

United Nations Environment Programme  
Global Environment Facility

**MID-TERM REVIEW REPORT**  
The Path to 2020 – Antigua and Barbuda

(GEF Project ID: 9402/UNEP Project ID: 01405)



**UNEP EVALUATION OFFICE**

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**12<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022**

## DISCLAIMER

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*This report has been prepared by an independent consultant evaluator and is a product of the Evaluation Office of UN Environment. The findings and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of UNEP or its staff.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*I would like to extend my appreciation to Ambassador Diann Black-Layne, Director of the Department of Environment and Katecia Thompson, Path to 2020 Project Coordinator in addition to the Project Management Committee members, as well as other project stakeholders who willingly made themselves available to participate in this Mid-Term Review and provided useful suggestions and recommendations. The input and guidance provided by Dr. Christopher Cox, UN Environment Task Manager, was essential in providing guidance to the overall Mid-Term Review Process. Thank you.*

## SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF THE CONSULTANT

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*Noel Jacobs has 19 years of experience working as an International Consultant in project design, management, and evaluation primarily in biodiversity, climate change, marine resources, protected areas, and sustainable tourism. He also has extensive experience as an Institutional Development Consultant, focusing on Institutional Assessments, Organizational Re-structuring; Development of Organizational Policies; Operational Guidelines and Manuals for Organizations and Projects. Mr. Jacobs has worked extensively as a consultant in more than 29 countries in a multitude of sectors including Tourism, Marine Fisheries, Coastal Zone Management, Environment, Climate Change, Aviation, Cultural Heritage, Health, among others. His analytical skills and ability to effectively apply the multi-sector approach in planning and policy development has proven to be a tremendous asset in the delivery of services to a wide diversity of clients in Latin America and the Caribbean.*

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## Abbreviations & Acronyms

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| APUA    | Antigua Public Utilities Authority                          |
| BD      | Biodiversity  |
| CARDI   | Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute   |
| CBD     | Convention on Biological Diversity                          |
| CBO     | Community Based Organization                                |
| DOE     | Department of the Environment                               |
| EA      | Executing Agency  |
| EIMAS   | Environmental Information Management and Advisory System    |
| EOP     | End of Project  |
| EPMA    | Environmental Protection and Management Act                 |
| GDP     | Gross Domestic Product                                      |
| GEB     | Global Environmental Benefit                                |
| GEF     | Global Environment Facility                                 |
| IA      | Implementing Agency   |
| IICA    | Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture     |
| IUCN    | International Union for the Conservation of Nature          |
| KBA/IBA | Key Biodiversity Area/Important Bird and Biodiversity Area  |
| MTR     | Mid-Term Review   |
| NEMMA   | Northeast Marine Management Area                            |
| NBSAP   | National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan              |
| NGO     | Non-Government Organization                                 |
| PA      | Protected Area  |
| PASP    | Protected Areas System Plan                                 |
| PDQ     | Project Design Quality                                      |
| PES     | Payment for Ecosystem Services                              |
| PIF     | Project Information Form                                    |
| PIR     | Project Implementation Review                               |
| PMC     | Project Management Cost                                     |
| POW     | Programme of Work   |
| PPG     | Project Preparation Grant                                   |
| PPP     | Public Private Partnership                                  |
| PSC     | Project Steering Committee                                  |
| ROtI    | Review of Outcomes to Impacts                               |
| SIRF    | Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund                  |
| SIRMM   | Sustainable Island Resource Management Mechanism            |
| SMMA    | Shekerley Mountain Management Area                          |
| SPPARE  | Sustainable Pathways - Protected Areas and Renewable Energy |
| TA      | Technical Assistance  |
| TAC     | Technical Advisory Committee                                |
| TEC     | Technical Evaluation Committee                              |
| TOC     | Theory of Change  |
| UNEP    | United Nations Environment Programme                        |

## Project Identification Table

Table 1. Project Summary

| UNEP Sub-programme:         | Subprogramme 3:<br>Healthy and productive ecosystems   | UNEP Division/Branch:        | Ecosystems Division,<br>Biodiversity and Land Branch  |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------------|---|
| Expected Accomplishment(s): | <p><b>EA 3 (a):</b> The health and productivity of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring, and cross-sector d transboundary collaboration frameworks at the national and international levels</p> <p><b>EA 3 (b):</b> Policymakers in the public and private sectors test the inclusion of the health and productivity of ecosystems in economic decision-making</p> | Programme of Work Output(s): | <p><b>EA3 (a)(3)</b> Support to UN and global efforts to standardize valuation and accounting of ecosystem services and goods and inclusion of natural capital in sustainable development monitoring systems, including inclusive wealth accounting</p> <p><b>EA3 (a)(7)</b> Support to cross-sectoral institutional frameworks and agreements for ecosystem management</p> <p><b>EA3 (b)(1)</b> Support to public institutions to pilot the inclusion of ecosystem health and resource availability considerations in economic decision-making</p> |
| SDG(s) and indicator(s)     | SDG 2 (2.5.1), SDG 15.1(15.1.1 & 15.1.2), 15.6 (15.6.1), 15.9 (15.9.1a), 15.a (15.a.1)   |                              |   |

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Project Title:</b> | The Path to 2020 – Antigua and Barbuda |
|-----------------------|--|

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Executing Agency:</b> | Department of the Environment, Ministry of Health and the Environment<br>Antigua and Barbuda |
|--------------------------|--|

|                          |                                      |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Project partners:</b> | Ministry of Agriculture, CARDI, IICA |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|

|                            |          |
|----------------------------|----------|
| <b>Geographical Scope:</b> | National |
|----------------------------|----------|

|                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Participating Countries:</b> | Antigua and Barbuda |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|

|  |                       |   |                              |
|--|-----------------------|---|------------------------------|
| <b>GEF project ID:</b>                                 | 9402                  | <b>IMIS number*:</b>  | GFL/11207-14AC0003-SB-006383 |
| <b>Focal Area(s):</b>                                  | Biodiversity          | <b>GEF OP #:</b>  |                              |
| <b>GEF Strategic Priority/Objective:</b>               | BD-1 Programs 1, 2, 7 | <b>GEF approval date*:</b>  | 27 September 2018            |
| <b>UNEP approval date:</b>                             | 27 September 2018     | <b>Date of first disbursement*:</b>                                   | 22 February 2019             |
| <b>Actual start date:</b>                              | 08 February 2019      | <b>Planned duration:</b>  | 48 months                    |
| <b>Intended completion date*:</b>                      | February 2023         | <b>Actual or Expected completion date:</b>                            | February 2023                |
| <b>Project Type:</b>                                   | Full Size Project     | <b>GEF Allocation*:</b>   | USD 2,729,153                |
| <b>PPG GEF cost*:</b>                                  |                       | <b>PPG co-financing*:</b>   | N/A                          |
| <b>Expected MSP/FSP Co-financing*:</b>                 | USD 5,501,791         | <b>Total Cost*:</b>   | USD 8,230,944                |
| <b>Mid-term Review/eval. (Planned date):</b>           | August 2021           | <b>Terminal Evaluation (actual date):</b>                             | N/A                          |
| <b>Mid-term Review/eval. (Actual date):</b>            | April – June 2022     | <b>No. of revisions*:</b>   | 3                            |
| <b>Date of last Steering Committee meeting:</b>        | 30 March 2022         | <b>Date of last Revision*:</b>  | 21 May 2021                  |
| <b>Disbursement as of 31 March 2022*:</b>              | USD 786,214.68        | <b>Date of financial closure*:</b>                                    | 31 December 2024             |
| <b>Date of Completion*:</b>                            | February 2023         | <b>Actual expenditures reported as of 31 March 2022:</b>              | USD 495,291.77               |
| <b>Total co-financing realized as of 31 March 2022</b> | USD 1,262,029.26      | <b>Actual expenditures entered in UMOJA as of 30 September 2021*:</b> | N/A                          |
| <b>Leveraged financing:</b>                            |                       |   |                              |

## Executive Summary

1. The twin island state of Antigua and Barbuda occupies an area of 440 km<sup>2</sup> in the Eastern Caribbean and is classified as a semi-arid country with annual rainfall averaging 45 inches, while Barbuda receives closer to 35 inches per year, or less than two thirds of the potential evaporation of water from its surface. The shorelines of both islands are greatly indented, with beaches, lagoons, and natural harbours, and the islands are rimmed by reefs and shoals. There are five major forest types in the country: Humid Valley Forest, Slope Forest, Mangrove, Scleromorphic forest of white cedar (*Tabebuia pallida*), and Mangroves. There is a current trend in the loss and extinction of biodiversity globally, and more specifically to Antigua and Barbuda, initiated in earnest by the clearing of its original vegetation for the cultivation of sugar cane and cotton as well as other economic developments. In the early colonial period, sugarcane was planted on over two thirds of the area of Antigua, resulting in removal of native vegetation. Despite these circumstances, the country has retained a biodiverse flora and fauna as reported in the country's Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2020.

