PSC to effectively play its M&E role has caused challenges in realising outputs and outcomes.
123. Coordination among key actors in the implementation and management of the project is limited to some extent. For instance, very little is known about the project among the farmer population. The only people who know something about the project are stakeholders directly involved in the management or coordination of project activities.

Project Reporting

124. Project Reporting is rated as Satisfactory.
125. Half-yearly progress reports were developed throughout the project lifespan to mid-term. Partner reports were submitted regularly and as expected. However, it must be noted that based on stakeholder interviews, project progress reports were not always submitted in a timely manner. Gender disaggregation and equality was reported on sufficiently in the PIRs and quarterly reports.

Rating for Monitoring and Reporting:	Moderately Satisfactory
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G. Sustainability

Socio-political Sustainability

126. Socio-political sustainability was rated as Moderately Unlikely.
127. The Socio-political sustainability of the project much depends on the public and stakeholder's awareness, interest and incentives to maintain and further SLM on the political agenda. One of the main characteristics of the SLMD project is that it follows a multi-institutional approach whereby many government agencies at national level, as well as other national entities are involved. This somewhat will aid in strengthening the acceptability of the project at policy level, which will contribute to the long-term sustainability.
128. A noted challenge will be to make the SLM agenda part of the political priorities. This needs to be promoted through the strong involvement of the communities addressing certain social and economic strategic needs, especially at local level, such as rural poverty and vulnerability, food security and rural development. It would be important that the SLMD projects continue to align and contribute to UN Conventions and other national priorities. This is currently only happening to a limited extent due to the delays experienced by the project.
129. COVID-19 will likely continue to play a role in shaping how the work of the outcome and output activities progress, including more movement online related to meetings, forums and capacity building components.

Financial Sustainability

130. Financial sustainability is rated as Unlikely.

131. A longer-term funding strategy would need to be put in place for some core funding to allow for ongoing maintenance and updating of SLM tools and technologies, as well as to meet the anticipated rising demand for training, especially after the uptake of SLM activities under the project. An exit strategy can be formulated towards the end of the project in order to facilitate continuity of project activity uptake by the beneficiaries. Providing support post project will be extremely important in securing project sustainability. There is some evidence of sustained funding of SLM interventions through Ministry funds and the assumption that financial institutions will be willing to provide credit to farmers but not at the level that would build confidence on funding predictability.

Institutional Sustainability

132. Institutional Sustainability is rated as Unlikely.
133. The sustainability of the SLMD project outcomes and the onward progress towards impact are absolutely dependent on the institutional and policy framework in which the method is integrated. SLMD project partners with key governmental organisations which aids with the sustainability of the project. Assumptions as noted in the TOC for SLM practices to be maintained are, a) Institutions will actively participate in Biodiversity/SLM Committee discussions on LD issues and land use planning; b) Institutions will share data for use in Geonode (decision-support) system; c) Relevant institutions and policy makers will support and facilitate change
134. SLM is recognized as an important framework for natural resources while improving peoples' livelihoods and poverty reduction. Therefore, it is aligned to national policies and governance structures. Hence there are limited or no threats to the continuation of project benefits. The project has inherent capacity building across all activities and has made efforts to build functional and operational capacity for SLM at the local level, including the setting up of technical training and land use plans as well as the intention to contribute to land tenure security for local communities, especially among women. However there is no evidence yet of coordination among stakeholders as it relates to institutional or legal framework to support the sustainability of this project.

Rating for Sustainability: Unlikely

H. Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

Preparation and Readiness

135. Preparation and Readiness is rated as Highly Satisfactory.
136. The logical framework (with the exception of some 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. Risk identification and environment and social safeguards presented in the project document were satisfactory for what was expected by GEF-6 projects at the time. The project was designed with flexibility which allowed the project partners to be able to adapt to changes in risks. As a result, after an initial stop of project activities, the project was able to adapt pretty well to COVID-19 limitations and shocks. Governance and implementation structure was laid out in the project document. Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders and partners were also clearly laid out in the ProDoc.

Quality of Project Management and Supervision

137. Quality of Project Management and Supervision is rated as Satisfactory. UNEP is rated as Highly Satisfactory and PISLM/PMU is rated as Moderately Satisfactory.
138. The implementation arrangement was clear and adequate with the project housed within UNEP (GEF Implementation Agency) under PISLM as the EA. Roles and responsibility were clearly defined in the ProDoc with a PMU and a PSC.
139. The PMU has been weakened by a number of factors. Changes in staff arrangement related to the Project Manager/NPC has greatly affected the leadership within the PMU. The project has had two different PMs at mid-term. The review team found that the PMU has had a weakened capacity due to this.
140. The PSC was set up to guide the development of the project and provide intra/inter-sector guidance and oversight to the overall project implementation. The committee is composed of representatives of various stakeholders and is supposed to meet every quarter. The findings of this MTR point out that the committee does not meet regularly. It is unclear if the PSC is highly effective and proactive in ensuring that the project activities and implementation approach remained relevant as there is only evidence of one PSC meeting which was noted to be the formation meeting.

Stakeholders Participation and Cooperation

Strategic Question: What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program?

141. Stakeholder participation and Cooperation is rated as Unsatisfactory.
142. A stakeholder analysis was undertaken during the project preparation stage as seen in the ProDoc where key stakeholders are identified and their potential role and responsibilities are assessed in the context of the project. The MTR found that most of the key stakeholders identified were directly relevant to implementing the project and to facilitating and realizing planned outcomes. The findings of this evaluation indicate that the relationship between the project and stakeholders is moderately unsatisfactory, particularly related to the farming community where more than half of the farmer were not fully knowledgeable about the project and the fact that many of them had limited awareness. A good relationship between the Project Management Units, communities and farmers are fundamental to implementing the project and achievement of project objectives. In addition, the Project Steering Committee did not meet at regular intervals to play the required oversight role.

Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

Strategic Question: What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding gender-responsive measures and any intermediate gender result areas?

143. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality is rated as Highly Satisfactory.
144. Dominica's National Policy and Action Plan for Gender Equity and Equality (2006), aims to improve quality of life at all levels of society, and to contribute to gender awareness among policy makers, planners, implementers, and the general public. It aims to "incorporate a gender perspective in all development planning" in a way that makes for the "gendering" of development planning and policy formulation and implementation, and to establish a system of gender mainstreaming into all sectors of government and society (ProDoc). The SLMD project used this policy as the framework for mainstreaming gender into all areas of this project.

145. The project has demonstrated broad willingness to ensure the role of women in SLM is strengthened and mainstreamed. Information on gender inequality in Dominica was assessed during the PPG phase and integrated into project design. Gender equality is embedded in the SLMD project, specially under component 2, where female farmers will be actively sought out as partners in demonstrating and training in SLM approaches in agriculture.
146. Regarding gender, the following are of particular significance:
 - i. The PSC is chaired by a female who is also the PS of the MOA
 - ii. The largest Women's Agri-Network sits on the PSC
 - iii. The PMU is composed predominately of a team of females
 - iv. Gender based targets under component 2 are actively included and considered in the execution of activities and development of outputs.
 - v. Despite the role of women in the Dominican agricultural landscape, the number of participants currently actively engaged in the project stands at 37%, which is well below the 50% minimum that was anticipated at project design. Measures need to be taken to close this gap.

Environmental and Social Safeguards

Strategic Question: What has been the experience at the project's mid-point against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval?

147. Environmental and Social Safeguards is rated as Highly Satisfactory.
148. With regards to social and environmental safeguards, as evident in the ProDoc the project was designed with Social and Environmental Screening Procedures which were periodically revised and reported in the PIR 2020 & 2021.
149. 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 PISLM representatives (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.

Country Ownership and Driven-ness

150. Country Ownership and Driven ness are rated as Satisfactory
151. The review team are of the view that the project's relevance identified during its formulation and implementation remains substantially valid. The project is designed to address the problem of LD and promote SLM practices in Dominica. Its development was initiated by the determination of the Government of Dominica to develop sustainable approaches to LD as it relates to agricultural lands and watersheds this reducing LD and increasing resilience of the country (a key priority as indicated in interview W09).
152. Country ownership is further enhanced by the active participation and leadership demonstrated by the PMU, MOE, MOA and other national stakeholders in its implementation and management at the PSC and TWG. (Interview L07).
153. Notwithstanding the above, there needs to be a strengthening of knowledge and leadership from the staff of the MOE & MOA in relation to cofinancing and reporting as

such. The review team noted that while both ministries were involved in the project start up and continue to be involved in the project implementation, there is a lack of proper documentation and accountability related to cofinancing commitments.

Communication and Public Awareness

Strategic Question: What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding the implementation of the project's Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g., website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions

154. Communication and public awareness are rated as Unsatisfactory.
155. Communication and public awareness were integrated into both components 1 and 2 through training and capacity building of various stakeholders and project beneficiaries and a community-based education programme highlighting the benefits of SLM practices. According to the PIR FY 2021, a number of national symposiums were held during the first half of 2021 (facilitated by IICA) which saw a good representation of stakeholders and project beneficiaries. Project consultants and technical experts from the Division of Agriculture took place in a symposium on SLM and there was capacity building in terms of the GIS component for staff of governmental project partners. It was also noted that IICA was the process of the preparation of documentation of SLM practices for agriculture and training for media professionals being disseminated.
156. Based on interviews and feedback provided from project stakeholders and beneficiaries, the findings indicate that while knowledge of the project was apparent among some stakeholders and beneficiaries, others were not fully knowledgeable about the project. It must be noted that 56% of the farmer interviewed noted that they were not familiar with the SLMD project. In comparison, 44% were aware there was an ongoing project but had limited knowledge or communication about updates were limited. When asked about public awareness, 83% of farmers stated inadequate public awareness of the project. Multiple stakeholder interviewees also noted that communication had been a long-standing issue and that public awareness of the SLMD project is ineffective.
157. While the ProDoc does include a section of knowledge management, there was no evidence of a structured communication plan or strategy. There are opportunities for improving external communication and awareness-raising to the general public, e.g., through production and dissemination of knowledge products, organizing fairs and other community events, to promote the benefits of SLM practices. There needs to be more inclusion, better internal communication, and meeting farmers' needs.

Rating for Factors Affecting Performance and Cross Cutting Issues:	Satisfactory
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V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusions

158. LD continues to be a major problem that threatens food security and thus the very lives of people affected. This will affect the entire global population if we continue with business as usual and climate change takes its course to further exacerbate conditions. The global community is desperate to find the right mix of solutions that promote human wellbeing and promote ecosystem health. This project aimed to refine ways of stimulating the further improvement and spread of community based SLM initiatives while developing a method to upscale and mainstream SLM approaches at local level in Dominica.
159. This project had a high degree of relevance, and this made gaining stakeholder support and establishing partnerships easier. The review team's main conclusion is that this was a well formulated project with clear alignment to national priorities, to UNEP country program, and to GEF focal area – hence highly relevant. The design process allowed for the potential of broad participation of stakeholders and country ownership. The project's sustainability and overall SLM efforts in the country may continue to be at risk unless there is certainty and predictability of funding underpinned by enabling national policies and regulatory instruments to broaden participation of actors and ensure the continued uptake of SLM practices.
160. The table below shows ratings against all review criteria.

