



**Mid-term review of FAO-GEF project
GCP/VAN/001/GFF
GEF ID 5397**

**Integrated Sustainable Land and Coastal Management
(ISLCM) Project in Vanuatu**

Final Report

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

- Ms. Dima Reda
- Ms. Emily Tasale

MTR Manager

- Mr. Madankumar Janakiraman FAO's Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands, staff focal point for the MTR

Acronyms and abbreviations

ARDS	Agriculture Rural Development Strategy
AWP/B	Annual Work Plan and Budget
APPR	Annual Project Progress Report
BH	Budget Holder
CBD	Convention on Biodiversity
CBO	Community Based Organization
CCA	Community Conservation Area
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
ELMA	Efate Land Management Area
EP	Executing Partner
EVCC	Efate Vaturisu Council of Chiefs
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FPMIS	Field Project Management Information System
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
FSPV	Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific Vanuatu
GEBS	Global Environmental Benefits
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEFTT	GEF Tracking Tools
GEO	Global Environmental Objective
GIS	Geographical Information System
ISLCM	Integrated Sustainable Land and Coastal Management
INRM	Integrated Natural Resources Management
KBA	Key Biodiversity Area

LCIP	Landholders Conservation Initiatives Project
LCC	Local Conservation Committee
LCS	Local Conservation Specialist
LD	Land Degradation
LLV	Live and Learn Vanuatu
LTO	Lead Technical Officer
LULUCF	Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry
MAQFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Quarantine, Forestry and Fisheries
MARSH	Mangrove Rehabilitation for Sustainably managed Healthy Forests
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MESCAL	Mangrove Ecosystems for Climate Change Adaptation and Livelihoods
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tools
MFA	Multi Focal Area
MLNR	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
MTTCI	Ministry of Trade, Tourism, Commerce and Industry
NAMA	Nationally Appropriate Programme of Action
NAP	National Action Plan
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NDS	National Development Strategy
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NSC	National Steering Committee
NTA	National Technical Advisor
NTFP	Non Timber Forest Product
NYBG	New York Botanical Garden

OFP	Operational Focal Point for GEF
PAs	Protected Areas
PSC	Project Steering Committee
R2R	Ridge to Reef Program (GEF)
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SAP	FAO Sub Regional Office for the Pacific Islands
USD	United States Dollar
VANGO	Vanuatu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
VCC	Village Conservation Committee

Executive Summary

Introduction

1. This Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the GEF-5 funded Integrated Sustainable Land and Coastal Management (ISLCM) project in Vanuatu was initiated by the FAO as the Implementation Agency as well as the financial and operational executing agency for this project and it aims to provide managers (at the Project Management Unit) with strategies recommendations for more effectively and efficiently achieving the project's expected results and for replicating the results. It also provides the basis for learning and accountability for managers and stakeholders. The MTR covers a period of 34 months, spanning from the beginning of project execution, 16 June 2018 through 30 April 2021.
2. The ISLCM project objective is to *test and implement sustainable and integrated management of forest, land and marine resources to achieve effective ridge-to-reef (R2R) conservation in selected priority watersheds in Vanuatu*. The project is being implemented in five locations: Aneityum Island, the Middle Bush area of Tanna Island, the north of Efate Island, South Pentecost Island and Gaua Island.
3. The MTR assesses progress made thus far toward the expected outcomes and overall objectives and will assist in ensuring the project is on track to achieve the maximum possible results by the time of project closure. The MTR has been carried out as a collaborative and participatory exercise and draws on lessons and experiences from the GEF portfolio, more widely to provide relevant recommendations for the remaining implementation period.
4. The main objective of this evaluation is stated in the project document: "To review the progress and effectiveness of implementation in terms of achieving project objectives, outcomes and outputs." The findings and recommendations of this review should support the improvement of the overall project design and execution strategy for the remaining period of the project's term.
5. The MTR involved four primary methodological elements: (i) Desk review of project documentation, and development of the inception report; (ii) Meetings with key stakeholders, including visits to project field sites; (iii) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders at the national and local levels, including: the project's LTO, the Funding Liaison Officer (in this case the former FLO and the current FLO), Project Management Unit (PMU), the Project Steering Committee (PSC), project partners; and other stakeholders as deemed necessary; (iv) interviews with key beneficiaries (farmers, fishers, eco-tourism operators, landowners, PA management committees, workshop participants, chiefs, provincial and government authorities) (Appendix 9 includes the field visit report).
6. Due to the limitations of the Covid-19 pandemic, the international consultant undertook her work remotely to minimize epidemiologic risks. In this context, the general approach was to have the international lead consultant work remotely from her home-office doing a desk review of project documents supported by remote semi-structured interviews using communication tools such as email, Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp and other convenient electronic tools. The national consultant was responsible to conduct interviews face-to-face or by using

communication tools as well such as phone, Skype, Zoom or other means, following guidelines that are in place locally to minimize epidemiologic risks. The national consultant also undertook the field visit to project sites to support the validation of results.

7. The MTR used a mixed-methods approach combining both quantitative and qualitative input. Three main sources of primary data and information were examined.
8. Evaluative evidence was assessed against the primary GEF evaluation criteria:
 - a. *Relevance* – the extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time.
 - b. *Effectiveness* – the extent to which an objective has been achieved or how likely it is to be achieved.
 - c. *Efficiency* – the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible.
 - d. *Results/impacts* – the positive and negative, and foreseen and unforeseen, changes to and effects produced by a development intervention. In GEF terms, results include direct project outputs, short-to medium term outcomes, and longer-term impact including global environmental benefits, replication effects and other, local effects.
 - e. *Sustainability* – the likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially and socially sustainable.
9. Factors affecting the performance and delivery of the project results - focused on quality of project oversight, execution and management, including financial management and materialization of co-financing, project design, partnerships and stakeholder engagement, communications and knowledge management and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), with specific attention to M&E Design, and M&E Plan Implementation. Cross-cutting dimensions- including gender, indigenous-peoples and minority-group concerns and equity concerns, Environmental and Social Safeguards (as appropriate).
10. The information collected, including documentary evidence, interviews and observations, have been compiled and organized according to the questions asked in the assessment and as per FAO's requirements and template design (see Appendix 4 for the specific review questions).

Main findings

11. Overall, the ISLCM project has faced several significant challenges over the course of its implementation including a late start,¹ the absence of a full project team for long stretches of the project, the advent of the COVID-19 global pandemic, and the natural disasters that occurred in 2020 (Tropical Cyclone (TC) Harold and the Yasur Volcano ashfall. Given these

¹ The initial project start date was supposed to take place in March 2017, the inception workshop did not take place until over a year later in July of 2018, and a fully capacitated project team was not in place until September 2019.

multiple challenges, the project team has made significant strides toward meeting the overall project objective.

12. Notwithstanding the tremendous effort being done on the ground with only 16 months remaining for project implementation, unless additional time is provided, the project is unlikely to meet its original targets and there will be significant shortcomings toward meeting the project's objectives. The MTR is therefore recommending an additional 6–12-month extension (in addition to the 12-month extension already granted) to provide the project enough time to complete key activities and allow the project to achieve key project outputs. The ratings provided have been provided under the assumption that additional time for project completion will be granted.

Relevance

13. The project was well designed, and the components, outcomes, and outputs of the project were closely aligned with and relevant to the country priorities, GEF focal area strategies, and FAO's Strategic Framework.
14. A significant shift occurred within the project to focus on disaster recovery at 2 of the 4 major ISLCM project sites affected by natural disasters. The project team has effectively adapted to the new situation on the ground and at the request of the Government of Vanuatu (GoV) reframed several activities to meet the changing needs and priorities of the targeted beneficiaries through the implementation of a targeted Livelihood Recovery Project (LRP). This has been done in a manner that aligns with the original design of the project and contributes to the overall objective.

While the LRP intervention has been well-received and is producing strong results, the re-alignment of the project did not include an adjustment of the logical framework (logframe).

Effectiveness

15. The project has produced several strong outputs as of the MTR, particularly in relation to parts of Component 2. These include the farmers and fishers managing resources sustainably as a result of increased capacities and awareness (outcome 2.2), capacities for generation of ecosystems and services restored in priority areas (outcome 2.3), and local people having opportunities and capacities to perceived direct benefits from conservation and SLM (outcome 2.4). Overall, however, the delivery of the expected outputs has been mixed, with many deliverables behind schedule (for example, some of the work around strengthening protected areas (outcome 2.5) and some of the policy integration work under Component 1).
16. The livelihood recovery efforts under the LRP initiative have positively impacted beneficiaries at all sites targeted in S. Pentecost (an area greatly affected by TC Harold) in terms of improved food security and have also provided a means of income generating activity due to a surplus supply of vegetables. While the LRP initiative has proved successful in addressing the needs of beneficiaries affected by unexpected natural disasters, the conservation activities and outputs of the project are lagging. The ISLCM project has recently begun to re-shift its focus back to accomplishing the conservation goal of the project, but more effort is needed for the project to achieve many of its expected targets.

17. The two-year delay in project start has compounded the lag on progress toward achieving the project's development objective as little was achieved prior to the onset of COVID-19 and the natural disasters that hit Vanuatu in 2020. Delays to project start-up also negatively impact the cost-effectiveness of project implementation as administrative funds must be spent throughout with little to demonstrate in terms of achievement.
18. Based on an analysis of activities and outputs completed to date, the **overall rating for progress towards achieving the project's development objective(s) is rated as Moderately Satisfactory (MS)** (see Appendix 6 for a rating breakdown by output and indicators).

Efficiency

19. With only 16 months left, the ISLCM project has expended approximately 34%² of the total GEF grant amount. Even now with the full capacity of the project team, it is unlikely that the project will expend the entire budgeted amount by project close.
20. In terms of co-financing, the amounts of co-financing across all co-financing partners, including the FAO, have not been tracked by the project at the time of the MTR and could not be verified. However, from interviews and the MTR field visit it is evident that several of the ISLCM's co-financiers, including Live and Learn Vanuatu (LLV), the New York Botanical Garden (NYBG), and the Vanuatu Government via the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation, have made significant progress in undertaking activities that support ISLCM's outputs. Funding from other development partners such as the World Bank and the New Zealand government have also contributed directly to ISLCM's project outputs³.

Sustainability

21. The strong alignment of the project with country and beneficiary priorities provides a solid basis for the sustainability of results that come out of the ISLCM project. The project has strong partners in the field and there is evidence that communities engaged by the ISLCM project have proactively designated protected areas.
22. Local Conservation Committees (LCCs) and the Village Conservation Committees (VCCs) are currently being set-up or revived. LCCs set-up under GEF-4 went dormant and had to be re-engaged under the current ISLCM project. There is a risk that these committees could become dormant again once GEF-5 funding comes to a close.
23. Another key aspect for sustainability and securing project results in the longer-term is implementing an effective knowledge management system that will survive beyond the life of the project. To date, the ISLCM project has developed multiple technical studies that should be easily accessible to government officials at all levels. Key messages have yet to be translated into local languages and disseminated in a user-friendly manner to community groups. The project has however effectively engaged on social media and incorporated stories through the

² Based on budget data provided as of 27 April 2021

³ These were not identified as co-financing during project design but funding from these agencies during implementation has directly contributed to ISLCM project outputs.

press, this provides an initial contribution to raising awareness and codifying success, however, does not constitute a robust knowledge management system.

24. The MTR team considers that there are moderate risks to sustainability mostly related to potential shortcomings to project outcomes by the project closure, this is mitigated in part because of the evidence of high commitment from project partners which are likely to continue into a foreseeable future. Therefore, the MTR team rates the **overall likelihood of risks to sustainability as Moderately Likely (ML)**.

Factors affecting performance

25. One of the positive aspects that has come out of the challenges faced by the global pandemic is that the team in-country is almost exclusively Vanuatu nationals. The project team is technically strong and competent. Moreover, the presence of all Vanuatu nationals under the guidance of an experienced international Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) can lead to greater sustainability of project results as all built capacities in the project team will remain in-country.
26. In addition to the Port Villa-based project team, having local conservation specialists (LCSs) at each project site supports better implementation of activities at project sites and provides more visibility for FAO in the field. The MTR did find, however, that project implementation on targeted sites has not yet been fully operationalized through provisions of complete resources, visibility and exposure.
27. Another factor affecting project performance are some weaknesses related to communications between the project team and key stakeholders. Through the MTR interviews, indications of miscommunication between the project team and other stakeholders has resulted in less effective implementation. There appears to be confusion around the roles and responsibilities of the various project partners versus the project team. This has led to some misunderstandings around project execution. Communication could be strengthened by re-setting expectations and ensuring roles and responsibilities are detailed and agreed to by all partners.
28. All partners interviewed also expressed frustration with FAO's procurement processes and delays stemming from the FAO Sub Regional Office for the Pacific Islands (FAO-SAP). The two main bottlenecks appear to be related to (1) approval delays from the original LTO assigned to the project (based in PNG) and (2) delays from the procurement team based in Apia. The LTO, who has now resigned, had a track record of delaying approvals, which resulted in delayed submissions to the GEF Coordination Unit. The GEF Coordination Unit, overall, has been responsive once provided with the appropriate approvals. The second bottleneck stems from the FAO-SAP office. Once requests are received from the PMU, in accordance with the approved Annual Work Plan and Budget, the processing of payments corresponding to delivery of goods, services and technical products based on technical clearance provided by the LTO is often significantly delayed. The new acting LTO is aware of these issues and has set-up an informal process to support the in-country PMU and expedite the overall process.
29. While actions are now being taken to improve procurement delays, it will be important for the FAO-SAP office to more formally address the root cause of these delays. This is a critical issue

as the project is now at a stage where delays in disbursements for goods and services will hinder the project team and its partners from effective execution of activities

30. Another factor affecting project performance are weaknesses related to monitoring, tracking, and reporting on indicators. At the time of the MTR, the GEF tracking tools had not yet been updated (expected by July 2021) and several of the logframe indicators had also not been updated. The team does not have a dedicated M&E officer and this increases the CTA and National Project Manager's (NPM) workload.
31. While bolstering the M&E system of the project is important, the MTR did find that the team is burdened by what appears to have been an overambitious project design that included direct alignment with five GEF Strategic Objectives and committing the implementation team to measure five different tracking tools. Given the size of the GEF grant, it may have been better to claim some of the strategic objectives as co-benefits or indirect outcomes. The five tracking tools significantly increase the M&E burden on the project team. Several other GEF R2R projects in the region committed to 3 or 4 tracking tools, which likely would have been sufficient for this project.
32. In terms of stakeholder engagement, overall, this is one of the strengths of the project. The initial project design included input into the project formulation and design from multiple stakeholders this contributed to the high degree of project relevance for both the GoV and the target beneficiaries. Throughout implementation the project has built strong partnerships with government agencies, target beneficiaries and communities, and relevant NGOs and civil society. Thanks to the relevance and quality of the intervention design, the activities implemented by mid-term have fostered the active participation of beneficiaries who have been engaged in the field. From interviews with PSC members, key government agencies including the Department of Environment, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Tourism have been actively involved in supporting the efforts of the the ISLCM project and in executing activities through the LoAs that have been approved to date.
33. Based on the MTR findings the overall **progress on implementation is rated as Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

Cross-cutting dimensions

34. Gender aspects of the project were not well developed at the project design stage, this is likely due to a lack of guidance on this issue provided at the time for GEF-5 projects. During implementation, however, gender aspects have been well documented and present good practice for integrating gender during implementation. The CTA has taken the lead to ensure FAO's methodology on gender has been incorporated and has deployed adequate gender mainstreaming across all technical studies as well as the training/awareness building pieces. This has included tracking of gender-disaggregated data across all of the ISLCM activities. For example, as of June 2020, the awareness raising and training has reached 7,987 people, 4,357 women and 3,630 men at the project sites.
35. Through the MTR field visit, women in particular, reported that the implementation of the livelihood recovery was most remarkable and assisted them to gain new knowledge and acquire

new gardening skills such as transplanting vegetable seedlings from the nursery to backyard gardens and knowledge-sharing of environmentally friendly pest-control applications on vegetables.

36. In terms of Environmental and Social (E&S) safeguards, risks have been well documented and managed. This is particularly true during the design of the LRP and could also be used as an example of good practice for ensuring E&S is properly addressed when adaptive measures are needed.

Conclusions

37. Taking into consideration the main findings related to the questions and criteria in the MTR reached the following conclusions:

Conclusion 1 (Criterion: Relevance): It was found that the implementation and design of the components, outcomes and outputs of the project are closely aligned with and relevant to the participating institutions and the beneficiaries of the project. Furthermore, the project's shift to focus on disaster recovery at 2 of the 5 ISLCM project sites affected by natural disasters in response to the GoV request was done effectively and in a manner that will contribute to meeting the objectives of the project while also meeting the changing needs and priorities of the targeted beneficiaries. As a result of this scenario, the project relevance is rated as **highly satisfactory (HS)** and, thanks to the relevance and quality of the intervention design, the activities implemented by mid-term foster the active participation of those beneficiaries who have been engaged in the field.

Conclusion 2 (Criterion: Effectiveness - general): The degree of progress towards the outputs laid out in the project logframe has several significant lags. The project's effectiveness is therefore considered **moderately satisfactory (MS)** for each of the components and for most of the outputs of the project. At mid-term, the project has delivered on several outputs, particularly in relation to parts of Component 2. These include support to farmers and fishers managing resources sustainably as a result of increased capacities and awareness (outcome 2.2), capacities for generation of ecosystems and services resorted in priority areas (outcome 2.3), and local people having opportunities and capacities to perceive direct benefits from conservation and SLM (outcome 2.4). Overall, however, the delivery of the expected outputs has been mixed, with many deliverables behind schedule in particular for integration around strengthening protected areas and at the 3 target sites not targeted through the LRP initiative.

Conclusion 3 (Criterion: Effectiveness – Components 1 and 2): The livelihood recovery efforts under the LRP initiative has positively impacted beneficiaries at all 11 sites in S. Pentecost in terms of improved food security and has also provided a means of income generating activity due to a surplus supply of vegetables. However, while the LRP initiative has proved successful in addressing the needs of beneficiaries affected by unexpected natural disasters, the conservation activities and outputs of the project are lagging. The ISLCM project has begun re-shifting its focus back to accomplishing the conservation goal of the project, but more effort is needed for the project to achieve many of its expected targets

Conclusion 4 (Criterion: Effectiveness – Component 3): The project has been effective in raising awareness of stakeholders, conducting several trainings and engaging on social media and incorporating stories through the press. However, more work is required to put in place a robust knowledge management system. A mechanism for systematizing and disseminating best practices and lessons learned is needed (output 3.1.1) as is a system for managing information on ecosystem conditions and trends. An MRV unit should also be established in the Department of Forestry (outputs 3.2.1 and 3.2.2).

Conclusion 5 (Criterion: Efficiency): Several of the ISLCM's co-financiers, including Live and Learn and the New York Botanical Garden, have made significant progress in undertaking activities that support ISLCM's activities. The funding of other development partners such as the World Bank and the New Zealand government have also contributed directly to ISLCM's project outputs. The co-financing and other parallel initiatives are not however formally being tracked by the project. The MTR verified that co-finance partners have undertaken significant work in the field that contributes directly to project outputs.

Conclusion 6 (Criterion: Efficiency): As of the end of April 2021, the project has utilized only 34% of the total budget however, there appears to be an overrun on the Project Salaries budget line. This does have implications for the project extension and how this budget line is affected should be explored further. The delay in project start has affected the overall cost effectiveness of the project. It is important to find a way to keep a fully capacitated project team till the end of the project to ensure the project does not lose momentum and that the project makes full use of the extension to progress on project results. The overall efficiency of the project is rated as **moderately satisfactory (MS)**.

Conclusion 7 (Criterion: Sustainability): The MTR team considers that there are minor risks to sustainability as there is a high probability that key outcomes will be achieved by the project closure and will continue into the foreseeable future. Therefore, the MTR team rates project sustainability as **moderately likely (ML)**. The excellent alignment of the project with country and beneficiary priorities provides a strong basis for the sustainability of results along with strong partners in the field. It is important for the project to strategize with stakeholders at the local level as to how to sustain community committees and commitment after project close.

Conclusion 8 (Criterion: Factors Affecting Performance): The MTR team has determined several administrative and project coordination factors that are affecting project implementation, which include: (i) miscommunication among project partners; (ii) cumbersome procurement procedures and processes for disbursing funds; (iii) non-responsiveness of the FAO-SAP team in Samoa; and (iii) weaknesses in measuring project indicators in a timely and accurate manner. These issues while important to address can be done without having to restructure or add a great deal of resources. Re-setting expectations and developing clear plans for the last part of the project implementation should address these issues sufficiently.

Conclusion 9 (Criterion: Factors Affecting Performance): The project has faced many setbacks, initially with a 2-year delay in putting in place a fully capacitated PMU and then shortly thereafter the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was then compounded by the occurrence of two natural disasters: TC Harold and the Yasur Volcano ashfall. Despite the major challenges faced by the project and shortened timeframe available, the project has made good

progress. The 1-year extension that has been granted is necessary for the project to complete many of the activities for the project and to make strong progress in areas that have as of now progressed slowly. If it is possible to grant a longer extension, the probability of achieving project results will increase significantly.

Conclusion 10 (Criterion: Factors Affecting Performance): The project team is technically strong and competent. Moreover, the fact that the team is comprised of all Vanuatu nationals under the guidance of an experienced international CTA can lead to greater sustainability of project results. In addition, built capacities within the project team will remain in-country. The hiring of LCSs at each project site also supports better implementation of activities at project sites and provides more visibility for FAO.

Conclusion 11 (Criterion: Cross-cutting issues, Gender): The project has made considerable strides in integrating gender issues across all project activities. This is an area where the team has tracked well the participation of women and captured the project's gender responsive measures. Moreover, during the MTR field visit, project beneficiaries indicated that one of the positive aspects of the project has been the continuous involvement and representation of women in environmental governance, particularly in protected area committees, conservation rangers or eco-tour guides.

Recommendations

38. Based on the conclusions and findings of the review process, the MTR has the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1. (PMU, PSC, OFP, Provincial Governments): **Develop work plan and agree on roles and responsibilities for remaining project timeframe.** From the interviews undertaken for the MTR, there is confusion among the various partners of the project as to their respective roles and responsibilities. There have also been misunderstandings between the Department of Environment and the project team as to what work is being done and what needs to be done and by whom. To ensure implementation is more effective and cooperative during the remaining project period, the MTR recommends that the PSC, the OFP and the PMU conduct a 1-day workshop to detail the roles and responsibilities of each person and agency that is part of the project execution. The outcome of the workshop should lay out a work plan for the remaining project period that includes responsibilities and dates for action.

The ISLCM project also has a role to integrate R2R planning and governance in its priority island localities. With the progress of setting up conservation committees there is also a need for setting a clear understanding of the differing roles of various stakeholder partners including the committees. As part of the recommended work plan, consensus on what the roles of the various stakeholders at the project sites should also be laid out. This needs to take into consideration a realistic balance between people's aspirations and the capacity of community-based organizations given that LCCs and VCCs have limited or no budgets.

Recommendation 2. (FAO-SAP, BH, GEF-CU): **Project Extension by 6-12 months.** The MTR notes that the status of the project timeframe (even with the 1-year extension till September 2022), will mean the remaining activities and the project outcomes will not be achieved. Additionally, there will be remaining project funds unused. Therefore, the MTR recommends an

additional 12-month extension of the project to complete the remaining activities due to the late start of the project, the absence of a full project team for long stretches, the advent of the global pandemic, and the natural disasters that occurred in 2020. To facilitate this extension, the major costs will be related to project staff and administration of which finances can be sourced from the savings thus far on the slow recruitment of staff. The remaining activities of the project all have budgets that should be able to sufficiently cover the necessary costs. Ground implementation of attaining the project's goal of conservation is only starting to pick up and with a strong team in place the probability for achieving satisfactory to highly satisfactory results will increase significantly with added time.

As noted the salary budget line appears to have an overrun, however, the details of this need to be better explored with support from the BH, FLO, GEF-CU and FAO-HQ as to how best an extension can be deployed.

Recommendation 3. (FAO-SAP BH, Procurement Unit): **FAO-SAP Budget Holder in coordination with procurement unit to develop action plan to address delays associated with payments and disbursements.** The level of frustration surrounding administrative matters such as the length of procurement processes and confusion related to the LOA process is high among almost all participants interviewed. Delays in FAO's procurement process and in particular the lag in response from the FAO-SAP office has been a source of frustration for those working in-country. The MTR recommends that the FAO-SAP BH in coordination with the procurement team develop an action plan to address delays associated with payments and disbursements. This will provide each partner with a transparent way to track responsibility for any delays as well as provide the team in Samoa a clear work plan so their workload can be managed and delays in procurement can be minimized.

Recommendation 4. (PMU/project team): **Improve efficient and effective administration in target localities of South Pentecost and Tanna.** Project implementation on targeted sites should be operating in full capacity with complete resources, visibility and exposure. The LCSs are an important part of the overall project team and their effectiveness is hindered by a lack of proper resourcing.

Recommendation 5. (PMU/project team). **Hire a specialist to improve monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management system.** The MTR recommends hiring an M&E/Knowledge management specialist as is indicated in the ProDoc. This person can be hired to coordinate the tracking tool completion, lead the annual PIR process, ensure that 6-monthly PPR reports are completed, and manage the activities needed to ensure activities and outputs under Component 3 are developed.

Prior to any project evaluation, the project team should have all documents organized and all necessary relevant and compulsory data /information (including updated tracking tools and co-finance figures) gathered prior to the start of review to allow the evaluation team to validate data.

As part of this recommendation, the project team should incorporate a means of tracking the effects and impacts of the ISLCM project initiative into the overall monitoring system. Along with this, communication materials that focus on spreading good practices should be

generated, thus fostering replicability and up-scaling of the effects and additionally contributing to the sustainability of the project.

Recommendation 6. (PMU and co-finance partners). **Track project co-finance.** The project should begin to track co-finance and parallel or leveraged finance, in particular because it appears to be an area of success for the project and there is potential for good practice lessons to come from it.