2. This Mid-Term Review covers the implementation of the project "Path to 2020 – Antigua and Barbuda" (Global Environment Facility Project ID: 9402/United Nations Environment Programme Project ID: 1405), for the period 8<sup>th</sup> February 2019 to 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The Project is funded by the Global Environment Facility and the Mid-Term Review was carried out in the period April – June 2022. The review sought to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The review has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among United Nations Environment Programme, the Global Environment Facility and the relevant agencies of the project participating countries. The project is managed from the United Nations Environment Programme's Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit, Ecosystems Division, via the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. Coordination and overall project supervision are the responsibility of the United Nations Environment Programme as Implementing Agency of the Global Environment Facility and the Department of Environment of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda is the project's Executing Agency.

3. The project aligns with the Global Environment Facility and the United Nations Environment Programmes' strategic programs, applicable at the time of project design. The project is consistent with the Global Environment Facility Biodiversity Focal Area (Biodiversity-1 Program 1, Biodiversity-1 Program 2, and Biodiversity-3 Program 7), and with United Nations Environment Programmes's Strategic Focus on Ecosystem Management, Expected Accomplishment 3 (a) - The health and productivity of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring and cross-sector and transboundary collaboration frameworks at the national and international levels; and Expected Accomplishment 3 (b) - Policymakers in the public and private sectors test the inclusion of the health and productivity of ecosystems in economic decision-making. The project is also aligned with Aichi Targets 1,2,



5, 13, 14, and 20 and with Sustainable Development Goals 2 (2.5.1), 15.1(15.1.1 & 15.1.2), 15.6 (15.6.1), 15.9 (15.9.1a), and 15.a (15.a.1).

4. This project seeks to actualize protection and sustainable use of biodiversity and protected areas, under the umbrella of the Environmental Protection and Management Act of 2019 by specifically addressing the dispersed and unclear responsibilities for protected area management, lack of institutional capacity to sustainably manage and conserve biodiversity and natural resources, insufficient information and data to support environmental decision-making, inadequate financial resources and mechanisms for protected areas, inadequate legislative framework to allow for innovative financing to complement biodiversity protection at the national level, insufficient awareness at the local and policy level, and inadequate support mechanisms for locally adapted crop varieties.

5. At the mid-term, the project has delivered the comprehensive assessment of the current state of existing protected area sites in Antigua and Barbuda, including assessment of the roles and capacities of protected area management authorities; the Biodiversity Gap Analysis; the Draft procedures for the development of protected area management plans; national standards and key performance indicators for protected area management; the development of cost-effective and participatory monitoring methods for protected areas; significant progress in the Protected Area Coordinating Mechanism and the Protected Area System Plan; the Legal Gap Analysis and drafting of legislation to facilitate enhanced private sector investments in agrobiodiversity and other genetic diversity protection activities, which has been incorporated into the Environmental Protection Management Act 2019, Section XXI; and the identification of sustainable livelihood, biodiversity and genetic resource investment and business development opportunities.

6. The project has also delivered the Ministerial Order for Declaration of Shekerley Mountain Management Area as a protected area, the final hydrological report for the said area, completion of bat monitoring in the Wallings Forest area, and development of a detailed protected area Management & Business Plan for the Shekerley Mountain Management Area based on the Protected Area Systems Plan Guidelines. Procedures for funding known as Term Sheets by the Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund, sustainable livelihood interventions, the Technical Evaluation Committee, training on sustainable agricultural practices, a Call for Proposals via the Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund, and screening of proposals for environmental and social risks, technical feasibility, and financial risks have all been delivered by the project at this Mid-Term Review.

7. Notwithstanding the progress described above, there are important delays being experienced by the project. The legal and regulatory action plan to address gaps in protected area legislation has been developed but is yet to be presented to the Attorney General's Office. There are delays in the delivery of two key activities: training on assessment, planning and capacity building to strengthen PA management and the development of participatory Management Plans for two protected areas. While there is progress in the delivery of Potential Protected Area Financing Instruments and the ten-year strategic Protected Area System Business Plan, there is a delay in their presentation to Cabinet. The development of an investment prospectus for a private operator to manage protected areas under a ten-year Build-Operate-

Transfer and/or Operations-Maintenance-Management agreement is significantly delayed, and thus also results in a delay of developing the prospectus and the eventual legal agreements for protected area management.

8. The project is facing delays linked to the gazettelement of the Shekerley Mountain Management Area while the Department of Environment awaits confirmation from the Chief Town and Country Planner. Additionally, several activities are delayed linked to the change of the Dunnings Forest ecosystem to Christian Valley as priority site for assessment and introduction of Payment for Ecosystem Services. Capacity building of the Shekerley Mountain Management Area management agencies and stakeholders is substantially delayed, and the design and operationalization of Payment for Ecosystem Services is still in its initiation stage. The scoping exercises for the equity pilot are still ongoing and the incorporating of equity into the Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund is proving to be challenging. There are substantial delays in the selection and award of technical assistance sustainable production grants and in the selection and award of innovative financing proposals. Also delayed is the identification and support to the development of proposals that can be submitted for grant and non-grant financing to the Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund, the private sector, and other investors. Delays in capacity building for protected areas management and in Public-Private Partnerships arrangements have resulted in difficulties in measuring two key indicators at the mid-term that are linked to the global objective of the project: Protected Areas Capacity Scorecard scores increased by 15% over baseline and Financial Scorecard score increased by 75% over baseline.

9. At the Mid-Term Review the project has made significant progress towards the achievement of Outcome 1 and Outcome 2, and less so for Outcome 3, even though most processes required to deliver all three outcomes are either ongoing or are not planned for initiation until after the Mid-Term Review. Delays are primarily due to COVID 19 in the early stage of project implementation and current contract delays by multiple consultants hired by the project. The assessment of outcomes considers the fact that some outcomes may rely on the collective delivery of multiple outputs, and that some outputs contribute to the delivery of multiple outcomes and may be across multiple project components, consistent with the reconstructed Theory of Change. Also, and based on the project's implementation plan, some outputs may not yet be due for delivery at the Mid-Term Review, and therefore are not assessed as 'delayed' and/or negatively affecting the delivery of the relevant outcomes. Progress at the Mid-Term Review shows the project is on track to deliver its contribution of 3,035 hectares to GEF 6 Core Indicator 1 - *Maintain globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services that it provides to society*.

10. The Reconstructed Theory of Change confirms that the project is following a robust theory of change with appropriately formulated outputs, direct outcomes, intermediate states, and long-term results. The outcome indicators are verifiable and appropriate for recording progress towards the achievement of the development objectives. The overall performance of the project at the Mid-Term is rated as '**Satisfactory**'. Assessment of the drivers, assumptions for the change processes, delivery of the most significant outcomes, and the proportion of intermediate states achieved at the Mid Term all suggest that the likelihood of impact is '**Likely**'.

11. The success of the project thus far has benefitted from assertive leadership and direction from the Department of Environment and competent project management. The Department of Environment has been successful in securing inter-institutional participation for the development of Protected Area Management Plans, National standards and key performance indicators for protected areas management, cost-effective and participatory monitoring methods for protected areas, and development of the Protected Area System Plan. The Department of Environment has been successful in securing political support for a Ministerial Order for Declaration of Shekerley Mountain Management Area as a protected area. The project has been very efficient in resolving obstacles including those related to COVID-19 with instated restrictions on physical meetings and visits to field sites. The Department of Environment and the Project Management Team must be commended for an exemplary display of commitment and leadership in ensuring significant delivery of project outputs and outcomes to date.

12. Some key **lessons learned** in this Mid-Term Review include:

- This project has demonstrated the need for dedicated full-time staff specific to the project, at both the project coordination and technical levels, to ensure timely and quality dedication to the implementation, reporting and quality control needs of the project.
- Institutional leadership and competent staff are indispensable to the successful development of project processes and ultimately, the delivery of project outputs and outcomes.
- The lack of a Theory of Change and ‘output to outcome’ analysis during the project design resulted in lost opportunities to better test project assumptions and drivers, which would have provided valuable data to inform and refine project implementation strategies and approach early in the project cycle. This could allow for better risk management and the avoidance of significant delays in implementation at the mid-term.
- The lack of a Gender Action Plan during project design resulted in limited efforts to truly mainstream gender perspectives into project processes, tools, manuals, and protected areas management and business plans. While this Mid-Term Review recognizes the existence of Environmental and Social Safeguards and gender policies at the Department of Environment, this lesson highlights the need for and importance of a project-specific Gender Action Plan that is prescriptive and responsive to the needs of the project.
- The lack of a reporting tool or template for compliance with Environmental and Social Safeguards makes it difficult to truly assess how the project ensures compliance with Global Environment Facility and United Nations Environment Programme policies in this regard. Consistent with the lesson above, a generic Environmental and Social Safeguards compliance checklist may not necessarily cover all the needs of this specific project.
- The project’s primary exit and upscaling strategy, which rely heavily on the definition and consolidation of a Payment for Ecosystem Services system and on robust Public-Private Partnership arrangements should have been prioritized for early project implementation to

minimize implementation risks and compromise of the project's global objective. At the time of this Mid-Term Review it is clear the project will be subject to substantial pressure to put these systems in place by the project's end, especially since they will require time for testing and validation before the anticipated impact on biodiversity conservation may be tangible and measurable. Also of note is that the 'innovation' the project is expected to deliver also rests with the successful design, testing, and validation of the Public-Private Partnership arrangements.