Table 8: Evaluation Ratings Table

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
Criterion A: Strategic Relevance	<i>High relevance in terms of GEBS, global SLM agenda, alignment to UNEP priorities strong; relevant to regional and national priorities depending on country level interest, strong alignment with demand in terms of complementarity</i>	HS
1. Alignment to UNEP's MTS, POW and strategic priorities	<i>Aligned to EA Sub-programme 3 – Healthy and Productive Ecosystems</i>	HS
2. Alignment to Donor/Partner strategic priorities	<i>In the GEF context, the Project is in line with the GEF 6 Land Degradation Focal Area (objective LD-1, 2 & 3) Strongly aligned to LD focal area through direct contribution increasing capacity</i>	HS
3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national issues and needs	<i>The project objective and outcomes are aligned with national policies and development strategies of Dominica. It is expected to provide the necessary capacity and policy environment for improving the decisions and investments in SLM.</i>	HS
4. Complementarity with existing interventions	<i>The project built on the results and lessons learnt from past project and during project implementation was relevant with a host of other GEF supported initiatives.</i>	HS
Criterion B: Quality of Project Design	<i>Generally, project was well designed, built on strong foundations, attempted to enhance synergies and partnerships. The project design adequately analyzed the socio-economic, institutional and policy setting and identified the gaps and opportunities the project could target, making the outcomes highly relevant.</i>	S
Criterion C: Effectiveness		MS

1. Availability of outputs	<i>Overall, the project has achieved approximately 54% of the expected output with exceptional work completed in the development of the Five Parish Land Use Plans</i>	MU
2. Achievement of direct outcomes	<i>The MTR verified that 61% of the activities related to achieving the project outcomes are completed.</i>	MS
3. Likelihood of impact	<i>The project's intended achievement of outcomes at mid-term has not made substantial progress but many are on course to be delivered during the lifetime of the project. Therefore, the project is on the trajectory to achieve its major global environmental objectives.</i>	ML
Criterion D: Financial Management		MS
1. Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures	<i>The reporting from the PMU generally followed UNEP Policies and Procedures, however the review team found that there were notable delays in reporting as confirmed from interviews with key stakeholder/partners.</i>	S
2. Completeness of project financial information	<i>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 reporting) however there are gaps related to financial auditing and evidence of financial files/documents.</i>	MU
3. Communication between finance and project management staff	<i>Through interviews and stakeholder feedback, the review deduced that there was a satisfactory level of awareness of the project's financial status between the PMU and the Task Manager. However, issues did arise due to late submission in reporting and there are gaps in overall communication.</i>	S
Criterion E: Efficiency	<i>The project underwent two no-cost project extensions. Project faced some delays (mostly due to COVID-19 and internal structure issues); overall no major concerns with effectiveness</i>	MU
Criterion F: Monitoring and Reporting		MS
1. Monitoring design and budgeting	<i>The monitoring and evaluation plan is laid out clearly in the ProDoc with dedicated budgets located in Annex G of the ProDoc and refers to standard UNEP/GEF M&E tools (including for project meetings, inception meeting and reporting, annual work plans, MTR, quarterly progress reporting, terminal evaluation, PSC meeting and reporting, PIRs, financial audits, co-financing reports as well as project publications). The project results framework presented includes SMART indicators for each expected outcome as well as mid-term and end-of-project targets.</i>	MS
2. Monitoring of project implementation	<i>Monitoring was mostly conducted as laid out by the project document. While Annual Work Plans, PIRs and Quarterly Reports were effectively prepared, it appears that these reports were not submitted in a timely manner. Additionally, only one financial audit has taken place at mid-term. Coordination among key actors in the implementation and management of the project is limited to some extent.</i>	MU
3. Project reporting	<i>Required project reports were developed throughout the project lifespan to mid-term, however it must be noted that based on stakeholder interviews, were not always submitted in a timely manner.</i>	S
Criterion G: Sustainability		U

1. Socio-political sustainability	<i>COVID-19 will likely continue to play a role in shaping how the work of the outcome and output activities progress, including more movement online related to meetings, forums and capacity building components</i>	MU
2. Financial sustainability	<i>There is some evidence of sustained funding of SLM interventions through Ministry funds and the assumption that financial institutions will be willing to provide credit to farmers but not at the level that would build confidence on funding predictability.</i>	U
3. Institutional sustainability	<i>The project has inherent capacity building across all activities and has made efforts to build functional and operational capacity for SLM at the local level, including the setting up of technical training and land use plans as well as the intention to contribute to land tenure security for local communities, especially among women. However, there is no evidence yet of coordination among stakeholders as it relates to institutional or legal framework to support the sustainability of this project.</i>	U
Criterion H: Factors Affecting Performance		S
1. Preparation and readiness	<i>Project was strong although governance arrangements could have been laid out more strategically for longer-term ownership.</i>	HS
2. Quality of project management and supervision	<i>Good overall management from UNEP. However, the Project Management Unit is significantly weakened due to limited it limited capacity. It is unclear if the Project Steering Committee is effective at its duties as there was only evidence of one meeting.</i>	S
2.1. UNEP/Implementing Agency		HS
2.2 Partner/Executing Agency		MS
3. Stakeholder participation and cooperation	<i>The MTR sound major gaps in stakeholder participation and cooperation. Overall communication particularly related to farmer and farmer group's knowledge about the project is lacking.</i>	U
4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity	<i>The project has demonstrated broad willingness to ensure the role of women in SLM is strengthened and mainstreamed.</i>	HS
5. Environmental, social and economic safeguards	<i>There was a detailed social and environmental safeguarding conducted at CEO approval/endorsement. COVID-19 had some implications on the project although project did well to adapt and in some cases had some positives (e.g., reduction of carbon footprint due to online training and limited travel).</i>	HS
6. Country ownership and driven-ness	<i>The project's relevance identified during its formulation and implementation remains substantially valid. The project is designed to address the problem of LD and promote SLM practices in Dominica.</i>	S
7. Communication and public awareness	<i>Public awareness effects have not been effective up to mid-term. General communication of the project is lacking as some beneficiaries and the public are unaware of the project and its benefits.</i>	U

Overall	<i>The project has demonstrated strong performance in the areas of GIS and Development of Land Use planning maps, however, areas that would benefit from further attention are involved better capacity building of partner agencies, increased communication and public outreach and better championship among government agencies to ensure future sustainability. Important challenges faced by the PMU and project partners during implementation of the project included the dissolution of the ECU and delays and interruption of activities as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. However, the project generally adapted well to these challenges.</i>	MS
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Note: Most criteria will be rated on a six-point scale as follows: Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). *Sustainability* and *Likelihood of Impact* are rated from Highly Likely (HL) down to Highly Unlikely (HU). A Criteria Ratings Matrix is available, within the suite of tools, to support a common interpretation of points on the scale for each review criterion. The ratings against each criterion are 'weighted' to derive the Overall Project Performance Rating.

161. Answers to the key strategic questions are listed below in Tables 8.

Table 9: SLMD Components, Outcomes and Outputs

Key Strategic Questions	Comments
What is the performance at the project's mid-point against Core Indicator Targets?	The overall assessment of the performance of the project is rated as Moderately Satisfactory with the project about 55% completed. Availability of outputs is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory with 54% of the expected outputs achieved and achievement of project outcomes is also rated Moderately Satisfactory with 61% of the activities related to achieving project outcomes completed.
What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program?	The MTR found that most of the key stakeholders identified were directly relevant to implementing the project and to facilitating and realizing planned outcomes. The findings of this evaluation indicate that the relationship between the project and stakeholders is moderately unsatisfactory, particularly related to the farming community where more than half of the farmer were not fully knowledgeable about the project and the fact that many of them had limited awareness. In addition, the Project Steering Committee did not meet at regular intervals to play the required oversight role. COVID-19 management protocols have greatly affected the reach of project awareness seeing as most activities where possible had to be done virtually. This brings into play limitations with access to reliable technology and connectivity issues. This is of particular concern in the number of farmers that could be reach seeing as this particular group of beneficiaries are best engaged on-site.
What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding gender-responsive measures and any intermediate gender result areas?	The SLMD project used Dominica's National Policy and Action Plan for Gender Equity and Equality (2006) as the framework for mainstreaming gender into all areas of this project. The project has demonstrated broad willingness to ensure the role of women in SLM is strengthened and mainstreamed. The following are of particular significance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PSC is chaired by a female who is also the PS of the MOA • The largest Women's Agri-Network sits on the PSC • The PMU is composed predominately of a team of females • Gender based targets under component 2 are actively included and considered in the execution of activities and development of outputs. • Despite the role of women in the Dominican agricultural landscape, the number of participants currently actively engaged in the project stands at 37%, which is well below the 50% minimum that was anticipated at project design. Measures need to be taken to close this gap.

Key Strategic Questions	Comments
What has been the experience at the project's mid-point against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval?	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 PISLM representatives (and UNEP) did visit countries, as much as possible was done to maximise on the visit (including field visits, added support, additional trainings). Environmental (specifically carbon) footprint was further minimised when some training was moved online and travel in general was limited due to COVID-19 restrictions.
What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding the implementation of the project's Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables.	National symposiums, which were facilitated by IICA, saw the collaboration and engagement of a good representation of stakeholders and beneficiaries. Capacity Building activities related to the completion of GIS training were completed; IICA is progressing towards the documentation of SLM practices for agriculture. While the ProDoc does include a section of knowledge management, there was no evidence of a structured communication plan or strategy. There are opportunities for improving external communication and awareness-raising to the general public. More inclusion and better communication internally and with farmers need to be improved as well.

B. Lessons learned

Lesson Learned #1:	Aligning project objectives outcomes to national priorities and engaging all relevant stakeholders early establishes understanding and shared values and increases sustainability
Context/comment:	Socio-Political commitment is extremely important for the success and sustainability of projects. Therefore, project alignment to national and local priorities at project inception is crucial. Involving policy makers (Legislature) right from the formulation stage of the project and throughout its implementation enhances chance of replicability and sustainability. This also guarantees the legislation of the action plans
Lesson Learned #2:	Building partnerships takes time and sustained effort
Context/comment:	Partnerships are critical to the success of any project. Sustainable partnership with civil society organization is a viable means to ensure sustainability of the project for future upscaling and replication. However, building these partnerships success takes time and continuous and regular feedback.
Lesson Learned #3:	Adequate consultation and feedback is critical in achieving project outputs and outcomes.
Context/comment:	Lessons related to establishment of national coordination structures include the need to ensure adequate consultation regarding establishment of coordination structures during the project design phase, and for multi-partner projects, to establish norms or rules of procedure regarding consultation, information sharing and decision-making for in-country activities and national assessments that ensure proper overall coordination and communication at national level.
Lesson Learned #4:	Institutional championship and individual championship alignment is important

Context/comment:	Involving policy makers (Legislature) right from the formulation stage of the project and throughout its implementation enhances chance of replicability and sustainability. This also guarantees the legislation of the action plans. Ensuring that beneficiaries also have some sort of 'ownership' over project deliverables is also import. This will lead to better uptake in practices upon project closure.
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Lesson Learned #5:	Management and communication in implementation of projects is vital
Context/comment:	Poor coordination and communication among key actors in the implementation and management of a project provides a strong recipe for failure.

Lesson Learned #6:	Government endorsement of a project does not necessarily mean readiness to implement Support
Context/comment:	Political support is needed through the entire project. A project of this nature assigned to the political level of a ministry requires the buying-in of line ministries; delays in starting the implementation and executing project can be experienced if there is not proper support. Changes in government officers at both higher and/or middle management levels may result in different conservation priorities.

Lesson Learned #7:	Adaptive Management and Planning is critical to projects
Context/comment:	Planning must be realistic in relation to time and financial resources. Risk should be well identified and there should be continued revision of the adaptive management plan so include unforeseen circumstances. Although not without its challenges, the project team and consultants did well to adapt to the management protocols implemented with the global COVID-19 pandemic.