Recommendation 7. (PMU, DEPC, and other partners): **Develop a roadmap to agree on the target terrestrial and marine protected areas** that will be covered by integrated landscape/seascape management plans (output 2.1.1) and ensure that the project provides updated mapping of these PAs and their boundaries. Such a roadmap will support the re-focusing on ISLCM's conservation outputs, prioritize targets to be achieved prior to project close, and provide updated mapping of these PAs and their boundaries

Recommendation 8. (PMU, PSC, and other project partners): **Develop exit strategy to ensure sustainability of results.** Under this strategy one aspect that should be discussed and agreed is how to ensure the Local Conservation Committees (LCC) do not go dormant after the close of the ISLCM project. Such committees under GEF-4 went dormant and had to be revived with the ISLCM in GEF-5. Based on discussions with local community members and other stakeholders in the field, potential strategies to consider include the following:

- Engage school children (primary and secondary) and youth, as agents of change in a community, including training on environmental protection or conservation. School students could be involved in tree planting activities, clean up campaigns, vegetable gardens in schools. The youth including young women can be represented in conservation committees in villages
- For the sustainability of forest ecosystem restoration programme, the establishment and construction of permanent nurseries on a few project sites (e.g., Nusumetu, Point Cross, Pangri) for government officers such as Forestry or Agriculture to continue to use after project closure.
- Potentially work with the Department of Environment to find ways to secure small amounts of funding for the LCCs and VCCs

Recommendation 9: (PMU/project team, PSC, FAO-SAP, FAO-HQ) **Adjusting indicators and targets in the logical framework is recommended.** Suggested changes are outlined in the table below:

Table 1: Suggested project targets and indicators to adjusted

Potential targets/indicators to adjust	Rationale	Proposed Adjustment
Component 1, Outcome 1.3	With the unpredictable collapse of the cruise ship industry, it is not possible for	<i>Indicator 1.3.1: Amount of financial resources committed from the tourism sector to</i>

<p><i>Indicator 1.3.1:</i> Amount of financial resources channeled from the tourism sector to environmental conservation and PA management</p> <p><i>Mid-term target:</i> \$75,000/year channeled from the tourism sector</p> <p><i>End-of Project target:</i> \$150,000/year channeled</p> <p><i>Output 1.3.1:</i> Corporate social and environmental responsibility commitments from the cruise industry</p>	<p>the project to actually receive funding from the industry during the lifetime of the project. It is more realistic at this stage if the team can focus on securing some type of commitment from the tourism sector and/or develop a strategy for how the DoT can secure such commitments.</p> <p>It is suggested that the project team hold discussions with the DoT to determine if there are other ways to channel funding from the tourism sector to environmental conservation and PA management aligned with the recently published Vanuatu Sustainable Development Tourism Strategy (2021-2025), potentially through Theme 2: RESILIENCE: through Niche Tourism Product Development: Developing and supporting niche tourism that protects, enhances and regenerates Vanuatu's assets or Theme 4: SUSTAINABILITY: through Sustainable Tourism Certification, Investment and Entrepreneurship.</p>	<p><i>environmental conservation and PA management</i></p> <p>Mid-term target: \$75,000/year committed from the tourism sector</p> <p>End-of Project target: \$150,000/year committed from the tourism sector</p> <p><i>Output 1.3.1:</i> Corporate social and environmental responsibility commitments from the tourism sector</p>
<p>Component 2, Outcome 2.1</p> <p><i>Indicator 2.1.1:</i> Area in target localities covered by landscape/seascape management plans developed and implemented by local landowners</p>	<p>The end of project target is that 100,000 ha will be targeted. This is an ambitious figure and given the shift in project focus, the delay in project start, and the extenuating circumstances of COVID, it is highly unlikely that the project can meet this target.</p>	<p>Suggest decreasing target to 10,000 ha</p> <p>This should be validated and discussed after the results of the mid-term tracking tool update are finalized.</p>
<p>Component 2, Outcome 2.2</p> <p><i>Indicators 2.2.1:</i> Increase in area (ha) in target localities</p>	<p>Given the focused efforts on S. Pentecost and Tana, the target for these 3 indicators may</p>	<p>The ha targeted may be increased for S. Pentecost and Tana and decreased at other sites. Updated figures can be</p>

<p>over which sustainable hillside farming practices are applied</p> <p><i>Indicator 2.2.2:</i> Increase in area (ha) in target localities over which sustainable hillside ranching area applied</p> <p><i>Indicator 2.2.3:</i> Increase in area (ha) in target localities over which community-based fisheries regulations are effectively applied</p>	<p>need to be adjusted to capture the <i>LRP</i></p> <p>There may also be a desire to add in an indicator directly related to the work of the LRP to capture any results that were not captured in the original project design</p>	<p>included in the next PIR and agreed to by the PSC.</p>
<p>Component 2, Outcome 2.4</p> <p><i>Output 2.4.1: Ecotourism</i> development plans formulated with local participation in each target locality, including carrying capacity studies</p> <p><i>Output 2.4.2 Ecotourism initiatives</i> managed by local communities or with provision for generating significant benefits for local communities</p>	<p>Outcome 2.4 is written to encompass more than just benefits from ecotourism: <i>Local people in target localities have opportunities and capacity to perceive direct benefits from conservation and SLM</i></p> <p>With the re-alignment through the LRP on food security, it seems appropriate to broaden outputs 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 beyond ecotourism. This will both better capture the work of the LRP and better align the outputs with Outcome 2.4. Moreover, in the coming years due to the COVID pandemic there is a potential for a reduction in tourism related activities and hence the need to diversify to other initiatives</p>	<p><i>Output 2.4.1: Development plans</i> formulated with local participation in each target locality, including carrying capacity studies</p> <p><i>Output 2.4.2: Conservation and SLM initiatives</i> managed by local communities or with provision for generating significant benefits for local communities</p>

GEF rating table

Table 2: MTR ratings and achievements summary table

GEF criteria/sub-criteria	Rating	Summary comments
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE		
A1. Overall strategic relevance	HS	Aligns strategically

		with country goals & contributes to GEBs
A1.1. Alignment with GEF and FAO strategic priorities	HS	Directly aligns with GEF & FAO strategic priorities
A1.2. Relevance to national, regional and global priorities and beneficiary needs	HS	Highly relevant to national and beneficiary needs
A1.3. Complementarity with existing interventions	HS	High degree of complementarity with existing interventions
B. EFFECTIVENESS		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	MS	Due to project delays, COVID-19, and natural disasters overall project is behind on several results and associated targets
B1.1 Delivery of project outputs	MS	Several outputs have only recently begun or need to start
B1.2 Progress towards outcomes ¹⁰ and project objectives		
- Outcome 1	MS	Progress on outcomes 1.2 and 1.3 in particular are lagging
- Outcome 2	MS	Progress toward several outputs is on track – a refocus on conservation is needed
- Outcome 3	MS	Tracking and reporting of all project indicators is needed
- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes	MS	Level of outcomes achieved include moderate shortcomings
B1.3 Likelihood of impact	Not rated at MTR	
C. EFFICIENCY		
C1. Efficiency	MU	Level of project disbursement not adequate to achieve project results by end of project; Co-finance should be tracked
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	ML	Moderate risks to sustainability mostly related to potential

		shortcomings to project outcomes by the project closure
D1.1. Financial risks	MU	Financial risks are moderate but could be reduced through better tracking and understanding of co-financing materialization
D1.2. Sociopolitical risks	L	High degree of relevance and alignment with government and beneficiaries
D1.3. Institutional and governance risks	MU	Frameworks structures and/or processes that will create mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer after the project's closure are still in early stages
D1.4. Environmental risks	L	Project is tracking E&S risks well
D2. Catalysis and replication	ML	To ensure catalysis & replication it will be important for project to strengthen KM mechanism
E. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE		
E1. Project design and readiness ¹²	S	Overall, well designed and appropriate; overambitious in terms of incorporation of multiple GEF TT
E2. Quality of project implementation	S	Project team has been proactive in utilizing adaptive management measures
E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (BH, LTO, PTF, etc.)	MS	Better communication and support is needed from FAO, especially in relation to procurement
E2.1 Project oversight (PSC, project working group, etc.)	MS	Oversight could be strengthened through more frequent communication
E3. Quality of project execution	S	Activities in the field have been well executed with strong collaboration with project partners

E3.1 Project execution and management (PMU and executing partner performance, administration, staffing, etc.)	S	Once the full project team was put in place execution and project management has been satisfactory
E4. Financial management and co-financing	MS	Better tracking is needed on the co-finance side
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement	MS	Project partners are engaged however re-setting roles and responsibilities is needed
E6. Communication, knowledge management and knowledge products	MS	Improvement in communication between the project team and other partners is needed
E7. Overall quality of M&E	MU	GEF tracking tools need to be completed, all indicators should be tracked and reported on; there are still missing baseline data
E7.1 M&E design	MS	The M&E design would benefit from providing funding for a dedicated M&E officer and incorporating workload for monitoring 5 GEF TTs
E7.2 M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	MU	Need to dedicate additional resources to properly implement plan
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	MS	Several of the weaknesses for performance can be addressed through better planning & communication. In last phase of implementation, this can be improved without requiring any major restructuring
F. CROSS-CUTTING CONCERNS		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	S	Gender has been well addressed
F2. Human rights issues	S	No issues were found related to human rights
F2. Environmental and social safeguards	S	E&S risks have been proactively handled

Overall project rating	MS
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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and scope of the MTR

39. This Mid-Term Review (MTR) was initiated by the FAO as the Implementation Agency as well as the financial and operational executing agency for this project and it aims to provide managers (at the Project Implementation Unit) with strategies recommendations for more effectively and efficiently achieving the project's expected results and for replicating the results. It also provides the basis for learning and accountability for managers and stakeholders. The MTR will cover a period of 34 months, spanning from the beginning of project execution, 16 June 2018 to April 2021.
40. The MTR assesses progress made thus far toward the expected outcomes and overall objectives and will assist in ensuring the project is on track to achieve the maximum possible results by the time of project closure. The MTR has been carried out as a collaborative and participatory exercise and draws on lessons and experiences from the GEF portfolio, more widely to provide relevant recommendations for the remaining implementation period.

1.2 Objective of the MTR

41. The main objective of this evaluation is stated in the project document: "To review the progress and effectiveness of implementation in terms of achieving project objectives, outcomes and outputs. The findings and recommendations of this review will be instrumental for improving the overall project design and execution strategy for the remaining period of the project's term if necessary."
42. In particular, the evaluation aims to achieve the following specific objectives:
 - a. To assess the relevance of the intervention in relation to the needs and expectations of the beneficiaries (participating province and communities), the Country Development Objectives and FAO Strategic Objective (SO) 2 (focusing especially on the integrated approach of the project) and GEF objectives
 - b. To evaluate the progress made by the project in two years of execution, particularly the degree to which it has contributed to reaching the project objectives. In doing so, the evaluation will assess the progress made and gaps in compliance vs .the expected targets.
 - c. To assess the progress towards achieving project sustainability and its potential long-term impact, if any.
 - d. To identify lessons learned and corrective measures in relation to project design, implementation and management.
43. Sub- questions related to each of the main MTR questions are shown in the MTR matrix (Appendix 4).

1.3 *Intended users*

44. The decision makers (PSC, PTF including the BH and the LTO) and implementers (PMU and executing partners) will be the main users of the MTR report and will specifically benefit from the MTR findings and recommendations on how to further improve the project implementation of activities. FAO GEF CU, and FAO staff and other projects will benefit from the good practices that might emerged from this project and from the lessons learned.
45. Aside from contributing to organizational learning and informed planning, the MTR will also serve a purpose of establishing accountability of the project custodians to the GEF and to Vanuatu.

1.4 *Methodology*

46. The MTR involved four primary methodological elements: (i) Desk review of project documentation, and development of the inception report; (ii) Meetings with key stakeholders, including visits to project field sites; (iii) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders at the national and local levels, including: the project's LTO, the Funding Liaison Officer (in this case the former FLO and the current FLO), Project Management Unit (PMU), the Project Steering Committee (PSC), project partners; and any other stakeholders as deemed necessary ; (iv) interviews with key beneficiaries To gain insights from target beneficiaries (farmers, fishers, eco-tourism operators, landowners, PA management committees, workshop participants, chiefs, provincial and government authorities) (Appendix 9 includes the field visit report with the questionnaire used at the field sites).
47. The MTR set-up a collaborative and participatory approach in order to ensure close commitment with the Project Team, FAO-SAP, FAO-GEF CU, government counterparts, and other key stakeholders. The MTR used a mixed-methods approach combining both quantitative and qualitative input.
48. Three main sources of primary data and information were examined:
 - a. A wide variety of documents covering project design, implementation progress, monitoring, amongst others (see Appendix 5 for a list of references)
 - b. Project document and CEO Endorsement.
 - c. Periodic project reports including Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs), Six Month's Project Progress Report (PPR) project budget, and technical reports produced during the project implementation.
 - d. Baseline GEF focal area Tracking Tool submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement,
 - e. One-on-one consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, using "semi-structured interviews" with a key set of questions (see Appendix 6). Triangulation of results, i.e., comparing information from different sources, such as documentation and interviews, or interviews on the same subject with different stakeholders, was used to corroborate or check the reliability of evidence.

- f. Direct observations of project results and activities at 2 field sites out of the five target sites covered by the project were undertaken: (i) Tanna; and (ii) South Pentecost (see Appendix 9 for full field report).
 - g. Stakeholders interviewed either in-person through the National consultant or via video-conference (Zoom, Skype) included amongst others (Appendix 3 for a complete list of stakeholders consulted/interviewed):
 - Members of the Project team
 - Members of the Project Steering Committee
 - Participatory partners and executing partners of the project
 - Local communities using resources from project sites
 - Stakeholders at grassroots level who benefit directly or indirectly from the intervention
49. Evaluative evidence was assessed against the primary GEF evaluation criteria:
- a. *Relevance* – the extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time.
 - b. *Effectiveness* – the extent to which an objective has been achieved or how likely it is to be achieved.
 - c. *Efficiency* – the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible.
 - d. *Results/impacts* – the positive and negative, and foreseen and unforeseen, changes to and effects produced by a development intervention. In GEF terms, results include direct project outputs, short-to medium term outcomes, and longer-term impact including global environmental benefits, replication effects and other, local effects.
 - e. *Sustainability* – the likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially and socially sustainable.
50. Factors affecting the performance and delivery of the project results - focused on quality of project oversight, execution and management, including financial management and materialization of co-financing, project design, partnerships and stakeholder engagement, communications and knowledge management and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), with specific attention to M&E Design, and M&E Plan Implementation. Cross-cutting dimensions- including gender, indigenous-peoples and minority-group concerns and equity concerns, Environmental and Social Safeguards (as appropriate).
51. The information collected, including documentary evidence, interviews and observations, have been compiled and organized according to the questions asked in the assessment and as per FAO's requirements and template design.
52. The MTR team consisted of the lead international consultant Ms. Dima Reda and a national consultant Ms. Emily Tasale. Ms. Reda has 20 years of experience working in the

international development field focusing on results and knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and institutional capacity building. Much of her work in these areas has been centered on engaging and working with vulnerable communities to support climate change adaptation efforts. Ms. Reda has recently been working to develop GCF projects utilizing community-based adaptation tools and models to enhance the adaptive capacity and build climate resilience of small-holder farmers and coastal communities. Previously, she led the development and implementation of the Global Environment Facilities' (GEF) results management system.

53. Ms Tasale has over 10 years of experience working in the field of biodiversity conservation, invasive species control management, natural resource management and community livelihood, of which much of her work has been devoted to working with the rural and remote communities on the island of Santo. She has assisted in the development of Vanuatu's National Community Conservation Area Ranger's Toolkit for piloting in community conservation areas in Vanuatu.

1.5 Limitations

54. Due to the limitations of the Covid-19 pandemic, this MTR was undertaken remotely to minimize epidemiologic risks. In this context, the general approach was to have the International lead consultant work remotely from her home-office doing a desk review of project documents supported by remote semi-structured interviews using communication tools such as email, Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp and other convenient electronic tools. The National consultant was responsible to conduct interviews face-to-face or by using communication tools as well such as phone, Skype, Zoom or other means, following guidelines that are in place locally to minimize epidemiologic risks. The National consultant undertook the field visit.
55. Other limitations included (i) the lack of availability of data for the mid-term tracking tool (TT) results. These are projected to be completed by July 2021 and should be verified at the time of the final evaluation along with the final TT results; (ii) missing documents from the early stages of the project launch (the inception report and minutes from that meeting were not found); (iii) availability of Project Steering Committee (PSC) members (the MTR team was able to interview 3 out of the 7 PSC members as many were not available or not responsive to emails and calls); (iv) lack of data on co-financing – some figures were discussed with project stakeholders via interviews but to date co-financing has not been tracked by the project team; and (iv) limited opportunity to travel to all project sites (given the difficulty of travel and time constraints for the MTR), the National Consultant was able to visit 2 out of the 5 project sites.

2 Project background and context

2.1 Project overview

56. The 'Integrated Sustainable Land and Coastal Management' project in Vanuatu (ISLCM), GCP/VAN/001/GFF (GEF ID 5397) is a four-year intervention (from March 2017 to September 2021) that seeks to address the consequences of unsustainable resource use patterns that threaten critical natural resources, including forest cover and biodiversity in the country, as well climate threats to coastal resources. The main environmental threats include: expansion of cattle ranching, expansion of tourism activities, inappropriate farming practices, exploitation of marine resources and damage to reefs by cyclones and invasive species.
57. The project aims to address the critical barriers that remain despite efforts by the national government and other development partners. These barriers can be split into national level and site level. At the national level, project barriers include: sector development policies are contradictory and undermine the protection of global environment values and flows of ecosystem goods and services, decision-making and planning mechanisms do not allow complex environmental considerations to be taken adequately into account, mechanisms are lacking for ensuring the financial sustainability of environmental conservation, management and restoration. At the site level, project barriers include: environmental issues and stakeholder interests are not effectively or equitably represented in planning and governance frameworks, local stakeholders have inadequate capacities for the application of forms of resource management which protect global environmental values and flows of ecosystem goods and services, costs of initiating ecosystem restoration processes exceed short term benefits to stakeholders and their willingness to pay, local stakeholders lack the means by which to perceive ongoing benefits from the protection of environmental values and ecosystems goods and services, and management capacities for protected areas are inadequate to ensure their long term sustainability.
58. FAO is the GEF Implementing Agency and the project's main government executing partners are the Ministries of Climate Change; Lands and Natural Resources; Agriculture, Quarantine, Forestry and Fisheries. The project was prepared aiming to be aligned to FAO's Strategic Objective SO2, GEF Focal Areas of Biodiversity, Climate Change Mitigation, International Waters and Sustainable Forest Management, and key national priorities (Vanuatu Forest Policy, National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, National Adaptation Programme of Action, and Aichi Targets).
59. The project objective is to *test and implement sustainable and integrated management of forest, land and marine resources to achieve effective ridge-to-reef (R2R) conservation in selected priority watersheds in Vanuatu*. The project is being implemented in five locations: Aneityum Island, the Middle Bush area of Tanna Island, the north of Efate Island, South Pentecost Island and Gaua Island.



Figure 1: Locations of target areas

2.2 Project Components

60. The project is structured into the following three components:

- **Component 1** focus on ensuring the existence of a favorable enabling environment in support of the application of the model proposed by the project, including the mainstreaming of integrated R2R approaches into agriculture, livestock, tourism, fisheries and environment policies; the promotion of coordination between these sectors in order to minimize the risk of conflicts and perverse incentives for environmental degradation; the strengthening of environmental decision-making capacities and instruments, including land use planning guidelines, EIA procedures, and lease application approval procedures; and the strengthening of the PA system.
- **Component 2** will focus on site level activities, emphasizing the integration of landscape elements, focal area activities and sector priorities with an overall landscape perspective. Successive outcomes will include: strengthened planning and governance frameworks for landscape management; strengthened capacities for the application of sustainable production systems; ecosystem restoration; livelihood alternatives; local PA strengthening and integration; and local financial sustainability mechanisms.
- **Component 3** will focus on knowledge management, including the systematization and dissemination of best practices and lessons learned, the

generation and supply of information on trends in ecosystem conditions to guide decision-making and planning, and monitoring and evaluation of project effectiveness, feeding back into adaptive management decisions.

61. Component outcomes and outputs are outlined in the table below.

Table 3: Project framework

Components	Outcomes	Outputs
Component 1: Improving the enabling environment for integrated sustainable land and coastal management	1.1 Integrated R2R considerations mainstreamed into sector development policies	1.1.1 Policy proposals for channeling tourism income to environmental management
		1.1.2 Policy proposals for promoting compatibility between agricultural development and maintenance of ecosystem goods and services
		1.1.3 Policy proposals in support of ICZM including protection of coastal and marine ecosystems on which fisheries sustainability and marine biodiversity depend
	1.2 Environmental planning and decision-making processes take integrated R2R considerations into account	1.2.1 Improved procedures for approving lease applications
		1.2.2 Improved capacities and regulatory instruments for consideration of landscape-wide (ridge to reef) considerations into EIAs and determinations
	1.3 Increased financial resources channeled from the tourism sector to environmental conservation and PA management	1.3.1 Corporate social and environmental responsibility commitments from the cruise industry
Component 2: Integrated ridge to reef management in priority island localities	2.1 Target landscapes subject to integrated R2R planning and governance	2.1.1 Multi-stakeholder mechanisms for landscape planning, decision-making and conflict management covering all three target localities
		2.1.2 Norms for resource management practices developed and agreed among stakeholder groups covering target localities
		2.1.3 Integrated landscape/seascape management plans developed and implemented by local landowners
	2.2 Farmers, ranchers and fishers are managing resources sustainably, resulting in	2.2.1 Extension modules for agriculture, fisheries, livestock and forestry including integrated R2R concepts

Components	Outcomes	Outputs
	improved flows of ecosystem goods and services, as a result of increased capacities and awareness	2.2.2 Field schools and mechanisms for participatory learning and experimentation in target localities
		2.2.3 Pilot solar driers for copra and other agricultural products
	2.3 Capacities for generation of ecosystem goods and services are permanently restored in priority areas affected by land degradation	2.3.1 Ecosystem restoration programmes implemented in all three target localities
	2.4 Local people in target localities have opportunities and capacities to perceive direct benefits from conservation and sustainable land management	2.4.1 Ecotourism development plans formulated with local participation in each target locality, including carrying capacity studies
		2.4.2 Ecotourism initiatives managed by local communities or with provision for generating significant benefits for local communities, including provisions for environmental sustainability
		2.4.3 Plans and norms agreed by local stakeholders in each target locality for sustainable extraction and marketing of NTFPs, incorporating results of ecological studies.
	2.5 Strengthened protected area network in target localities, filling ecosystem coverage gaps and responding to overall R2R management plans	2.5.1 MPA and CCA agreements negotiated and signed by government and local communities, with corresponding mapping and demarcation
		2.5.2 MPA and CCA agreements negotiated and signed by government and local communities, with corresponding mapping and demarcation
		2.5.3 Buffer zones and corridors established between and around CCAs and MPAs International designations of PAs
		2.5.4 Management plans for each PA, harmonized with provisions of overall landscape management plans
		2.5.5 Local PA management committees, functioning with capacities for adaptive management
	2.6 Sustainable resource management and PA	2.6.1 PA-specific financial management and investment plans

Components	Outcomes	Outputs
	management supported by sustainable financing	2.6.2 Local-level financial mechanisms in support of PA management and landscape restoration
Component 3: Knowledge management	3.1 Best practices and lessons learned are systematized and disseminated	3.1.1 Mechanisms for systematization, dissemination and awareness raising
	3.2 Decision-making and planning are guided by information on trends in ecosystem conditions	3.2.1 Systems in provincial government offices for management of information on ecosystem conditions and trends, feeding data to local organizations in target localities
	3.3 Project management is subject to effective M&E that feeds back into adaptive management decisions.	3.2.2 Functioning Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) unit in the Department of Forestry 3.3.1 Functioning project M&E system

2.3 Beneficiaries and stakeholders

62. Project stakeholders, their respective roles in the project (including beneficiaries) and their connection to the MTR is outlined in the table below.