- Stakeholders buy-in and support needed for the institutionalization of the project's outcomes and to ensure sustainability of project results cannot be taken for granted and must be continuously nurtured. This Mid-Term Review revealed that some stakeholders believe there is much more the project can do to better engage them to the benefit of both the project and stakeholders.
- While the project is using a multi-pronged approach to communication and awareness, not having a well-structured communication and awareness strategy may result in challenges to effectively implement a Knowledge Management Strategy for the project, which must be ongoing, systematic, and sufficiently institutionalized to inform future upscaling and sustainability of project results beyond project implementation.

13. Some key **recommendations** emanating from in this Mid-Term Review include:

- Determine a strategy that will incorporate and make visible the gender dimension within the course of the project implementation, including a tool for systematic reporting at the project level.
- Develop a reporting tool that will allow for the systematic reporting of compliance with Environmental and Social Safeguards at the project level.
- The Department of Environment, Project Management, and United Nations Environment Programme should develop a procedure or tool to correctly estimate and report counterpart contribution, consistent with the expectations and spirit of the GEF Co-financing Policy.
- Develop measures to raise awareness of and demonstrate management practices that reduce the impact of agriculture on sensitive habitats and biodiversity in and around protected areas, especially those activities that include the movement of livestock.
- Seek institutional and political support to ensure timely incorporation by the Board of equity into the Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund.
- The project must immediately prioritize four critical issues that are indispensable for the project's success: (1) formalization of the change from Dunnings Forest to Christian Valley, (2) design and consolidation of the Payment for Ecosystem Services system, (3) a Build-Operate-Transfer and/or Operations-Maintenance-Management agreement for protected areas management; and (4)

getting resources on the ground to support livelihoods in rural communities. This latter activity is critical for boosting the project's budget execution rate and to produce tangible results for local communities.

- Once the change from Dunnings Forest ecosystem to Christian Valley is finalized, all relevant project texts must be updated accordingly, including the Project Results Framework, and this must be reported in the Project Implementation Reports for upload the Global Environment Facility portal.
- It is understood that within the context of an Operations-Maintenance-Management agreement for protected areas management, the private partner (Operator) will be expected to make up-front investments, such as the purchase of vessels, vehicles, signage, equipment, multimedia technologies, etc., and to finance and manage the primary on-going management and operational activities, including: staff salaries, general operations and maintenance, collection of visitor / user fees, conservation programs and scientific monitoring, etc. While current global marketing conditions may negatively affect the risk appetite of investors, the project must exercise flexibility in devising an attractive package which provides comfort to investors in the event of unpredictable global economic shocks such as that caused by the COVID 19 pandemic. The investment risks must be seen as shared between the investor and the Government of Antigua & Barbuda. The project simply does not have the time to wait for global market conditions to improve, which by its nature is full of uncertainties and not always predictable.
- Take all necessary steps to provide an updated measure (beyond the baseline) of all Results Framework indicators that are linked to the project's global objective, for example, Protected Area Capacity Scorecard scores increased by 15% over baseline and Financial Scorecard score increased by 75% over baseline
- For all future design of projects, it is crucial to include a detailed Theory of Change analysis, which thoroughly assesses assumptions and drivers, to allow for early identification of possible intermediate states and alternative outcome to impact pathways, thus allowing for a more diverse identification of project implementation strategies. This will allow for a more effective and efficient project implementation, the strategic positioning of key project drivers, an elimination of unrealistic assumptions, and a minimization of overall project risks.
- It is recommended that the Project Management Committee reviews and vets all project reports that are submitted to the United Nations Development Programme. This is consistent with best practice in the governance of projects funded by the Global Environment Facility.
- The delays experienced by the project in key activities that are critical to its upscaling, sustainability of results, and long-term success will require time beyond the planned closing date of February 2023. The low budget execution rate cannot be substantially improved without an

extension of the time available for implementation. This Mid-Term Review estimates that an extension of 12 months may be appropriate.

## I. Project Overview

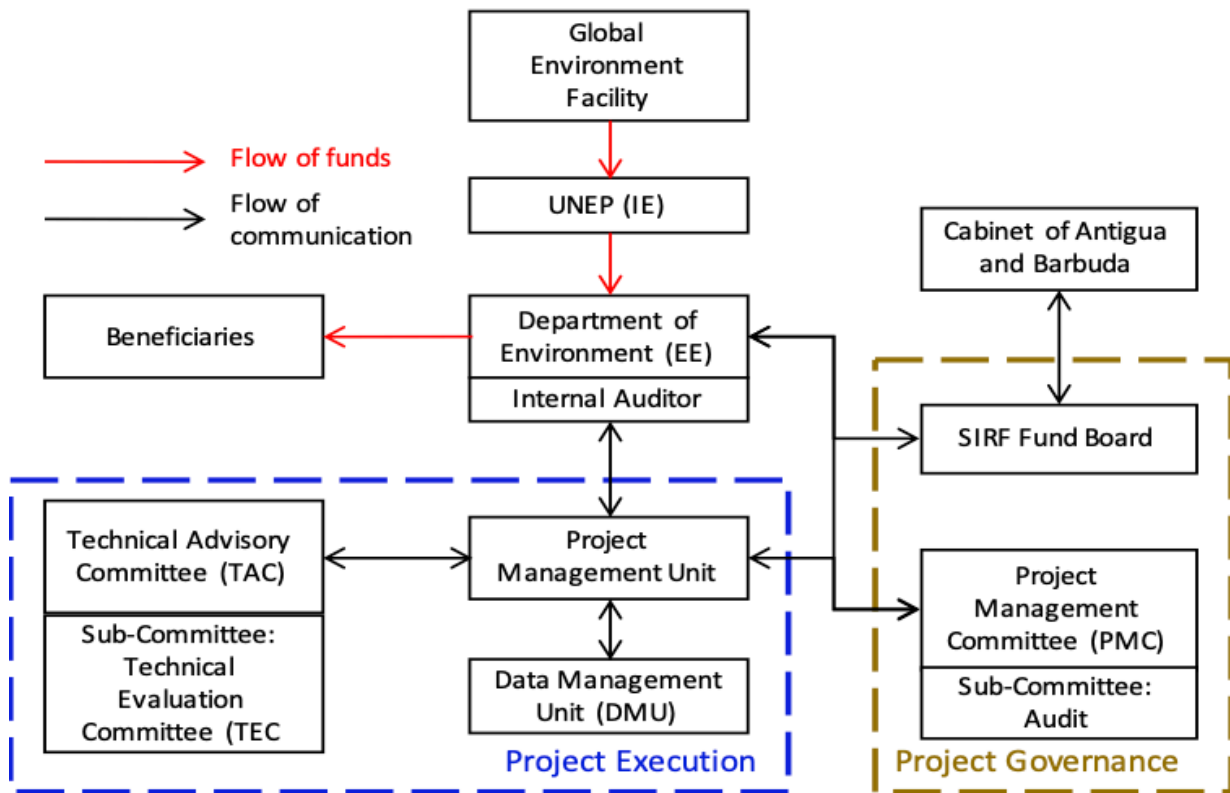
### Institutional Context and Implementation Arrangements

14. This Mid-Term Review covers the implementation of the project “Path to 2020 – Antigua and Barbuda” (GEF Project ID: 9402/UNEP Project ID: 1405), for the period 8<sup>th</sup> February 2019 to 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The Project is funded by the Global Environment Facility and the Mid-Term Review was carried out in the period April – June 2022. The review sought to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The review has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, the GEF and the relevant agencies of the project country. The project is managed from UNEP’s GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit, Ecosystems Division, via the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC). The project aligns with the GEF’s and UNEP’s strategic programs, applicable at the time of project design and is generally consistent with UNEP’s Strategic Focus on Ecosystem Management, **EA 3 (a)**: The health and productivity of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring, and cross-sector d transboundary collaboration frameworks at the national and international levels; and **EA 3 (b)**: Policymakers in the public and private sectors test the inclusion of the health and productivity of ecosystems in economic decision-making. In terms of GEF Core Indicators, the project is consistent with GEF-6 Core Indicator 1: Maintain globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services that it provides to society. The project also aligns with the following GEF Biodiversity Focal Area programs, objectives and outcomes: **BD-1 Program 1**: Improved management effectiveness of protected areas; **BD-1 Program 2**: Increase in area of terrestrial and marine ecosystems of global significance in new protected areas and increase in threatened species of global significance protected in new protected areas; and **BD-3 Program 7**: Increased genetic diversity of globally significant cultivated plants and domesticated animals that are sustainably used within production systems. The project is in full alignment with all five strategic goals of the Aichi Targets, and primarily with targets 1,2, 5, 13, 14, and 20 and with Sustainable Development Goals SDG 2 (2.5.1), SDG 15.1(15.1.1 & 15.1.2), 15.6 (15.6.1), 15.9 (15.9.1a), and 15.a (15.a.1).