C. Recommendations

Recommendation #1:	Development/Improvement of a Communication Strategy among beneficiaries and stakeholder
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	56% of beneficiaries (farmers) indicated that they had no knowledge of the SLMD project or while 44 % stated that they had some knowledge, but communication related to updates are far and few in between. Some have indicated that they were of the view that the project was cancelled. The level of communication among stakeholder and partners (i.e., government representatives, IICA, PMU and PISLM) can be improved upon by implementing a proper strategy that include clear communication channels and regular feedback to all parties concerning project updates and progress.
Priority Level:	Critical Recommendation

Type of Recommendation	Project & Partner
Responsibility:	PMU
Proposed implementation time-frame:	

162. Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section IV

Recommendation #2:	Preparation of a sound built in exit strategy
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	<p>Sustainability of the project remains at risk. The ratings for socio-political, financial and institutional sustainability are MU, U and U respectfully. While the project is very relevant with national priorities, there is very little evidence that the project can be sustained at the end of the project life. Stakeholder interviews highlighted that no real exit strategy exist for the project. Farmer interviews and questionnaire feedback noted that without proper support there would be no sustainable uptake in the SLM practices. Support includes adequate access to markets; increased government support; provision of adequate financial support; access to proper training.</p> <p>An exit strategy is always suggested well before the completion of the project. This will assist the transition of participating stakeholder and beneficiaries to an active life without the formal support and coordination functions undertaken during the project by the PMU. A sound exit strategy identifying measures with relation to their importance and urgency, their priorities for the sector as well as those that require an allocation of resources and those that can already be integrated into the stakeholder's work programmes.</p>
Priority Level:	Critical Recommendation
Type of Recommendation	Project & Partner
Responsibility:	PMU & project partners
Proposed implementation time-frame:	Before project closure

163. Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section IV

Recommendation #3:	Preparation of a Public Awareness Campaign/ Social Media Outreach
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	<p>Stakeholder feedback indicates that public awareness of the SLMD project is inadequate and can be improved greatly. A proper public awareness campaign that includes social media outreach will lead to greater reach of a wider population paying particular attention to the younger population. It has been noted among the selected group of farmers under this project, the average farmer is over 50. Therefore,</p>

	further public awareness of SLM and its local and global benefits may help encourage young farmer to partake in SLM practices and aid in the project achieving output 2.1.5 in particular. More systematic public awareness and feedback processes should be designed and carried out as part of the adaptive management process in order to achieve maximum 'buy in' from all sectors of Dominican society.
Priority Level:	Critical Recommendation
Type of Recommendation	Project
Responsibility:	PMU and other project partners
Proposed implementation time-frame:	

164. Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section IV

Recommendation #4:	Improvement in financial project reporting
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	While the UNEP Policies and Procedures for financial reporting was followed, there are still gaps in financial management. No evidence was seen as to whether the recommendation related to the financial audit (2020) was adopted. The project should initial another financial audit, as this is the only audit done since the project has started. Updated financial information is necessary to ensure that the project is on track with the required financing policies.
Priority Level:	Important Recommendation
Type of Recommendation	Project
Responsibility:	PMU
Proposed implementation time-frame:	

165. Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section IV

Recommendation #5:	Project partners to continue strengthening partnerships established during this project
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Partnerships and collaborations will be a significant driver in producing the kind of transformation in SLM that is necessary to achieve the goals of this project. Success and sustainability of the project is linked closely to the uptake of the SLM toolsets and partners working together.
Priority Level:	Opportunity for improvement

Type of Recommendation	Partners
Responsibility:	All project partners
Proposed implementation time-frame:	

166. Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section IV

Recommendation #6:	Reinforcement of Management Structure at the PMU
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	The PMU has been affected by the changing of the NPC during project implementation. There is a need to strengthen management capacity of the PMU to ensure there are proper checks and balances and to ensure that there is proper alignment to the project objectives.
Priority Level:	Critical Recommendation
Type of Recommendation	Partner
Responsibility:	PISLM & PMU
Proposed implementation time-frame:	

167. Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section IV

ANNEX I. RESPONSE TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Table 10: Response to stakeholder comments

Page Ref	Stakeholder comment	Reviewer Response
Page 19: Table 5: Co-financing Table	Unit disagreement with data in table	The unit of measurement "US\$1,000" removed from Table 5 to reflect correct figures.
Page 24: Figure 2	Diagram in the report appears to be the same that is in the project document. The MTR process seeks to clarify whether the TOC is still valid; that is whether the assumptions and drivers that influence the project still hold. If this is the case then, then TOC diagram remains unchanged; but if there are changes, then the TOC diagram can be adjusted as a 'reconstructed TOC' and an updated diagram included as Figure 2 in the report. In this regard, Refer to guidance note sent via email; refer to Step 2, para 11 onwards (note: this was included in the guidance package ZIP file that was shared at the time when the MTR was initiated).	<p>The TOC is still valid at mid-term; the assumptions and drivers that influence the project still hold therefore no changes were made to the TOC.</p> <p>On page 22, Para 64 the sentence "<i>The assumptions and drivers that influence the project at project design still hold therefore the TOC at project design is still valid and remain unchanged</i>" is added to clarify that the TOC is unchanged at mid-term. Page 22, Para 64 now reads:</p> <p><i>"A Theory of Change (TOC) explains the process of change by outlining causal linkages in a project, i.e., its outputs, project outcomes, 'intermediate states', and long-lasting outcomes. The identified changes are mapped as a set of interrelated pathways, with each pathway showing the required outcomes in a logical relationship with respect to the others, and with a broad chronological flow. The assumptions and drivers that influence the project at project design still hold therefore the TOC at project design is still valid and remain unchanged. Overall, the TOC, as depicted in Figure 2 below, has provided a reasonable articulation of the nature of the problem at hand, the needed long-term solutions, structural barriers to the application of such solutions and solution pathways that the project should undertake. The planned objective and three outcomes are logical responses to the barriers identified."</i></p>
Page 26: Para 86	Typo; should be: 'notably'	Correction made
Page 33: Para 108	'One audit report was seen' should read instead 'One audit report was reviewed'	Correction made
Page: 33 Para 109	Report states that 'Documents such as any relevant legal agreements and proof of fund transfer were not seen or submitted'. Contracts are in Anubis (project content management system) and available to the consulting team.	<p>The review team did not have access to Anubis/was not made aware that there was access to Anubis as no log in credentials were given to the team. Legal contracts and other related documents were requested but were not seen in the google drive links containing project documents sent to the team.</p> <p>However, other methods were used for verification of information such as site visits, interviews with consultants, stakeholder questionnaires and analysis of other project reporting documents (i.e. audit report, PIRs, budgets etc. as listed in Annex III) as stated on Page 20 Para 59 & 60.</p>
Page: 34 Para	Reads 'The two extension requested...'; one	This was a typo; the correction was made.

Page Ref	Stakeholder comment	Reviewer Response
117	extension was requested (and granted)	
Page: 35 Para 131	At this stage an exit strategy may not be expected so as to suggest that there is 'presently a lack of an exit strategy'. However, the recommendation for an exit strategy in the latter stages of project implementation is definitely agreed. Suggest to rephrase.	Comment noted. Page 35 Para 131 Rephrased and now reads: <i>"A longer-term funding strategy would need to be put in place for some core funding to allow for ongoing maintenance and updating of SLM tools and technologies, as well as to meet the anticipated rising demand for training, especially after the uptake of SLM activities under the project. An exit strategy can be formulated towards the end of the project in order to facilitate continuity of project activity uptake by the beneficiaries. Providing support post project will be extremely important in securing project sustainability. There is some evidence of sustained funding of SLM interventions through Ministry funds and the assumption that financial institutions will be willing to provide credit to farmers but not at the level that would build confidence on funding predictability."</i>
Page: 34 Para 122; Page: 35 Para 123; Page: 36 Para 134; Page: 36 – comments under 'Management and Supervision' Page: 39 Para 156	UNEP accepts and underscores these critical observations for particular attention of the project team.	Comment noted and brought to the attention of the PMU, who agreed with the recommendations and would take executing action within the next reporting cycle.
Page: 45	Recommendation list needs to be discussed at earliest opportunity. UNEP is in agreement	Comment noted and brought to the attention of the PMU, who agreed with the recommendations and would take executing action within the next reporting cycle.
	Minister, Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernisation & Kalinago Upliftment – <i>"Please proceed to have MTR published. I endorse the same"</i>	Comment noted. No changes required.
	<i>Permanent Secretary Ministry of Blue and Green Economy, Agriculture and National Food Security</i> <i>"Please find comments below: As was highlighted in the report "The project has demonstrated strong performance in GIS and development of Land Use planning maps. However, areas that would benefit from further attention are better capacity building of partner agencies, increased communication and public outreach, and better championship among government agencies to ensure future sustainability". Furthermore "In alignment with the UNEP Evaluation Guidelines, the project was assessed with a minimum set of evaluation criteria grouped into the following eight (8) categories: Strategic Relevance, Quality of Project Design, Effectiveness, Financial</i>	Comments noted. No changes required.

Page Ref	Stakeholder comment	Reviewer Response
	<p><i>Management, Efficiency, Monitoring and Reporting, Sustainability, factors affecting performance and cross-cutting issues". Based on the findings from this MTR the project proves that performance is Moderately Satisfactory.</i></p> <p><i>"The review team was unable to receive feedback from government stakeholders. Due to cabinet meetings, government officials were unavailable, and interviews could not be facilitated. However, feedback was not received after attempts to contact them via telephone and email. Therefore, the MTR does not include feedback from key government representatives".</i></p> <p><i>Key findings suggest that</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Availability of Outputs is rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory. Overall, the project has achieved approximately 52% of the expected output.</i> <i>2. Achievements of project outcomes is rated as Moderately Satisfactory. The MTR verified that 61% of the activities related to achieving the project outcomes are completed.</i> <i>3. Achievement of likelihood of impact is rated as Moderately Likely. The project's intended achievement of outcomes has not made substantial progress, but many are on course to be delivered during the project's lifetime.</i> <i>4. Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures is Satisfactory; Completeness of Financial Information is Moderately Unsatisfactory; Communication between finance and project management staff is Satisfactory.</i> <i>5. Efficiency is Moderately Unsatisfactory.</i> <p><i>In conclusion the report highlighted that this project has a high degree of relevance, and this made gaining stakeholder support and establishing partnerships easier. The review team's main conclusion is that this was a well formulated project with clear alignment to national priorities, to UNEP country program, and to GEF focal area – hence highly relevant. The design process allowed for the potential of broad participation of stakeholders and country ownership. The project's sustainability and overall SLM efforts in the country may continue to be at risk unless there is certainty and predictability of funding underpinned by enabling national policies and regulatory instruments to broaden participation of actors and ensure the continued uptake of SLM practices."</i></p>	