Table 4: Participatory stakeholder analysis matrix

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate) ⁴	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3) ⁵	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
1. Active stakeholders with direct responsibility for the project, e.g. FAO, executing partners				
AFAOREP-PROGRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Agency in Vanuatu – overseeing implementation of the project in Vanuatu. 		1	Mr. Graham Nimoho Throughout the MTR process
FAO Sub-regional Coordinator for the Pacific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget holder for the project 		1	Ms. Xiangjun Yao

⁵ 1 = essential; 2 = desirable; 3 = if time and resources allow

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate) ⁴	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3) ⁵	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
Lead Technical Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for the technical delivery of the project 		1	Mr. Aru Mathias
Funding Liaison Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overseeing the adherence to GEF requirements 		1	Ms. Yurie Naito (initial FLO)/) Chhakchhuak, Lianchawii (current FLO)
Ministry for Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology, Geo-Hazards, Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main implementation partners and responsible for day-to-day execution, management, coordination and monitoring of the SLM, SFM, agriculture related and sylvo-pastoral activities Recipients of training Collaboration in establishment of demonstration site/s and related training activities. Support with policy in strengthening PAs, PA network system, and establishment of mechanisms for sustainable financing of PAs National government oversight of project implementation Support for project management/oversight and M&E 	Participatory partner - Executing partner of the project	1	Mrs. Eslyne Garaebiti Director General
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main implementation partners and responsible for day to day execution, management, coordination and monitoring of the SLM, 	Participatory partner, Executing partner of the project	1	Mr. Moses John Amos Director General

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate) ⁴	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3) ⁵	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
	<p>SFM, agriculture related and sylvo-pastoral activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration in establishment of community nurseries, distribution of seedlings and related activities • Recipients of training • Collaboration in establishment of demonstration site/s and related training activities. • Support with policy in strengthening PAs, PA network system, and establishment of mechanisms for sustainable financing of PAs • National government oversight of project implementation • Support for project management/oversight and M&E 			
Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recipients of training • National government oversight of project implementation • Support for project management/oversight and M&E 	Participatory partner	2	Mr. Arthur Faerua Director General
SHEFA Province	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main implementation partners and responsible for day to day execution, management, coordination and monitoring of the SLM, 	Participatory partner, Executing partner of the project	1	Mr. Morris Kaloran, Secretary General

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate) ⁴	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3) ⁵	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
	SFM, agriculture related and sylvo-pastoral activities			
TAFEA Province	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main implementation partners and responsible for day-to-day execution, management, coordination and monitoring of the SLM, SFM, agriculture related and sylvo-pastoral activities 	Participatory partner	1	Mr. Joe lautim, Secretary General
Local communities using resources from project sites and Pas. South Pentecost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration in establishment of community nurseries, distribution of seedlings and related activities • Collaboration in establishment of protected areas. • Recipients of training 	Participatory partner	1	Area Administrator and Area Council Secretaries of Pentecost. Malbanbang Customary Chiefs representatives for South Pentecost
Local communities using resources from project sites and Protected Areas, Middle Bush and North Tanna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration in establishment of community nurseries, distribution of seedlings and related activities • Collaboration in establishment of protected areas. • Recipients of training 	Participatory partner	1	Area Administrator and Area Council Secretaries of Central and North Tanna. Central and North Tanna Customary Chiefs representatives
2. Active stakeholders with authority to make decisions on the project, e.g., members of the PSC				
Department Environment Protection and Conservation	Chairman PSC	Participatory partner	1	Mrs. Donna Kalfatack. Director

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate) ⁴	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3) ⁵	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	Member PSC	Participatory partner	1	Mr. Antoine Ravo. Director
Department of Livestock	Member PSC	Participatory partner	1	Mr. Lonny Bong. Director
Department of Forestry	Member PSC	Participatory partner	1	Mr. Rexon Vira. Director
Department of Fisheries	Member PSC	Participatory partner	3	Mr. William Naviti. Director
Department of Tourism	Member PSC	Participatory partner	1	Mr. Jerry Spooner. Director
Department of Lands	Member PSC	Participatory partner	2	Mr. Paul Gambetta. Director
3. Secondary stakeholders (only indirectly or temporarily affected)				
National Disaster Management Office	Partner in Emergencies and Recovery TH Harold	Partner	2	Mr. Philip Meto. Operations Manager, South Pentecost
4. Stakeholders at grassroots level who benefit directly or indirectly from the intervention (gender disaggregated where possible)				
Nusumetu Conservancy Community Total Population: 867 Men: 487 Women: 380	Beneficiary	Beneficiary	1	Chief and counsellors Nusumetu Community representative

Key stakeholders (disaggregated as appropriate) ⁴	What is their role in the project?	What is the reason for their inclusion in or exclusion from the MTR?	Priority for MTR (1-3) ⁵	How and when should they be involved in the MTR?
South Pentecost Communities. Livelihood Recovery Program Total Inhabitants: 2,921 Men: 1,287 Women: 1,634	Beneficiary	Beneficiary	1	Chief and counsellors Bay Homo Community representative
5. Stakeholders at grassroots level who do not benefit from the intervention (gender disaggregated where possible)				
NA				
6. Other interest groups that are not participating directly in the intervention, e.g., development agencies working in the area, civil-society organizations				
New York Botanical Garden	Co-financing	New York Botanical Garden also did work in one of the project sites	1	Mr. Gregorrry Blankett
Live and Learn	NGO-Prodac	Live and Learn also did work in one of the project site	1	Ms. Glarinda Andre, Officer in Charge

2.4 Financial Resources

63. The GEF grant resources for the project total USD 4,605,680 have been allocated in support of capacity development, policy and legal studies and preparation of normative instruments, technical assistance for technical studies, preparation of policies and plans, and finding technical and social solutions for sustainable forest and land management and protected area (PA) management linked with community livelihoods. GEF resources will also be used for financing publications for awareness raising and education on biodiversity, land degradation, community conservation areas, sustainable forest management and PA management best practices and will support community-based livelihood enhancement activities.
64. Vanuatu Government co-financing for the projects includes a USD 10,000,000 grant and USD 500,000 in-kind contributions. The grant element comes from five ministries and is marked for use in several project activities, land lease registration, development of marine hatcheries, tourism promotion and development, governance and climate change monitoring and reporting, among others. In-kind co-financing mainly consists of staff time, office time and utilities, and support for local travel. Additionally, co-financing from

non-government sources (ACIAR, VANGO, Live and Learn and NY Botanical Garden) has also been pledged for project implementation.

65. FAO co-financing for the project total USD 1,775,000. The FAO grant is in the form of a Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) formulated under FAO's Pacific Programme Framework. The TCP is marked to address issues and impacts related to loss of biodiversity, forest cover and sustained agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry produce and use. FAO is also tasked to provide technical assistance, support, training and supervision of the execution of activities financed by GEF resources.
66. Please see the co-financing table in Appendix 2 for additional information on pledged co-financing, the MTR was unable to verify current co-financing status.

2.5 Project changes and implementation status

67. The full-strength Project Management Unit (PMU) did not begin until September 2019 (two years after project inception in 2017). Little progress had been made prior to the arrival of the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA). In spite of the initial delay, the COVID-19 global pandemic, and severe natural disasters, the project's progress towards targets has improved.
68. The Covid-19 global pandemic has severely impacted project implementation and slowed progress. Travel restrictions due to lockdown, prevented international consultants/experts travel to the country to provide technical support needed for some activities, On top of the global pandemic, natural disasters in the form of Tropical Cyclone Harold and the Yasur Volcano ashfall and acid rain in Tanna Island have also affected the implementation of activities at project sites.
69. Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Harold (TC) made landfall in Vanuatu on Monday 6 April 2020, causing widespread and severe damage as it travelled east south-east. Hurricane force winds of 215km/hr. (115knots) gusting to 235km/hr. (125knots) were experienced across Penama, Sanma and Malampa provinces. This was accompanied by heavy rainfalls and flash flooding over low lying areas and areas close to riverbanks including coastal flooding over parts.
70. Given the severity of the damage caused, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Vanuatu sought FAO's support to help communities in the affected areas as quickly as possible to ensure food security and livelihoods in the short term. While it was challenging to convert activities of the ISLCM project toward emergency and recovery activities in the project area, the project team was able to adapt effectively to target one project site that was most affected by the TC, South Pentecost. After a verbal request from the Government of Vanuatu and in accordance with the GEF OPF, the team developed a realignment of the priorities to concentrate on the components and planned activities of the project focusing on Pentecost Island.
71. The team developed a Livelihood Recovery Project (LRP) to contribute to the agriculture sector recovery programme and GoV priorities included in the DNP. The LRP has focused mainly on the agriculture, set-up of community agro-forestry nurseries The GoV recovery

planning also emphasizes the need to focus on promoting sustainable farming practices and agricultural technologies adapted to local conditions; improving information systems for food security and animal health surveillance; introducing proper rangeland management systems; and promoting income diversification activities. The designed LRP interventions has contributed to most of the above thematic areas and aligns directly with the outputs under Component 2 of the ISLCM. A discussion of the alignment and results is included in Section 2.7.

72. In terms of the volcano ashfall and acid rain in Tanna island, the project team was able to conduct a *Damage and Loss Assessment on the impact of Volcanic Ash and Acid Rain on Agriculture and Vegetation on Tanna*, the team developed an associated workplan that better targets the situation on the island and fully aligns with component 2 of the ISLCM project. The relevance and results of this work is detailed in Section 2.7
73. As at the end of April 2021, the overall rate of delivery is at 34%. As mentioned earlier, the complicated situation created by 3 disasters has not helped the normal development of activities. The rate in implementation of the multi-year work plan is slower than that which is expected to deliver on all of the outputs by the end date of 15 September 2022.
74. The PSC held a meeting in August 2020 to recommend a no-cost extension till 15 September 2022 in order to meet the Project objectives (since the project started a full 2-years late and due to the global pandemic and natural disasters that have occurred since).

2.6 Theory of change

75. The project did not have an explicit theory of change (ToC) as such the MTR team has reconstructed a “post-facto” ToC as part of the MTR, based on the project's log frame and initial review of project documents. The ToC was discussed and reviewed during stakeholder interviews and sent separately via email to solicit feedback. The MTR team did not receive any written comments on the ToC and during the interviews there seemed to be a general consensus that the ToC outlined below was adequate.
76. From a review of documentation and through consultations with stakeholders, the MTR team has proposed the following as the ToC for the project:

The overarching theory for the project is that by adopting sustainable and integrated management practices of coastal and terrestrial ecosystems the forest, agriculture, marine environments (including coral reefs), and other natural habitats will be strengthened and conserved, while also supporting livelihoods and income from farming, fishing, and tourism.

The project is built on a series of intervention strategies that lead to the enabling conditions that allow for integrated sustainable land and coastal management in Vanuatu. The enabling conditions at both the national and local level provide a base for broader adoption of a R2R approach creating the desired behavior change of sustainable management practices and increased investment. The increased uptake in R2R planning and governance will support the reduction of stress on ecosystems and improve environmental, social and economic conditions, thereby creating a long-term impact of

sustainable and integrated management of forest, land, and marine ecosystems. Figure 1 provides a schematic of the above suggested pathway of change.

Figure 2 below, provides a mapping of the main barriers the project is addressing, intermediate states the project will achieve, underlying assumptions, impact drivers, and project impacts. The overall model detailed in figure 2 has been used as a basis to better understand the project's intervention strategies that establish the monitoring and assessment of process, stress reduction, environmental status and socio-economic status indicators and will support the capturing of learning for dissemination and adaptive management.

It also supports an understanding of how the intervention strategies have been designed to support the use of new practices by targeted stakeholders, specifically in the application of a landscape-wide spatial vision based on R2R principles and restore relevant aspects of targeted ecosystems to supply benefits to the primary benefices. Based on feedback from relevant stakeholders, the ToC has been refined and finalized.

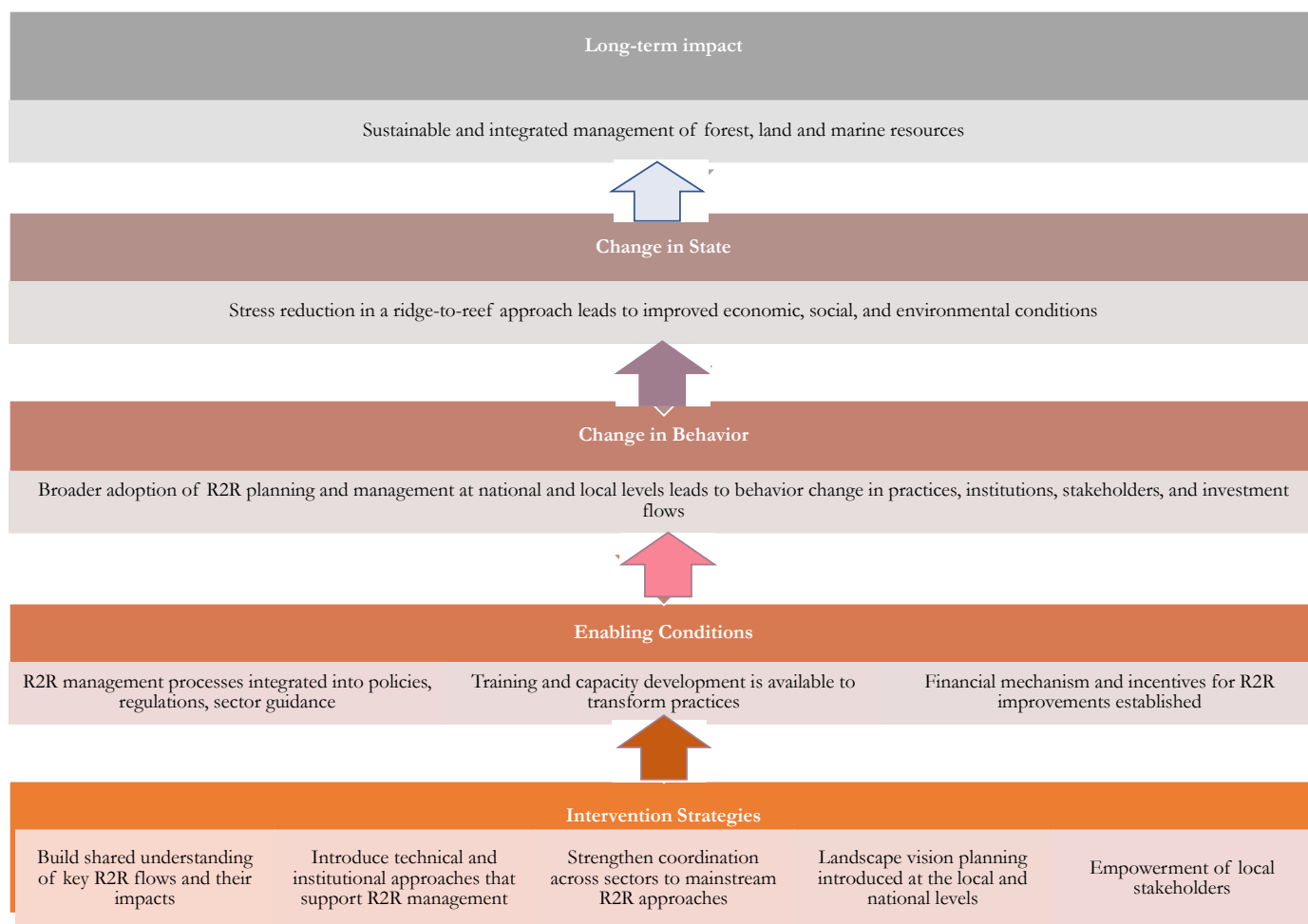


Figure 2: Suggested Pathway of Change⁶

⁶ Adapted from Mathews, R. E., Tengberg, A., Sjödin, J., & Liss-Lymer, B. (2019). Implementing the source-to-sea approach: A guide for practitioners. SIWI, Stockholm.

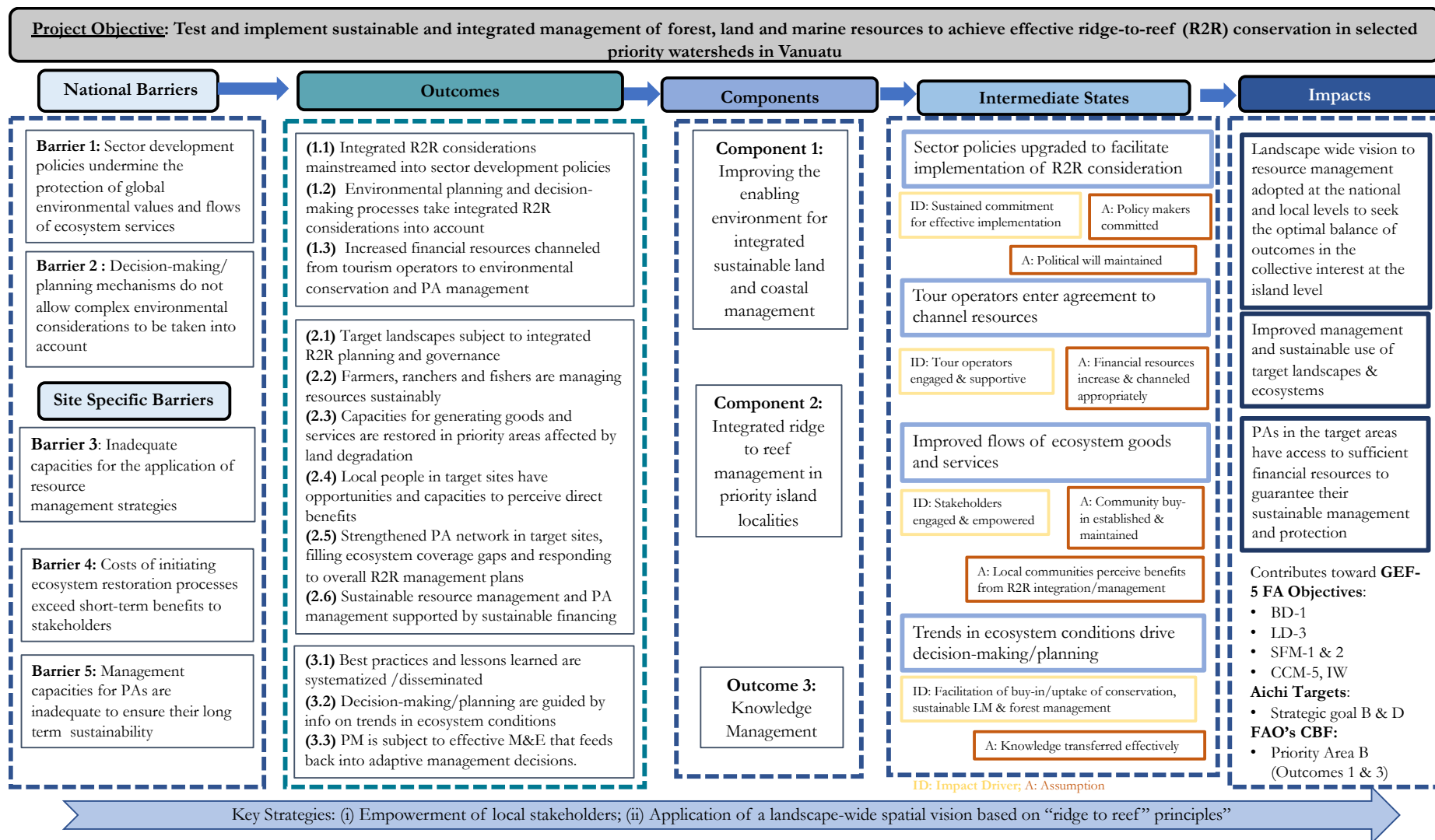


Figure 3: ISLCM Theory of Change

2.7 Key findings and MTR questions

Relevance

Finding 1: The project was well designed and the components, outcomes, and outputs of the project were closely aligned with and relevant to the country priorities, GEF focal area strategies, and FAO's Strategic Framework.

Finding 2: A significant shift occurred within the project to focus on disaster recovery at 2 of the 5 ISLCM project sites affected by natural disasters. The project team has effectively adapted to the new situation on the ground and at the request of the Government of Vanuatu (GoV) reframed several activities to meet the changing needs and priorities of the targeted beneficiaries. This has been done in a manner that aligns with the original design of the project and contributes to the overall objective.

Finding 3: The re-alignment of the project did not include an adjustment of the results framework (RF). Given the additional resources and time that has been devoted to support the recovery effort, targets may need to be adjusted including incorporating new targets to reflect the Livelihood Recovery Project (LRP).

2.7.1.1 Political, institutional and strategic relevance.

77. A review of the documentation and interviews with key stakeholders in the review process confirmed that the design and implementation of the project outcomes were highly relevant to FAO's strategic objective 2, and GEF Strategic Objectives Biodiversity (BD-1) – Improve sustainability of protected area systems; Land Degradation (LD-3) - Integrated Landscapes: Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape; Climate Change Mitigation (CCM-5) – Promote conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks through sustainable management of land use, land use change, and forestry; International Waters (IW-3) ; and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM-1) - Reduce pressures on forest resources and generate sustainable flows of forest ecosystem. Details of this alignment are described below.
78. In terms of country policies, the initial design aligned directly with key government policies as well as processes such as the NBSAP, NAP and NAPA (detailed in ProDoc). With the two-year delay in putting in place a full project team, several of the government policies have been updated or developed prior to project start or during the project implementation period. Even with these updates, the project as designed aligns well with the Government of Vanuatu's strategies and objectives. The chart below outlines this alignment with several of the updated strategies and policies.

Table 5: Alignment with Country Policies and Strategies

Alignment with Country Policies and Strategies		
	Description	Aligned Outcomes

		1. 1	1. 2	1. 3	2. 1	2. 2	2. 3	2. 4	2. 5	2. 6	3.1	3.2
NBSAP (2018-2030) <i>Original NBSAP Action Plan in the ProDoc (1999)</i>	The original project design referred to the NBSAP's 1999 Action Plan, after project approval, the GoV has developed their latest NBSAP (2018-2030). The project still aligns directly with the NBSAP action plan and contributes directly to the Strategic Areas (SA) including: SA 1: Conservation Area Management; SA 2: Forest and Inland Waters Ecosystems Conservation and Management; SA 3: Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Conservation and Management; SA 6: Mainstreaming Biodiversity across sectors and society; and SA 7: Resource Mobilization	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) (2016-2030)	The environment is one of the three main pillars of the (NSDP). The environment goals and policy objectives that align directly to this project include: Objective 1: A nation that ensures our food and nutrition security needs are adequately met by all people through increasing sustainable food production; Objective 3: A strong and resilient nation in the face of climate change and risks posed by hazards and natural disasters and improving household production; and Objective 4: A nation which	X	X		X	X		X	X			X

	utilizes and sustainably manages land, water, and natural resources.											
Vanuatu Sustainable Development Tourism Strategy (2021-2025)	Vanuatu's Sustainable Development Tourism Strategy was not developed at the time of project design. The primary focus of the strategy is to support the transition to a more resilient tourism that focuses on a higher value, low impact, diversified tourism model.			X				X				
Vanuatu National Fisheries Sector Policy (VNFSP) (2016-2031)	The VNFSP was not yet approved at the time of project design. The ISLCM project aligns directly with several of the main strategic objectives of the policy including: (1) Institutional Setup and Good Governance: Sustained resources and resourcing that strengthen fisheries institutions capacity building and training; (5) Environment Protection, Climate Change and Disaster Risk reduction: Investigate the impacts of CC on fisheries resources and habitats, particularly identifying and implementing key priority areas on climate resilience and disaster risk reduction	X	X		X	X			X			X

2.7.1.2 Alignment with GEF objectives.

79. **Biodiversity:** in the biodiversity focal area, the project focuses on GEF's Objective 1 (BD-1): to improve the sustainability of protected area systems by increasing the area of protected areas to fill ecosystem gaps (particularly montane forests and reef ecosystems)

and increase the effectiveness of management of these areas through the strengthening of community-based institutions and governance, within the overall framework of a ridge-to-reef approach. The longer-term objective for the project was to contribute to the financial sustainability of protected area management by supporting the development of mechanisms for channeling income from the tourism sector. *It is not yet clear whether payment from the tourism sector will be achieved through this project.*

80. **Land degradation:** the project is attempting to reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape (GEF Objective 3, LD-3), by supporting evidence-based processes that will enable multiple stakeholders to engage in negotiated planning, decision-making and governance, taking into account the nature, magnitude and implications of land use alternatives and their interactions at a landscape level in such a way as to optimize the balance of social and environmental outcomes.
81. **International waters:** the project should contribute to IW-3 Outcome 1 through its mainstreaming of ICZM principles into policy frameworks under project output 1.1.3 as well as IW-3 Outcome 2 through its support to the establishment and management of MPAs under project outcome 2.5, and management of fisheries resources under project outcome 2.2; and finally, to IW-3 Outcome 3 through the mechanisms for knowledge management and information sharing under project outcome 3.1.
82. **Climate change:** The project is promoting the conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks through the sustainable management of land use, land-use change, and forestry (GEF Objective 5, CCM-5), specifically by developing and implementing agricultural practices that reduce forest degradation and encourage forest restoration (e.g. agroforestry and silvo-pastoral production systems) and reduce demands for fuel wood. *The project will need to better track indicators if carbon sequestration estimates are to be captured.*
83. **SFM/REDD:** the project will contribute to GEF Objective 1, SFM-1 (Reduced pressures on forest resources and generate sustainable flows of forest ecosystem services) and Objective 2, SFM-2 (Strengthen the enabling environment to reduce GHG emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhance carbon sinks from LULUCF activities), through supporting improved landscape-wide planning and governance of resource use in order to address unsustainable land use change dynamics that threaten forest areas. The project document initially indicated that this would also be done through the financial mechanisms (including carbon markets) to support and motivate forest conservation. From the current status of project outputs, it is not clear that this can be done during the remaining timeframe of the project nor are there any specific indicators related to this in the project design.

2.7.1.3 Alignment with FAO Strategic framework and Objectives

84. The project is aligned with the FAO's Strategic Framework and Objectives. The project specifically aligns with the Strategic Objective 2: Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner. The project is also aligned with Regional Priority Area 4: Environmental Management and Resilience.

85. The project is also aligned with priority areas of the FAO's Vanuatu Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2013 – 2017. Priority Area B: Environmental management and resilience (including disaster preparedness, emergency response and climate change), Priority Area B Outcome 1: Enhanced biodiversity conservation and climate change, and Priority Area B Outcome 3: Integrated sustainable land and coastal management. The project is also aligned with FAOs regional priorities updated after project development in [FAO's Multi-country Programming Framework for the Pacific Islands \(2018-2022\)](#): mostly through an alignment with sustainable and climate-smart practices promoted to help build resilient agriculture, fisheries and forestry production systems.

2.7.1.4 Adaptive management due to natural disasters

86. As mentioned in Section 2.5, to support the GoV to address the natural disasters that took place during project implementation, the project team had to adapt and develop a work plan that not only supported beneficiary needs on the ground but also aligned with the overall objective of the project.

87. The changes and alignment occurred most directly with Component 2 of the project *Integrated R2R management in priority localities*. Table 4 below provides a mapping of the alignment between the *Livelihood Recovery Project (LRP)* and the overall ISLCM results framework.