15. Coordination and overall project supervision is the responsibility of UNEP as the GEF’s Implementing Agency (IA), and the Department of Environment (DOE) in the Ministry of Health and the Environment is the project’s Executing Agency (EA). The DOE is responsible for day-to-day project execution through the support of the Project Manager, Project Coordinator, Project Technical Officer, and consultants as appropriate. The DOE also is responsible for all administrative, management and financial activities of the project. UNEP’s Task Manager provides continuous support and works closely with project personnel in project implementation aspects related to UNEP and the GEF implementation requirements.

16. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) (aka Project Management Committee or PMC) is composed of high-level policy makers and heads of departments from across different sectors, including the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health, Wellness & the Environment (Chair), the Principle Assistant Secretary of this Ministry, the Focal Point of the international/donor agency, a representative of the Budget Office at the Ministry of Finance, the Director of Environment, and a secretary. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is composed of representatives of eighteen (18) Government agencies, three NGOs and one from the Private Sector.

Figure 1. Project Implementation Arrangements



### Project Parameters

17. The project was approved as a Full-Sized Project by the GEF on September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018, and by UNEP on the same date, for a period of 48 months with an intended completion date of February 2023. The project was approved with a total budget of US\$8,230,944 that is divided between the GEF contribution of US\$2,729,153 and co-financing of US\$5,501,791. The first disbursement of project funds was on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019. Between September 2018 and January 2019, the project suffered from



administrative delays, with actual start date being February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019. At the time of the MTR the project had received three (3) revisions, the last being May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

### Project Objective and Logical Framework

18. The project “Path to 2020 – Antigua and Barbuda” (GEF Project ID: 9402/UNEP Project ID: 1405) seeks to actualize protection and sustainable use of biodiversity and protected areas, under the umbrella of the Environmental Protection and Management Act (EPMA) of 2019 by specifically addressing the dispersed and unclear responsibilities for protected area (PA) management, lack of institutional capacity to sustainably manage and conserve biodiversity and natural resources, insufficient information and data to support environmental decision-making, inadequate financial resources and mechanisms for protected areas, inadequate legislative framework to allow for innovative financing to complement biodiversity protection at the national level, insufficient awareness at the local and policy level, and inadequate support mechanisms for locally adapted crop varieties. The project consists of three technical components, with ten (10) planned ‘Outputs’ all contributing to three (3) ‘Outcomes’, distributed across three components.

19. The project’s Logical Framework is summarized below in Table 2.

Table 2: Project Logical Framework

| Components  | Outputs  | Outcomes  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>C1: Strengthening regulations, institutions, and financing mechanisms for the national Protected Areas System.</b> | 1.1 – Protected Areas System Plan for Antigua and Barbuda updated and formally approved<br>1.2 – Protected Areas legal and regulatory action plan and development of new regulations<br>1.3 – Technical assistance provided for PA management actions and development of the public private partnership strategy<br>1.4 – PA System Business Plan developed for triple bottom line revenue generation<br>1.5 – Public Private Partnership for management of Antigua and Barbuda’s Protected Areas System established | <b>O1:</b> PA management and financing framework in Antigua and Barbuda strengthened and coordinated to support biodiversity conservation and to enable a Public Private Partnership agreement for future management of the PA system |
| <b>C2: Expansion of protected areas in support of species conservation.</b>   | 2.1 – Gazettement and management of the Shekerley Mountain Management Area and the Dunnings Forest ecosystem<br>2.2 – Payment for ecosystem services pilot in the Dunnings Forest ecosystem  | <b>O2:</b> Globally significant biodiversity & agrobiodiversity conserved, managed, and sustainably used to improve livelihoods and generate PA revenues  |

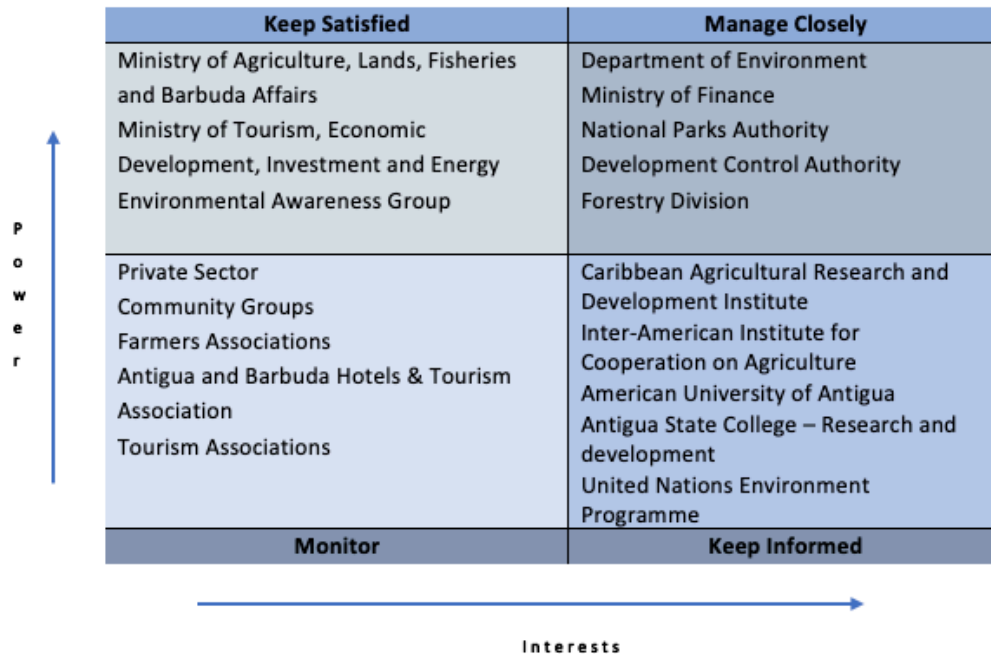


|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p><b>C3: Pilot livelihood financing mechanisms that support conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and plant genetic resources in the newly designated Shekerley Mountain Management Area.</b></p> | <p>3.1 – Updated policies and regulations in place for the SIRF Fund’s non-grant financing instruments</p> <p>3.2 – Technical assistance and financing provided to pilot grant and non-grant biodiversity conservation and mainstreaming activities in the Shekerley Mountain Management Area</p> <p>3.3 – Lessons learned documented and used to facilitate up-scaling through additional grant and non-grant financing from various investors</p> | <p><b>O3:</b> Reduced negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services through enhanced sustainable livelihoods in rural communities</p> |
|---|---|---|

### Stakeholder Analysis

20. The stakeholder analysis sought to identify and assess the relevance of key people, groups of people, or institutions that may significantly influence the implementation and success of the project. The analysis considered key institutions involved in the process of protected area delimitation, planning, and management, payment for ecosystem services, species protection, financing mechanisms, and community ownership. The project’s primary stakeholders and their level of influence and interest in project implementation and thus possible level of impact on project outcomes are presented below in a power/influence and interest grid in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Distribution of Project Stakeholder Influence and Interests



In the above grid, those institutions that have power, influence, and primary interests in the project's processes and outcomes, and thus exert major control are listed in the right upper quadrant, i.e., Department of Environment, Forestry Division, Ministry of Finance, National Parks Authority, and the Development Control Authority. Stakeholders with low level of influence and/or low levels of interest in the project are listed in the lower left quadrant, while those who have major influence independent of their level of interest are listed in the upper left quadrant. Those stakeholders with high levels of interest, but less influential are in the lower right quadrant. The above grid was informed by relevant project documents, the stakeholder analysis conducted as part of the Inception Phase and validated through feedback received in stakeholder interviews.