ANNEX II. PEOPLE CONSULTED DURING THE REVIEW

Table 11: People consulted during the Review

Organisation	Name	Position	Gender
PISLM	Mr. Calvin James	Executive Director	Males
PISLM	Mr. Lakeram Singh	Technical Officer	Males
PISLM	Mrs. Glenda Joseph	Project Assistant	Female
PISLM	Ms. Alison Alfred	National Project Coordinator	Female
UNEP	Dr. Christopher Cox	UNEP Task Manager	Male
UNEP	Mrs. Gloritzel Frangakis Cano	Team Member	Female
IICA	Mr. Kent Coipel	Technical Specialist	Male
	Dr. Davidson Lloyd	Consultant – Watershed	Male
	Mr. Errol Emanuel	Consultant – Certification	Male
	Mr. Bernard Nation	Consultant – Certification	Male
	Ms. Danielle Edwards	Consultant – Legal	Female
	Ms. Ayodele Andrews	Consultant - Communications	Female
MOA	Mr. Asha	Extension Officer	Male
	Mr. Fitzroy Llyod	Farmer	Male
	Mr. Dylan Williams	Farmer	Male
	Mr. Claxton Shillingford	Farmer	Male
	Mr. Mervin Thomas	Farmer	Male
	Mr. Mathias Bruno	Farmer	Male
	Mr. Brian Timothy	Farmer	Male
	Mr. Adrien Bannis	Farmer	Male
	Mr. Amos Wiltshire	Farmer	Male
	Ms. Karen Darroux	Farmer	Female
	Mr. David Howe	Farmer	Male
	Ms. Julietta Richards	Farmer	Female
	Ms. Dianne Joseph	Farmer	Female
	Mr. Oscar Graham	Farmer	Male
	Ms. Shirley George	Farmer	Female
	Ms. Lima Henry	Farmer	Female
	Mr. Morris Dupigny	Farmer	Male
	Ms. Hilary Mason	Farmer	Female
	Mr. Ruth Prevost	Farmer	Male

ANNEX III. KEY DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Project planning and reporting documents

- Project Inception Workshop Report
- PIR 2020 & 2021
- Annual Work Plans
- Progress Reports
 - July – December 2018
 - January – June 2019
 - July – December 2019
 - January – June 2020
 - July – December 2020
- Minutes of Meetings
 - SLM Project Launch Report (8/10/2018)
 - Launching of IICA Component (24/09/2020)
 - Joint PSC Meeting (27/03/2020)
 - Joint Technical working group (27/05/2020 & 17/11/2021)
- Budgets
 - Budget accepted on 11/08/2021
 - #1 Rephasal end 2018 Budget Revision
 - #2 Budget Revision
 - #3 Rephasal end 2019 Budget Revision
 - #4 Rephasal end 2020 Budget Revision
- Periodic Expenditure Report (Summary)
 - Period: 03/07/2018 – 30/09/2018
 - Period: 01/10/2018 – 31/12/2018
 - Period: 01/01/2019 – 31/03/2019
 - Period: 01/04/2019 – 30/06/2019
 - Period: 01/07/2019 – 30/09/2019
 - Period: 01/10/2019 – 31/12/2019
 - Period: 01/01/2020 – 31/03/2020
 - Period: 01/04/2020 – 30/06/2020
 - Period: 01/07/2020 – 30/09/2020
 - Period: 01/10/2020 – 31/12/2020
 - Period: 01/01/2021 – 31/03/2021
 - Period: 01/04/2021 – 30/06/2021
- Audited Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 December 2019 and Management Letter.
- Work plans & revisions
 - 2018 – 2019 (Work plan as at 31/08/2019)
 - 2020 (Work plan as at 03/06/2020)

o 2021 – 2023 Revised Work plan

- IICA Status Report Dec 2020 & May 2021
- Project Supervision Plan
- UNEP-GEF Biodiversity Unit – Project Implementation Review Mission – 2019

Reference documents

- Project Document
- Mid Term Review TOR
- UNEP/GEF Evaluation Tools, Templates and Guidance Notes
- GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy 2019
- GEF Policy on Monitoring 2019
- 8th UNRCCA IP12
- UNEP’s Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results
- UNEP/GEF MTR Tools
- UNEP MTS 2018 – 2021
- UNEP Biennial PoW 2018 – 2019
- Sustainable Land Management Financing in the GEF – A primer for the sixth GEF Replenishment Phase (GEF- 6)
- Summary of the Negotiations of the Sixth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund

ANNEX IV. PROJECT BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

Table 12: Project Funding Sources

Funding source	Planned funding	% of planned funding	Secured funding	% of secured funding
All figures as USD				
Cash				
Funds from the Environment Fund				
Funds from the Regular Budget				
Extra-budgetary funding (listed per donor):				
Sub-total: Cash contributions				
In-kind				
Environment Fund staff-post costs				
Regular Budget staff-post costs				
Extra-budgetary funding for staff-posts (listed per donor)				
Sub-total: In-kind contributions				
Co-financing*				
Co-financing cash contribution	13,213,654.00	87%	1,073,119.92	8%
Co-financing in-kind contribution	200,345.00	1%	200,345.00	1%
Sub-total: Co-financing contributions	13,413,999.00		1,273,464.92	
Total	13,413,999.00		1,273,464.92	9%

*Funding from a donor to a partner which is not received into UNEP accounts, but is used by a UNEP partner or collaborating centre to deliver the results in a UNEP – approved project.

I. Table 13: Expenditure by Outcome/Output

Component/sub-component/output All figures as USD	Estimated cost at design		Actual Cost/ expenditure
	GEF	Co-Financing	
Component 1 / Outcome 1.1	\$250,000	\$2,400,000	\$167,067.45
Component 1 / Outcome 1.2	\$501,484	\$6,713,999	\$109,067.50
Component 2 / Outcome 2.1	\$1,025,000	\$4,300,000	\$174,400.00
TOTAL	\$1,776,484	\$13,413,999	\$450,534.95

ANNEX V. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Table 14: Financial Management

Financial management components:		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
1. Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures:		S	
Any evidence that indicates shortcomings in the project's adherence ⁸ to UNEP or donor policies, procedures or rules		No	Reporting from the PMU generally followed UNEP Policies and Procedures. Notable Delays in submissions of reports.
2. Completeness of project financial information⁹:			
Provision of key documents to the reviewer (based on the responses to A-H below)		MU	
A.	Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines)	Yes	General information related to co-financing and project cost at design on component & outcome level.
B.	Revisions to the budget	Yes	Initial project budget provided with relevant revisions
C.	All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA)	No	No legal agreements or documents submitted to the project team
D.	Proof of fund transfers	No	No evidence of fund transfers submitted
E.	Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind)	Yes	Proof of co-financing was limited to letters found in Annex K of the ProDoc
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	Expenditure reports provided. Limited/no information of expenditure on component/output level seen.
G.	Copies of any completed audits and management responses (<i>where applicable</i>)	Yes	One audit report submitted (2019). No evidence of PMU response
H.	Any other financial information that was required for this project (list):	No	
3. Communication between finance and project management staff		MS	
Project Manager and/or Task Manager's level of awareness of the project's financial status.		S	
Fund Management Officer's knowledge of project progress/status when disbursements are done.		S	
Level of addressing and resolving financial management issues among Fund Management Officer and Project Manager/Task Manager.		S	
Contact/communication between by Fund Management Officer, Project Manager/Task Manager during the preparation of financial and progress reports.		MS	

⁸ If the review raises concerns over adherence with policies or standard procedures, a recommendation maybe given to cover the topic in an upcoming audit, or similar financial oversight exercise.

⁹ See also document 'Criterion Rating Description' for reference

Project Manager, Task Manager and Fund Management Officer responsiveness to financial requests during the review process	MS	
Overall rating		

ANNEX VI. BRIEF CV OF THE REVIEWER

Name: Right Angle Business Solutions

Right Angle Business Solutions, contracted as an independent reviewer, conducted the Mid-Term Review of the Sustainable Land Management in the Commonwealth of Dominica project. Right Angle Business Solutions is a regional consultancy firm with headquarters located in Trinidad and Tobago, and sub office in St. Lucia. The company's expertise ranges from project development and design, implementation, review and evaluations, audits, management consultancy, project management, and impact assessments/surveys.

SLMD Review team

- Colin Diaz – Team Lead
- Kedisha Diaz – Supporting Team Lead
- Darleen Modeste – Reviewer/Researcher
- Rajiv Mahase – Investigator/Technical personnel
- Walter Francis – Investigator

Review team key specialties and capabilities cover:

- Project Management and Business Consultancy
- Financial Management,
- Sustainable Land Management,
- GIS
- Procurement

ANNEX VII. REVIEW TORS (WITHOUT ANNEXES)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Mid-Term Review of the UNEP/GEF project
Sustainable Land Management
in the Commonwealth of Dominica
and GEF ID: 9667**

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1. Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary

UNEP Sub-programme:	Healthy and Productive Ecosystems	UNEP Division/Branch:	Ecosystems Division
Expected Accomplishment(s):	<p>EA (a) The health and productivity of Terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring and cross-sector collaboration frameworks at the national level</p> <p>EA (b) Policymakers in the public and private sectors test the inclusion of the health and productivity of ecosystems in economic decision-making</p>	Programme of Work Output(s):	Biennia: 2018-19 Sub-programme 3: Healthy and productive ecosystems
SDG(s) and indicator(s)	SDG 1, Targets 1.1, 1.2; SDG 11, Targets 11.A, 11.B; SDG 12, Targets 12.2, 12.4; SDG 15, Targets 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4; SDG 14, Targets 14.1		
GEF Core Indicator Targets (identify these for projects approved prior to GEF-7)	Core Indicator 4.3: Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems; Target: 2,000 hectares of agricultural land and 4,000 hectares of restored watersheds		
Dates of previous project phases:	n/a	Status of future project phases:	

FROM THE PROJECT'S PIR REPORT (use latest version) :

Project Title: Sustainable Land Management in the Commonwealth of Dominica

Executing Agency: PISLM Support Office

Project partners:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernisation and Kalinago Upliftment • Ministry of Blue & Green Economy, Agriculture & National Food • IICA
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Geographical Scope:	National
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GEF project ID:	9667	IMIS number*1:	GFL-11207-14AC0003-SB-010162
Focal Area(s):	Land Degradation	GEF OP #:	
GEF Strategic Priority/Objective:	LD-1 Program 1 LD-2 Program 3 LD-3 Program 4	GEF approval date*:	18 April 2018
UNEP approval date:	9 July 2018	Date of first disbursement*:	9 August 2018
Actual start date²:	8 October 2018	Planned duration:	36 months
Intended completion date*:	July 2021	Actual or Expected completion date:	July 2023
Project Type:	Mid-size Project	GEF Allocation*:	USD 1,776,484
PPG GEF cost*:		PPG co-financing*:	
Expected MSP/FSP Co-financing*:	USD 13,413,999	Total Cost*:	USD 15,190,483
Mid-term Review/eval. (planned date):	June 2021	Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	December 2023
Mid-term Review/eval. (actual date):	January 2022	No. of revisions*:	n/a
Date of last Steering Committee meeting:	20 December 2021	Date of last Revision*:	n/a
Disbursement as of 30 June 2021*:	USD 673,226.69	Date of planned financial closure*:	31 July 2023
Date of planned completion³*:	July 2023	Actual expenditures reported as of 30 June 2021:	USD 450,534.95
Total co-financing realized as of 30 June 2021	USD 1,273,464.92	Actual expenditures entered in IMIS as of 31 December [year]*:	???
Leveraged financing:⁵			

2. Project Rationale

Dominica is particularly vulnerable to land degradation from deforestation and unsustainable agricultural practices because of its topography and its location in the hurricane belt of the Caribbean; more than even most of its neighbours, Dominica has suffered repeated extreme weather events (hurricanes, flooding, droughts) that greatly magnify land degradation processes. For these reasons, the Government of Dominica is determined to develop new, sustainable approaches to land management of agricultural lands and watersheds that will reduce land degradation processes and increase resilience to the impacts of severe weather events while also ensuring that the country's agricultural sector can continue to ensure food security and provide viable livelihoods for the large part of the population engaged in agricultural production. The project therefore seeks the establishment of landscape level planning, information and coordination frameworks to support sustainable agriculture and sustainable watershed management in Dominica.