Table 6: Alignment of LRP to ISLCM

Livelihood Recovery Project Component/Sub-Components	ISLCM Outcomes/Outputs Alignment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Component 1: Sustainable Livelihoods Recovery: objective to restore the productive assets of the targeted communities and households in selected municipalities of the target Provinces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 2.1: Target landscapes subject to integrated R2R planning and governance Outcome 2.2: Farmers, ranchers and fishers are managing resources sustainably, resulting in improved flows of ecosystem goods and services, as a results of increased capacities and awareness Outcome 2.3: Capacities for generation of ecosystem goods & services are permanently restored in priority areas affected by land degradation Outcome 2.4: Local people in target localities have opportunities and capacities to perceive direct benefits from conservation and SLM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subcomponent 1.1: Recovery of Household Productive Assets. Agricultural and fisheries productivity enhanced under rain-fed crop and livestock systems (integrated systems) and livelihoods developed and diversified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Output 2.1.2: Norms for resource management practices developed and implemented by local landowners Output 2.1.3: Integrated landscape/seascape management plans developed and implemented by local landowners Output 2.2.1: Extension modules for agriculture, fisheries, livestock and forestry including integrated R2R concepts

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output 2.2.2: Field schools and mechanisms for participatory learning and experimentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcomponent 1.2: Recovery of Community Productive Assets. Stabilized/improved livelihoods through use of community productive infrastructure. Through (i) rehabilitation, construction and maintenance of the water infrastructure; and (ii) rehabilitating rangelands and pastures through EBA approaches, undertaking soil and water conservation measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output 2.1.1: Multi-stakeholder mechanism for landscape planning, decision-making and conflict management • Output 2.3.1: Ecosystem restoration programmes implemented • Output 2.4.3: Plans and norms agreed by local stakeholders for sustainable extraction and marketing of NTFPs incorporating results of ecological studies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcomponent 1.3: Capacity Building for Recovery - will provide the essential capacity building to ensure effective implementation of subcomponents 1.1 and 1.2. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output 2.2.1: Extension modules for agriculture, fisheries, livestock and forestry including integrated R2R concepts • Output 2.2.2: Field schools and mechanisms for participatory learning and experimentation

88. Given the introduction of the LRP, the PMU along with the Project Steering Committee (PSC), FAO-SAP, should hold a meeting to discuss potential adjustments to the logframe and initial project targets to reflect the changes made and incorporate indicators to measure the success of the LRP. Suggested outputs and indicators to change are included in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Suggested project targets and indicators to be adjusted

Potential targets/indicators to adjust	Rationale	Proposed Adjustment
<p>Component 1, Outcome 1.3</p> <p><i>Indicator 1.3.1:</i> Amount of financial resources channeled from the tourism sector to environmental conservation and PA management</p> <p><i>Mid-term target:</i> \$75,000/year channeled from the tourism sector</p> <p><i>End-of Project target:</i> \$150,000/year channeled</p> <p><i>Output 1.3.1:</i> Corporate social and environmental responsibility commitments from the cruise industry</p>	<p>With the unpredictable collapse of the cruise ship industry, it is not possible for the project to actually receive funding from the industry during the lifetime of the project. It is more realistic at this stage if the team can focus on securing some type of commitment from the tourism sector and/or develop a strategy for how the DoT can secure such commitments.</p> <p>It is suggested that the project team hold discussions with the DoT to determine if there are other ways to channel funding from the tourism sector to environmental</p>	<p><i>Indicator 1.3.1:</i> Amount of financial resources committed from the tourism sector to environmental conservation and PA management</p> <p>Mid-term target: \$75,000/year committed from the tourism sector</p> <p>End-of Project target: \$150,000/year committed from the tourism sector</p> <p><i>Output 1.3.1:</i> Corporate social and environmental responsibility commitments from the tourism sector</p>

	conservation and PA management aligned with the recently published Vanuatu Sustainable Development Tourism Strategy (2021-2025) , potentially through Theme 2: RESILIENCE : through Niche Tourism Product Development: Developing and supporting niche tourism that protects, enhances and regenerates Vanuatu's assets or Theme 4: SUSTAINABILITY : through Sustainable Tourism Certification, Investment and Entrepreneurship.	
<p>Component 2, Outcome 2.1</p> <p><i>Indicator 2.1.1:</i> Area in target localities covered by landscape/seascape management plans developed and implemented by local landowners</p>	<p>The end of project target is that 100,000 ha will be targeted. This is an ambitious figure and given the shift in project focus, the delay in project start, and the extenuating circumstances of COVID, it is highly unlikely that the project can meet this target.</p>	<p>Suggest to decrease target to 10,000 ha</p> <p>This should be validated and discussed after the results of the mid-term tracking tool update are finalized.</p>
<p>Component 2, Outcome 2.2</p> <p><i>Indicators 2.2.1:</i> Increase in area (ha) in target localities over which sustainable hillside farming practices are applied</p> <p><i>Indicator 2.2.2:</i> Increase in area (ha) in target localities over which sustainable hillside ranching area applied</p> <p><i>Indicator 2.2.3:</i> Increase in area (ha) in target localities over which community-based fisheries regulations are effectively applied</p>	<p>Given the focused efforts on S. Pentecost and Tana, the target for these 3 indicators may need to be adjusted to capture the <i>LRP</i></p> <p>There may also be a desire to add in an indicator directly related to the work of the LRP to capture any results that were not captured in the original project design</p>	<p>The ha targeted may be increased for S. Pentecost and Tana and decreased at other sites. Updated figures can be included in the next PIR and agreed to by the PSC.</p>
<p>Component 2, Outcome 2.4</p> <p><i>Output 2.4.1: Ecotourism</i> development plans formulated</p>	<p>Outcome 2.4 is written to encompass more than just benefits from ecotourism:</p>	<p><i>Output 2.4.1: Development plans</i> formulated with local participation in each target</p>

<p>with local participation in each target locality, including carrying capacity studies</p> <p>Output 2.4.2 Ecotourism initiatives managed by local communities or with provision for generating significant benefits for local communities</p>	<p><i>Local people in target localities have opportunities and capacity to perceive direct benefits from conservation and SLM</i></p> <p>With the re-alignment through the LRP on food security, it seems appropriate to broaden outputs 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 beyond ecotourism. This will both better capture the work of the LRP and better align the outputs with Outcome 2.4.</p> <p>Moreover, in the coming years due to the COVID pandemic there is a potential for a reduction in tourism related activities and hence the need to diversify to other initiatives</p>	<p>locality, including carrying capacity studies</p> <p>Output 2.4.2: Conservation and SLM initiatives managed by local communities or with provision for generating significant benefits for local communities</p>
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Effectiveness

Finding 1. The project has produced several strong outputs as of the MTR, particularly in relation to parts of Component 2. These include the farmers and fishers managing resources sustainably as a results of increased capacities and awareness (outcome 2.2), capacities for generation of ecosystems and services resorted in priority areas (outcome 2.3), and local people having opportunities and capacities to perceived direct benefits from conservation and SLM (outcome 2.4). Overall, however, the delivery of the expected outputs has been mixed, with many deliverables behind schedule (for example, some of the work around strengthening protected areas (outcome 2.5) and some of the policy integration work under Component 1).

Finding 2. The livelihood recovery efforts under the LRP initiative has positively impacted beneficiaries at all 11 sites in S. Pentecost in terms of improved food security and has also provided a means of income generating activity due to a surplus supply of vegetables

Finding 3. While the LRP initiative has proved successful in addressing the needs of beneficiaries affected by unexpected natural disasters, the conservation activities and outputs of the project are lagging. The ISLCM project has begun re-shifting its focus back to accomplishing the conservation goal of the project but more effort is needed for the project to achieve many of its expected targets

Finding 4. FAO's processes and procedures for procurement and the LOA modality for engaging with project partners is relatively new for officials in Vanuatu. These administration issues have caused delays on several outputs.

Finding 5. Monitoring of the project targets is uneven across the project logframe. While some of the data is directly tied to the GEF tracking tools, which will be completed in July 2021, other indicators should be updated and reported on both quantitatively and qualitatively through the PIR.

2.7.1.5 *Delivery on project outcomes and outputs*

Component 1

89. With regards to Component 1: improving the enabling environment for integrated sustainable land and coastal management there has been some progress made however, delays in the signing the Letters of Agreement (LOAs) has severely hampered movement on this component and has created some misgivings among stakeholders as the FAO process is a newer one for government officials and is perceived as cumbersome.
90. Under this component several LOAs have been successfully signed specifically with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development; Department of Livestock, and Shefa Province, with at least one completed and closed There have however been significant delays in signing LOAs with the Department of Environment Protection and Conservation as well as the Department of Forestry. It is critical that these LOAs are signed as soon as possible to ensure work under component 1 is completed.
91. Under Outcome 1.1, several sector policies such as the [Vanuatu Sustainable Tourism Policy \(2019-2030\)](#) and the [Vanuatu National Fisheries Sector Policy \(VNFSP\) \(2016-2031\)](#), were developed with support from other donors/funds. The VSTP was developed by the Department of Tourism (DoT) in 2018 through support from the Government of New Zealand, prior to the full capacitation of the ISLCM project team and the VNFSP was developed through another GEF project implemented by UNDP. Both of these policies instruments take into account certain elements of the R2R approach committing the sectors to promoting sustainability and maintenance of ecosystem goods and services. The VSTP also references the EIA procedures and states that "tourism planning should encourage climate change adaptation strategies for the development, siting, design, and management of facilities as well as consider how tourism sites contribute to the sustainability and resilience of Vanuatu."
92. Several studies have been commissioned by the project, including on ICZM for the protection of coastal and marine ecosystems and carrying capacities studies in CCAs. More work is still needed with the Department of Tourism (DoT), the Department of Fisheries, and the Department of Agriculture to determine policy proposals that will promote the integration of R2R considerations.
93. Under Outcome 1.2, progress has been made with regards to capacity support and training (output 1.2.1) provided to government officials and local conservation officers, including a specific session on tracking and measuring key biodiversity indicators. Some work has been done with regards to environmental planning and EIA procedures, however, more work is needed to ensure EIA procedures include specific requirements to consider landscape-wide environmental and social dynamics. By mid-term, the procedures should have been outlined as the end target is for 50% of EIAs issued address landscape-

ide environmental and social dynamics. Given the remaining timeframe of the project, it is unlikely that the end target will be met but there is still time to put in place evidence-based procedures that can contribute to impactful results in the longer term.

94. In terms of instituting improved procedures for approving lease applications, it has been indicated through the PIR that this has been done through the government and World Bank support (output 1.2.1). The MTR team did not receive a copy of the procedures developed so could not verify that the completed report provides improved procedures for approving lease applications. The ISLCM project, however, was also designed to support the improvement, efficiency and accuracy of the management of spatial information related to lease applications, through the provision of hardware, software and training for the establishment of a centralized Solutions for Open Land Administration (SOLA) system in the Ministry of Lands, which will centralize data currently managed by different Government departments. If the World Bank's support does not include support for SOLA then ISLCM should still undertake key activities under this outcome including: activity 1.2.1.3, support to the piloting and validation of the application of the improved lease approval criteria, by the Ministry of Lands and the LMPC And activity 1.2.1.4. capacity development for SOLA, including the provision of hardware, software and training.
95. Finally, under outcome 1.3, as mentioned above, the DoT has made substantial progress on their sustainable development policy and developed an associated action plan (with funding from other donors). The changed tourism circumstances however, makes this particular outcome difficult to achieve. Suggested changes to indicators under this outcome were provided above as the assessment of this MTR is that the targets as originally designed cannot be met by project close. Similar to output 1.2.1 however, the ISLCM project does have the opportunity to support the DoT to put measures in place to increase financial resources channeled from the tourism sector to environmental conservation and PA management, once the global and local situation change over the next few years and tourism numbers pick up again.

Table 8: Midterm Rating and Justification for Component 1

Component rating	Rating Justification
Component 1 Moderately Unsatisfactory	<p>At the stage of the MTR there are key shortcomings under Component 1 however, if key LOAs are signed and resources are devoted to activities under this outcome, it is likely that most targets can be met.</p> <p>At least one study analyzing the implications of current policies in the target sectors for the condition of global environmental values (GEVs) is in process, however how this will translate into mainstreaming GEVs into sector policy is unclear. The challenges under this outcome stem in part from the delayed start-up of the project and policy work having been completed by government departments utilizing other sources of support. This does however, offer</p>

	the ISLCM project an opportunity to capitalize on the work done and focus on promoting coordination among sectors to minimize the risk of conflicts and perverse incentives for environmental degradation; strengthen environmental decision-making capacities and instruments, including through supporting the implementation of new lease procedures, EIA procedures, lease application and the strengthening of the PA system.	
Green = Achieved	Yellow = On target to be achieved	Red = Not on target to be achieved

Component 2

97. With regards to Component 2, the project has made concrete progress on several of the outputs under this component. Most of field work undertaken to date supports the results of component 2 as does the LRP discussed in greater detail in the section above. The following section summarized the validation effort undertaken by the national consultant, her full report is available in Appendix 9.

Livelihood recovery effort

98. Under Outcome 2.2, the ISLCM project has put significant effort on livelihood recovery across 11 communities in South Pentecost after tropical cyclone Harold (TC Harold) left massive destruction on April 6, 2020. The livelihood recovery activities have improved the capacity for women and men - farmers, fishers, ranchers - in the communities.
99. One year since TC Harold passed, the recovery effort of the project is still ongoing and the second phase of distribution of vegetable seed packets (tomatoes, carrots, Chinese cabbage, eggplant, broccoli and lettuce) has been distributed to communities. On the national consultant's field mission, a survey of beneficiaries was undertaken (please see Appendix 9 for the full report). From the survey on South Pentecost, 100% of the respondents mentioned that the ISLCM project has positively impacted all the local people, benefiting both men and women, youth and children and also people with special needs, in terms of improved food security, the project has provided provisions of a variety of vegetables that are easily accessible from beneficiaries' backyard gardens and due to a surplus supply of vegetables this has also become an income generating activity (see Figure 4 below).



Figure 4: Lettuce seedlings in nursery on Londar village (l) and newly planted backyard garden on point cross with bucket irrigation system(r)

100. In all the 11 communities targeted women in particular, reported that the implementation of the livelihood recovery was most remarkable. It has assisted them greatly to gain new knowledge and acquire new gardening skills such as transplanting vegetable seedlings from nursery to backyard gardens and knowledge-sharing of environmentally friendly pest-control applications on vegetables. They have now also acquired the skills to harvest, prepare, and cook the 'introduced' vegetables (see Figure 5 below).



Figure 5: Interviewing women of Panlimsi (l) and women of Londar (r) on their vegetable garden who earn income through sale of vegetable

101. The "introduced" agricultural systems of nursery, backyard gardens and multiplication plots complement the existing traditional systems of food security i.e. taro irrigation fields, bush fern cabbage, which have continuously supported the people of South Pentecost for centuries.

Conservation effort

102. The ISLCM project has begun re-shifting its focus back to accomplishing the conservation goal of the project. The project's conservation efforts via strengthening the environmental governance for the Bay Homo conservation area has recently started (April, 2021) through the revival of the Local Conservation Committee (LCC), established under GEF-4. This was achieved by re-electing new members into the 22-member committee of which two (2) members are women. The committee members are representatives of 11 communities in South Pentecost and they were tasked by the ISLCM project to set-up village conservation committees (VCCs) in their respective villages. Four (4) VCCs have been established so far in the communities of Ranputor, Point Cross, Wali and Ranwas. Furthermore, two other communities of Ransuksu and Hotwota, located adjacent to the Bay Homo conservation boundary, have also indicated interest in conserving their catchment areas as well. Therefore, progress has been made for strengthening protected area network (Outcome 2.5).



Figure 6: An LCC member of Ranputor (l) and LCC members of Ranwas including the LCS in the agro-forestry nursery (r)

- Three (3) out of the eleven (11) project sites, namely Panas, Wali and Point Cross have managed to establish protected areas in their communities targeting riverine, coastal and marine environment and only Ranputor community has continued to manage the Banmatmat marine protected area(MPA) since its establishment prior to GEF4. Interestingly, the Banmatmat MPA is managed by the local members of the Church of Christ in Ranputor with the purpose of raising funds for the church through seasonal harvest of the marine resources.
103. The VCC of Ranputor, which comprises members of the Church of Christ, has witnessed spill-over effects on marine resources and has decided to do a trial to extend the MPA along the coastline towards the Ranputor village and create zones for better management of its marine resources. The zones are then managed by the tribes in Ranputor.



Figure 7: Marine and coastal forest protected area at Wali

104. In February 2021, the community of Panas and Wali placed a ban on harvesting resources on the river and coastal marine environment. Local people of Wali and Panas have reported an increase in freshwater and marine resources particularly freshwater prawns and marine crabs since March. The Point Cross community has also set up a conservation area protecting the coastal forest and reef ecosystem on 1 May 2021
105. Few respondents (32%) recognize the conservation efforts made so far by the project. The group of people who recognize conservation efforts are those residing in communities where protected areas have been set-up and have received some awareness information about environmental conservation from the project. The vast majority of respondents (68%) have yet to see progress on conservation within their communities targeted by the project. Areas remaining for support include, but not limited to, raising awareness, capacity support to recognize and address environmental issues, setting up protected areas and managing the resources in water catchment areas and marine protected areas.
106. On Nusumetu, North Tanna, the ISLCM project has progressed in increasing capacity of locals to sustainably manage their resources (Outcome 2.2), carry out ecosystem restoration activities (2.3), provide livelihood alternatives (outcome 2.4) and influence other communities to care and protect the environment (outcome 2.5) as well as securing a local financial sustainability mechanism to support the Nusumetu CCA (outcome 2.6). Attaining these outcomes was supported in large part through the co-financing partners of the project.
107. On Tanna, the ISLCM Project has conducted environmental conservation awareness campaigns starting in the first quarter of 2020 through March 2021. The awareness team comprises of the ISLCM Project Local Conservation Specialist based on Nusumetu, the conservation committee of Nusumetu, the Tafea Provincial Area Secretary and the

government Area Administrator of North Tanna area council. It is clear that there is recognition by local stakeholders of the need to address environment issues.

108. The awareness team has reached out to other communities on North Tanna and the Middle Bush area on central Tanna. The mode of delivery is via power-point presentation, delivered in simple local dialect, supported by the use of a hired generator (later damaged) but there were limitations due to unavailability of fuel, poorly developed road conditions to villages on the coastal areas that hindered its transportation as well as the high cost of using the generator. Therefore, the team opted to revert to the cultural practice of simply talking by sharing the Nusumetu CCA experience delivered in the local vernacular language.
109. As a result of increased capacities and awareness, a total of 13 communities within the project target area of Middle Bush and North Tanna have shown interest and have proposed to protect and manage resources on certain areas of terrestrial or coastal marine or both ecosystems, amounting to a total of 35 CCA's. The beneficiaries in the 13 communities would need to be continually supported with information and advice on how to sustainably manage the resources in their proposed protected areas.
110. Nusumetu CCA has been mapped with an **area of 289 ha**. See map in Figure 8 below. In addition, the proposed conservation areas that have yet to be mapped out comprises fragmented forests, areas of previous agricultural development, aquatic reservoirs which includes caves.

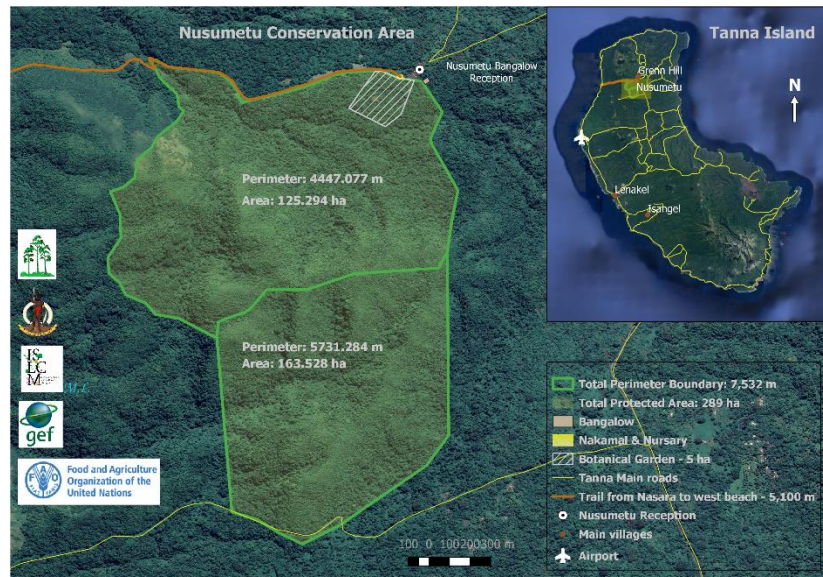


Figure 8: Nusumetu Conservation Area

111. In addition to the direct work of the ISLCM project, there is evidence of environment and conservation-related activities on Nusumetu CCA carried out by the project's co-financing partners, namely New York Botanical Garden, Live and Learn Vanuatu and Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation. The active participation and

engagement of the local people of Nusumetu in conservation activities has continued to enhance their level of knowledge to address environmental issues and has influenced their attitude to care for their environment and natural resources.

112. Influencing people's values is a task that is often very difficult to achieve. On Nusumetu, even children are aware of and value conservation. According to Kew Bob, the LCS on Nusumetu, it is very rare to see a child or young person go into the conservation area with intention of cutting trees. Over the years since the CCA establishment in 1940 the increasing knowledge about the local biodiversity and its significance via awareness exposure and engagement in practical conservation activities from various environmental projects has clearly and positively influenced the local people's attitude and values. The intrinsic cultural, environmental and conservation value of preserving the forest is continually embedded into each new generation of the Kamtuling tribe which owns the area and manages the Nusumetu CCA.
113. Furthermore, there is also a forest restoration effort ongoing in Nusumetu CCA. The community of Nusumetu works in partnership with the Department of Environment to control the invasive vine *Meremia peltata* (also known as Big leaf rope) in Nusumetu by means of agro-forestry practices.
114. The Nusumetu CCA committee works in collaboration with New York Botanical Garden (NYBGs) to restock populations of the rare and endangered endemic palm *Carpoxydon macrospermum* palm, that only naturally grows on Tanna (found in Nusumetu CCA) and some islands of the Tafea Province. A nursery has been built to raise the *Carpoxydon macrospermum* palm seeds and the endemic *Caryota ophiopellis* seeds, which only grows naturally on Tanna, Aneityum and Futuna on Tafea Province. The local people of Nusumetu were involved in constructing the nursery, collecting seeds in the CCA forest and sowing the seeds in polybags
115. Despite the economic impact of Covid-19 pandemic, Nusumetu CCA has officially launched its eco-tour on May 7, 2021. With financial support from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) through Live and Learn Vanuatu (LLV) working in partnership with the Department of Tourism, LLV has promoted the direct benefits from Nusumetu conservation by the means of eco-tourism. LLV has assisted to develop the Eco-tourism Business Plan for Nusumetu. LLV as one of the co-financing partners has provided significant support to the ISLCM in progress toward outcome 2.4.
116. A perceived long-term impact of the project is the continuous involvement and representation of women in environmental governance particularly in protected area committees, conservation rangers or eco-tour guides.

Table 9: Midterm Rating and Justification for Component 2.

Component 2 rating	Rating Justification
Outcome 2 Moderately Satisfactory	At the stage of the MTR there are moderate levels of shortcomings under Component 2, however strong progress has been made on outcomes 2.2 and 2.3 on 2 of

	<p>the 4 project sites⁷. To a lesser degree but not insignificant progress has also been made on outcomes 2.4 and 2.5.</p> <p>The challenge now under Component 2 for the ISLCM project is to work on progressing the other 3 sites as per the agreed logframe and continue to refocus efforts on conservation particularly as related to outcome 2.1, target landscapes subject to integrated R2R planning and governance. Critically, indicator 2.1.1 is for 100,000 ha in target localities to be covered by integrated landscape/seascape management plans developed and implemented by local landowners.</p> <p>In addition, measurements of several key indicators have yet to be undertaken, specifically indicator 2.2.4, reef health indices and 2.2.5, fish catch per unit of effort still need baseline data. It is unclear at the MTR stage whether an improvement in index rating or increase in fish catch will be measurable by the end of the project.</p> <p>Finally, work on outcome 2.6 Sustainable resource management and PA management supported by sustainable financing has not yet started in any significant way. Out of 4 project sites, only 1 site (Nusumetu) has developed a sustainable finance mechanism via an ecotourism activity with financial assistance from the LLV project. The two outputs include PA-specific financial management and investment plans (2.6.1) and local-level financial mechanism in support of PA management and landscape restoration (2.6.2). Under this outcome it is unlikely that the targets will be met to start generation of income of \$20,000 per year across target localities. However, by the end of the project it is possible to have the plans in place and an agreed financial mechanism with estimated revenue per year.</p>	
Green = Achieved	Yellow = On target to be achieved	Red = Not on target to be achieved

Component 3.

117. With regards to Component 3, the project has made good progress in raising awareness through a number of trainings and individual meetings both at the national and local level (output 3.1.1). The project has also been active through social media and a

⁷ South Pentecost, Efate, North Tanna, and Aneityum. Work on Gaua is to a much lesser extent (i.e. finalizing the draft management plan produced in GEF 4)

number of articles about various aspects of the project have been published. A sample of articles published to date is listed below⁸:

- Article: [FAO Supports Vanuatu Government in TC Harold Response and Recovery Plan](#)
- Article: [Workshop on Farm field School Approach](#)
- Article: [Agriculture Local Organizing Committee Formed](#)

118. It is still not clear how the project is codifying best practices and lessons learned into a mechanism for systemization (output 3.1.1). This will be critical as the project has undertaken a number of studies, with others in progress and planned that should be easily accessible to government stakeholders. All of the materials developed are not always accessible outside of the FAO internal data filing system (Sharepoint). In the planned project budget (ProDoc), there is budget for a *monitoring, evaluation, knowledge management and communication specialist*. An M&E/KM specialist could support this work.

119. For Outcome 3.2, there does not seem to be much progress made in either of the outputs a system in provincial government offices for management of information ecosystems conditions and trends, feeding data to local organizations (output 3.2.1) nor is there evidence for how the project is supporting the MRV unit within the Department of Forestry (output 3.2.2). There is a functioning MRV system within the Department of Environment and the project's GIS specialist for ISLCM project works part time with the project (2 days a week) and the remaining time with the MRV unit in Department of Forestry. Bringing the GIS specialist on full-time to the project to support the work under Outcome 3.2 could accelerate progress.

120. For Outcome 3.3, this is a weakness of the current project reporting system. Project indicators have not been systematically tracked or measured and it is therefore difficult to assess to what degree the project has progressed. This will be partially addressed through the collection of tracking tool data, however, there indicators outside of the tracking tools that should also be measured and reported on in a timely, accurate manner. Having a dedicated M&E/KM specialist may help the team ensure Outcome 3.3. is achieved.

Table 10: Midterm Rating and Justification for Component 3

Component 3 rating	Rating Justification
Outcome 3 Moderately Satisfactory	The ISLCM project has made considerable progress in terms of awareness raising and targeted trainings. The challenges for the project is codify the work that has been done and that is planned into a comprehensive knowledge management system. This will contribute to

⁸ A video has also been produced for the project as well as other materials that are currently on the FAO internal database (Sharepoint)

	the sustainability of results and allow for future replication of good practice.	
Green = Achieved	Yellow = On target to be achieved	Red = Not on target to be achieved

Efficiency

Finding 1. *With only 16 months left, the ISLCM project has expended approximately 34% of the total GEF grant amount. Even now with the full capacity of the project team, it is unlikely that the project will expend the entire budgeted amount.*

Finding 2. *Several of the ISLCM's co-financiers, including Live and Learn and the New York Botanical Garden and the Vanuatu Government via the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation, have made significant progress in undertaking activities that support ISLCM's activities. The funding of other development partners such as the World Bank and the New Zealand government have also contributed directly to ISLCM's project outputs.*

Finding 3. *Co-financing is not formally being tracked by the project. The MTR verified that co-finance partners have undertaken significant work in the field that contributes directly to project outputs.*

121. As of April 27 2021, the estimated total budget expenditure for the project totals USD 1.575 M, only 34% of the total GEF grant amount. Please see table and figures by component below for estimated figures.⁹

Table 11: Estimated total budget expenditure (as of April 2021)

	Expended	Available	Budgeted	
Component 1	125,000	306,470	431,470	29%
Component 2	1,280,000	2,336,909	3,616,909	35%
Component 3	170,000	387,301	557,301	31%
Total	1,575,000	3,030,680	4,605,680	34%

⁹ Expenditure figures by component were provided by the CTA as the budget data provided was by budget category and not component nor project output. After several attempts to obtain the information from the PMU, GEF Coordinating Unit, LTO, BH as well as checking with the FAO-HQ about FAO's budgeting procedures, this was the best available information at the time of the MTR..