## II. Review Methods

21. This MTR was conducted by an Independent International Evaluation Consultant as per the Terms of Reference developed by the project for this purpose (Annex 1). The MTR Report was structured as per 'Guidance on the Structure and Contents of the Main Mid Term Review Report' of the Evaluation Office of UN Environment Programme, Revised Version 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

### Data Collection

22. The MTR addressed the following four (4) primary evaluation criteria: (1) Attainment of objectives and planned results; (2) Sustainability and catalytic role; (3) Processes affecting attainment of project results; and (4) Complementarity with UNEP strategies and programmes. The following specific review categories were addressed, according to their distribution across the evaluation criteria listed above: (A) Strategic Relevance; (B) Quality of Project Design; (C) Nature of External Context; (D) Effectiveness; (E) Financial Management; (F) Efficiency; (G) Monitoring and Reporting; (H) Sustainability; and (I) Factors Affecting Project Performance. For purposes of the MTR, these categories were defined as per UN Environment Programme Evaluation Policy and OECD/DAC.

23. Evaluation questions were developed as per the guidance provided in the Terms of Reference of the MTR, inclusive of addressing the Key Strategic Questions and those required by the GEF Portal, and in consideration of the results of the PDQ assessment and the Reconstructed Theory of Change (TOC) developed during the Inception Phase. The main evaluation questions of the Terms of Reference are generally included under 'effectiveness' but are reinforced by other questions through-out the different categories of the MTR as laid out in the Evaluation Framework in Annex B of the Inception Report. All evaluation indicators were analyzed using the project's reporting mechanisms (actual available outputs, PIRs, Half Year Progress Reports, technical reports, etc.), using where possible quantitative and qualitative data, validated through semi-structured interviews with project staff, partners, beneficiaries and other key stakeholders.

24. Stakeholders and project beneficiaries are important sources of information to validate information in project reports, and are instrumental in reviewing the draft MTR report, and as such, are also targeted audiences of the overall MTR process. Stakeholders, and in particular project staff and members of the PMC, were engaged through virtual one-on-one interviews, and focused at detail on the project's performance, challenges, lessons learned, and opportunities for improvement. Persons interviewed and/or engaged during the MTR process are presented in Annex 2.

25. The methodological steps for data collection in this MTR were as follows:

- (a) A desk review of relevant background documentation, inter alia: the Project Document and appendices; project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Project Implementation Plan and Budgets; the project's logical framework; Half-Year Progress Reports (HYPR) and Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports; financial reports; progress reports from collaborating partners; Evaluations/Reviews of similar projects; the Tracking Tool, and public awareness materials produced thus far by the project.
- (b) One-on-one Interviews were conducted using GoToMeeting and WhatsApp platforms. Semi-structured questions developed by the evaluator, based on questions in the Evaluation Framework developed during the Inception Phase, were used to secure responses and inputs from stakeholders on the four primary evaluation criteria and their respective categories. This guaranteed a more interactive process through which the interviewed respondents had more opportunities to contribute to the MTR process, without limitations to the extent of their responses. Project stakeholders who participated in one-on-one interviews were given the opportunity to provide additional information and/or clarifications where necessary. The findings derived from the desk review, one-on-interviews with stakeholders, the project team, and UNEP personnel were critically reviewed, assessed, and systematized to identify trends in the responses and perceptions on the project's results, overall performance, and perceived project challenges. This was especially useful in validating information presented in the Project PIRs, and in ensuring the proper context for articulating project lessons and recommendations for improving project implementation.
- (c) A presentation of Preliminary Findings (Annex 4) was presented to the UNEP Task Manager and the Project Team, to ensure all information sources have been accessed and to provide an opportunity to verify emerging findings. Additional discussions, information, and validation of project outputs after the preliminary findings' presentation were instrumental in the development of the Final Main MTR Report.

### Limitations of the Mid Term Review

26. Even though the Project Team was proactive in advising stakeholders that the Consultant will be reaching out to them as part of the MTR process, an important number of stakeholders did not react to the request for interviews or respond to a survey by email, even after multiple follow-ups by email. One-on-one interviews were very much limited to representatives of the Project Team and members of the PMC, most of whom are primarily from government agencies, and UNEP personnel. Two government institutions outside the PMC were also engaged: the Development Control Authority and the Ministry of Tourism. A few interviews were also held with persons from a few non-government organizations. Some project partners were not available during the review, and as such were not able to contribute to the process. Several project stakeholders interviewed during the MTR process appeared to have very little knowledge of the project preparation phase, and therefore could not respond or opted to reserve their response to questions on Project Design and Implementation Arrangements. Also, the fact that some key project activities are yet to be substantially developed limited the extent to which respondents in the review process were able to articulate their responses in terms of outputs and performance of the project to date.

### III. Review Findings

27. Overall findings of the MTR are summarized as per the criteria and rating scale used by UN Environment Programme, consisting of the following five (5) ratings:

**HS:** Highly Satisfactory – the activity/parameter/output/outcome is expected to achieve or exceed all its end-of-project targets, without major shortcomings. The progress towards the objective/outcome can be presented as “good practice”.

**S:** Satisfactory - the activity/parameter/output/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings.

**MS:** Moderately Satisfactory - the activity/parameter/output/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, but with significant shortcomings.

**MU:** Moderately Unsatisfactory - the activity/parameter/output/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets with major shortcomings.

**U:** Unsatisfactory - the activity/parameter/output/outcome is expected not to achieve most of its end-of-project targets.

28. Sustainability is rated from ‘Highly Likely’ to ‘Highly Unlikely’ as follows:

**HL:** Highly Likely – Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes on track to be achieved by the project’s closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

**L:** Likely – Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Mid Term Review.

**MU:** Moderately Unlikely – Significant risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on.

**U:** Unlikely – Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained.

### **A. Strategic Relevance**

29. The project aligns with the GEF's and UNEP's strategic programs, applicable at the time of project design. The project is consistent with the GEF Biodiversity Focal Area (BD-1 Program 1, BD-1 Program 2, and BD-3 Program 7), and with UNEP's Strategic Focus on Ecosystem Management, Expected Accomplishment 3 (a) - The health and productivity of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring and cross-sector and transboundary collaboration frameworks at the national and international levels; and Expected Accomplishment 3 (b) - Policymakers in the public and private sectors test the inclusion of the health and productivity of ecosystems in economic decision-making. The project is also aligned with Aichi Targets 1,2, 5, 13, 14, and 20 and with Sustainable Development Goals SDG 2 (2.5.1), SDG 15.1(15.1.1 & 15.1.2), 15.6 (15.6.1), 15.9 (15.9.1a), and 15.a (15.a.1). The project is aligned with Antigua and Barbuda's National Physical Development Plan (2012), the country's Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) (2015-2020), the Antigua and Barbuda Environmental Management Strategy and Action Plan (2004 – 2009) (NEMS), the Antigua and Barbuda's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2014-2020), and Antigua's 2015 report on its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). The project is aligned with the 'United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework in the Caribbean' cities Priority Area 4 'A Sustainable and Resilient Caribbean'. The project shows complementarity with other GEF-UNEP projects at the national and regional levels. Notwithstanding the above, the Project Document is deficient in its articulation of linkages to the Bali Strategic Plan and to South-South Cooperation.

*The overall rating for the project's Strategic Relevance is "Highly Satisfactory".*

### **B. Effectiveness**

#### ***Reconstructed Theory of Change***

30. The intervention logic in the Project Document, the Logical Framework, and the results of the PDQ Assessment were analysed to establish the project's TOC, and a "reconstructed" TOC at Design was developed to help identify links between outputs and outcomes, and the intermediary states between outcomes and intended impacts. During the main MTR process, the TOC at design was revisited after a review of project processes, documentary evidence, primarily the PIRs and one-on-one interviews with project stakeholders, to reconstruct the TOC at Evaluation. The findings in the TOC at Evaluation confirm the TOC at Design. Key assumptions and drivers that influence implementation along causal pathways and which affect the delivery of outputs, outcomes, and ultimately impacts remain the same as indicated below in Figure 3 and in the Outputs to Impact Analysis in Figure 4.