3. Project Results Framework

Component 1: Enabling 'whole island' landscape framework to plan, monitor and adapt land management

Output 1.1.1 – Four Parish land-use plans designed, with associated guidelines of implementation

Output 1.1.2 - Land Information decision support system is available for use in land use planning, assessment of environmental conditions and trends, and policy development

Output 1.1.3 - Multi-sector platform for land use planning developed

Output 1.1.4 - At least one Protocol established for monitoring and evaluation of SLM practices

Output 1.2.1 - One Strategic Training plan developed and implemented (Beneficiaries: institutions with sectorial responsibilities for development and conservation, regulatory authorities, relevant CSOs, community partners; indicators: # of training sessions, # of beneficiaries, increased capacity score from 21 to 32):

Output 1.2.2 - At least two knowledge publications on SLM practices disseminated within Dominica and in the sub-region

Component 2: Reducing the effects of land degradation on ecosystem services through sustainable land management

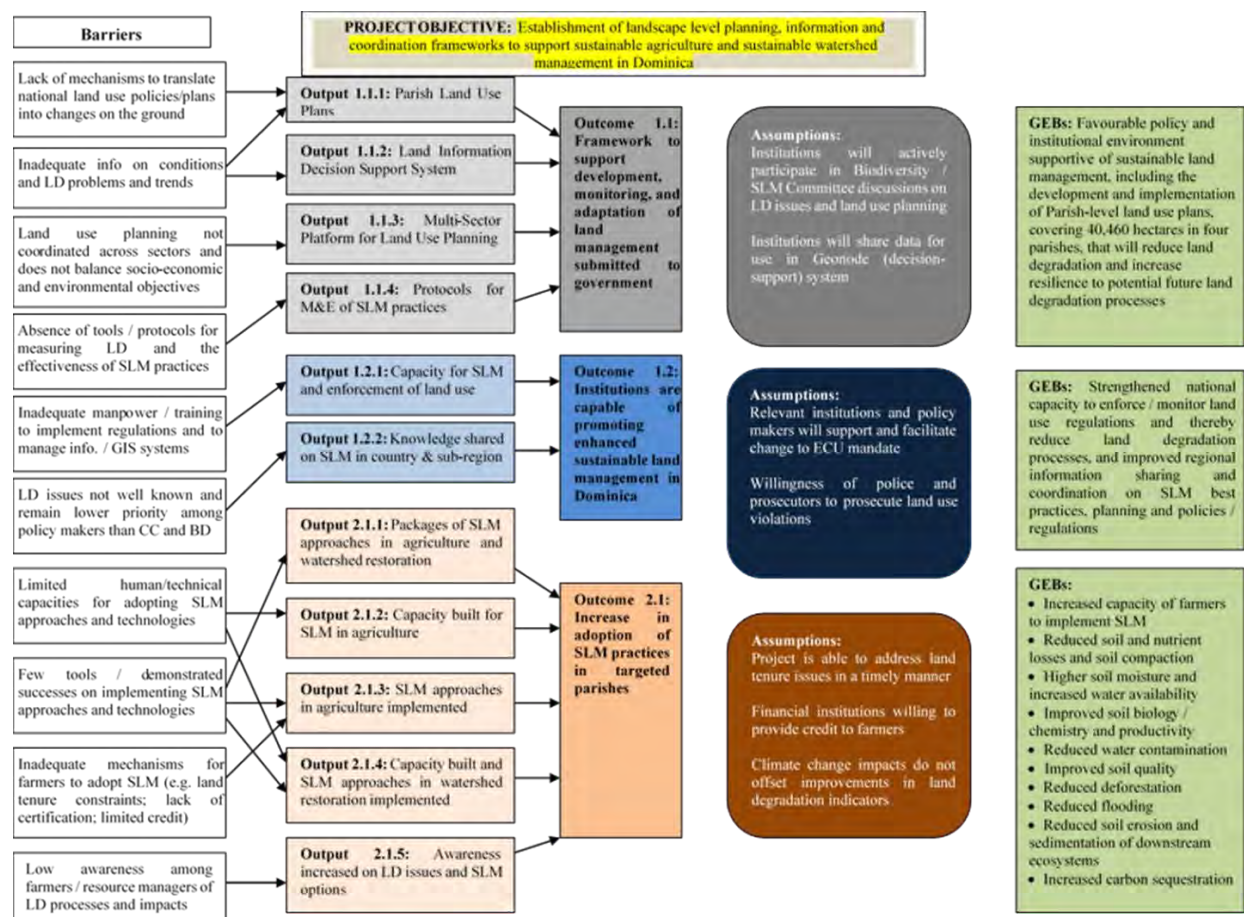
Output 2.1.1 - Package of effective SLM approaches & technologies identified in collaboration with relevant national institutions

Output 2.1.2 - At least 1,500 Farmers and local communities with strengthened capacities to implement SLM approaches & technologies in agriculture

Output 2.1.3 - SLM approaches & technologies implemented in 4 target parishes, and lessons learned consolidated for farmers of at least 40 farms

Output 2.1.4 - Degraded watersheds in at least 8 villages rehabilitated with native vegetation, based on site specific rehabilitation plans developed in collaboration with local communities

Output 2.1.5 - Increased public understanding and awareness of LD issues and associated SLM options, and increased support for land use regulations



4. Executing Arrangements

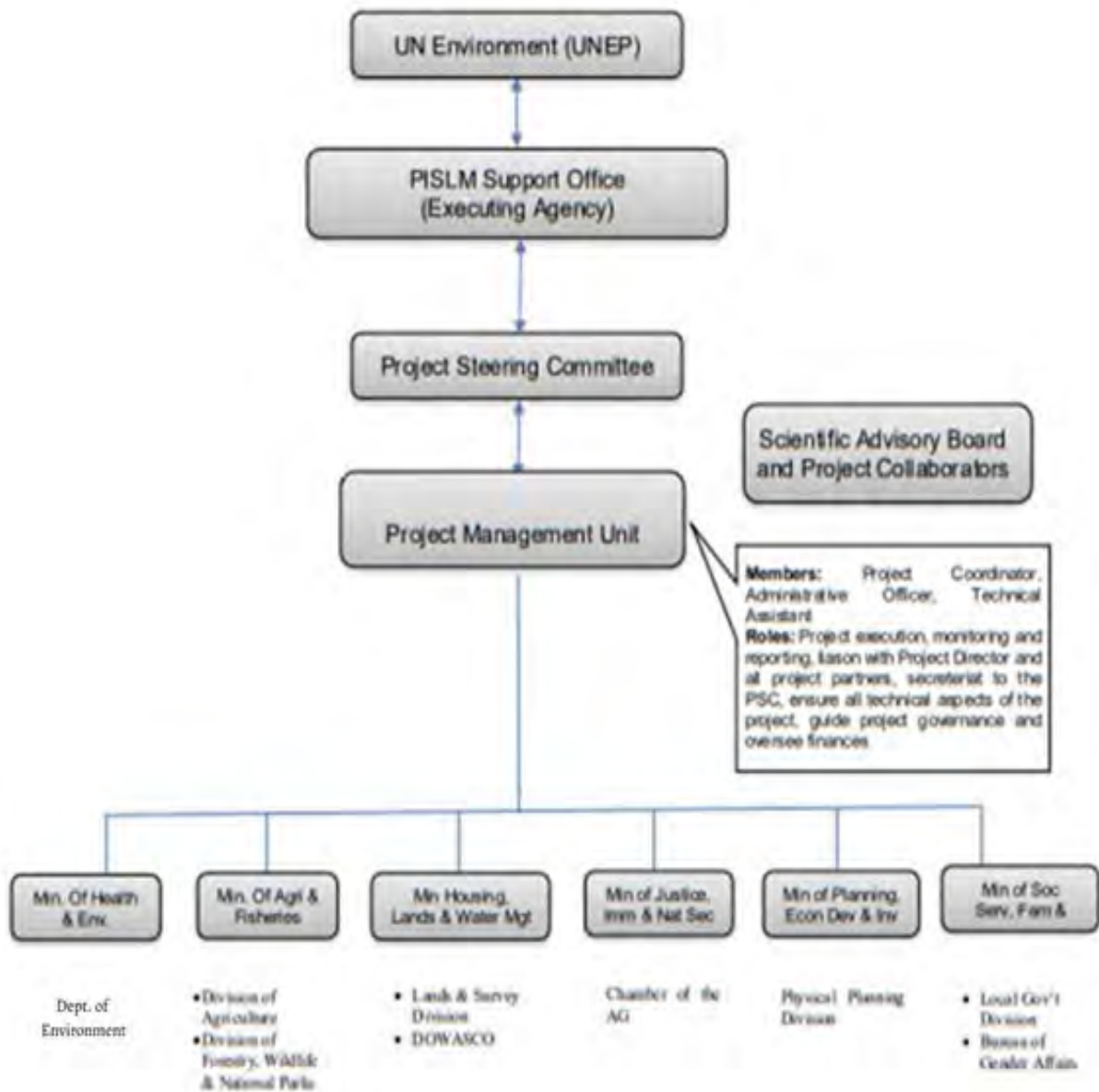
A Project Management Unit (PMU) will be established within the country. The PMU will be led by a National Project Coordinator (NPC) and supported by an Administrative Officer and a Technical Assistant, who will be contracted through a selection process by PISLM, and paid directly from UNEP-GEF funds. The NPC will have specific responsibility for project Outputs through day-to-day management of project implementation. The NPC will also:

- Ensure the logistical, administrative and financial effectiveness of the Executing Agency in fulfilling its roles set out above.
- Provide monitoring, supervision and guidance to the technical teams based in the project areas.
- Promote collaboration and coordination with PISLM, UNEP, other project executing agencies and other project stakeholders, accordingly.

The PMU's roles will be to implement project outputs, conduct monitoring and reporting, liaise with project partners, act as the Secretariat to the Steering Committee, and ensure project execution and all technical aspects of project implementation. To ensure proper coordination of the project, the Government of Dominica will appoint a Project Director who will facilitate as necessary the work of PMU and project execution with the partners and will ensure that the project fits into the national development agenda. The NPC and the Project Director will discuss and agree on the project technical and financial reports before they are sent to UNEP.

The PSC oversees the project oversight and overall guidance. It will meet at least on a semi-annual basis or according to the project's needs. Participation in PSC meetings will be possible also via video link or Skype, and decisions and consultations might also take place in email exchange form.

The main oversight body for the project is the Project Steering Committee, comprised of the Implementing Agency, the Executing Agency, the beneficiary Ministry of Health and Environment, and representatives of all main partners and stakeholder groups. Further monitoring and evaluation procedures of the project, including regular reporting duties, are detailed in Section C of the CEO Endorsement Request. The Executing Agency can undertake field visits at any stage and is tasked to support the mid-term review and terminal evaluation and auditing of the project.