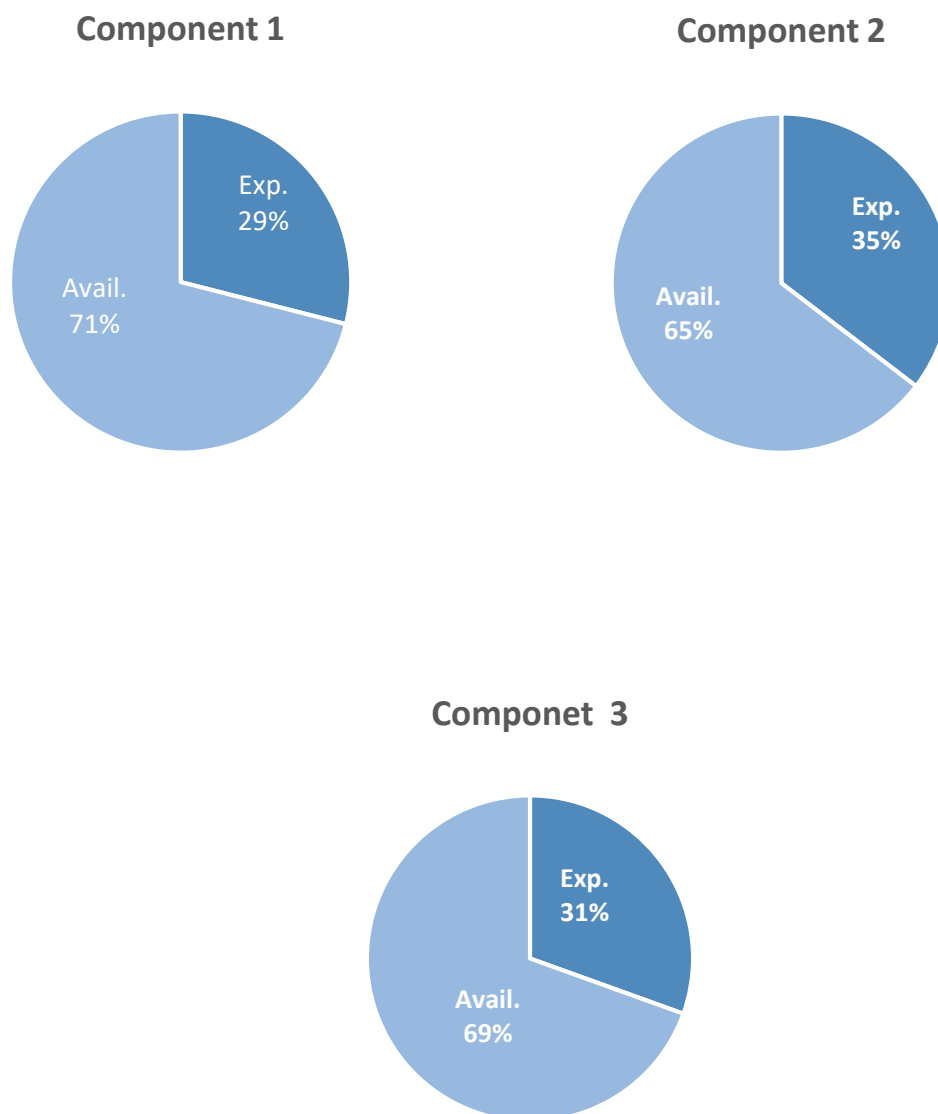


Figure 9: Expenditures by component

122. Broken-down by FAO expense category, 37% of the budget has been expensed to salaries and 26% to consultants. Contracts and consultants are the two budget categories with the largest underspending, with only 3% of the Contract budget committed or spent and 30% of the consultant budget committed or spent. The under expenditure in these two categories can be attributed in part to COVID-19 pandemic, which has made it difficult to hire international consultants or firms over the course of 2020. For salaries, currently there appears to be an overrun of (USD 388,256) under that budget category. This does have implications for the project extension and how this budget line is affected should be explored further. It is however important that a full PMU be kept till the end of the project to ensure the project doesn't lose momentum and makes full use of the extension.

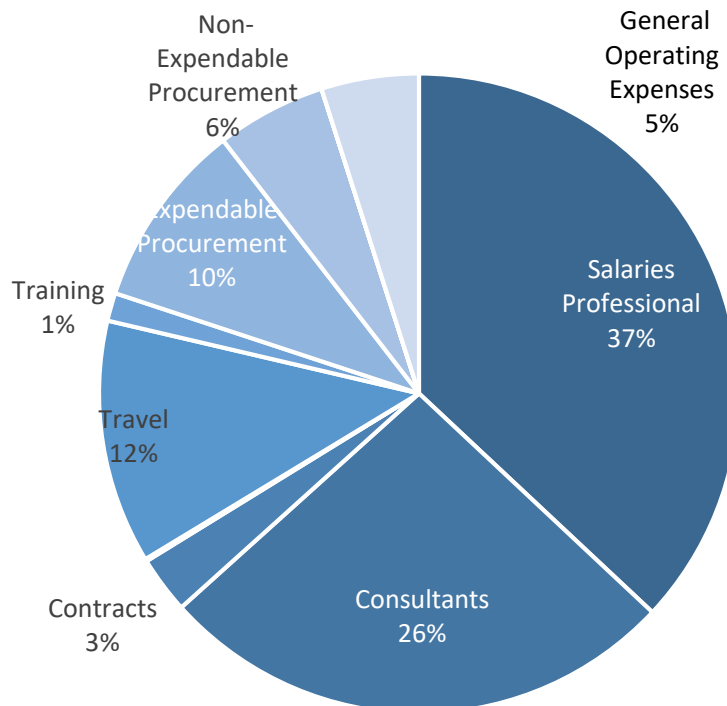


Figure 10: Expenditures by FAO expense category

123. In terms of co-finance, this has not been tracked for any co-financer, including FAO's own co-financing commitment. The MTR team was able to get verbal confirmation from the Live to Learn NGO that they have expended approximately 70,000 USD toward ISLCM project outputs and through the National consultant's field visit, the work undertaken by both the Live to Learn NGO, approximately 7,000 USD expended by DEPC on invasive species (Meremia) control program and the NY Botanical Gardens was significant and has contributed directly to project outcomes. The level of co-finance and support from other donors should be tracked by the project team.¹⁰ Moreover, the investments from the government side should also be looked into as this can in part support the sustainability of the project.

¹⁰ In principle, the GEF-co-financing table should be preliminarily completed with up-to-date co-financing information by the project team prior to the MTR mission. This would mean meeting with all co-financing partners regularly to align the financing priorities and annual work plans. Since this has not happened the MTR team has not been able to confirm co-financing information for its accuracy

Sustainability

Finding 1. The excellent alignment of the project with country and beneficiary priorities provides a strong basis for the sustainability of results that come out of the ISLCM project.

Finding 2. The project has strong partners in the field and there is evidence that communities engaged by the ISLCM project have proactively designated protected areas. It is important for the project to strategize with NGO partners as well as the Local Conservation Committees (LCC) as to how to sustain community committees and commitment after project close.

Finding 3. Knowledge management is a key avenue for securing project results. The project has developed multiple technical studies that should be easily accessible to government officials at all levels. Moreover, key messages should be translated into local languages and disseminated in a user friendly manner to community groups.

124. The sustainability of the project is defined as the continuation of benefits from an intervention after development assistance has been completed. The important aspect here is the sustainability of results, not necessarily the sustainability of activities that produced the results. Assessment of sustainability requires the evaluation of risks that may affect the continuation of the project outcomes. The commitment of the Government of Vanuatu to sustain results of the current project is judged by examining the existence of relevant legislative framework, enforcement of the legal provisions and prospect of financial resources' availability for future conservation sites. The following aspects were assessed in this mid-term review:

2.7.1.6 Financial risks to sustainability

125. The project is dependent on the financial support of the GEF, the Government and the contribution of CSOs/NGOs. The Government, FAO and the CSOs/NGOs contribute co-financing with a total amount of USD 15,290,558 million.
126. According to the field visit and discussions with Live and Learn and the NYBG co-financing from these two NGOs has to at least some degree has materialized. In addition, analysis of the updated policies supported through other funding sources provides an indication of either realized co-finance or parallel financing that contributes to the ISLCM's project outcomes. However, as stated earlier, no evidence has been shared with the MTR team to confirm the committed amount was utilized.
127. Given the strong alignment of the project with national and sector priorities the government budget does currently support the ISLCM work. However, by not providing an analysis of these contributions nor of the project achievements it will put the sustainability of these achievements at risk.
128. Based on the above discussion, the financial risks are moderate but could be reduced through better tracking and understanding of co-financing materialization. Sustainability under this aspect is rated as **moderately likely (ML)**.

2.7.1.7 Socio-economic risks to sustainability

129. The representatives of the population interviewed from the 2 project sites visited indicated that local communities have developed strong ownership of the project activities as they believe in the project's ability to enhance their lives and ensure the sustainable use of the ecosystems. The perspective of the strong local ownership is based on the fact that socio-economic consequences of the project will, in general, be positive as the outcomes will ensure improvements in quality of life of population in large part due to enhance alternative livelihood.
130. The project has no major socio-economic risks that might affect the sustainability of the project outcomes. The project has not however, managed to document lessons learned on a continual basis. Thus, project's challenges, risks, issues and project's successful aspects are not being transferred to appropriate parties, for potential future beneficiaries or stakeholders to learn from the project and potentially replicate or scale up it in the future.
131. Based on the above-mentioned Socio-economic Risk, risks are negligible and thus the sustainability is rated as **likely (L)**.

2.7.1.8 Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability

132. The project is in the early stages of putting in place frameworks, policies governance structures and/or processes that will create mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer after the project's closure.
133. A key issue to look at when reviewing institutional sustainability is ensuring the project's achievements and impact after the project closure are codified and available in-country. In addition, the key issue of how to sustain the Local Conservation Committees (LCCs) and Village Conservation Committees (VCCs) after project closure. The Bo Homo conservation committee, went dormant after it was established under GEF-4.
134. The Institutional framework and governance risks are medium, and sustainability is rated as **moderately likely (ML)**. The presence of a sustainability plan and a comprehensive exit strategy will lower the institutional and governance risk to sustainability.

2.7.1.9 Environmental risks to sustainability

135. No activities implemented by the project pose any environmental threats to the sustainability of the project's outcomes. The environmental risks are negligible and therefore sustainability is rates as **likely (L)**.
136. It follows from the above analysis that the key risks for sustainability are a failure to capture, codify, and catalogue the results of the project, including findings from technical studies, determining contributions from co-financing, measuring indicators and capturing lessons learned. Efforts to complete the outputs under Component 3 will greatly increase the probability of sustaining the project results.

137. The MTR team considers that there are moderate risks to sustainability mostly related to potential shortcomings to project outcomes by project closure, this is mitigated in part because of the evidence of high commitment from project partners which are likely to continue into a foreseeable future. Therefore, the MTR team rates the overall likelihood of risks to sustainability as **moderately likely (ML)**.

Factors affecting performance

Finding 1.: The project design may have been overambitious providing direct alignment with 5 GEF Strategic Objectives and committing the implementation team to measure five different tracking tools. Given the size of the GEF grant, it may have been better to claim some of the strategic objectives as co-benefits or indirect outcomes. The 5 tracking tools increase significantly the M&E burden on the project team. Several other GEF R2R projects committed to 3 or 4 tracking tools, which likely would have been sufficient for this project.

Finding 2. Communication between the PMU and executing partners could be strengthened. Through interviews, it was clear that there has been some miscommunication that has resulted in less effective implementation.

Finding 3. All partners interviewed expressed frustration with FAO's procurement processes and delays stemming from the FAO-SAP offices.

Finding 4. Monitoring, tracking, and reporting on indicators is one of the weaker aspects of the project implementation. The team does not have a dedicated M&E officer and that lays too much burden on the CTA and National Project Manager (NPM).

Finding 5: The project team, now that all members have been hired, is technically strong and competent. Moreover, the presence of all Vanuatu nationals under the guidance of an experienced international CTA can lead to greater sustainability of project results all built capacities in the project team will remain in-country.

Finding 5: Having local conservation specialists (LCSs) at each project site supports better implementation of activities at project sites and provides more visibility for FAO. However, the resignation and/or termination of project field officers, particularly on Aneityum and Efate has affected progress of project implementation on sites. In addition, the project must improve efficient and effective administration in target localities. Project implementation on targeted sites are not however operating in full capacity with complete resources, visibility and exposure.

2.7.1.10 Monitoring and Evaluation

138. When the MTR was launched in April 2021, the project team was unaware that the project included 5 tracking tools. The team had been provided with only 3 (BD, LD, and IW). Through discussions with the former LTO and FAO HQ, the other 2 GEF tracking tools (SFM and CCM) were discovered and sent to the MTR team as well as the project team. From a project design perspective, the burden of tracking and reporting on 5-GEF tracking tools is significant and it seems the budgeted M&E plan did not fully take this monitoring burden into consideration.

139. Overall the M&E system for the project should be strengthened. As detailed above, the budgeted M&E/KM person has not been hired and much of the M&E work is falling to the CTA and NPM to undertake. Based on the PIRs reviewed (2019, 2020) and one PPR report (2019), the project should undertake more consistent reporting and ensure that indicators in the logframe are updated.
140. The project's M&E system is not following the outlined plan contained in the ProDoc which includes the need for regular reporting and tracking of project indicators. Overall, the planned M&E system was adequate as designed with the exception of including 5 tracking tools. As outlined previously, there is a need to ensure **indicators** within the logframe are updated and reported on through the PIR and FAO's PPR.

2.7.1.11 Project Coordination

141. The ISLCM project team is now a technically strong team and it was universally agreed that once the CTA was recruited and in-country, progress on project outputs accelerated significantly. The COVID-19 pandemic in some ways created an opportunity to recruit an all national team with experts from Vanuatu. Based on interviews with the NPM, the National Project Officer, National Biodiversity Conservation Specialist, Natural Resource Management and Community Livelihood Specialist, and GIS Specialist – it is clear that the team is technically strong. There was a steep learning curve to fully understand FAO's systems but this has now been achieved. Through the project team, the ISLCM project has built capacity in-country with this group of experts which provides can contribute to sustaining results upon project closure.
142. The MTR interviews did reveal several instances of miscommunication among the project partners. In particular, there seems to be a misunderstanding between the project team and Department of Environment around roles and responsibilities as well as a perception that information is not being shared adequately. Other members of the PSC also mentioned that communication from the project team to the PSC and other stakeholders could be strengthened. Several of those interviewed mentioned putting in place a plan that lays out all partners roles and details activities that remain outstanding. More frequent meetings with the PSC may also be useful to keep all partners updated on progress and to discuss any challenges that arise.
143. The integration of LCSs at project sites was done in response to lessons learned from GEF-4. The MTR found that having the LCSs supports better implementation of activities at project sites and provides more visibility for FAO in communities.
144. The specific challenges faced in coordinating activities in the field are highlighted in the MTR Field Visit Report (Appendix 9) and reproduced in the table below.

Figure 11: Implementation Challenges at Project Sites

Pentecost	Tanna
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1. Damage to vegetables in garden from pests, long period of rainfall and domestic animals (cows, pigs, chickens) due to lack of proper fencing.	1. Volcanic ashfall disaster on Tanna caused damage to crops, water affecting people lives
2. Poaching into protected areas by people from other communities.	2. Custom ceremonies including death – mourning lasts up to a week. Traditional and customary event are of priority significance and must be respected in a community.
3 The isolated location of the current home-based office ISLCM Project on Wali makes it inaccessible to the project partners and beneficiaries.	3. La Nina event (Sept 2020 – April 2021)- period of rainfall causes delays and postponement of activities in communities (difficult to assemble people for a meeting)
4. Lack of availability of land transport to project sites affects implementation of project activities. The progress of implementation is slow.	
5. The lack of simple office equipment such as a copier/scanner/printer in home-based offices requires both of the LCS on Tanna and Pentecost to travel to their main town center to simply print or photocopy. Travelling to Lenakel town takes about one hour for the LCS on Tanna based on his home office at Nusumetu and it takes about 15 minutes for the LCS on South Pentecost to travel to Pangi from Wali.	
6. The FAO process of re-imbursement of expenses incurred by the LCS is slow. Both LCS on Tanna and Pentecost have reported spending their own money to carry out project activities. For instance, one LCS has reported inverter damage a few months ago and nothing has been done till now. The LCS therefore had to paid for a new inverter with their own money while the solar battery is not functioning well. Laptops and mobile devices cannot be charged well due to solar battery not functioning properly	

2.7.1.12 Administrative Effectiveness

145. Through the MTR interviews with in-country partners, from the PMU to the PSC to other stakeholders interviewed, there has been universal frustration with FAO's procurement system and LoA process. While training on LoA's, ToR's and FAO's procedures was conducted in September 2019 with the assistance of government officials, partners in project execution and NGOs the process has still been a difficult one. Local Conservation Officers were also trained in planning, reporting and also in FAO procedures in (December 2019).

146. Specifically, there has been frustration with a lack of responsiveness from the FAO-SAP in Apia. The Vanuatu-based project team, highlighted several issues through the 2019 PPR including the following: (i) strengthening the procurement and administration unit as the process cannot depend on a single person; (ii) improving the skills and communication among colleagues by ensuring the acknowledgement of receipt of emails; and (iii) holding regular meeting with FAO-SAP to establish a better relationship between the FAO-SAP colleagues and those in the field. Progress on some of these items has been hindered by the pandemic and the lack of ability to for colleagues to meet in person.
147. In addition to communication issues all partners interviewed expressed frustration with FAO's procurement processes and delays stemming from the FAO Sub Regional Office for the Pacific Islands (FAO-SAP). The two main bottlenecks appear to have been approval delays from the original LTO assigned to the project (based in PNG) and the procurement team based in Apia. The LTO, who has now resigned, had a track record of delaying approvals, which then resulted in delayed submissions to the GEF Coordination Unit. The GEF Coordination Unit, overall, is quite responsive once provided with the appropriate approvals. The second bottleneck has then occurred from the FAO-SAP office once requests are received from the PMU, in accordance with the approved Annual Work Plan and Budget. The processing of payments corresponding to delivery of goods, services and technical products based on technical clearance provided by LTO is often significantly delayed. The new acting LTO is aware of these issues and has set-up an informal process to support the in-country PMU and expedite the overall process.
148. While actions are now being taken to improve procurement delays, it will be important for the FAO-SAP office to more formally address the root cause of these delays. This is a critical issue as the project is now at a stage where delays in disbursements for goods and services will hinder the project team and its partners from effective execution of activities

Other administrative factors

149. **Quality of project implementation** by FAO has been **moderately satisfactory**. The initial BH and LTO did not provide sufficient support to the project team and did not provide full project documentation to the team when they finally came on board (such as tracking tools, , the inception report, minutes of meetings etc). The former FLO, provided useful quality assurance on the 2020 PIR, however, seemed to have too many projects to manage to be able to devote enough time to fully back-stop the project. With a new FLO in place, it is expected that this quality assurance mechanism should improve.
150. **Project oversight:** there has been no evidence provided that an FAO-Project Task Force (PTF) was ever deployed for the project. The GEF-CU has been responsive and helpful to the in-country team, however, there has been minimal active oversight, supervision or backstopping by the BH and former LTO. The GEF-CU could also provide more upfront support by being more proactive in providing the project team the information they need ahead of time to meet GEF requirements.

151. **Quality of project execution:** overall the quality of project execution has been strong as evidenced by the field visit (see Component 2 description above and Appendix 9 for the full report. Project partners are engaged regularly, with the exception of needing to further engage the PSC and OFP to ensure roles and responsibilities are understood among all project partners.
152. **Project execution and management:** as mentioned above in the effectiveness section, once the project team was fully in place, the overall project team has been strong. There is also no indication that executing partners are not fulfilling their obligations under LOAs signed.

Cross-cutting dimensions

Finding 1. Gender aspects of the project were not well developed at the project design stage. However, during implementation, gender aspects have been well documented and present good practice for integrating gender during implementation¹¹.

Finding 2. E&S risks have been well documented and managed. This is particularly true during the design of the LRP and could also be used as an example of good practice for ensuring E&S is properly addressed when adaptive measures are needed.

153. While gender aspects of the project were not well developed at the project design stage, the project team has done a good job ensuring gender is fully integrated during project design. The project has ensured to include gender-disaggregated data across all of its activities. As of June 2020, the awareness raising and training has reached 7,987 people, 4,357 women and 3,630 men at the project sites.
154. The CTA has taken the lead to ensure FAO's methodology on gender has been incorporated and he has ensured adequate gender mainstreaming across all technical studies as well as the training/awareness building pieces.
155. Through the MTR field visit, women in particular, reported that the implementation of the livelihood recovery was most remarkable. It has tremendously assisted them to gain new knowledge and acquire new gardening skills such as transplanting vegetable seedlings from the nursery to backyard gardens and knowledge-sharing of environmentally friendly pest-control applications on vegetables. They have also learned when to harvest and how to cook the 'introduced' vegetables. Moreover, there has been a change in perception and behavior of the local people regarding vegetable gardening - who now realize that it is possible to grow vegetables in home backyard.
156. A good example of the management of E&S risks was through the deployment of the LRP initiative. Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) were undertaken and the LRP was categorized as a level B risk: *potential adverse environmental impacts are expected to be site specific, reversible and with the possibility of being*

¹¹ It should be noted that during GEF-5, the GEF did not have extensive requirements around gender and no gender action plan was required to be developed.

minimized using appropriate measures that can be included in Environmental and Social Management plans for the water infrastructure development.

157. The infrastructure development has been at a micro and small-scale and are located in non-sensitive locations. Measures, such as improved water management, safe handling of agrochemicals and waste management, have been promoted particularly through the Farmer Field Schools (FFSs). Efforts have been made to minimize the social risks through community participation including a grievance mechanism and the development of community based NRM plans.
158. The climate risk classification of the LRP is high given the adverse impacts on the agricultural sector due to prolonged and recurrent cyclones during the El-Nino events and the floods experienced in some areas due to the subsequent La-Niña events. The beneficiaries should have a benefit from climate change adaptation capacity building through the FFSs. The curriculum includes techniques and appropriate technologies for the smallholders to adopt.
159. Overall, the E&S risk rating of moderate is still relevant and appropriate.

3 Conclusions and recommendations

3.1 Conclusions

160. Taking into consideration the main findings related to the questions and criteria in the MTR reached the following conclusions:

Conclusion 1 (Criterion: Relevance): It was found that the implementation and design of the components, outcomes and outputs of the project are closely aligned with and relevant to the participating institutions and the beneficiaries of the project. Furthermore, the project's shift to focus on disaster recovery at 2 of the 5 ISLCM project sites affected by natural disasters in response to the GoV request was done effectively and in a manner that will contribute to meeting the objectives of the project while also meeting the changing needs and priorities of the targeted beneficiaries. As a result of this scenario, the project relevance is rated as **highly satisfactory** and, thanks to the relevance and quality of the intervention design, the activities implemented by mid-term foster the active participation of those beneficiaries who have been engaged in the field.

Conclusion 2 (Criterion: Effectiveness - general): The degree of progress towards the outputs laid out in the project logframe has several significant lags. The project's effectiveness is therefore considered **moderately satisfactory** for each of the components and for most of the outputs of the project. At mid-term, the project has delivered on several outputs, particularly in relation to parts of Component 2. These include support to farmers and fishers managing resources sustainably as a result of increased capacities and awareness (outcome 2.2), capacities for generation of ecosystems and services resorted in priority areas (outcome 2.3), and local people having opportunities and capacities to perceived direct benefits from conservation and SLM (outcome 2.4). Overall, however, the delivery of the expected outputs

has been mixed, with many deliverables behind schedule in particular for integration around strengthening protected areas and at the 3 target sites not targeted through the LRP initiative.

Conclusion 3 (Criterion: Effectiveness – Components 1 and 2): The livelihood recovery efforts under the LRP initiative has positively impacted beneficiaries at all 11 sites in S. Pentecost in terms of improved food security and has also provided a means of income generating activity due to a surplus supply of vegetables. However, while the LRP initiative has proved successful in addressing the needs of beneficiaries affected by unexpected natural disasters, the conservation activities and outputs of the project are lagging. The ISLCM project has begun re-shifting its focus back to accomplishing the conservation goal of the project but more effort is needed for the project to achieve many of its expected targets

Conclusion 4 (Criterion: Effectiveness – Component 3): The project has been effective in raising awareness of stakeholders, conducting several trainings and engaging on social media and incorporating stories through the press. However, more work is required to put in place a robust knowledge management system. A mechanisms for systematizing and disseminating best practices and lessons learned is needed (output 3.1.1) as is a system for managing information on ecosystem conditions and trends. An MRV unit should also be established in the Department of Forestry (outputs 3.2.1 and 3.2.2).

Conclusion 5 (Criterion: Efficiency): Several of the ISLCM's co-financiers, including Live and Learn and the New York Botanical Garden, have made significant progress in undertaking activities that support ISLCM's activities. The funding of other development partners such as the World Bank and the New Zealand government have also contributed directly to ISLCM's project outputs. The co-financing and other parallel initiatives are not however formally being tracked by the project. The MTR verified that co-finance partners have undertaken significant work in the field that contributes directly to project outputs.

Conclusion 6 (Criterion: Efficiency): As of the end of April 2021, the project has utilized only 34% of the total budget however, there is an overrun on the Project Salaries budget line. This does have implications for the project extension and how this budget line is affected should be explored further. It is important that a fully capacitated project team be kept till the end of the project to ensure the project doesn't lose momentum and that the project makes full use of the extension to progress on project results

Conclusion 7 (Criterion: Sustainability): The MTR team considers that there are minor risks to sustainability as there is a high probability that key outcomes will be achieved by the project closure and will continue into the foreseeable future. Therefore, the MTR team rates project sustainability as moderately likely (ML). The excellent alignment of the project with country and beneficiary priorities provides a strong basis for the sustainability of results along with strong partners in the field. It is important for the project to strategize with stakeholders at the local level as to how to sustain community committees and commitment after project close.

Conclusion 8 (Criterion: Factors Affecting Performance): The MTR team has determined several administrative and project coordination factors that are affecting project implementation these include: (i) miscommunication among project partners; (ii) cumbersome procurement procedures and processes for disbursing funds; (iii) non-responsiveness of the

FAO-SAP team in Samoa; and (iii) weaknesses in measuring project indicators in a timely and accurate manner. These issues while important to address can be done without having to restructure or add a great deal of resources. Re-setting expectations and developing clear plans for the last part of the project implementation should address these issues sufficiently.

Conclusion 9 (Criterion: Factors Affecting Performance): The project has faced many setbacks, initially with a 2-year delay in putting in place a fully capacitated PMU and then shortly thereafter the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was then compounded by the occurrence of two natural disasters: TC Harold and the Yasur Volcano ashfall. Despite the major challenges faced by the project and shortened timeframe available, the project has made good progress. The 1-year extension that has been granted is necessary for the project to complete many of the activities for the project and to make strong progress in areas that have as of now progressed slowly. If it is possible to grant a longer extension, the probability of achieving project results will increase significantly.