Figure 3: Theory of Change Analysis - Key Project Impact Drivers and Assumptions

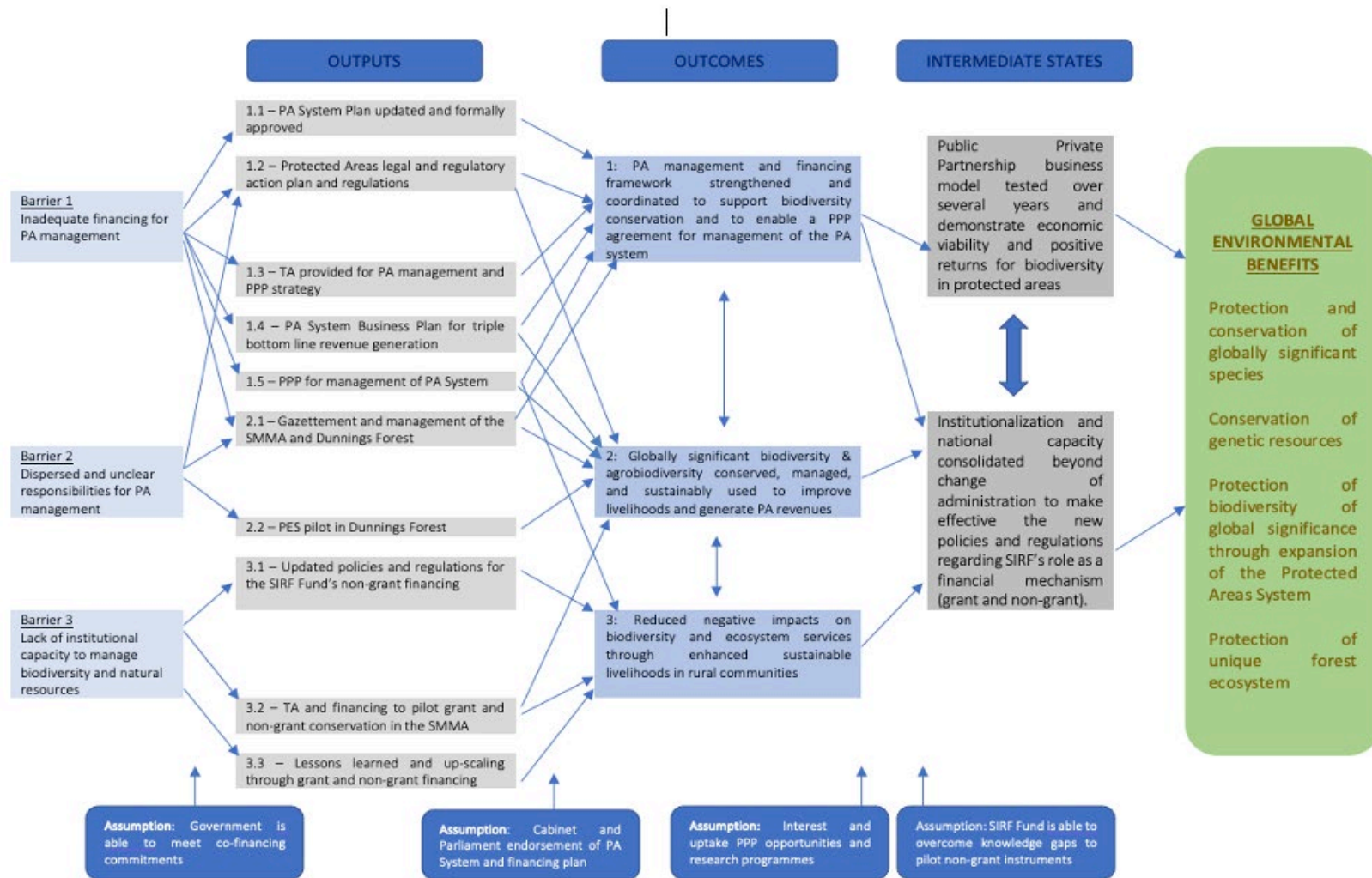
|  |
|--|
| <p><i>Key Impact Drivers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Project investments in strengthening of capacity for protected areas management.</li><li>▪ Project supports development and testing of business model for innovative financing of protected areas management.</li><li>▪ Project supports institutional strengthening and institutionalization of financial mechanisms for protected areas management.</li></ul> <p><i>Key Assumptions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Government can meet co-financing commitments.</li><li>▪ Cabinet and Parliament endorsement of PA System and financing plan.</li><li>▪ Interest and uptake of PPP opportunities and research programmes.</li><li>▪ SIRF Fund can overcome knowledge gaps to pilot non-grant instruments.</li></ul> |
|--|

31. The logic and causal pathways inferred from the Project Document and Logical Framework for moving from barriers to outputs show strong coherence, resulting in a reconstructed TOC that is likely to lead to desired impacts if all drivers are delivered and assumptions hold true. There are clear linkages between components as well as pathways which connect outputs and outcomes of different components, as well as precursor linkages between outcomes; for example, Outcome 2 which is directly linked to the protection of biodiversity with global importance, is dependent on Outcome 1 and Outcome 3 being delivered effectively.

32. Outputs to outcomes: the outputs outlined for project components show a clear linkage with the outcome defined for each component and with the corresponding barriers they were designed to address. There also is strong coherence between the individual outputs across all three components and their collective contribution to the delivery of project outcomes. Outcomes 1 & 3 contribute to the delivery of Outcome 2, which therefore suggests all ten project outputs contribute either directly (as in the case of the outputs of Component 2) or indirectly (outputs of Components 1 and 3) to Outcome 2. Said differently, the project's intervention logic suggests the three barriers identified must all be resolved to deliver the desired overall objective. For the transition between outputs and outcomes are the key drivers that the project invests in strengthening of capacity for protected areas management, support development and testing of business model for innovative financing of protected areas management, and support institutional strengthening and institutionalization of financial mechanisms for protected areas management.



Figure 4. Reconstructed Theory of Change (Outputs to Impact Analysis)



33. Outcomes to intermediate state to impact: Outcome 1 lead a logical path towards Intermediate State 1: Public Private Partnership business model tested over several years and demonstrate economic viability and positive returns for biodiversity in protected areas, while Outcomes 2 and 3 are in clear support towards delivering Intermediate State 2: Institutionalization and national capacity consolidated beyond change of administration to make effective the new policies and regulations regarding SIRF's role as a financial mechanism (grant and non-grant). The transition between outcomes and achieving the intermediate states relies on the project supporting broad institutionalization of the PPP business model and the financial mechanisms for the protected area system to the point where the model and mechanisms can be tested and tweaked as necessary over time. This may require time beyond the life of the project, and as such, the institutionalization process must be able to withstand possible changes in political administration. To be able to demonstrate measurable change in biodiversity benefits will require time over which all project assumptions will be tested. Both intermediate states are required before the intended impact and Global Environmental Benefits may be achieved: protection and conservation of globally significant species; conservation of genetic resources; protection of biodiversity of global significance through expansion of the Protected Areas System; and protection of unique forest ecosystem.

#### ***Availability of Outputs***

34. This section provides a brief overview of the status of the project's outputs by component at the time of the MTR. The assessment below is based on mid-term targets defined in the Project Implementation Plan, validated against the results of project implementation to date as reported in the PIRs, as observed during the MTR, and with due consideration of inputs provided by the Project Team and stakeholders during interviews conducted as part of this MTR process. A summary of the project's performance at the output level is provided in Table 3.

#### **C1: Strengthening regulations, institutions, and financing mechanisms for the national Protected Areas System.**

35. At the time of the MTR and based on assessment of performance at the output level, the overall delivery for this component has been estimated at 70%. The project has made substantial progress in the delivery of output 1.1, having completely delivered the comprehensive assessment of the current state of existing PA sites in Antigua and Barbuda, including assessment of the roles and capacities of PA management authorities; the Biodiversity Gap Analysis; the Draft procedures for the development of PA Management Plans; national standards and key performance indicators for PA management; and the development of cost-effective and participatory monitoring methods for protected areas. Two other activities under this output have advanced significantly, but not yet fully completed: the Protected Area Coordinating Mechanism and the final approval of the Protected Area System Plan, which is to be presented to Cabinet in due course. Output 1.2 is also significantly delivered with completion of the Legal Gap Analysis and the drafting of legislation to facilitate enhanced private sector investments in



agrobiodiversity and other genetic diversity protection activities, which has been incorporated into the Environmental Protection Management Act (EPMA) 2019, Section XXI. The legal and regulatory action plan to address gaps in PA legislation has been developed but is yet to be presented to the Attorney General’s Office. Output 1.3 is less advanced than the previous two outputs due to delays in the delivery of two key activities by the Environmental Awareness Group: training on assessment, planning and capacity building to strengthen PA management and the development of participatory Management Plans for two PAs. However, the project has delivered the identification of sustainable livelihood, biodiversity and genetic resource investment and business development opportunities. While output 1.4 has made significant progress in the delivery of Potential PA Financing Instruments and the ten-year strategic PA System Business Plan, the Legal Unit has advised that the lessons learnt as provided for under output 3.3 be incorporated into the PA System Business Plan, before it is presented to Cabinet. This essentially means a delay, since a revision of the PA System Business Plan will be initiated until the latter part of project implementation. The development of an investment prospectus (IP) for a private operator to manage PAs under a ten-year Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) and/or Operations-Maintenance-Management (OMM) agreement under Output 1.5 is significantly delayed, and thus also results in a delay of developing the prospectus and the eventual legal agreements for PA management.