5. Project Cost and Financing

Focal Area Objectives / Programs	Focal Area Outcomes	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
			GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
LD-1 Program 1	Outcome 1.1: Improved agricultural, rangeland and pastoral management	GEFT F	250,000	2,400,000
LD-2 Program 3	Outcome 2.2: Improved forest management and/or restoration	GEFT F	501,484	6,713,999
LD-3 Program 4	Outcome 3.2: Integrated landscape management practices adopted by local communities based on gender sensitive needs	GEFT F	1,025,000	4,300,000
Total project costs			1,776,484	13,413,999

Project Components	(in \$)	
	GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
1. Enabling 'whole island' landscape framework to plan, monitor and adapt land management	492,500	2,283,589
2. Reducing the effects of land degradation on ecosystem services through sustainable land management	1,018,685	10,660,065
M&E	107,600	20,000
Project Management Cost	157,699	450,345
Total Project Cost	1,776,484	13,413,999

6. Implementation Issues

- The project encountered a 6-month delay (approximately) at the beginning of the implementation of activities due to administrative challenges resulting from the change in structure of the relevant Ministry which saw the dissolution of the ECU.
- COVID 19 Global Pandemic: The situation presented a massive challenge to project implementation as the Government of Dominica enforced a countrywide lockdown order [Date]. Given the restriction on physical assemblies, innovation with respect to the conduct of virtual meetings and trainings was needed. Deliverables not requiring field travels were accomplished via virtual means and as a result the project has focused on non-fieldwork and travel related activities during this review period

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

7. Objective of the Review

In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy⁶ and the UNEP Programme Manual⁷, the Mid-Term Review is undertaken approximately half-way through project implementation to analyze whether the project is

on-track, what problems or challenges the project is encountering, and what corrective actions are required. The MTR will assess project performance to date (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine the likelihood of the project achieving its intended outcomes and supporting their sustainability.

8. Key Review Principles

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

As this Review is being undertaken at the mid-point of project implementation, particular attention will be given to identifying implementation challenges and risks to achieving the expected project objectives and sustainability, which will support potential course correction. Questions to be considered include:

- Does the TOC properly reflect the project's intended change process?
- Is the stakeholder analysis still appropriate and adequate to support the project's ambitions?
- Are results statements in keeping with both UNEP and GEF definitions (e.g. outcomes are expressed as the uptake or use of outputs)
- Are roles and responsibilities commonly understood and playing out effectively?
- Is there an effective monitoring mechanism for the project's implementation (this is separate from, and supports, reporting in the annual PIR)?
- Is the rate of expenditure appropriate for the mid-point?
- Have plans for inclusivity (human rights, gender considerations, disability inclusion etc) been implemented as planned, or does more need to be done?
- Are safeguard identification and mitigation plans being monitored and steps taken to minimize negative effects?
- Is there an exit strategy in place and are the elements needed for the project's benefits to be sustained after the project end, being incorporated in the project implementation?
- Have recommendations from previous performance assessments (where they exist) been appropriately addressed?
- (Where relevant) What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?

A Mid-Term Review is a *formative assessment*, which requires that the consultants go beyond the assessment of "what" the project performance is and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of "why" the performance is as it is. (i.e., what is contributing to the achievement of the project's results). This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project at the mid-point and the recommendations that support adaptive management for the remainder of the project.

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 proper 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.

A key aim of the Mid-Term Review is to encourage reflection and learning by UNEP staff, the Executing Agency and key project stakeholders. The Review Consultant should consider how reflection and learning can be promoted, both through the review process and in the communication of review findings and key lessons. Clear and concise writing is required on all review deliverables. There may be several intended audiences, each with different interests and needs regarding the report. The Task Manager will plan with the Review Consultant which audiences to target and the easiest and most effective way to communicate the key review findings and lessons to them. This may include some or all of the following: a webinar, conference calls with relevant stakeholders, the preparation of a review brief or interactive presentation. Draft and final versions of the Main Review Report will be shared with key stakeholders by the Task Manager and a copy of the final version will be submitted to the UNEP Evaluation Office, who will provide an assessment of the quality of the Review Report based on a standard UNEP template.

9. Key Strategic Questions

In addition to the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 10 below, the Review 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. Also included are five questions that are required when reporting in the GEF Portal and these must be addressed in the MTR.

- To what extent is the project following a robust theory of change and capacity building with appropriately formulated outputs, direct outcomes, intermediate states and long-term results?
- What revisions are required to ensure that implementation can be effectively evaluated at the end the project? This includes consideration of whether the outcome indicators are verifiable and appropriate for recording progress towards the achievement of the development objectives?
- What level of progress has been made towards the mid-term targets in the project results framework?

Address the questions required for the GEF Portal in the appropriate parts of the report and provide a **summary of the findings in the Conclusions section of the report:**

a) Under Monitoring and Reporting/Monitoring of Project Implementation:

What is the performance at the project's mid-point against Core Indicator Targets? *(For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided).*

b) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation:

What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program? *(This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval)*

c) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality:

What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding gender-responsive measures and any intermediate gender result areas? *(This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent)*

d) d)Under Factors Affecting Performance/Environmental and Social Safeguards:

What has been the experience at the project's mid-point against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval? The risk classifications reported in the latest PIR report should be verified and any measures 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)*

a) e) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Communication and Public Awareness:

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

10. Evaluation Criteria

All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Sections A-G 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 (see notes in Annex 1) to support the determination of an overall project rating.

A. *Strategic Relevance*

The Review will assess the extent to which the activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor. The Review 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, as well as each country's UNDAF. 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:

i. Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy⁸ (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities

The Review 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. UNEP strategic priorities include the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building⁹ (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.

ii. Alignment to Donor/Partner Strategic Priorities

Donor strategic priorities will vary across interventions. The Review will assess the extent to which the project is suited to, or responding to, donor priorities. In some cases, alignment with donor priorities may be a fundamental part of project design and grant approval processes while in others, for example, instances of 'softly-earmarked' funding, such alignment may be more of an assumption that should be assessed.

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

The Review will assess the alignment of the project with global priorities such as the SDGs and Agenda 2030. 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 will be considered. Examples may include: UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) or, national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies or Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) plans or regional agreements etc. Within this section consideration will be given to whether the needs of all beneficiary groups are being met and reflects the current policy priority to leave no-one behind.

iv. Complementarity with Existing Interventions/Coherence

An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization¹¹, took account of ongoing and planned initiatives (under the same sub-programme, other UNEP-programmes or being implemented by other agencies within the same country, sector or institution) that address similar needs of the same target groups. The Review 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 work within UNDAFs or One UN programming. Linkages with other interventions should be described and instances where UNEP's comparative advantage has been particularly well applied should be highlighted.

B. Effectiveness

The Review will assess effectiveness across three dimensions: delivery of outputs, achievement of project outcomes and, where proper and feasible, likelihood of impact. At the mid-point more emphasis is placed on performance at the output and outcome levels, but observations about likelihood of impact may be helpful for course correction or adjusting the emphasis of the project's efforts.

i. Availability of Outputs

The Review will assess the project's success in producing the programmed outputs and achieving targets and 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, a table should be provided showing the original formulation and the amended version for transparency. The delivery of outputs will be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality, and the assessment will consider their usefulness and the timeliness of their provision. It is noted that emphasis is placed on the performance of those outputs that are most important to achieve outcomes. The Review will briefly explain the reasons behind the success or shortcomings of the project in delivering its programmed outputs and meeting expected quality standards.

ii. Achievement of Project Outcomes

The achievement of project outcomes is assessed as performance against the project outcomes defined in the Project Results Framework¹⁴. These are outcomes that are intended to be achieved by the end of the project timeframe and within the project's resource envelope. Emphasis is placed on the achievement of project outcomes that are most important for attaining intermediate states. As with outputs, a table can be used where substantive amendments to the formulation of project outcomes is necessary to make them consistent with UNEP guidelines. Where possible, the Review should report evidence of attribution, contribution or credible association between UNEP's intervention and the project outcomes.

iii. Likelihood of Impact

Based on the articulation of longer-term effects as defined in the project objective or stated intentions, the Review will, where possible, assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts becoming a reality.

The Review will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute, to unintended negative effects (e.g., will vulnerable groups such as those living with disabilities and/or women and children, be disproportionately affected by the project?). 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 Safeguards¹⁵. The Review will consider the extent to which the project is playing a catalytic role or is promoting longer-term scaling up and/or replication

C. Financial Management

Under financial management the Mid-Term Review will assess: a) whether the rate of spend is consistent with the project's length of implementation to-date, the agreed workplan and the delivery of outputs and b) whether financial reporting and/or auditing requirements are being met consistently and to adequate standards by all parties. This includes an assessment of whether UNEP's financial management policies and the GEF's fiduciary standards are being met. Any financial management issues that are affecting the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance will be highlighted.

D. Efficiency

The Review will assess the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution. Focusing on the translation of inputs into outputs, cost-effectiveness is the extent to which an intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its results at the lowest possible cost. Timeliness refers to whether planned activities were delivered according to expected timeframes as well as whether events were sequenced efficiently. The Review will describe any cost or time-saving measures put in place to maximize results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe and consider whether the project is being implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternative interventions or approaches. The Review will also assess ways in which potential project extensions can be avoided through stronger project management.

E. Monitoring and Reporting

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

i. Monitoring of Project Implementation

Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART17 results towards the achievement of the project's outputs and outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender, marginalisation or vulnerability, including those living with disabilities. The Review will assess the use and quality of the monitoring plan. 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. This assessment will include consideration of whether the project gathered relevant and good quality baseline data that is accurately and appropriately documented. The Review will assess whether the monitoring system is operational and facilitates the timely tracking of results and progress towards project milestones and targets throughout the project implementation period. It will also consider the quality of the information generated by the monitoring system during project implementation and how it was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensure sustainability. The Review should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring are being used to support this activity.

The performance at the project's mid-point against Core Indicator Targets should be reviewed. For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided.

ii. Project Reporting

Projects funded by GEF have requirements with regard to verifying documentation and reporting (i.e. the Project Implementation Reviews, Tracking Tool and CEO Endorsement template¹⁸), which will be made available by the Task Manager. The Review will assess the extent to which both UNEP and GEF reporting commitments have been fulfilled. Where corrective action is indicated in the annual Project Implementation Review reports (e.g., as an identified risk), the Review Consultant will record whether this action has been taken.

F. Sustainability

Sustainability is understood as the probability of the benefits associated with the project outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the intervention. The Review will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of benefits at the outcome level. Some factors of sustainability may be embedded in the project design

and implementation approaches while others may be contextual circumstances 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.

The Review will ascertain that the project has put in place an appropriate exit strategy and measures to mitigate risks to sustainability. The Review Consultant will consider: a) the level of ownership, interest and commitment among government and other stakeholders to take the project achievements forwards, b) the extent to which project outcomes are dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained and c) the extent to which the sustainability of project outcomes 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.

I. Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

These factors are rated in the ratings table but can be discussed 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)

i. Preparation and Readiness

This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project. The Review will assess whether appropriate measures were taken to either address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. The Review 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.

ii. Quality of Project Implementation and Execution

Specifically, for GEF funded projects, this factor refers separately to the performance of the Executing Agency and the technical backstopping and supervision provided by UNEP, as the Implementing Agency.

The Review 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.); maintaining project relevance within changing external and strategic contexts; communication and collaboration with UNEP colleagues; risk management; use of problem-solving; project adaptation and overall project execution. Evidence of adaptive project management should be highlighted.

iii. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

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. 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.

The progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program should be reviewed. This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval.

iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity

The Review will ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on the human rights-based approach (HRBA) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Within this human rights context the Review will assess to what extent the intervention adheres to UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment²⁰.