Conclusion 10 (Criterion: Factors Affecting Performance): The project team is technically strong and competent. Moreover, the fact that the team is comprised of all Vanuatu nationals under the guidance of an experienced international CTA can lead to greater sustainability of project results. In addition, built capacities within the project team will remain in-country. The hiring of LCSs at each project site also supports better implementation of activities at project sites and provides more visibility for FAO.

Conclusion 11 (Criterion: Cross-cutting issues, Gender): The project has made considerable strides in integrating gender issues across all project activities. This is an area where the team has tracked well the participation of women and captured the project's gender responsive measures. Moreover, during the MTR field visit, project beneficiaries indicated that one of the positive aspects of the project has been the continuous involvement and representation of women in environmental governance particularly in protected area committees, conservation rangers or eco-tour guides

3.2 Recommendations

Recommendation 1. (PMU, PSC, OFP, Provincial Governments): **Develop work plan and agree on roles and responsibilities for remaining project timeframe.** From the interviews undertaken for the MTR, there is confusion among the various partners of the project as to their respective roles and responsibilities. There have also been misunderstandings between the Department of Environment and the project team as to what work is being done and what needs to be done and by whom. To ensure implementation is more effective and cooperative during the remaining project period, the MTR recommends that the PSC, the OFP and the PMU conduct a 1-day workshop to detail the roles and responsibilities of each person and agency that is part of the project execution. The outcome of the workshop should lay out a work plan for the remaining project period that includes responsibilities and dates for action.

The ISLCM project also has a role to integrate R2R planning and governance in its priority island localities. With the progress of setting up conservation committees there is also a need for setting a clear understanding of the differing roles of various stakeholder partners including the committees. As part of the recommended work plan, consensus on what the

roles of the various stakeholders at the project sites should also be laid out. This needs to take into consideration a realistic balance between people's aspirations and the capacity of community-based organizations given that LCCs and VCCs have limited or no budgets.

Recommendation 2. (FAO-SAP, BH, GEF-CU): **Project Extension by 6-12 months.** The MTR notes that the status of the project timeframe (even with the 1-year extension till September 2022), will mean the remaining activities and the project outcomes will not be achieved. Additionally, there will be remaining project funds unused. Therefore, the MTR recommends an additional 12-month extension of the project to complete the remaining activities due to the late start of the project, the absence of a full project team for long stretches, the advent of the global pandemic, and the natural disasters that occurred in 2020. To facilitate this extension, the major costs will be related to project staff and administration of which finances can be sourced from the savings thus far on the slow recruitment of staff. The remaining activities of the project all have budgets that should be able to sufficiently cover the necessary costs. Ground implementation of attaining the project's goal of conservation is only starting to pick up and with a strong team in place the probability for achieving satisfactory to highly satisfactory results will increase significantly with added time.

As noted above, the salary budget line appears to have an overrun, however, the details of this need to be better explored with support from the BH, FLO, GEF-CU and FAO-HQ as to how best an extension can be deployed.

Recommendation 3. (FAO-SAP BH, Procurement Unit): **FAO-SAP Budget Holder in coordination with procurement unit to develop action plan to address delays associated with payments and disbursements.** The level of frustration surrounding administrative matters such as the length of procurement processes and confusion related to the LOA process is high among almost all participants interviewed. Delays in FAO's procurement process and in particular the lag in response from the FAO-SAP office has been a source of frustration for those working in-country. The MTR recommends that the FAO-SAP BH in coordination with the procurement team develop an action plan to address delays associated with payments and disbursements. This will provide each partner with a transparent way to track responsibility for any delays as well as provide the team in Samoa a clear work plan so their workload can be managed and delays in procurement can be minimized.

Recommendation 4. (PMU/project team): **Improve efficient and effective administration in target localities of South Pentecost and Tanna.** Project implementation on targeted sites should be operating in full capacity with complete resources, visibility and exposure. The LCSs are an important part of the overall project team and their effectiveness is hindered by a lack of proper resourcing.

Recommendation 5. (PMU/project team). **Hire a specialist to improve monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management system.** The MTR recommends hiring an M&E/Knowledge management specialist as is indicated in the ProDoc. This person can be hired to coordinate the tracking tool completion, lead the annual PIR process, ensure that 6-monthly PPR reports are completed, and manage the activities needed to ensure activities and outputs under Component 3 are developed.

Prior to any project evaluation, the project team should have all documents organized and all necessary relevant and compulsory data /information (including updated tracking tools and co-finance figures) gathered prior to the start of review to allow the evaluation team to validate data.

As part of this recommendation, the project team should incorporate a means of tracking the effects and impacts of the ISLCM project initiative into the overall monitoring system. Along with this, communication materials that focus on spreading good practices should be generated, thus fostering replicability and up-scaling of the effects and additionally contributing to the sustainability of the project.

Recommendation 6. (PMU and co-finance partners). **Track project co-finance.** The project should begin to track co-finance and parallel or leveraged finance, in particular because it appears to be an area of success for the project and there is potential for good practice lessons to come from it.

Recommendation 7. (PMU, DEPC, and other partners): **Develop a roadmap to agree on the target terrestrial and marine protected areas** that will be covered by integrated landscape/seascape management plans (output 2.1.1) and ensure that the project provides updated mapping of these PAs and their boundaries. Such a roadmap will support the re-focusing on ISLCM's conservation outputs, prioritize targets to be achieved prior to project close, and provide updated mapping of these PAs and their boundaries

Recommendation 8. (PMU, PSC, and other project partners): **Develop exit strategy to ensure sustainability of results.** Under this strategy one aspect that should be discussed and agreed is how to ensure the Local Conservation Committees (LCC) do not go dormant after the close of the ISLCM project. Such committees under GEF-4 went dormant and had to be revived with the ISLCM in GEF-5. Based on discussions with local community members and other stakeholders in the field, potential strategies to consider include the following:

- Engage school children (primary and secondary) and youth, as agents of change in a community, including training on environmental protection or conservation. School students could be involved in tree planting activities, clean up campaigns, vegetable gardens in schools. The youth including young women can be represented in conservation committees in villages
- For the sustainability of forest ecosystem restoration programme, the establishment and construction of permanent nurseries on a few project sites (e.g., Nusumetu, Point Cross, Pangi) for government officers such as Forestry or Agriculture to continue to use after project closure.
- Potentially work with the Department of Environment to find ways to secure small amounts of funding for the LCCs and VCCs

Recommendation 9: (PMU/project team, PSC, FAO-SAP, FAO-HQ) **Adjusting indicators and targets in the logical framework is recommended.** Suggested changes are outlined in the table below:

Table 12: Suggested project targets and indicators to adjusted

Potential targets/indicators to adjust	Rationale	Proposed Adjustment
<p>Component 1, Outcome 1.3</p> <p><i>Indicator 1.3.1:</i> Amount of financial resources channeled from the tourism sector to environmental conservation and PA management</p> <p><i>Mid-term target:</i> \$75,000/year channeled from the tourism sector</p> <p><i>End-of Project target:</i> \$150,000/year channeled</p> <p><i>Output 1.3.1:</i> Corporate social and environmental responsibility commitments from the cruise industry</p>	<p>With the unpredictable collapse of the cruise ship industry, it is not possible for the project to actually receive funding from the industry during the lifetime of the project. It is more realistic at this stage if the team can focus on securing some type of commitment from the tourism sector and/or develop a strategy for how the DoT can secure such commitments.</p> <p>It is suggested that the project team hold discussions with the DoT to determine if there are other ways to channel funding from the tourism sector to environmental conservation and PA management aligned with the recently published Vanuatu Sustainable Development Tourism Strategy (2021-2025), potentially through Theme 2: RESILIENCE: through Niche Tourism Product Development: Developing and supporting niche tourism that protects, enhances and regenerates Vanuatu's assets or Theme 4: SUSTAINABILITY: through Sustainable Tourism Certification, Investment and Entrepreneurship.</p>	<p><i>Indicator 1.3.1:</i> Amount of financial resources committed from the tourism sector to environmental conservation and PA management</p> <p>Mid-term target: \$75,000/year committed from the tourism sector</p> <p>End-of Project target: \$150,000/year committed from the tourism sector</p> <p><i>Output 1.3.1:</i> Corporate social and environmental responsibility commitments from the tourism sector</p>
<p>Component 2, Outcome 2.1</p> <p><i>Indicator 2.1.1:</i> Area in target localities covered by landscape/seascape management plans developed</p>	<p>The end of project target is that 100,000 ha will be targeted. This is an ambitious figure and given the shift in project focus, the delay in project start, and the extenuating circumstances of</p>	<p>Suggest decreasing target to 10,000 ha</p> <p>This should be validated and discussed after the results of</p>

and implemented by local landowners	COVID, it is highly unlikely that the project can meet this target.	the mid-term tracking tool update are finalized.
<p>Component 2, Outcome 2.2</p> <p><i>Indicators 2.2.1:</i> Increase in area (ha) in target localities over which sustainable hillside farming practices are applied</p> <p><i>Indicator 2.2.2:</i> Increase in area (ha) in target localities over which sustainable hillside ranching area applied</p> <p><i>Indicator 2.2.3:</i> Increase in area (ha) in target localities over which community-based fisheries regulations are effectively applied</p>	<p>Given the focused efforts on S. Pentecost and Tana, the target for these 3 indicators may need to be adjusted to capture the <i>LRP</i></p> <p>There may also be a desire to add in an indicator directly related to the work of the LRP to capture any results that were not captured in the original project design</p>	<p>The ha targeted may be increased for S. Pentecost and Tana and decreased at other sites. Updated figures can be included in the next PIR and agreed to by the PSC.</p>
<p>Component 2, Outcome 2.4</p> <p><i>Output 2.4.1: Ecotourism</i> development plans formulated with local participation in each target locality, including carrying capacity studies</p> <p><i>Output 2.4.2 Ecotourism initiatives</i> managed by local communities or with provision for generating significant benefits for local communities</p>	<p>Outcome 2.4 is written to encompass more than just benefits from ecotourism: <i>Local people in target localities have opportunities and capacity to perceive direct benefits from conservation and SLM</i></p> <p>With the re-alignment through the LRP on food security, it seems appropriate to broaden outputs 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 beyond ecotourism. This will both better capture the work of the LRP and better align the outputs with Outcome 2.4. Moreover, in the coming years due to the COVID pandemic there is a potential for a reduction in tourism related activities and hence the need to diversify to other initiatives</p>	<p><i>Output 2.4.1: Development plans</i> formulated with local participation in each target locality, including carrying capacity studies</p> <p><i>Output 2.4.2: Conservation and SLM initiatives</i> managed by local communities or with provision for generating significant benefits for local communities</p>

Table 13: Recommendations Table

Rec. no.	Rationale for recommendation	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timing/dates for actions
Strategic relevance				
None				
Effectiveness				
B.1	To re-focus the project on the conservation elements, map out how these targets will be achieved, and provide updated mapping of these PAs and their boundaries.	Recommendation: Develop a roadmap to agree on the target terrestrial and marine protected areas that will be covered by integrated landscape/seascape management plans	PMU, DEPC	August 2021
B. 2	Given project delays and challenges faced as well as the introduction of the LRP, the logframe should be adjusted to reflect these changes made and incorporate indicators to measure the success of the LRP.	Recommendation: Adjust indicators and targets in the logical framework	PMU, PSC, FAO-SAP	August 2021
Efficiency				
C.1	To complete the remaining activities due to the late start, the absence of full project team for long stretches of the project, the advent of the global pandemic, and the natural disasters that occurred in 2020.	Recommendation: Project Extension by 6-12 months.	FAO-SAP, GEF-CU, BH	September 2021
C.2	To ensure a more efficient, expedited procurement process and minimize delays	Recommendation: BH in coordination with procurement unit to develop action plan to address delays associated with payments and disbursements.	FAO-SAP, BH, procurement unit	July 2021
C.3	To fully operationalize project implementation at targeted sites	Recommendation: Improve efficient and effective administration in target localities of South Pentecost and Tanna	PMU, project team	September 2021
C.4	To track co-finance as	Recommendation: Track	PMU/project	Ongoing

	well as parallel or leveraged finance, in particular because it appears to be an area of success for the project and there is potential for good practice lessons to come from it.	project co-finance.	team	
Sustainability and catalysis/replication				
D.1	To ensure sustainability of results and in particular to make sure the Local Conservation Committees (LCC) do not go dormant after the close of the ISLCM project. Such committees under GEF-4 went dormant and had to be revived with the ISLCM in GEF-5.	Recommendation: Develop exit strategy to ensure sustainability of results.	PMU, PSC, project team, and other project partners	September 2021
Factors affecting performance				
E.1	To clarify roles and responsibilities for the remaining project duration. To reset expectations and understanding among project partners	Recommendation: Develop work plan and agree on roles and responsibilities for remaining project timeframe.	PMU, PSC, OFP, Provincial Governments	July 2021
E.2	To coordinate the tracking tool completion, lead the annual PIR process, ensure that 6-monthly PPR reports are completed, and manage the activities needed to ensure activities and outputs under Component 3 are developed. Prior to any project. This will also serve to incorporate a means of tracking the effects and impacts of the ISLCM project	Recommendation: Hire a specialist to improve monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management system	PMU/project team	July 2021/ongoing

	initiative into an overall KM system.			
Cross-cutting dimensions				
None				

3.3 Lessons learned

161. **Lesson 1.** FAO HQ and FAO SAP should be sure to maintain all documentation related to a GEF project in one place and provide all information to members of project team at the start of their appointments. The ISLCM project team did not have access to documentation from the initiation of the ISLCM project, including the inception report, first PIR, and any PSC meeting minutes.
162. **Lesson 2.** FAO SAP should have a clear on-boarding process that can be deployed at the start of any project members joining. The process should include training on FAO's procurement system, the LOA process (if that is the modality to be used), how to access and utilize any IT systems (including email and shared drives), etc. If an operations manual does not exist one should be designed or adopted for the Pacific context.
163. **Lesson 3:** Once changes were agreed based on the needs of beneficiaries due to a natural disaster it is important subsequently to undertake a review of the Prodoc, evaluate changes in context and make any adjustments to the logical framework that may be needed given the re-alignment of resources.
164. **Lesson 4:** Having a communication strategy from the outset of the project that establishes objectives, deadlines, responsible parties and production of materials, would make it possible to improve internal dissemination and reporting within country as well as to other FAO-SAP initiatives about the methodologies used and outcomes attained, in addition to helping ensure the sustainability and replicability of the initiative.
165. **Lesson 5.** At project design, keeping in mind the burden of reporting for the implementation team is important. In the future, analyzing the focal areas which will be most impacted by project interventions and aligning with the GEF corporate reporting only with those areas where the project will directly contribute to the Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs). Others can be included as co-benefits of the intervention.
166. **Lesson 6.** Projects particularly in the Pacific should be designed for a minimum for 6 years. Almost every project approved under the GEF R2R programme has needed a project extension and several of these recommendations were developed prior to the onset of the global pandemic. Given capacity constraints in the region, recruiting a complete project team can take a full year, this situation should be incorporated into the initial design of projects. More broadly, there is an added degree of difficulty in implementing projects in the Pacific that is unique to the region and should be incorporated proactively into project design. These include the need for a longer lead-in time prior to intervention for recruitment of qualified project personnel, the .

Appendix 1 – Terms of reference for the MTR



ToR for
MTR_GCPVAN001G

Appendix 2 – MTR itinerary

The MTR mission will take a total of 8 days. It will begin on the island of Tanna on the 05 May through 8 of May 2021 and it will continue onto South Pentecost on the 8 of May to 12 May 2021. The table below briefly outlined the activities of the MTR mission.

Date	Activity	Location/comments
3/05/2021	Travel Vila – Tanna	MTR National Consultant
4/05/2021	Interview LCS and other relevant stakeholder partners	Isangel North Tanna
05/05/2021	Interview project beneficiaries	North Tanna
06/05/2021	Visit Nusumetu CCA	North Tanna
07/05/2021	Travel Tanna - Vila	MTR National Consultant
08 /05/2021	Travel Vila – Lonoroe Interview LCS, participants of training workshops(women/men/youth)	MTR National Consultant South Pentecost, PMU to recommend sites/villages, LCS to organize transportation to sites
09/05/2021	Interviews conducted - Local Conservation Committee (LCC) 9am - Govt field extension officers (Agriculture) - Community chiefs 11am - Landowners Site visits – Interview (farmers/fishers/ranchers) 2pm	LCS to organize meeting for MTR with LCC 9am
10/05/2021	Site visits and interviews conducted	LCS to organize transportation to sites
12/05/2021	Travel Pentecost - Vila	MTR National Consultant
End of Mission		

Appendix 3 – Stakeholders interviewed

	First name	Last name	Position	Organization/location
1	Jerry	Spooner	Director	Department of Tourism, Port Vila
2	Donna	Kalfatak	Director	Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation, Port Vila
3	Rolenas	Baereleo	Principal Biodiversity and Conservation Officer	Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation, Port Vila
4.	Ricardo	Dominguez Llosa	Chief Technical Officer	FAO, ISLCM Project Management Unit, Port Vila
5	Hanington	Tamla	National Project Coordinator	FAO, ISLCM Project Management Unit, Port Vila
	Joe	Nakou	National Project Officer	FAO, ISLCM Project Management Unit, Port Vila
6.	Willy	Missack	National Biodiversity Conservation Specialist	FAO, ISLCM Project, Port Vila
7.	Elena	Silas	Natural Resource Management and Community Livelihood Specialist	FAO, ISLCM Project, Port Vila
8.	Michel	Liliord	GIS Specialist	FAO, ISLCM Project, Port Vila
9.	Graham	Nimoho	FAO Country Representative	Assistant FAO (Program) Representative for Vanuatu
10.	Joanna	Wari	Local Conservation Specialist	FAO, ISLCM Project, Wali, South Pentecost
11.	Bob	Kew	Local Conservation Specialist	FAO, ISLCM Project, Nusumetu, North Tanna
12.	Mathias	Bule	Agriculture officer	Department of Agriculture
13.	Morris	Kaloran	Secretary General	Shefa Provincial Council
14.	Madankumar	Janakiraman	SAP GEF projects manager	FAO SAP, Apia
15.	Yurie	Naito	Funding Liaison Officer	FAO GEF CU, Rome, Italy
16	Aru	Mathias	Lead Technical Officer	FAO SAP, Port Moresby
17.	Jamesly	Tavuti	Tafea Provincial Planner	Tafea Provincial Council

18.	Loretta	Tupun	Area Administrator	South Tanna Area Council
19.	Johnny	Bani	Area Administrator	Department of Internal Affairs, South Pentecost Area Council
20.	Samuel	Bebe	Forestry Officer	Department of Forest, Penama Province
21	Glarinda	Andre	Team Leader	Live and Learn Vanuatu, Port Vila
22.	Jessie	Kampai	Local Project Officer	Live and Learn Vanuatu, Port Vila
23	Serge	Warakar	Local Project Officer	Live and Learn Vanuatu, Port Vila
24.	Godfrey	Bome		Department of Forests, Port Vila
25.	Lianchawii	Chhakchhuak,	FLO	FAO GEF CU, Rome, Italy
26.	Ydidiya	Abera	FAO-GEF CU	FAO GEF CU, Rome, Italy

Field Visit Interview List

	Name of Interviewee	Gender		Represented Site	Project Involvement	Date of Interview
		Male (55)	Female (45)			
1	Joanna Wari		x	Wali	Local Conservation Specialist (LCS)	3-May-21
2	Reginald Bebe	x		Wali	Treasurer LCC	3-May-21
3	Caroline Wari		x	Wali	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	3-May-21
4	Davita Tobu		x	Wali	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	3-May-21
5	Liaren Olul		x	Wali	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	3-May-21
6	Moriel Bebe		x	Wali	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	3-May-21
7	Madline Tor		x	Wali	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	3-May-21
8	Jesina Mali		x	Wali	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	3-May-21
9	Keith Lala	x		Panlimsi	Chairman LCC	4-May-21
10	Clement Tamar	x		Pangi	Irrigation Bucket Specialist	4-May-21
11	Eddie Bebe	x		Pangi	LCC Rep	4-May-21
12	Merelyn Taback		x	Ranwas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	4-May-21
13	Evelyn Clement		x	Pangi	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	4-May-21

14	Roslyn Tamtam		x	Panlimsi	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	4-May-21
15	Heather Bebe		x	Panlimsi	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	4-May-21
16	Lynette Bani		x	Panlimsi	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	4-May-21
17	Johnny Henry	x		Point Cross	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	4-May-21
18	Jill Taripiti		x	Ranputor	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	4-May-21
19	Marie Taripiti		x	Ranputor	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	4-May-21
20	Hardy Nakon	x		Ranputor	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	4-May-21
21	Carol Bebe		x	Pangi	Primary School Teacher	4-May-21
22	Hancy Jill		x	Pangi	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	4-May-21
23	Howard Solip	x		Wali	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	4-May-21
24	Albert Bebe	x		Panas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	4-May-21
25	Jeremy Bule	x		Panas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	4-May-21
26	Edward Bonga	x		Point Cross	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
27	Jacob Ute	x		Point Cross	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
28	Shrimpton Ute		x	Point Cross	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
29	Grace Boha		x	Point Cross	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
30	May Rongo		x	Point Cross	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
31	Estella Derick		x	Point Cross	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
32	Elizabeth Tapack		x	Point Cross	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
33	Mark Bebe	x		Point Cross	Former Director General Ministry of Foreign Affairs	5-May-21
34	Augustine Tapack-Sali	x		Point Cross	GEF 5 LCC member /VCC Chairman/GEF4 V.chair	5-May-21
35	Cecil Tamla	x		Point Cross	GEF 5 LCC member /GEF4 LCC member	5-May-21

36	Philemon Rongo	x		Point Cross	Agro-forestry Training Participant	5-May-21
37	Samuel Bebe	x		Point Cross	Penama Provincial Forestry Officer	5-May-21
38	Winnie Philip		x	Bay Marteli	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
39	Laurent Melsul	x		Bay Marteli	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
40	Dorah Kamil		x	Bay Marteli	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
41	Janet Belaku		x	Bay Marteli	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
42	Cecilia Mali		x	Bay Marteli	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
43	Lady-Rose		x	Bay Marteli	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
44	Delphine Melsul		x	Bay Marteli	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	5-May-21
45	Elizabeth Gebeso		x	Bay Marteli	Project beneficiaries	5-May-21
46	Marie Christie		x	Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
47	Manuela Mali		x	Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
48	Anita Mani		x	Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
49	Pierre Worwor	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
50	Freddy Sognul	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
51	Jules Buletamlua	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
52	Fredrick	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21

53	Eugene Bule	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
54	Cyprida Bule	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
55	Cyriaque Gulgal	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
56	Lionel Are	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
57	Simon Buletamba	x		Londar	GEF 5 LCC member	6-May-21
58	Gilbert Bulesom	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
59	Thierry Sognul	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
60	Yvon Ware	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
61	Joseph Tatao	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
62	Francois Sognul	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
63	Lambert Sognul	x		Londar	GEF 5 LCC member	6-May-21
64	Manuel Bulesam	x		Londar	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
65	Viran Males		x	Wanur	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
66	Leah Majuk		x	Wanur	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
67	Collin Mambong		x	Wanur	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	6-May-21
68	John Patterson	x		Wanur	GEF 5 LCC member	6-May-21
69	Philemon Tamtam	x		Ranputor	GEF 5 LCC member / GEF 4 LCC chairman	6-May-21
70	Ps. Steward Loas	x		Ranputor	VCC chairman	6-May-21
71	Lauren Loas		x	Ranputor	GEF 5 LCC member	6-May-21
72	Hancy Wetas		x	Ranwas	GEF 5 LCC member	7-May-21
73	Rodney Wari	x		Ranwas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
74	Joseph Bule	x		Ranwas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
75	Tutu Bebe	x		Ranwas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21

76	Howard Wari	x		Ranwas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
77	Naitol Wari	x		Ranwas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
78	Shem Tapack	x		Ranwas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
79	Steward Tor	x		Ranwas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
80	Trevor Watas	x		Ranwas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
81	Johnny Bani	x		Pangi	South Pentecost Area Council Administrator	7-May-21
82	Rachel Graham		x	Bay Homo	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
83	Weang Allan		x	Bay Homo	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
84	Jirob Mark		x	Bay Homo	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
85	Wabak Mark		x	Bay Homo	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
86	Benkat Bebe	x		Panas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
87	Delvin Bebe		x	Panas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
88	Jibe Job	x		Panas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
89	Elian Sakari		x	Panas	Agro-forestry nursery training participant	7-May-21
90	Bob Kew	x		Nusumetu	Local Conservation Specialist (LCS)	10-May-21
91	Yoan Kuhao	x		Nusumetu	Chief / Nusumetu conservation committee	11-May-21
92	Bob laus	x		Nusumetu	CCA committee member	11-May-21
93	Naomi Kamoe		x	Nusumetu	CCA committee member	11-May-21
94	Jepi Matai	x		Nusumetu	CCA committee member, Tour guide	11-May-21
95	Lency Johnson	x		Nusumetu	CCA committee member	11-May-21
96	Naloma Ken		x	Nusumetu	CCA committee member, Tour guide	11-May-21
97	Manipen lauko	x		Nusumetu	CCA committee member	11-May-21

98	Kating Kew	x		Nusumetu	CCA committee member	11-May-21
99	Jamesly Tavuti	x		Isangel	Tafea Provincial Planner	11-May-21
100	Lorita		x	Isangel	Area Administrator	11-May-21

Appendix 4 – Review questions

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
Evaluation Criteria: Relevance			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the project outcomes congruent with country priorities, GEF focal areas/operational programme strategies, the FAO Country Programming Framework and the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries (local communities, men and women, and indigenous peoples, if relevant)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of coherence between project objective and stated priorities of local stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local government stakeholders Local community stakeholders Local private sector stakeholders Relevant regional and local planning documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local level field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has there been any change in the relevance of the project since its formulation, such as the adoption of new national policies, plans or programmes that affect the relevance of the project's objectives and goals? If so, are there any changes that need to be made to the project to make it more relevant? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of involvement of local and national stakeholders in project origination and development as indicated by number of planning meetings held, representation of stakeholders in planning meetings, and level of incorporation of stakeholder feedback in project planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project staff Local and national stakeholders Project documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
Evaluation Criteria: Efficiency			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost effectively? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality and comprehensiveness of financial management procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Interviews with project staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has project management been able to adapt to any changing conditions to improve the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Interviews with project staff