Figure 5. Management Plan Workshop for Shekerley Mountain Management Area

## **C2: Expansion of protected areas in support of species conservation.**

36. Overall output delivery for this component at the MTR is 40%. The project has made moderate progress in the delivery of Output 2.1 having delivered the Ministerial Order for Declaration of SMMA as protected area, the final hydrological report for the SMMA, completion of bat monitoring in the Wallings Forest area, and development of a detailed PA Management & Business Plan for the Shekerley Mountain Area based on PA Systems Plan guidelines. However, the project is facing delays linked to the gazettelement of the SMMA while the DOE awaits confirmation from the Chief Town and Country Planner. Additionally, several activities are delayed in this component linked to the change of the Dunnings Forest ecosystem to Christian Valley as priority site for assessment and introduction of Payment for Ecosystem Services. The DOE is to make a formal request to UNEP to formalize this change and has also sought Cabinet approval for the change of site, which would also mean modifying the title of Outputs 2.1 and 2.2. This change is not yet evident in official project documents, but once approved by UNEP, must be communicated to the GEF. It must be noted that this MTR did not come across any documentation with the reason for the change of Dunnings Forest. Also of note is the fact that the stakeholder and community validation of the final PA Management & Business Plan for the Shekerley Mountain Area was delayed due to COVID 19, with said validation now being pursued via the use of two Community Liaison Officers. In this regard, it is still advisable to conduct a workshop to validate the management plan in a public collective setting. Capacity building of the SMMA management agencies and stakeholders is substantially delayed with no evidence of tangible progress other than the work plan. Output 2.2 is less advanced than output 2.1 with the design and operationalization of PES in its initiation stage, in addition to the fact that the Dunnings Forest ecosystem will no longer be used, and Christian Valley still being formalized.



Figure 6. Wallings Biodiversity Monitoring and Camera Trap Deployment



**C3: Pilot livelihood financing mechanisms that support conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and plant genetic resources in the newly designated Shekerley Mountain Management Area.**

37. Overall output delivery for Component 3 at the MTR is estimated at 55%. Output 3.1 is the most advanced of this component having produced the procedures for funding known as Term Sheets by the SIRF Fund, even though the scoping exercises for the equity pilot are still ongoing and the incorporating of equity in to the SIRF Fund is proving to be challenging with the approval of the SIRF Fund Board still pending. Sustainable livelihood interventions were developed and were included on Call for Proposal documents and the selection criteria was revised to include feedback from SIRF Fund Technical Evaluation Committee and other relevant DOE officers. The Call for Applications/Proposal Forms and Applicant Review Forms have also been produced under this output. Delivery of output 3.2 is less advanced than output 3.1. The Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) has been established and training provided on sustainable agricultural practices; a Call for Proposals was issued via the SIRF Fund and proposals have been screened for environmental and social risks, technical feasibility, and financial risks. However, there are substantial delays in the selection and award of technical assistance sustainable production grants and in the selection and award of innovative financing proposals. Output 3.1 is the least advanced of this component, since it is substantially linked to projects financed, which are delayed under output 3.2. Also delayed under this output is the identification and support to the development of proposals that can be submitted for grant and non-grant financing to the SIRF Fund, the private sector, and other investors.



Figure 7. Review of Grant and Loan Application

Table 3. Summary Progress of Project Outputs at the MTR

| Outputs  | Progress at MTR (%) | Summary Evidence of Progress at MTR  |
|--|---------------------|--|
| <b>Outcome 1: PA management and financing framework in Antigua and Barbuda strengthened and coordinated to support biodiversity conservation and to enable a Public Private Partnership agreement for future management of the PA system</b> |                     |  |
| 1.1 – Protected Areas System Plan for Antigua and Barbuda updated and formally approved  | 90%                 | PA System Specialist Desk Review, Draft report on the status of PAs and the roles and responsibilities of PA agencies; METT at MTR; PMC Resolution showing approval to establish PACM; Biodiversity Gap Analysis; procedures for the development of PA Management Plans drafted; National standards and key performance indicators for PA management; cost-effective and participatory monitoring methods for protected areas; and Final draft PA System Plan. |
| 1.2 – Protected Areas legal and regulatory action plan and development of new regulations  | 92%                 | Legal Gap Analysis; legal and regulatory action plan to address gaps in PA legislation; and Environmental Protection Management Act (EPMA) 2019, Section XXI.  |
| 1.3 – Technical assistance provided for PA management actions and development of the public private partnership strategy   | 62%                 | Selection of Nelson’s Dockyard for management plan development; and Investment and business development opportunities.   |
| 1.4 – PA System Business Plan developed for triple bottom line revenue generation  | 66%                 | Potential PA Financing Instruments and National PA Business Plan.  |
| 1.5 – Public Private Partnership for management of Antigua and Barbuda’s Protected Areas System established  | 36%                 | Process initiated for development of an investment prospectus (IP) for a private operator to manage PAs under a ten-year Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) and/or Operations-Maintenance-Management (OMM) agreement.  |
| <b>Outcome 2: Globally significant biodiversity &amp; agrobiodiversity conserved, managed, and sustainably used to improve livelihoods and generate PA revenues</b>  |                     |  |
| 2.1 – Gazettement and management of the Shekerley Mountain Management Area and the Dunnings Forest ecosystem   | 62%                 | Ministerial Order for Declaration of SMMA as protected area; Concept note and Cabinet Note on change of Dunnings Forest ecosystem to Christian Valley; Final hydrological report and final bat assessment report; SMMA management plan; SMMA business plan; Community Liaison officers; and monthly update to Information Management and Advisory System (EIMAS).  |
| 2.2 – Payment for ecosystem services pilot in the Dunnings Forest ecosystem  | 19%                 | Inception Reports for design and operationalization of PES system and potential for PES systems.   |
| <b>Outcome 3: Reduced negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services through enhanced sustainable livelihoods in rural communities</b>  |                     |  |
| 3.1 – Updated policies and regulations in place for the SIRF Fund’s non-grant financing instruments  | 74%                 | Term Sheet for Path to 2020 Funding Programme; Call for Applications/Proposal Forms, Applicant Review Forms for sustainable livelihood interventions; and SIRF Fund Manual.  |
| 3.2 – Technical assistance and financing provided to pilot grant and non-grant biodiversity conservation and mainstreaming activities in the Shekerley Mountain Management Area  | 53%                 | Call for Applications/Proposal Forms via SIRF Fund, Applicant Review Forms; Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) convened, and training provided on sustainable agricultural practices. Ongoing review of proposals for sustainable production grants.   |

|  |     |   |
|--|-----|---|
| 3.3 – Lessons learned documented and used to facilitate up-scaling through additional grant and non-grant financing from various investors | 38% | 5 CBOs/NGOs identified for financing training and ongoing process to support the development of at least 5 proposals that can be submitted for grant and non-grant financing to the SIRF Fund, the private sector, and other investors. |
|--|-----|---|

### ***Achievement of Project Outcomes***

38. Consistent with the discussion presented in the reconstructed ToC at Evaluation, this section seeks to determine the extent to which the anticipated outcomes of the project are likely to be achieved, thus contributing to the intermediate states identified in the TOC and ultimately to the project’s intended impact. The progress of the outputs discussed above, coupled to the discussion and logic of the TOC at Evaluation, form the substantive basis upon which this assessment of achievement of direct outcomes is based. This assessment also considers the fact that some outcomes may rely on the collective delivery of multiple outputs, and that some outputs contribute to the delivery of multiple outcomes and may be across project components. This concept was described in the outputs to impact analysis in the reconstructed TOC. Also, and based on the project’s implementation plan, some outputs may not yet due for delivery at the MTR, and therefore should not be assessed as ‘delayed’ and/or negatively affecting the delivery of the relevant outcome or outcomes.

#### **Outcome 1: PA management and financing framework in Antigua and Barbuda strengthened and coordinated to support biodiversity conservation and to enable a Public Private Partnership agreement for future management of the PA system**

39. Four of the five outputs directly contributing to this outcome have been substantially delivered at the MTR, resulting in the development of national standards and key performance indicators for PA management, the PA System Plan, the identification of investment and business development opportunities, PA financing Instruments and a national PA Business Plan. The results obtained to date will directly contribute to the strengthening of PA management and biodiversity conservation in Antigua and Barbuda. To increase the financial sustainability and management effectiveness of the PA system, however, will require that the project diligently continue to pursue legal and institutional arrangements to introduce and consolidate Public Private Partnerships for the operation, maintenance, and management of PAs. This is a necessary baseline input to the first Intermediate State identified in the project’s Theory of Change. At the MTR this outcome is on track to be fully delivered by the project’s end if the PPP arrangements are secured.