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

The progress, challenges, and outcomes regarding gender-responsive measures and any intermediate gender result areas should be reviewed. 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.

v. Environmental and Social Safeguards

UNEP projects address environmental and social safeguards primarily through the process of environmental and social screening, risk assessment and management (avoidance or mitigation) of potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with project and programme activities. The evaluation will confirm whether UNEP requirements²¹ were met to: screen proposed projects for any safeguarding issues; conduct sound environmental and social risk assessments; identify and avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, mitigate, environmental, social and economic risks; apply appropriate environmental and social measures to minimize any potential risks and harm to intended beneficiaries and report on the implementation of safeguard management measures taken.

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

The Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval should be reviewed, the risk classifications verified and any measures taken to address identified risks assessed. Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant should be shared with the Task Manager.

vi. Country Ownership and Driven-ness

The Review will assess the quality and degree of engagement of government / public sector agencies in the project. The Review will consider the involvement not only of those directly involved in project execution and those participating in technical or leadership groups, but also those official representatives whose cooperation is needed for change to be embedded in their respective institutions and offices. 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 gender and marginalised groups.

vii. Communication and Public Awareness

The Review will assess the effectiveness of a) communication of learning and experience sharing between project partners and interested groups arising from the project during its life and b) public awareness activities that were undertaken during the implementation of the project to influence attitudes or shape behaviour among wider communities and civil society at large. The Review should consider whether existing communication channels and networks were used effectively, including

meeting the differentiated needs of gender or marginalised groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project the Review will comment on the sustainability of the communication channel under either socio-political, institutional or financial sustainability, as appropriate.

The progress, challenges and outcomes regarding the implementation of the project's Knowledge Management Approach, including Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions should be reviewed. This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval.

Section 3. REVIEW APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

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

Where applicable, the Review Consultant should 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 Review will be based on the following:

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

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

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

- UNEP Task Manager (TM) and team members;
- Project Manager (PM) and team members;
- UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO);
- Representatives from civil society and specialist groups:

(c) **Field visits:** One field visit to Dominica to meet with farmers who have been impacted by the project.

(d) **Other data collection tools:** If needed, to be decided by the Review Consultant at the inception phase

11. Review Deliverables and Review Procedures

The Review Consultant will prepare:

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

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

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

VI. The Review Consultant

For this review, the work will be conducted by one consultant who will work under the overall responsibility of the Project Coordinator (Alison Alfred) the PISLM Executive Director (Calvin James) in consultation with the Task Manager Christopher Cox and Team Assistant Gloritzel Frangakis, the Portfolio Manager Johan Robinson and the Fund Management Officer, Michael Atogoh. The consultant will liaise with the Task Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the Review. It is, however, the consultants' responsibility to arrange for their travel, visa, obtain documentary evidence, plan meetings with stakeholders, organize online surveys, and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The PMU will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the review as efficiently and independently as possible.

The Review Consultant will be hired over a period of three (3) months [June 2021 to August 2021] and should have the following: a university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other related fields; a minimum of 10 years of technical / evaluation experience is required, preferably to include elaboration and design of projects, evaluating large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; a broad understanding of multi-sectorial projects or initiatives analysis and evaluation, including multilateral funding or support agencies. 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's system and specifically the work of UNEP is an added advantage. The work will be home-based and expected to be facilitated by telecommuting, considering COVID19 protocols.

The Review Consultant will be responsible, in close consultation with the Project Manager, supported by the Task Manager, for overall management of the review and timely delivery of its outputs, described above in Section 11 Evaluation Deliverables, above. The Review Consultant will ensure that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered.

13. Schedule of the Review

The table below presents the tentative schedule for the Review.

VII. Table 3. Tentative schedule for the Review

Milestone	Tentative Dates of Completion
Kick-off meeting (via Skype, Zoom, etc.)	15 th June, 2021
Inception Report	15 th December, 2021
Data collection and analysis, desk-based interviews and surveys	25 th February, 2022
Draft Report shared with UN Environment Task Manager and Project Team	8 th April, 2022
Draft Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	22 nd April, 2022
Final Report	13 th May, 2022

14. Contractual Arrangements

Review Consultants will be selected and recruited by the PISLM under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) on a “fees only” basis (see below). By signing the service contract with PISLM, 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 Task Manager of expected key deliverables. The schedule of payment is as follows:

Schedule of Payment for the Consultant:

Deliverable	Percentage Payment
Approved Inception Report (<i>as per annex document 3</i>)	30%
Approved Draft Main Evaluation Report (<i>as per annex document 4</i>)	30%
Approved Final Main Evaluation Report	40%

Fees only contracts:

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

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

If the consultant(s) fail to submit a satisfactory final product to the Task Manager in a timely manner, i.e. before the end date of their contract, PISLM 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 PISLM to bring the report up to standard or completion.

ANNEX VIII. PROJECT DESIGN QUALITY

Table 15: PDQ

A.	Operating Context		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the review design <i>(e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)</i>	Section Rating (see footnote 2) - Highly Unfavourable to Highly Favourable
1	Does the project document identify any unusually challenging operational factors that are likely to negatively affect project performance?	i)Ongoing/high likelihood of conflict?	NO		Criterion is rated for whether the operational factors have been assessed, not on the favourability of the operating context.
		ii)Ongoing/high likelihood of natural disaster?	YES		
		iii)Ongoing/high likelihood of change in national government?	YES		
B.	Project Preparation		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the review design <i>(e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)</i>	Section Rating
2	Does the project document entail clear and adequate situation analyses?		YES		
3	Does the project document include a clear and adequate stakeholder analysis, including by gender/minority groupings		YES		

	or indigenous peoples?				
4	<i>If yes to Q4: Does the project document provide a description of stakeholder consultation during project design process? (If yes, were any key groups overlooked: government, private sector, civil society and those who will potentially be negatively affected)</i>		NO		
5	Does the project document identify concerns with respect to human rights, including in relation to differentiated gender needs and sustainable development? (e.g. integrated approach to human/natural systems; gender perspectives, rights of indigenous people)	i) Sustainable development in terms of integrated approach to human/natural systems	YES		
		ii) Gender	YES		
		iii) Indigenous peoples	YES		
C.	Strategic Relevance		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the review design <i>(e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)</i>	Section Rating
6	Is the project document clear in terms of its alignment and relevance to:	i) UNEP MTS andPoW	YES		
		iii) UNEP/GEF/Donor strategic priorities (incl Bali Strategic Plan and South South Cooperation)	YES		
		ii) Regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities?	YES		

		iv) Complementarity with other interventions	YES		
D.	Intended Results and Causality		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the review design <i>(e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)</i>	Section Rating
7	Are the causal pathways from project outputs (availability of goods and services to intended beneficiaries) through outcomes (changes in stakeholder behaviour) towards impacts (long-lasting, collective change of state) clearly and convincingly described in either the lograme or the TOC? <i>(NOTE if there is no TOC in the project design documents a reconstructed TOC at Review Inception will be needed)</i>		YES		
8	Are impact drivers and assumptions clearly described for each key causal pathway?	-	YES		
9	Are the roles of key actors and stakeholders clearly described for each key causal pathway?		YES		
10	Are the outcomes realistic with respect to the timeframe and scale of the intervention?		NO		
E.	Logical Framework and Monitoring		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the review design <i>(e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key</i>	Section Rating

				<i>respondents etc)</i>	
11	Does the logical framework:	i) Capture the key elements of the Theory of Change/ intervention logic for the project?	YES		
		ii) Have appropriate and 'SMART' results at output level?	YES		
		ii) Have appropriate and 'SMART' results at outcome level?	YES		
12	Is there baseline information in relation to key performance indicators?		YES		
13	Has the desired level of achievement (targets) been specified for indicators of outputs and outcomes?		YES		
14	Are the milestones in the monitoring plan appropriate and sufficient to track progress and foster management towards outputs and outcomes?		YES		
15	Have responsibilities for monitoring activities been made clear?		YES		
16	Has a budget been allocated for monitoring project progress?		YES		
17	Is the workplan clear, adequate and realistic? <i>(eg. Adequate time between capacity building and take up etc)</i>		YES		

F.	Governance and Supervision Arrangements		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the review design <i>(e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)</i>	Section Rating
18	Is the project governance and supervision model comprehensive, clear and appropriate? <i>(Steering Committee, partner consultations etc.)</i>		YES		
19	Are roles and responsibilities within UNEP clearly defined? <i>(If there are no stated responsibilities for UNEP Regional Offices, note where Regional Offices should be consulted prior to, and during, the Review)</i>		YES		
G.	Partnerships		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the review design <i>(e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)</i>	Section Rating
20	Have the capacities of partners been adequately assessed? <i>(CHECK if partner capacity was assessed during inception/mobilisation where partners were either not known or changed after project design approval)</i>		NO		

21	Are the roles and responsibilities of external partners properly specified and appropriate to their capacities?		YES		
H.	Learning, Communication and Outreach		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the review design <i>(e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)</i>	Section Rating
22	Does the project have a clear and adequate knowledge management approach?		YES		
23	Has the project identified appropriate methods for communication with key stakeholders during the project life? <i>(If yes, do the plans build on an analysis of existing communication channels and networks used by key stakeholders?)</i>		YES		
24	Are plans in place for dissemination of results and lesson sharing at the end of the project? If yes, do they build on an analysis of existing communication channels and networks ?		NO		
I.	Financial Planning / Budgeting		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the review design <i>(e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)</i>	

25	Are the budgets / financial planning adequate at design stage? (coherence of the budget, do figures add up etc.)		YES		
26	Is the resource mobilization strategy reasonable/realistic? (<i>If it is over-ambitious it may undermine the delivery of the project outcomes or if under-ambitious may lead to repeated no cost extensions</i>)		NO		
J	Efficiency		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the review design <i>(e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)</i>	Section Rating
27	Has the project been appropriately designed in relation to the duration and/or levels of secured funding?		YES		
28	Does the project design make use of / build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency?		YES		
29	Does the project document refer to any value for money strategies (ie increasing economy, efficiency and/or cost-effectiveness)?		YES		

30	Has the project been extended beyond its original end date? <i>(If yes, explore the reasons for delays and no-cost extensions during the Review)</i>		YES		
K.	Risk identification and Social Safeguards		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the review design <i>(e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)</i>	Section Rating
31	Are risks appropriately identified in both the ToC/logic framework and the risk table? <i>(If no, include key assumptions in reconstructed TOC at Review Inception)</i>		YES		
32	Are potentially negative environmental, economic and social impacts of the project identified and is the mitigation strategy adequate? <i>(consider unintended impacts)</i>		YES		
33	Does the project have adequate mechanisms to reduce its negative environmental footprint? <i>(including in relation to project management and work implemented by UNEP partners)</i>		YES		
L.	Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic Effects		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the review design <i>(e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)</i>	Section Rating

34	Did the design address any/all of the following: socio-political, financial, institutional and environmental sustainability issues?		YES		
35	Was there a credible sustainability strategy and/or appropriate exit strategy at design stage?		YES		
36	Does the project design present strategies to promote/support scaling up, replication and/or catalytic action? (If yes, capture this feature in the reconstructed TOC at Review Inception)		YES		
M.	Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the review design <i>(e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)</i>	
37	Were there any major issues not flagged by PRC?		NO		
38	What were the main issues raised by PRC that were not addressed?				
N	UNEP Gender Marker Score	SCORE		Comments	No Rating
39	What is the Gender Marker Score applied by UNEP during project approval? (This applies for projects approved from 2017 onwards)	2A		<i>Reflections on whether the gender score appears appropriate.</i>	

	<p>0 = gender blind: Gender relevance is evident but not at all reflected in the project document.</p> <p>1 = gender partially mainstreamed: Gender is reflected in the context, implementation, logframe, or the budget.</p> <p>2a = gender well mainstreamed throughout: Gender is reflected in the context, implementation, logframe, and the budget.</p> <p>2b = targeted action on gender: (to advance gender equity): the principle purpose of the project is to advance gender equality.</p> <p>n/a = gender is not considered applicable: A gender analysis reveals that the project does not have direct interactions with, and/or impacts on, people. Therefore gender is considered not applicable.</p>				
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NOTES

- 1 For Terminal Evaluations/Reviews where a revised version of the project was approved based on a Mid-Term Evaluation/Review, then the revised project design forms the basis of this assessment. Formal revisions include those changes formally adopted following a Mid-Term Review/Evaluation; endorsed through Steering Committee meeting minutes; recorded in Project Implementation Review reports for GEF projects or those made in UNEP's Project Information Management System – PIMS/IPMR etc).
- 2

- 3 A number rating 1-6 is used for each section: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1.