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
efficiency of project implementation?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the project built on existing agreements, initiatives, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other projects, partnerships, etc. and avoided duplication of similar activities by other groups and initiatives? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Interviews with project staff Field visit interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the project is executed under the OPIM modality, add relevant OPIM questions, for example, whether the execution agreement was followed efficiently. An additional set of questions is suggested for projects with an OPIM component in Annex 12 of the MTR Guide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Interviews with project staff
Evaluation Criteria: Effectiveness			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the project delivered on its outputs, outcomes and objectives? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of progress toward project indicator targets relative to expected level at current point of implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What broader results (if any) has the project had at regional and global level to date? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were there any unintended consequences? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there any evidence of environmental stress reduction (for example, in direct threats to biodiversity) or environmental status change (such as an improvement in the populations of target species), reflecting global environmental benefits or any change in policy, legal or regulatory frameworks? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent can the achievement of results be attributed to the GEF-funded component? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there any barriers or other risks that may prevent future progress towards and the achievement of the project's longer-term objectives? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What can be done to increase the likelihood of positive impacts from the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent can the progress towards long-term impacts be attributed to the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How coherent is the programme with its child projects' theories of change, indicators and expected/achieved results? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the added value of bringing the different interventions together under one programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
(compared with the same level of investment made through comparable alternatives)?			
Evaluation Criteria: Results			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the planned outputs being produced? Are they likely to contribute to the expected project outcomes and objective? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of project implementation progress relative to expected level at current stage of implementation Existence of logical linkages between project outputs and outcomes/impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the anticipated outcomes likely to be achieved? Are the outcomes likely to contribute to the achievement of the project objective? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of logical linkages between project outcomes and impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
Evaluation Criteria: Sustainability			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the likelihood that the project results will be useful or persist after the end of the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial requirements for maintenance of project benefits Level of expected financial resources available to support maintenance of project benefits Potential for additional financial resources to support maintenance of project benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the key risks that may affect the sustainability of the project results and its benefits (consider financial, socioeconomic, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
institutional and governance, and environmental aspects)?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What project results, lessons or experiences have been replicated (in different geographic areas) or scaled up (in the same geographic area, but on a much larger scale and funded by other sources)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What results, lessons or experiences are likely to be replicated or scaled up in the near future? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the project is executed under the OPIM modality, add relevant OPIM questions (see list in the OPIM toolkit). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
Factors Affecting Progress			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Project design) Is the project design suited to delivering the expected outcomes? Is the project's causal logic (per its theory of change) coherent and clear? To what extent are the project's objectives and components clear, practical and feasible within the timeframe allowed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of progress toward project indicator targets relative to expected level at current point of implementation Level of project implementation progress relative to expected level at current stage of implementation Existence of logical linkages between project outputs and outcomes/impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent was gender integrated into the project's objectives and results framework? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were other actors – civil society, indigenous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
peoples or private sector – involved in project design or implementation and what was the effect on project results?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Project execution and management) To what extent did the executing agency effectively discharge its role and responsibilities in managing and administering the project? What have been the main challenges in terms of project management and administration? How well have risks been identified and managed? What changes are needed to improve delivery in the latter half of the project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified modifications to project plans, as necessary in response to changing assumptions or conditions Presence, assessment of, and preparation for expected risks, assumptions and impact drivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Project Management and administration) What was the role of the BH to manage and administer the project, considering the proper use of funds, and the acquisition and contracting of goods and services? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality and comprehensiveness of financial management procedures Cost of project inputs and outputs relative to norms and standards for donor projects in the country or region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents ((budget files, audit, etc.) Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Financial management and co-financing) What have been the financial-management challenges of the project? To what extent has pledged co-financing been delivered? Has any additional leveraged co-financing been provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of cash and in-kind co-financing relative to expected level Amount of resources leveraged relative to project budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
since implementation? How has any shortfall in co-financing or unexpected additional funding affected project results?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Project oversight, implementation role) To what extent has FAO delivered oversight and supervision and backstopping (technical, administrative and operational) during project identification, formulation, approval, start-up and execution? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriateness of structure of management arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Partnerships and stakeholder engagement) To what extent have stakeholders, such as government agencies, civil society, indigenous populations, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, people with disabilities and the private sector, been involved in project formulation and implementation? What has been the effect of their involvement or non-involvement on project results? How do the various stakeholder groups see their own engagement with the project? What are the mechanisms of their involvement and how could these be improved? What are the strengths and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of participation of relevant stakeholders Level of initiative and engagement of relevant stakeholders in project activities and results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
challenges of the project's partnerships? Has the stakeholder engagement plan been adhered to and documented? Have all stakeholders been made aware of the ESS plan and the grievance complaint mechanism?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Communication and knowledge management) How effective has the project been in communicating and promoting its key messages and results to partners, stakeholders and a general audience? How can this be improved? How is the project assessing, documenting and sharing its results and lessons learned and experiences? To what extent are communication products and activities likely to support the sustainability and scaling up of project results? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of communication materials Understanding of key messages by partners and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication materials Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (M&E design) Is the project's M&E system practical and sufficient? How has stakeholder engagement and gender assessment been integrated into the M&E system? How could this be improved? (M&E implementation) Does the M&E system operate per the M&E plan? Has information been gathered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of M&E plan in terms of meeting minimum standards, conforming to best practices, and adequate budgeting Consistency of implementation of M&E compared to plan, quality of M&E products Use of M&E products in project management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
in a systematic manner, using appropriate methodologies? To what extent has information generated by the M&E system during project implementation been used to adapt and improve project planning and execution, achieve outcomes and ensure sustainability? Are there gender-disaggregated targets and indicators? How can the M&E system be improved?	and implementation decision-making		
Cross-cutting dimensions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Gender and minority groups, including indigenous peoples, disadvantaged, vulnerable and people with disabilities) To what extent were gender considerations taken into account in designing and implementing the project? Has the project been designed and implemented in a manner that ensures gender-equitable participation and benefits? Was a gender analysis done? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of gender and minority group participation in project activities Results achieved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ESS) To what extent were environmental and social concerns taken into consideration in the design and implementation of the project? Has the project been implemented in a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of environmental risks to project benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document Project staff Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit interviews Desk review

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Sources	Data Collection Method
manner that ensures the ESS Mitigation Plan (if one exists) has been adhered to?			

Appendix 5 – References

<u>Name of Document</u>	<u>File name</u>	<u>File Type</u>
<u>Prodoc</u>	<u>Project docu from FAO</u>	pdf
Inception Report	Not provided	
2nd PIR (1 July 2018-30 June 2020)	2019 2nd PIR Report_VAN001	doc
3rd PIR (1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020)	PIR_5397_2020PIR_FAO_Vanuatu_AsiaPacific	pdf
Annual work plan & Budget 2020 – 2021	CGP_VAN_001_GFF_Work Plan 2020 - 2021-REV_PMU_cleared_PSC	xl
Annual work plan & Budget 2020 – 2021	AWP_20-21_psc	pdf
Project financial situation (Content: June 2020 Statement, July 2020 Expenses, Co-financing Jun 2019)	administrative_finance_PSC_20re d	pdf
PPR 2019	PPR_2019_GCP_001_VAN_GFF_1_CTA_NPC(2)	doc
GEF Tracking Tools (Biodiversity) at CEO Endorsement	Vanuatu_R2R_BD_tracking_tool_24062016	xl
GEF Tracking Tools (International Waters) at CEO Endorsement	Vanuatu_R2R_IW_Tracking_Tool_24062016	xl
GEF Tracking Tools (Land Degradation) at CEO Endorsement	Vanuatu_R2R_LD_Tracking_Tool_24062016	xl
GEF Tracking Tools (CC-M) at CEO Endorsement	Vanuatu_R2R_CCM_Tracking_Tool_24062016	xl
GEF Tracking Tools (SFM) at CEA Endorsement	Vanuatu_R2R_SFM_Tracking_Tool_24062016	xl
Co-financing letters	Co-financing_letters	pdf

CEO Endorsement Request	CEOEndorsementRequest_2016July	pdf
FAO Project E&S Risk Screening	VAN 001 -Project Identification	doc
Project Steering Committee (PSC) Minutes of Meeting 14 Aug 2020	MoM_PSC_GCP VAN 001 GFF_20202021-1-1	pdf
PSC Meeting Attendance list and contacts (14 Aug 2020)	Attendance list_5PSC_20	pdf
Letter of Requesting no-cost extension of Project to 15 Sept 2022	Letter for no-cost extension-1-1	pdf
Comments from Yididya on Draft Inception Reports	Draft-InceptionReport-30March21	.doc
Guide for Planning and Conducting MTR for FAO-GEF funded projects	MTR Guide - English	pdf
Budget tables drafts (April 2021)	Vanuatu_MTR_budget_graphs_table	.doc
GIS Maps Project Sites	Aneityum_map_MTR Gaua for MTR Nusumetu for MTR_v2 South Pentecost calculated areas_MTR	.jpeg .png
COVID 19 MTR Guide Additional Note	Supplementary Note to Mid-Term Review Guide - 30July2020	pdf
Reports (Technical Reports and Back To Office Reports)		
Report on Establishment of 11 community agroforestry nurseries	Forestry Report_Final Nursery Establishment Report, South Pentecost_red	pdf
Post TC Harold Impact Data D&L (Damage & Loss) Report	FAO-ISCLM_BRIEF_PSE_FSAC_Vanuatu_red	pdf

Biodiversity and Conservation Comprehensive workshop - outcome report - 2021	Integrated Sustainable Land and Coastal Management - Biodiversity and Conservation Comprehensive workshop - outcome report - 2021	pdf
ISLCM Brief Intro Presentation	ISLCM Brief Intro Presentation_mdt_apia/ ISLCM Brief Intro Presentation	pdf/ ppt
Presentation on Implementation of Biodiversity Indicators	Implementation of the Biodiversity Indicators_edt_28Jan21	Ppt
Advancing capacity building on Tanna and Aneityum Community Conservation Area through Establishment and Training of Conservation Management Committee and Awareness among community	FINAL BTOR - TAFEA_Mission_May2021	Pdf
Livelihood Recovery Project Proposal	Livelihood Recovery Project_VANUATU_realignment_proposal_TCHarold_yn	doc
Development of Communications Strategy	Development-of-a-communications-strategy-for-the-gef-isclm-VAN-project	doc
Carry Capacity Final Report	Carrying_capacity_FINAL_JULY 2020_CA_PMU.Cleared(1)	Pdf
Damage and Loss Assessment Tana Presentation	DAL_TANNA_def_190521	PPT
Damage and Loss & Needs Assessment Data Analysis	TANNA ASH FALL_130521	Pdf
Training online data collection (KOBO)	kobo_training_presentation_eng_final_tanna	PPT

Appendix 6 – Results matrix

167. As part of the assessment of the delivery of project outcomes and outputs, the MTR should assess progress made towards the mid-term project targets using the matrix in Table A11.2. Where mid-term targets are not given in the project logframe, assessment can be made against end-of-project targets. Assessment of progress should be colour-coded using a “traffic-light system”, with a rating assigned to progress on each outcome (but not outputs) using the standard GEF six-point rating scale. Recommendations should be made for those areas marked as “not on target to be achieved” (red).

Table 14: Progress towards results matrix

Project objective and Outcomes	Description of indicator(s) ¹²	Baseline level	Mid-term target	End-of-project target	Mid-term level& assessment	Progress rating ¹³
Objective(s): To test and implement sustainable and integrated management of forest, land and marine resources to achieve effective ridge-to-reef (R2R) conservation in selected priority watersheds in Vanuatu						
Component 1: Improving the enabling environment for integrated sustainable land and coastal management.						
Outcome 1: 1.1 Integrated R2R considerations mainstreamed into sector development policies	Indicator 1.1.1: Degree of commitment in policy instruments for channeling tourism income to environmental management	Generalized policy statements exist, but in different sector policy documents and without specific commitments	Proposals under discussion of specific commitments for promoting the channeling of tourism income to environmental management	Tourism policy makes specific commitments for promoting the channeling of tourism income to environmental management	The latest version of tourism sector policy has integrated commitments to environmental management; The project has produced "A review of carrying capacity assessments for tourism planning and management in Vanuatu's Community Conservation Areas" Specifics on income channeled have not yet been agreed.	MS

¹² This is taken from the approved results framework of the project.

¹³ Use GEF Secretariat required six-point scale system: **Highly Satisfactory** (HS), **Satisfactory** (S), **Marginally Satisfactory** (MS), **Marginally Unsatisfactory** (MU), **Unsatisfactory** (U), and **Highly Unsatisfactory** (HU).

	Indicator 1.1.2: Degree of commitment in policy instruments for promoting compatibility between agricultural development and the maintenance of ecosystem goods and services	Several sector policies example agriculture, forestry, land and livestock make broad reference to maintenance of ecosystem goods and services but without specific definitions or commitments	Proposals under discussion of specific commitments for promoting compatibility between agricultural development and maintenance of ecosystem goods and services	Agriculture, livestock, forestry and planning policy documents include specific commitments for promoting compatibility between agricultural development and maintenance of ecosystem goods and services	LoA on development of Policy Monitoring and Evaluation Framework has been approved. Closing LoA. Livestock LoA on capacity building on Livestock Act has been approved. LoA under implementation. To be closed on 15 July	S
	Indicator 1.1.3: Degree of commitment in policy instruments for protection of coastal and marine ecosystems through ICZM approaches	Existing Fisheries and Environment policies make generalized references, but lack a vision of inter-sector integration	Proposals under discussion of specific commitments for protection of coastal and marine ecosystems through ICZM approaches	Fisheries and planning policy documents include specific commitments for protection of coastal and marine ecosystems through ICZM approaches	Discussion and an LoA has been developed but yet to be signed	MS
	Output 1.1.1: Policy proposals for channeling tourism income to environmental management Output 1.1.2: Policy proposals for promoting compatibility between agricultural development and maintenance of ecosystem goods and services Output 1.1.3: Policy proposals in support of ICZM including protection of coastal and marine ecosystems on which fisheries sustainability and marine biodiversity depend					

1.2 Environmental planning and decision-making processes take integrated R2R considerations into account	Indicator 1.2.1: Percentage of EIAs that specifically address landscape-wide environmental and social dynamics	All EIAs are site-specific with little or no consideration of landscape-wide dynamics	EIA procedures specifically require consideration of landscape-wide environmental and social dynamics	50% of EIAs specifically address landscape-wide environmental and social dynamics	Work is in progress but there is no indication that EIA procedures have been written to specifically require consideration of landscape-wide E&S dynamics. The end target seems out of reach in the next 16 months given EIA procedures have not been agreed	MU
	Indicator 1.2.2: Percentage of planning determinations nationwide that specifically address landscape-wide environmental and social dynamics	No planning decisions to date have adequately considered landscape-wide dynamics	Planning determinations are required to specifically address landscape-wide environmental and social dynamics	50% of planning determinations nationwide that specifically address landscape-wide environmental and social dynamics	Project Support Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy (FLRS) Held 2 workshops – The procedures for approving lease applications still need development; connection to EIAs not yet clear; FLRS is useful but is not a land use planning guide	MS
	Output 1.2.1: Improved procedures for approving lease applications Output 1.2.2: Improved capacities and regulatory instruments for consideration of landscape-wide (ridge to reef) considerations into EIAs and determinations Output 1.2.2: Land use planning guidelines providing for consideration of landscape-wide (ridge to reef) environmental and social processes					
1.3: Increased financial resources channeled from the tourism	Indicator 1.3.1: Amount of financial resources channeled	No reliable figures available, but assumed to be negligible	\$75,000/year channeled from the tourism sector to environmental conservation and PA	\$150,000/year channeled from the tourism sector to environmental conservation	COVID-19 has prevented the proper development of this activity. Meetings have been held with	MU

sector to environmental conservation and PA management	from the tourism sector to environmental conservation and PA management		management by project end	and PA management by project end ¹⁴	the Ministry of tourism senior management to agree on core tourism activities; it is likely that that this activity will not be completed by project end. Suggestion to adjust indicator given circumstances	
Output 1.3.1: Corporate social and environmental responsibility commitments from the cruise industry						
Component 2: Integrated ridge to reef management in priority island localities						
2.1 Target landscapes subject to integrated R2R planning and governance	Indicator 2.1.1: Area in target localities covered by integrated landscape/ seascape management plans developed and implemented by local landowners	0 ha		100,000ha in target localities covered by integrated landscape/ seascape management plans developed and implemented by local landowners	Management plans have not yet been developed as of the MTR . Suggestion to adjust end-of-project target	MU

¹⁴ Cruise companies, their passengers and crew spent AUS\$34.6 million (US\$25 million) in Vanuatu in 2013. Using a conservative assumption of growth to \$30 million/year, \$150,000/year would be 0.5% of total spending.

	Indicator 2.1.2: Levels of satisfaction with multi-stakeholder mechanisms among stakeholders in target localities, by category (chiefs, other village members)	No surveys yet carried out of satisfaction with existing decision-making structures	At least 30% of stakeholders in all categories consider that the mechanisms adequately represent them and address their needs.	At least 75% of stakeholders in all categories consider that the mechanisms adequately represent them and address their needs.	From MTR field visit, stakeholders seem reasonably satisfied. The project team still needs to carry out formal surveys	S
	Indicator 2.1.3: Proportion of land area in target localities where management decisions (leases, land use changes) coincide with provisions of R2R plans, norms and recommendations of local dialogue mechanisms	No relevant provisions have as yet been generated through R2R plans, norms and dialogue mechanisms	On at least 40% of the land affected by management decisions (leases, land use changes) between project mid-term and end, the decisions coincide with provisions of R2R plans, norms and recommendations of local dialogue mechanisms	On at least 80% of the land affected by management decisions (leases, land use changes) between project mid-term and end, the decisions coincide with provisions of R2R plans, norms and recommendations of local dialogue mechanisms	There has been little to no movement on developing local integrated management plans	MU

	Output 2.1.1: Multi-stakeholder mechanisms for landscape planning, decision-making and conflict management covering all three target localities Output 2.1.2: Norms for resource management practices developed and agreed among stakeholder groups covering target localities Output 2.1.3: Integrated landscape/seascape management plans developed and implemented by local landowner																															
2.2 Farmers, ranchers and fishers are managing resources sustainably, resulting in improved flows of ecosystem goods and services, as a result of increased capacities and awareness	Indicator 2.2.1: Increase in area (ha) in target localities over which sustainable hillside farming practices are applied	Approximately 13,250ha under cultivation with traditional farming practices @1ha worked/year/family	Area with improved farming practices: <table><tr><th>Locality</th><th>ha</th></tr><tr><td>SW Aneityum</td><td>62</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Bush Tanna</td><td>1,250</td></tr><tr><td>N. Efate</td><td>1,250</td></tr><tr><td>S. Pentecost</td><td>750</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>3,312</td></tr></table>		Locality	ha	SW Aneityum	62	Middle Bush Tanna	1,250	N. Efate	1,250	S. Pentecost	750	Total	3,312	Area with improved farming practices: <table><tr><th>Locality</th><th>ha¹⁵</th></tr><tr><td>SW Aneityum</td><td>125</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Bush Tanna</td><td>2,500</td></tr><tr><td>N. Efate</td><td>2,500</td></tr><tr><td>S. Pentecost</td><td>1,500</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>6,625</td></tr></table>		Locality	ha ¹⁵	SW Aneityum	125	Middle Bush Tanna	2,500	N. Efate	2,500	S. Pentecost	1,500	Total	6,625	Field Mission Visits conducted and located Project demonstration plots. After TC Harold Landed in April 2020. PMU realigned activities for a LRP in South Pentecost.	S
	Locality	ha																														
	SW Aneityum	62																														
Middle Bush Tanna	1,250																															
N. Efate	1,250																															
S. Pentecost	750																															
Total	3,312																															
Locality	ha ¹⁵																															
SW Aneityum	125																															
Middle Bush Tanna	2,500																															
N. Efate	2,500																															
S. Pentecost	1,500																															
Total	6,625																															
	Indicator 2.2.2: Increase in area (ha) in target localities over which sustainable hillside ranching practices are applied	N/A	Area with improved ranching practices: <table><tr><th>Locality</th><th>ha</th></tr><tr><td>SW Aneityum</td><td>15</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Bush Tanna</td><td>25</td></tr><tr><td>N. Efate</td><td>25</td></tr><tr><td>S. Pentecost</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>30</td></tr></table>		Locality	ha	SW Aneityum	15	Middle Bush Tanna	25	N. Efate	25	S. Pentecost	10	Total	30	Area with improved ranching practices: <table><tr><th>Locality</th><th>ha</th></tr><tr><td>SW Aneityum</td><td>30</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Bush Tanna</td><td>50</td></tr><tr><td>N. Efate</td><td>500</td></tr><tr><td>S. Pentecost</td><td>20</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>600</td></tr></table>		Locality	ha	SW Aneityum	30	Middle Bush Tanna	50	N. Efate	500	S. Pentecost	20	Total	600	Field Mission Visits conducted and located Project demonstration plots. On Ranputor village, it was reported that reforestation activities have been done on an old coconut plantation where cattle used to graze on	MS
Locality	ha																															
SW Aneityum	15																															
Middle Bush Tanna	25																															
N. Efate	25																															
S. Pentecost	10																															
Total	30																															
Locality	ha																															
SW Aneityum	30																															
Middle Bush Tanna	50																															
N. Efate	500																															
S. Pentecost	20																															
Total	600																															
	Indicator 2.2.3: Increase in area (ha) in target localities over which community-	N/A	<table><tr><th>Locality</th><th>ha</th></tr><tr><td>SW Aneityum</td><td>100</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Bush Tanna</td><td>50</td></tr><tr><td>N. Efate</td><td>300</td></tr><tr><td>S. Pentecost</td><td>50</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>500</td></tr></table>		Locality	ha	SW Aneityum	100	Middle Bush Tanna	50	N. Efate	300	S. Pentecost	50	Total	500	<table><tr><th>Locality</th><th>ha</th></tr><tr><td>SW Aneityum</td><td>100</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Bush Tanna</td><td>50</td></tr><tr><td>N. Efate</td><td>300</td></tr><tr><td>S. Pentecost</td><td>50</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>500</td></tr></table>		Locality	ha	SW Aneityum	100	Middle Bush Tanna	50	N. Efate	300	S. Pentecost	50	Total	500	There are marine protected areas established by 4 communities on South Pentecost. All traditionally managed by communities.	MS
Locality	ha																															
SW Aneityum	100																															
Middle Bush Tanna	50																															
N. Efate	300																															
S. Pentecost	50																															
Total	500																															
Locality	ha																															
SW Aneityum	100																															
Middle Bush Tanna	50																															
N. Efate	300																															
S. Pentecost	50																															
Total	500																															

¹⁵ Assumes 0.5ha/family with sustainable hillside farming practices

	based fisheries regulations are effectively applied					MU																
	Indicator 2.2.4: Reef health indices	To be determined at project start		10% improvement in index ratings in all sites (to be confirmed once baseline values are determined)	Activity hasn't been initiated yet If project team works closely with Fisheries Department, more accurate data can be obtained from the Fisheries Department and via the TAIL Monitors of the Fisheries Department based in local area councils for Indicators 2.2.4 and 2.2.5	MU																
	Indicator 2.2.5: Fish catch per unit of effort	To be determined at project start	5% increase	10% increase	Activity hasn't been initiated yet	MU																
	Indicator 2.2.6: Quantities of firewood used for drying of copra and	Annual consumption (t): <table><tr><th>Locality¹⁶</th><th>t</th></tr><tr><td>SW Aneityum</td><td>361</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Bush Tanna</td><td>7,229</td></tr><tr><td>N. Efate</td><td>7,229</td></tr></table>	Locality ¹⁶	t	SW Aneityum	361	Middle Bush Tanna	7,229	N. Efate	7,229	Annual consumption (t): <table><tr><th>Locality</th><th>t</th></tr><tr><td>SW Aneityum</td><td>343</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Bush Tanna</td><td>6,867</td></tr><tr><td>N. Efate</td><td>6,506</td></tr></table>	Locality	t	SW Aneityum	343	Middle Bush Tanna	6,867	N. Efate	6,506	Annual consumption (t):	Activity hasn't been initiated yet	
Locality ¹⁶	t																					
SW Aneityum	361																					
Middle Bush Tanna	7,229																					
N. Efate	7,229																					
Locality	t																					
SW Aneityum	343																					
Middle Bush Tanna	6,867																					
N. Efate	6,506																					

¹⁶ Total fuelwood consumption in Vanuatu in 2007 = 937,203t. Assumed 40% increase to present day gives 1,312,084t, of which 30% (393,625t) is estimated to be for drying of agricultural crops. The target localities contain an estimated 0.09%, 1.84%, 1.84% and 1.10% respectively of the national population; adjusting fuelwood consumption by the same proportions gives an estimated fuelwood consumption of 361, 7,229, 7,229 and 4,337t respectively per locality.

	other agricultural products	S. Pentecost	4,337	S. Pentecost	4,120	Locality ¹⁷	t	
			19,156		17,836	SW Aneityum	325	
						Middle Bush Tanna	6,506	
						N. Efate	5,783	
						S. Pentecost	3,904	
							16,518	
		Overall reduction in year 5 = 2,638t; total reduction over 5 years = 7,914t ¹⁸ : total avoided emissions = 517tCO _{2eq}						
		Output 2.2.1: Extension modules for agriculture, fisheries, livestock and forestry including integrated R2R concepts						
		Output 2.2.2: Field schools and mechanisms for participatory learning and experimentation in target localities						
		Output 2.2.3: Pilot solar driers for copra and other agricultural products						
2.3 Capacities for generation of ecosystem goods and services are permanently restored in priority areas affected by land degradation	Indicator 2.3.1: Area of degraded lands subject to restoration with direct project support, with resulting carbon benefits	0		ha		ha	Damage and Loss Assessment conducted on S. Pentecost to determine activities under FFS approach	MS
			SW Aneityum	100	SW Aneityum	200		
			Middle Bush Tanna	100	Middle Bush Tanna	200		
			N. Efate	100	N. Efate	200		
			S. Pentecost	100	S. Pentecost	200		
			Total	400	Total	800		
			With resulting carbon benefit from capture of 153,329tCO _{2eq} .					
			There are areas of degraded and fragmented forest landscapes on Tanna (13 other communities have proposed to conserve their areas) that the					

¹⁷ The introduction of solar driers is expected to reduce consumption of fuelwood for drying of agricultural crops by 10, 10, 20 and 10% respectively in the target localities.