CALCULATING THE OVERALL PROJECT DESIGN QUALITY SCORE

	SECTION	RATING (1-6)	WEIGHTING	TOTAL (Rating x Weighting/10)
A	Operating Context	5	0.4	0.2
B	Project Preparation	5	1.2	0.6
C	Strategic Relevance	6	0.8	0.48
D	Intended Results and Causality	4	1.6	0.64
E	Logical Framework and Monitoring	5	0.8	0.4
F	Governance and Supervision Arrangements	4	0.4	0.16
G	Partnerships	5	0.8	0.4
H	Learning, Communication and Outreach	4	0.4	0.16
I	Financial Planning / Budgeting	5	0.4	0.2
J	Efficiency	5	0.8	0.4
K	Risk identification and Social Safeguards	5	0.8	0.4
L	Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic Effects	4	1.2	0.48
M	Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps	5	0.4	0.2
		TOTAL SCORE (Sum Totals)		4.72

Satisfactory

1 (Highly Unsatisfactory)

< 1.83

1 (Highly Unsatisfactory)

< 1.83

2 (Unsatisfactory)	$\geq 1.83 < 2.66$
3 (Moderately Unsatisfactory)	$\geq 2.66 < 3.5$
4 (Moderately Satisfactory)	$\geq 3.5 \leq 4.33$
5 (Satisfactory)	$> 4.33 \leq 5.16$
6 (Highly Satisfactory)	> 5.16

2 (Unsatisfactory)	$\geq 1.83 < 2.66$
3 (Moderately Unsatisfactory)	$\geq 2.66 < 3.5$
4 (Moderately Satisfactory)	$\geq 3.5 \leq 4.33$
5 (Satisfactory)	$> 4.33 \leq 5.16$
6 (Highly Satisfactory)	> 5.16

ANNEX VIII. REVIEW QUESTIONS

PMU

(A) Please tick the appropriate rating from 1 to 5 with 1 being the lowest rating and 5 being the highest rating

How would you rate the efficiency of the PMU?

How would you rate the effectiveness of the PMU?

How would you rate the reporting process of the PMU to date?

How would you rate the project schedule to date?

How would you rate the public awareness of local SLM issues since the start of this project?

How would you rate the probability that the project can be sustained?

How would you rate the stakeholder participation?

How would you rate the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) of the project?

How would you rate the performance of the Steering Committee as a function in the management process?

How would you rate the participation of the below listed stakeholders?

1. Government Representatives
2. Farmers & Farmer Organisations
3. NGOs/CBOs
4. Representatives of Civil Society & Specialist Groups
5. National and International Partners

How would you rate the internal monitoring and feedback of the below listed stakeholders?

1. Government Representatives
2. Farmers & Farmer Organisations
3. NGOs/CBOs
4. Representatives of Civil Society & Specialist Groups
5. National and International Partners

How would you rate the communication between the various stakeholders & the PMU?

(B) Opened ended questions

1. What percentage of project activities has been completed date?
2. Have the project achievements been met to date?(outputs, outcomes & results level, products generated)
3. Are you aware of any problems that may have been encountered during the project execution? If yes, please explain and what were some measures taken to resolve these problems?
4. Were the project objectives at mid-term achieved?
 - a) If not, what were the principal obstacles to this?
 - b) Could these obstacles have been avoided?
5. Do you think that this project has influenced any government policy (For example, new budgetary allocations, legislation or mainstream planning)?
6. Do you think that this project can be replicated in other Caribbean territories? Please give reasons for your answer.
7. Which community organizations (NGOs) were involved in the project so far and what were their roles?
8. What would you consider as the most important achievement of this project to date? Please give reasons for your answer
9. What other national projects (specifically GEF projects) are being implemented jointly or in synergy with this SLM project?
10. Is there a plan to support long term sustainability of the SLM project?
11. List some visible changes/impacts that are occurring in Dominica as a result of the implementation of the SLM project.

12. Is there anything that could have been done differently to improve the project to date?
13. What are the main successes of the SLM project? What are its major challenges/weaknesses?
14. Have there been any challenges with time management of the project? If yes, please explain.
15. Has all documentation from the Steering Committee (i.e. meeting minutes/reports) been circulated in a timely manner and shared with all relevant stakeholders?
16. Has UNEP/GEF office been able to full fill its commitments to the project to date? (example capacity building, etc)
17. What are some of the major lessons learned with the SLM project to date?
18. Has the project promoted gender equality and women's empowerment? If yes, give examples
19. In your opinion, have challenges such COVID-19 and natural disasters impacted the implementation level of this project?
20. Does the PMU undertake periodic monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the project?
 - a. If yes, can you please describe what monitoring systems are used?
 - b. Describe the systems and tools employed for M&E, i.e. log frame, baselines established.
21. Have the co-financier partners delivered on their commitments to date?
22. Has a financial audit of the project been undertaken to date?
 - a. If yes, what were the major findings if any?
 - b. Do you agree/disagree with the finding? Please explain
23. Kindly summarise your general opinion of the status of the project thus far.

UNEP REPRESENTATIVES

(A) Please tick the appropriate rating from 1 to 5 with 1 being the lowest rating and 5 being the highest rating

How would rate the following entities support of the project to date?

- a) PMU
- b) PISLM Support Office

How would you rate the reporting process of the below entities?

- a) PMU
- b) PISLM Support Office

How would you rate the time management for the project to date?

How would you the performance of the below entities?

- a) PMU
- b) PISLM Support Office

(B) Opened ended questions

1. Have the project achievements been met to date? (outputs, outcomes & results level, products generated)
2. Are you aware of any problems that may have been encountered during the project execution? If yes, please explain and what were some measures taken to resolve these problems?
3. Were the project objectives at mid-term achieved?
 - a) If not, what were the principal obstacles to this?
 - b) Could these obstacles have been avoided?
4. Do you think that this project can be replicated in other Caribbean territories? Please give reasons for your answer.
5. What would you consider as the most important achievement of this project to date? Please give reasons for your answer

6. Giving the significant challenges that has risen during the implementation during the first phase of the project, do you believe that the current funding allocated by funding partners are adequate for this project?
7. Have the co-financier partners delivered on their commitments to date?
8. Are you aware of any plans to support long term sustainability of this current SLM project?
9. Has time management on the project been an issue? Please give reasons for your answer
10. Were reports and other requisite documentation submitted and circulated in a timely manner? Give reasons for your answer
11. Has UNEP/GEF office been able to fulfill its commitments to the project to date?(example capacity building, etc)
12. In your opinion have challenges such COVID-19 and natural disasters impacted the implementation level of this project?
13. Can you identify any major concerns that occurred between the government and the UNEP/GEF office since the start of the project?
14. Are the current project deliverables in line with the projected financial expenditure at the project's mid-term? Give details.
15. Kindly summarise your general opinion of the status of the project thus far.

FARMERS

(A) Demographic Information

- a) Gender- Male; Female; Other; Prefer not to answer
- b) Age – Below 20; 21-30; 31-40; 41-50; Above 50; Prefer not to answer
- c) Location (Parish) – Saint David; Saint Paul; Saint Joseph; Saint Patrick; Other

(B) Questions

1. How long have you been involved in the agricultural sector? - *Under 5 years; 5 – 10 years; 10 – 15 years; over 15 years*
2. Do you think this sector plays an important role in Dominica's development? – *Yes; No; Uncertain*
3. Have you heard the term Sustainable Land Management (SLM)? – *Yes; No;*
4. Are you familiar with any agricultural activities that promote SLM? – *Yes; No;*
5. Do you think SLM practices are important to agriculture and farming? – *Yes; No; Uncertain*
6. Are you familiar with the UNEP/GEF SLM Project being executed by the Partnership Initiative for Sustainable Land Management (PISLM)? – *Yes; No*
7. Has this project benefitted or added value to you and your farming experience? Give reasons for your answer. – *Yes; No; Comments*
8. Do you think famers are adequately involved in the consultation processes as it relates to their needs being met from new projects? – *Yes; No;*
9. Do you think that the public is adequately aware of the project? – *Yes; No; Uncertain*
10. In your opinion, what needs to be done to efficiently and effectively scale-up SLM activities in Dominica? (Tick all that applies)
 - Further sensitise the farmers on SLM and its benefits
 - Build capacity of the farmers on SLM and climate smart agriculture
 - Properly mainstream SLM into annual plans
 - Provide adequate financial support to take up SLM activities
 - Provide regular technical support on SLM activities
 - Put in place proper policies/guidelines on land use & SLM

Others: _____

CONSULTANTS

1. Please describe your role within the context of the Dominica SLM project
2. Based on your role within the Dominica SLM project, what percentage of the outputs/deliverables has been completed? *To date & mid-term.*
3. In your opinion, how would the project benefit the different stakeholders once completed?
4. Does the project align with any national priorities? (For example, land degradation, watershed management etc.)
5. Based on your outputs/deliverables, which one do you believe is the most important component to the project?
6. Were there any challenges in executing your role within the project? Please explain
7. How would you rate the level of ownership, interest and commitment among government and other stakeholders in the Dominica Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Project? Give reason for your answer. *High; Moderate; Low – Comments*
8. Are you aware of any plans to support long-term sustainability of this current SLM project?
9. How would you rate the possibility that the project can be sustained? *On a scale of 1 to 5 with "1" being the lowest rating and "5" being the highest rating. Any comments.*
10. In your opinion have challenges such COVID-19, natural disasters and any other unforeseen circumstances impacted the implementation level of this project?
11. Do you think that this project has influenced any government policy (For example, new budgetary allocations, changes in legislation, any laws, policies and frameworks, mainstream planning)?
12. Are you aware if there is an exit strategy with an institutional component that can be initiated upon completion of this SLM project?
13. Are you aware of any adaptive mechanisms in place to respond to changes in the social/political context, should it become necessary?
14. What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project?
15. What public awareness activities have been taken during the project?
16. Do you think that the Government Ministries/Public Sector Agencies that are essential for moving from outputs to project outcomes took a leadership role in the following categories?
 - a) Strategic guidance of the project delivery *Yes; No; Uncertain - Comments*
 - b) Driving or advocating for change to achieve higher level results *Yes; No; Uncertain - Comments*
 - c) Endorsing/accepting project results *Yes; No; Uncertain - Comments*
 - d) Initiating non-cost complementary or additional activities *Yes; No; Uncertain - Comments*
 - e) Provision of in-kind and/or cash co-financing contributions; making provisions in forward-looking budgetary plans or securing additional external resources *Yes; No; Uncertain - Comment*
17. Kindly summarise you general opinion of the progress of the project thus far.