¹⁸ Assumes a linear annual increase in reductions (20, 40, 60, 80 and 100% respectively at the ends of years 1,2,3,4 and 5 = 528, 1,055, 1,583, 2,110 and 2,638t = 7,914t total).

									project will be working on.	
Output 2.3.1: Ecosystem restoration programmes implemented in all three target localities										
2.4 Local people in target localities have opportunities and capacities to perceive direct benefits from conservation and sustainable land management	Indicator 2.4.1: Numbers of local people receiving economic benefits from sustainable ecotourism	TBD – a number of ecotourism ventures exist but little specific attention to sustainability		People	Total US\$		People	Total US\$	Out of 4 project sites, only 1 site (Nusumetu) has developed a sustainable finance mechanism via an ecotourism activity with financial assistance from the LLV project.	MS
			SW Aneityum	250	45,000	SW Aneityum	500	90,000		
			Middle Bush Tanna	50	30,000	Middle Bush Tanna	100	60,000		
			N. Efate	300	45,000	N. Efate	600	90,000		
			S. Pentecost	50	15,000	S. Pentecost	100	30,000		
			Total	650	150,000	Total	1,300	300,000		
	Indicator 2.4.2: Numbers of local people receiving economic benefits from sustainable NTFP extraction	TBD – handicrafts are currently produced but little specific attention to sustainability		People	Total US\$		People	Total US\$	Activity hasn't been done yet	MU
			SW Aneityum	40	9,750	SW Aneityum	80	19,500		
			Middle Bush Tanna	30	6,500	Middle Bush Tanna	60	13,000		
			N. Efate	25	45,000	N. Efate	50	90,000		
			S. Pentecost	20	15,000	S. Pentecost	40	30,000		
			Total	115	32,500	Total	230	65,000		

	Output 2.4.1: Ecotourism development plans formulated with local participation in each target locality, including carrying capacity studies Output 2.4.2: Ecotourism initiatives managed by local communities or with provision for generating significant benefits for local communities, including provisions for environmental sustainability Output 2.4.3: Plans and norms agreed by local stakeholders in each target locality for sustainable extraction and marketing of NTFPs, incorporating results of ecological studies.																																														
2.5 Strengthened protected area network in target localities, filling ecosystem coverage gaps and responding to overall R2R management plans	Indicator 2.5.1: Increase in area coverage of PAs in target localities	Current PA areas: <table><tr><th>Locality</th><th>ha</th></tr><tr><td>SW Aneityum</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Bush Tanna</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>N. Efate</td><td>3,715</td></tr><tr><td>S. Pentecost</td><td>4,277</td></tr><tr><td>Gaua</td><td>5,826</td></tr><tr><td>Total:</td><td>13,838</td></tr></table>		Locality	ha	SW Aneityum	10	Middle Bush Tanna	10	N. Efate	3,715	S. Pentecost	4,277	Gaua	5,826	Total:	13,838	Proposed additional areas: <table><tr><th>Locality</th><th>ha</th></tr><tr><td>SW Aneityum</td><td>600</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Bush Tanna</td><td>400</td></tr><tr><td>N. Efate</td><td>600</td></tr><tr><td>S. Pentecost</td><td>800</td></tr><tr><td>Total:</td><td>2,400</td></tr></table>		Locality	ha	SW Aneityum	600	Middle Bush Tanna	400	N. Efate	600	S. Pentecost	800	Total:	2,400	Proposed additional areas: <table><tr><th>Locality</th><th>ha</th></tr><tr><td>SW Aneityum</td><td>2,600</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Bush Tanna</td><td>1,000</td></tr><tr><td>N. Efate</td><td>600</td></tr><tr><td>S. Pentecost</td><td>800</td></tr><tr><td>Total:</td><td>5,000</td></tr></table>		Locality	ha	SW Aneityum	2,600	Middle Bush Tanna	1,000	N. Efate	600	S. Pentecost	800	Total:	5,000	Field Mission Visits conducted and located Project demonstration plots. LoA with DECP to prepare declaration and prepare Management plan For Lake Letas Conservancy area in Gaua	S
	Locality	ha																																													
SW Aneityum	10																																														
Middle Bush Tanna	10																																														
N. Efate	3,715																																														
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N. Efate	600																																														
S. Pentecost	800																																														
Total:	2,400																																														
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SW Aneityum	2,600																																														
Middle Bush Tanna	1,000																																														
N. Efate	600																																														
S. Pentecost	800																																														
Total:	5,000																																														
	Indicator 2.5.2: Management effectiveness ratings of existing and new PAs in target localities	Mystery Island 52 Central Aneityum (proposed) 1 SE Mystery Island MPA (proposed) 1 Numusetu 37 Proposed Tanna CCA 0 Proposed Tanna MPA 0 ELMA 24 Tanoliu Marine CCAs 23 JICA Lelepa 36 Lelepa Island Tours 38 Proposed Efate CCA 0 Bay Homo CCA 24	Mystery Island 56 Central Aneityum (proposed) 56 SE Mystery Island MPA (proposed) 56 Numusetu 56 Proposed Tanna CCA 56 Proposed Tanna MPA 56 ELMA 56 Tanoliu Marine CCAs 56 JICA Lelepa 56 Lelepa Island Tours 56 New Efate CCA 56 Bay Homo CCA 56 Proposed Pentecost CCA 56 Lake Letas CCA 56 Average 56	Mystery Island 85 Central Aneityum (proposed) 85 SE Mystery Island MPA (proposed) 85 Numusetu 85 Proposed Tanna CCA 85 Proposed Tanna MPA 85 ELMA 85 Tanoliu Marine CCAs 85 JICA Lelepa 85 Lelepa Island Tours 85 New Efate CCA 85 Bay Homo CCA 85 Proposed Pentecost CCA 85 Lake Letas CCA 85 Average 85	A Field Mission Visits conducted and located Project demonstration plots. A joint mission with the Directorates of Fisheries, Forests and Conservation and Environmental Protection to Aneityum is planned for July or August 2021 to prepare the Baseline and begin preparatory work for the delimitation of the protected area	MS																																									

		<table><tr><td>Proposed Pentecost CCA</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Lake Letas CCA</td><td>21</td></tr><tr><td>Average</td><td>18.4</td></tr></table>	Proposed Pentecost CCA	0	Lake Letas CCA	21	Average	18.4				
Proposed Pentecost CCA	0											
Lake Letas CCA	21											
Average	18.4											
	Indicator 2.5.3: Area of buffer zones and corridors around and between PAs in target localities	0ha	15,000ha	30,000ha	One of the activities planned for the LRP in South Pentecost is precisely that of working with the communities affected by TC Harold in raising awareness and determining these ecological corridors and in protecting buffer zones. The area of buffer zones and corridors still needs to be measured	MS						
Output 2.5.1: MPA and CCA agreements negotiated and signed by government and local communities, with corresponding mapping and demarcation Output 2.5.2: MPA and CCA agreements negotiated and signed by government and local communities, with corresponding mapping and demarcation Output 2.5.3: Buffer zones and corridors established between and around CCAs and MPAs Output 2.5.4: International designations of PAs Output 2.5.5: Management plans for each PA, harmonized with provisions of overall landscape management plans Output 2.5.6: Local PA management committees, functioning with capacities for adaptive management												
2.6 Sustainable resource management and PA management supported by sustainable financing	Indicator 2.6.1: Annual income for PAs and ecosystems management in target localities	0	\$10,000 per year across the target localities	\$20,000 year across the target localities	No work has been done at MTR	U						

	Output 2.6.1: PA-specific financial management and investment plans Output 2.6.2: Local-level financial mechanisms in support of PA management and landscape restoration					
Component 3: Knowledge management						
3.1 Best practices and lessons learned are systematized and disseminated	Indicator 3.1.1: Numbers of decision-makers in key institutions reporting access to best practices and lessons learned as being useful	N/A		Directors of all key Government stakeholder institutions (departments)	4 Training and workshops with different stakeholders held	S
Output 3.1.1: Mechanisms for systematisation, dissemination and awareness raising						
3.2 Decision-making and planning are guided by information on trends in ecosystem conditions	Indicator 3.2.1: Proportions of lease application determinations in target localities that take into account monitoring data on ecosystem conditions	0	50%	100%	This study has been undertaken by the Government through World Bank funding, it is not clear how this study will allow the project to achieve output 3.2.1	MS

	Indicator 3.2.2: Proportions of EIAs in the target localities that take into account monitoring data on ecosystem conditions	0	50%	100%	Activity hasn't been done yet	MU
	Output 3.2.1: Systems in provincial government offices for management of information on ecosystem conditions and trends, feeding data to local organisations in target localities Output 3.2.2: Functioning Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) unit in the Department of Forestry					
3.3 Project management is subject to effective M&E that feeds back into adaptive management decisions.	Indicator 3.3.1:	N/A	All project indicators are measured in a timely and accurate manner and the results fed into adaptive management of the project	All project indicators are measured in a timely and accurate manner and the results fed into adaptive management of the project	Indicators should be better tracked and documented. As project changes, baselines and targets need to be updated regularly	MU
	Outputs: 3.3.1 Functioning project M&E system					

Indicator assessment key

Green = Achieved	Yellow = On target to be achieved	Red = Not on target to be achieved
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Appendix 7 – Co-financing table

The MTR team was not able to verify/confirm levels of actual materialization of co-finance.

Sources of co-financing	Name of co-financer	Type of co-financing	Amount confirmed at CEO endorsement/ approval ⁷		Actual amount materialized as of (date of MTR)		Actual amount materialized at mid-term or closure (confirmed by the review/evaluation team)	Expected total disbursement by the end of the project
			Cash	In kind	Cash	In kind		
	FAO	Grant	1,175, 000					
	FAO	In-kind		600,000				
	ACIAR ¹⁹	Grant	571,516					
	VANGO ²⁰	Grant	650,000					
	VANGO	In-kind		5,000				
	Live & Learn Vanuatu	In-kind		20,000				
	The Pacific Community (SPC)	Grant	1,354,597					
	Vanuatu Government	Grant	10,000,000					
	Vanuatu Government	In-kind		500,000				
	New York Botanical Garden	Grant	415,445					
		TOTAL	14,166,558	1,125,000				

¹⁹ Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research

²⁰ Vanuatu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations.

Appendix 8 – GEF evaluation criteria

GEF evaluation criteria rating scheme

168. The MTR team is required to rate the aforementioned MTR criteria for the purposes of reporting to GEF and FAO on progress to date. Ratings need to be well substantiated, based on evidence gathered from the MTR, and a summary description of this evidence should be presented in the MTR Ratings & Achievements Summary Table (Table A11.3).
169. The MTR team should compare their (independently derived) ratings with those of the most recent GEF project implementation review (PIR) and describe any significant discrepancies.
170. Most criteria will be rated on a six-point scale, as follows: highly satisfactory (HS); satisfactory (S); moderately satisfactory (MS); moderately unsatisfactory (MU); unsatisfactory (U); highly unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability and the likelihood of impact are rated from likely (L) down to highly unlikely (HU). Explanations as to how to rate the criteria of effectiveness, sustainability and factors affecting performance can be found in the corresponding sections in Table A11.3.

Table 15: How to assess ratings for specific criteria

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

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

could, depending on its effectiveness and efficiency rating, be either satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

Table 16: Factors affecting performance

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

Table 17: Monitoring and evaluation design or implementation ratings

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

Table 18: Sustainability ratings

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

Table 19: MTR ratings and achievements summary table

GEF criteria/sub-criteria	Rating	Summary comments
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE		
A1. Overall strategic relevance	S	
A1.1. Alignment with GEF and FAO strategic priorities	HS	
A1.2. Relevance to national, regional and global priorities and beneficiary needs	HS	
A1.3. Complementarity with existing interventions	HS	
B. EFFECTIVENESS		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	MS	
B1.1 Delivery of project outputs	MS	
B1.2 Progress towards outcomes ¹⁰ and project objectives	MS	
- Outcome 1	MS	
- Outcome 2	MS	
- Outcome 3	MS	
- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes	MS	
B1.3 Likelihood of impact	Not rated at MTR	
C. EFFICIENCY		
C1. Efficiency	MU	
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	ML	
D1.1. Financial risks	MU	
D1.2. Sociopolitical risks	L	
D1.3. Institutional and governance risks	MU	
D1.4. Environmental risks	L	
D2. Catalysis and replication	ML	
E. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE		
E1. Project design and readiness ¹²	S	
E2. Quality of project implementation	MS	

E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (BH, LTO, PTF, etc.)	MS	
E2.1 Project oversight (PSC, project working group, etc.)	MS	
E3. Quality of project execution	MS	
E3.1 Project execution and management (PMU and executing partner performance, administration, staffing, etc.)	MS	
E4. Financial management and co-financing	MS	
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement	S	
E6. Communication, knowledge management and knowledge products	S	
E7. Overall quality of M&E	MU	
E7.1 M&E design	MS	
E7.2 M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	MU	
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	MS	
F. CROSS-CUTTING CONCERNS		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	S	
F2. Human rights issues	S	
F2. Environmental and social safeguards	S	
Overall project rating	MS	

Appendix 9 – Field Visit Report

Please see appended MTR field visit report.



Annex 10 - Comments matrix for stakeholder feedback on MTR report and MTR Team response

The FAO GEF Coordination Unit (GCU) aims at high levels of transparency and pursues consultation throughout the MTR process. The MTR report, in both early and advanced drafts as well as the final version is shared with FAO internal and external stakeholders as appropriate and feasible, for comments and suggestions. The template below aims to show how the received comments on the draft MTR report have (or have not) been incorporated into the final MTR report. This audit trail should be included as an annex in the final MTR report. For the sake of transparency, it is important that comments formulated are available to all concerned and that the MTR team expresses openly its own intentions about each comment, be this acceptance and integration, or rejection.

The MTR Manager should send the matrix below to each reviewer along with the draft MTR report. Reviewers are requested to indicate the section/paragraph in the report related to any comment/feedback they submit, and, if necessary cut-and-paste text from the draft to ensure it is clear which text they are referring to when detailing their comments. The MTR Team will provide its own response, as appropriate.

Comments received on (7 June 2021) from the Midterm Review of (Integrated Sustainable Land and Coastal Management)

Reviewer	Comment Number	Section / paragraph number	Comment/feedback on the draft MTR report (cut and paste relevant text from draft report as appropriate)	MTR team's response and actions taken
FAO-GEF CU		82. 86. 87. 88. 122. 129.	There are many instances where recommendations are presented in the findings section. This mix creates a confusion and there is a risk of missing some of the important elements that could be practically presented in the recommendations. Please group these paragraphs in the recommendations section; they can be used to	Thank you for this observation. The recommendations have been removed from the findings section and grouped to further

			elaborate and further complete the recommendations. For instance, the table following Para 82. The suggested targets and indicators are very much relevant for the project team to implement in the remaining project life.	elaborate the recommendations section.
		105.	<p>"The indigenous people in the 13 communities would need to be continually supported with information and advice on how to sustainably manage the resources in their proposed protected areas." Are indigenous people involved in project implementation? If so, are there evidences of consultations with them? How does the MTR team view their interaction with the project?</p>	<p>Almost 100 percent of the population of Vanuatu are Melanesian ni-Vanuatu, and can be considered indigenous. As such, all of the community work and target beneficiaries can be considered "indigenous." As stated throughout the MTR, the project is designed to fully engage communities and the evidence of this has been provided throughout.</p> <p>The sentence has been adjusted to avoid confusion "The beneficiaries in the 13 communities ..."</p>
		106 -111	Are the activities and results reported in these paragraphs a result of the project's intervention or is it mainly related to the co-financier's intervention. It would help to clarify	The results are a combination of the project's intervention and the co-financier's intervention. This has been

				further clarified in the cited paragraphs to provide accurate attribution.
		113.	How are the awareness raising, training and social media activities mentioned here related to the target in output 3.1.1? It would be useful to provide examples, links, photos of these communication activities and elaborate further in the knowledge management section (under factors affecting performance).	<p>Examples have been linked within paragraph 113. As mentioned in the MTR, these are useful for media, raising awareness purposes but do not support a complete KM system. Please also see section on effectiveness where more detail on output 3.1.1 is provided. A specific recommendation has been provided around strengthening the KM aspect of the project (see Recommendation 5).</p> <p>As suggested additional language has been provided under factors affecting performance</p>
		117.	If the budget per component is available and in each component, if budget lines are included, why	This was raised to the FAO-GEF CU, acting LTO, FLO

			<p>is it not possible to have the expenditure per component? Also, is there no finance staff that could have answered to this, other than the CTA?</p>	<p>and PMU during the initial briefing meeting on 27 April 2021. Eventually, the CTA was able to provide an estimate of expenditures by component. No finance staff provided an answer to our multiple requests.</p> <p>In addition, as per an email dated 4 May 2021 the FAO-GEF CU in response to the following question:</p> <p>“It seems that output level budgeting is not easy to pull out of the system. I just wanted to clarify whether this pertains to this particular project or whether it is more broadly how the FAO budgeting system works”.</p> <p>The FAO-GEF CU responded 5 May 2021</p> <p>“It appears that output level budget is not available anymore for projects. I had enquired further from the team who is in charge of</p>
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				budget related issues in HQ."
		118.	How about the two years delay in project start-up, doesn't it have any implications on the cost-effectiveness of the project?	Thank you for this point, it is an important one and has been added.
		119.	How about FAO Grant and in kind co-financing? Has that not been tracked either?	As noted in the MTR, no information on any co-financing has been provided – a sentence to explicitly address the lack of tracking of FAO Grant tracking has been added
		134.	Are the TTs the only M&E systems in place? How about the M&E plan laid out in the Prodoc has it been implemented in a proper manner? Has it enabled the project to track progress, improve in planning and execution? How about the project's M&E design, is it practical and sufficient? It would be useful to assess these aspects and provide feedback	<p>The TTs are not the only M&E system in place. The project has a complete logframe that is not being tracked adequately as is highlighted in <i>Finding 5</i> under <i>Effectiveness</i> and in paras (30-32). A separate recommendation has been developed to address this issue. (Recommendation 5).</p> <p>As mentioned as well in the document the M&E was not entirely practical. Please see paras 138-139 that address this.</p>

				Language has been added under these paragraphs as well to ensure clarity.
		136 - 142	<p>Factors affecting performance</p> <p>*The MTR needs to assess the executing agency's role in discharging its responsibilities, not just the PMU's. In addition, FAO's role in oversight, supervision and backstopping needs to be assessed. Please refer to the Mtr questions relevant for this section.</p> <p>*In terms of partnerships and communication, the report lacks an assessment of stakeholders' involvement in the project formulation and implementation, the strengths and challenges of the project's partnerships.</p> <p>*With regards to Communication and Knowledge Management, there is a mention of the project's achievement in a different section. It would however be useful to assess in this section how effective the project has been in communicating and promoting its results to partners and stakeholders, any challenges and areas of improvement?</p>	<p>Additional language around these areas has been added.</p> <p>Please note that the strengths of project partnerships has been highlighted throughout the proposal, under the section on <i>relevance</i> and throughout the discussion on project components. This is indicated in the MTR is an area of strength for the project.</p>
		147 - 148	Is the initial risk classification (moderate) still relevant? At MTR stage, the GEF now requires agencies to provide an Overall Project/Program Risk Classification, based on the organization's ESS	Thank you for alerting the MTR to this requirement, it is still relevant and has been added.

			systems and procedures (low, medium, high / substantial).	
		GEF Rating Table	<p>E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (BH, LTO, PTF, etc.)</p> <p>The rating provided for this criteria needs to be substantiated by evidence in the main text i.e assessment of the role of the BH, LTO, FLO</p> <p>E2.1 Project oversight (PSC, project working group, etc.)</p> <p>Has the FAO-Project Task Force (PTF) been deployed effectively? FAO's role in oversight, supervision and backstopping needs to be assessed to provide evidence for this rating.</p> <p>E3. Quality of project execution</p> <p>Same as above</p> <p>E3.1 Project execution and management (PMU and executing partner performance, administration, staffing, etc.)</p> <p>Please provide evidence in the comments section</p>	Comments have been added around these issues within the <i>Factors Affecting Performance</i> section

		General	<p>Adjustments made to the main text to be also reflected in the ES</p> <p>Section 2 – Project Background and context comprises many other aspects like theory of change, findings etc</p> <p>I would suggest to put Findings, conclusions and recommendations in a separate section – This is one of the main parts of the report</p> <p>Formatting –</p> <p>the table of contents needs to be adjusted, page numbering is incorrect, title formatting should be adjusted</p> <p>Harmonize the font style across the document. There is a mix of fonts (for eg. Starting from Para 120)</p> <p>Photos and figures need to be numbered and referenced accordingly</p>	<p>It is not clear what is requested for the ES</p> <p>Section 2 Adjusted as suggested.</p> <p>As the draft MTR was a draft intended for substantive feedback, time was not spent on formatting the draft.</p> <p>The final report has been edited and formatted properly.</p>
PMU	1	Pag.11 Effectiveness	<p>The ISLCM project has recently begun to re-shift its focus back to accomplishing the conservation goal of the project but more effort is needed for the project to achieve many of its expected targets.</p> <p>Additional information includes that by 30 May 2021:</p>	<p>Thank you for this additional information, it validates our finding that there has been a re-shift in focus back to accomplishing the conservation goals of the project.</p>

			<p>3 Local Conservation Committee Constituted: South Pentecost .Bay Homo +Aneityum LCC+ Nusumetu Conservancy (Tanna island).</p> <p>6 Village Conservation Committee ongoing:</p> <p>South Pentecost:</p> <p>Ramputor,Pangi;Wally,Pointcross,Ranwass,</p> <p>Aneityum:</p> <p>Anelgouath,Port Patrick</p> <p>Tanna:</p> <p>Nusumetu</p>	
	2	Efficiency	<p>The project should begin to track co-finance, in particular because it appears to be an area of success for the project and there is potential for good practice lessons to come from a it.</p> <p>PMU has started contacts with cofinanciers to establish a roadmap and update the activities carried out in synergy and support of the activities at the project sites</p> <p>PSC to be held by end July to review Co-Financing and follow-up</p>	This will be important for the project to capture and can then be validated during the terminal evaluation.
	3	Sustainability	<p>One aspect of sustainability that should be explored in greater detail prior to the close of the project is how to ensure the Local Conservation Committees</p>	Thank you for this additional information, the issue of sustainability of

			<p>(LCCs) and the Village Conservation Committees (VCCs) continue after the project has closed. Such committees under GEF-4 went dormant and had to be revived with the ISLCM in GEF-5. Under The project team should strategize with NGO partners as well as the LCCs and VCCs as to what approaches can be taken to sustain community committees and commitment after project close.</p> <p>By 30 May 2021:</p> <p>3 Local Conservation Committee Constituted: South Pentecost .Bay Homo +Aneityum LCC+ Nusumetu Conservancy (Tanna island).</p> <p>6 Village Conservation Committee ongoing:</p> <p>South Pentecost:</p> <p>Ramputor,Pangi;Wally,Pointcross,Ranwass,</p> <p>Aneityum:</p> <p>Anelgouath,Port Patrick</p> <p>Tanna:</p> <p>Nusumetu</p>	<p>these committees still remains and continued discussions with how best to approach this issue can begin prior to the close of the project.</p>
	4	Factors affecting performance	<p>Another factor affective project performance are some weaknesses related to communications between the project team and key stakeholders. Through the MTR interviews, indications of miscommunication between the project team and</p>	<p>This finding stems from our interviews with the various project partners, in particular the Department of Environment. There</p>

			<p>other stakeholders has resulted in less effective implementing. Communication between the PMU and executing partners could be strengthened through more regular and formal updates.</p> <p>Not agree.</p> <p>PMU have Monthly meetings with OFP.</p> <p>Before any mission we share ToR and ask for Department officer's nominations.</p> <p>After missions we share the MTOR cleared and received Departments reports.</p> <p>By this moment we will evidence all this information shared and improve</p>	<p>seems to be some misunderstanding as to the roles and responsibilities of individuals on the project team and their relationship with the Department. The MTR suggests a "re-setting" exercise to ensure there is agreement on the way forward for the remaining project period and that all partners are on the same page as to the various roles and responsibilities of each partner.</p> <p>To help clarify the language has been adjusted as such: <i>There appears to be confusion around the roles and responsibilities of the various project partners versus the project team. This has led to some misunderstandings around project execution. Communication could be strengthened by re-setting expectations and ensuring roles and responsibilities are</i></p>
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				<i>detailed and agreed to by all partners.</i>
	5	Factors affecting performance	<p>Another factor affecting project performance are weaknesses related to monitoring, tracking, and reporting on indicators. At the time of the MTR, the GEF tracking tools had not yet been updated (expected by July 2021). The team does not have a dedicated M&E officer and that does lay too much burden on the CTA and National Project Manager (NPM). It is important that all project indicators be updated regularly and the quality of reporting through PIRs, PPRs, etc. could be improved.</p> <p>Duly noted.</p> <p>We will hire M&E officer asap.</p> <p>Roster</p>	This will help strengthen the M&E and will alleviate the burden on the CTO and NPC.
	6	Recommendations	All recommendations dully noted and we are already working on complying with the recommendations	Noted
	7	Recommendation 4. (FAO-SAP, PMU):	Develop procurement plan for remainder of project timeframe. The level of frustration surrounding administrative matters such as the length of procurement processes, the confusion related to the LOA process, is high among almost all participants interviewed. Delays in FAO's procurement process and in particular the lag in response from the FAO-SAP office has been a source of frustration for those working in-country. The MTR recommends that the FAO-SAP provide a template for the PMU to use to	<p>Based on this information, the recommendation has been adjusted per the following:</p> <p><i>FAO-SAP Budget Holder in coordination with procurement unit to develop action plan to address</i></p>

			<p>develop a 6-12 month procurement plan with deadlines for submission of quotes, RFPs, etc. as well as deadlines by which the FAO-SAP team must respond to requests. In this way, each partner will have a transparent way to track responsibility for any delays as well as provide the team in Samoa a clear work plan so that their workload can be managed and delays in procurement can be minimized.</p> <p>PMU, by the date already send two times Procurement Plan to SAP, and updated in a quarterly based.</p>	<i>delays associated with payments and disbursements</i>
	8	Recommendation 5. (PMU/project team):	<p>Improve efficient and effective administration in target localities of South Pentecost and Tanna. Project implementation on targeted sites should be operating in full capacity with complete resources, visibility and exposure. For instance, the provision/shipment of a project vehicle such as truck or quad bike to the localities can enable project activities to be implemented at a faster pace.</p> <p>As explained in Debriefing Assets can't be moved due Insurance do not cover outer Island.</p> <p>Indeed PMU will improve working conditions for LCS</p>	This is noted and has been removed from recommendation.

	9	Recommendation 6. (PMU/project team).	<p>Ensure logframe is updated regularly and improve quality of reports (PIR, PPR)</p> <p>Of course .</p> <p>In this regards and I read PPR from 2020 is with LTO to be cleared and MTR meeting don't have enough information about activities developed in 2020</p>	Noted.
	10	<p>Recommendation 10: (PMU/project team, PSC, FAO-SAP, FAO-HQ)</p> <p>Adjusting indicators and targets in the logical framework is recommended.</p>	<p>Adjusting indicators and targets in the logical framework is recommended.</p> <p>To be presented in PSC July 2021</p>	Noted.