#### **Outcome 2: Globally significant biodiversity & agrobiodiversity conserved, managed, and sustainably used to improve livelihoods and generate PA revenues**

40. Even though the capacity building of SMMA management agencies is delayed, other key inputs for the management and conservation of globally significant biodiversity have been achieved by the project in support of this outcome, namely, the Ministerial Order for Declaration of SMMA as a protected

area, the SMMA management plan, and the SMMA business plan. Also, the hiring of the Park Manager and Rangers for the Boggy Peak Interpretation Centre in Christian Valley will address watershed management in this area as part of their workplan and using the management plan. Of note is the fact that several outputs contributing to Outcome 1 and which have been substantially delivered, also contribute to the delivery of Outcome 2 as identified in the Project's Theory of Change, and thus increases the probability of delivery of this outcome. Efforts to assess potential for PES systems and the operationalization of a PES system have started, but there was no tangible progress yet at the MTR. The improvement of livelihoods and the generation of protected areas revenues are dependent on the establishment and operation of a functional PES system and is indispensable for the full delivery of this outcome by the project's end.

### **Outcome 3: Reduced negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services through enhanced sustainable livelihoods in rural communities**

41. The enhancement of sustainable livelihoods through updated policies for the SIRF Fund and technical assistance and financing to pilot grant and non-grant biodiversity conservation and mainstreaming activities in the Shekerley Mountain Management Area is ongoing, even though slightly delayed. A significant input to this outcome has been the development of operational and financial procedures for the SIRF Fund, the call for proposals, and the screening of proposals for risks. The full delivery of this outcome, however, is dependent on the selection and award of technical assistance sustainable production grants and the selection and award of innovative financing proposals, and the subsequent monitoring of grant execution performance and measurement of tangible improvements of livelihoods in rural communities. The project must prioritize the grant review and approval process to get the investments 'on the ground' as soon as possible if there is to be measurable change in livelihoods by project's end.

42. At the MTR the project has made significant progress towards the achievement of Outcome 1 and Outcome 2, and less so for Outcomes 3, even though most processes required to deliver all three outcomes are either ongoing or are not planned for initiation until after the MTR. Delays are primarily due to COVID 19 in the early stage of project implementation and current contract delays by multiple consultants hired by the project. Even though there was a delay with UNEP's third disbursement to the project, this MTR did not come across any evidence to suggest this may have resulted in project delays, especially when considering the substantial amount of unspent resources that are still available to the project. There is no apparent reason why the pending outputs cannot be delivered by the project's end, thus increasing the probability of delivery of all project outcomes. Most required processes have been initiated by the project at the MTR. There are four critical issues to be resolved that are indispensable for the project's success: (1) formalization of the change from Dunnings Forest to Christian Valley, (2) design and consolidation of the PES system, (3) a Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) and/or Operations-Maintenance-Management (OMM) agreement for PA management; and (4) getting resources on the ground to support livelihoods in rural communities.

### ***Likelihood of Impact***

43. Assessment of likelihood of Impact was conducted using the tool provided by the Evaluation Office of UN Environment Programme as updated on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019. At the MTR, the likelihood of impact is **‘Likely’**. As indicated in the Likelihood of Impact Assessment Results in Table 4, drivers to support transition from Outputs to Project Outcomes are partially in place; assumptions for the change process from Outputs to Project Outcomes seem to hold; two project Outcomes (important to achieve intermediate states and impact as indicated in the TOC) have been substantially delivered and the remaining outcome with good chances of being fully delivered by the project’s end. The proportion and level of Intermediate States achieved at the MTR is satisfactory, particularly due to the PA System Plan, Environmental Protection Management Act (EPMA) 2019, Section XXI to facilitate enhanced private sector investments in agrobiodiversity and other genetic diversity protection activities, investment and business development opportunities, Ministerial Order for Declaration of SMMA as protected area, potential PA financing instruments and the National PA Business Plan, all of which put the project on track to deliver the anticipated impact, with the assumption that Outcomes 2 and 3 will be fully delivered by project’s end.

*The overall rating for Effectiveness is ‘Satisfactory’*

### **C. Financial Management**

44. At the MTR the project has received disbursements from UNEP totalling US\$2,271,726.16, with total expenditures to date of US\$545,149.05. Overall disbursements at the MTR total 83.24% of the approved GEF budget, while project expenditure at the MTR is only 19.97% of the approved GEF budget. UNEP’s approval of expenditures and provision of replenishments are evidence of compliance with required policies and procedures. All project financial information is complete, up to date, and generally submitted on time with a few exceptions. One observation worth noting is the reporting of project expenditures as per UNEP’s budget lines, thus they are not available by project component, outcome, or output. This restricts the ability of the reviewer to assess expenditure by component to determine adherence with budget distribution as approved by the GEF for project execution, including expenditure under Project Management Cost (PMC) and Monitoring & Evaluation. There is no evidence of any issues in communication between the finance and project management staff. Complete and mostly timely financial reporting also suggest communications are of the standard required.

45. In terms of co-financing, of total planned co-financing of US\$5,501,791, only US\$1,262,029.26<sup>1</sup> or 22.9% had been secured and reported on 31 March 2022. There is no apparent established formula for calculating co-financing, especially when provided in-kind and there is lack of clarity as to how this should be reported to UNEP, and the level of detail required in terms of listing all sources of co-financing. Co-financing by UNEP will be tabulated and reported in the project’s Terminal Evaluation.

<sup>1</sup> Cumulative co-financing amount as validated by UNEP on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

The overall rating for Financial Management is ‘Satisfactory’

Table 4. Likelihood of Impact Assessment Results

| A GUIDE FOR THE RATING LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT   |                    |  | Likelihood of impact |                    |                    |                    |                    |          | Likelihood of impact |   |    |    |   |    |
|---|--------------------|--|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------|----------------------|---|----|----|---|----|
| Reset Form  | Select Response    |  | HU                   | U                  | MU                 | ML                 | L                  | HL       | HU                   | U | MU | ML | L | HL |
| Drivers to support transition from Outputs to Project Outcomes are ...                        | Partially in place |  | Not in place         | Partially in place | Partially in place | In place           | In place           | In place | 1                    | 1 |    |    |   |    |
| Assumptions for the change process from Outputs to Project Outcomes ...                       | Hold               |  | Do not hold          | Partially hold     | Partially hold     | Hold               | Hold               | Hold     |                      |   |    | 1  | 1 | 1  |
| Proportion of Project Outcomes fully or partially achieved?                                   | Some               |  | None                 | Some               | Some               | Some               | Some               | All      | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  |   |    |
| Which Project Outcomes? (the most important to attain intermediate states / impact or others) | Others             |  | n/a                  | Others             | Others             | Most important     | Most important     | n/a      | 1                    | 1 |    |    |   |    |
| Level of Project Outcome achievement?   | Partial            |  | n/a                  | Partial            | Full               | Partial            | Full               | Full     | 1                    |   | 1  |    |   |    |
| Drivers to support transition from Project Outcome(s) to Intermediate States are ...          | Partially in place |  | n/a                  | Not in place       | Not in place       | Partially in place | Partially in place | In place |                      |   | 1  | 1  |   |    |
| Assumptions for the change process from Project Outcomes to Intermediate States ...           | Partially hold     |  | n/a                  | Do not hold        | Do not hold        | Partially hold     | Hold               | Hold     |                      |   | 1  |    |   |    |
| Proportion of Intermediate States achieved?   | Some               |  | n/a                  | n/a                | None               | None               | Some               | All      |                      |   |    | 1  |   |    |
| Level of Intermediate State achievement?  | Partial            |  | n/a                  | n/a                | n/a                | n/a                | Partial            | Full     |                      |   |    | 1  |   |    |
| Drivers to support transition from Intermediate States to Impact are ...                      | Partially in place |  | n/a                  | Not in place       | Not in place       | Not in place       | Partially          | In place |                      |   |    | 1  |   |    |
| Assumptions for the change process from Intermediate States to Impact ...                     | Partially hold     |  | n/a                  | Do not hold        | Do not hold        | Do not hold        | Partially          | Hold     |                      |   |    | 1  |   |    |
|   |                    |  |                      |                    |                    |                    |                    |          | 0                    | 4 | 3  | 5  | 7 | 1  |
| <b>OVERALL RATING</b>   |                    |  |                      |                    |                    |                    |                    |          |                      |   |    |    |   |    |
|   |                    |  |                      |                    |                    |                    |                    |          |                      |   |    |    |   |    |
|   |                    |  |                      |                    |                    |                    |                    |          |                      |   |    |    |   |    |
|   |                    |  |                      |                    |                    |                    |                    |          |                      |   |    |    |   |    |
|   |                    |  |                      |                    |                    |                    |                    |          |                      |   |    |    |   |    |
|   | <b>LIKELY</b>      |  |                      |                    |                    |                    |                    |          |                      |   |    |    |   |    |



## D. Efficiency

46. The impacts of COVID-19 have demanded an efficient project management approach to keep the project on track as best as possible, especially considering the many consultation processes that are required to deliver project results. The project has responded in several ways, including the appointment of a dedicated project implementation team, stable direction, and leadership by the executing entity (DOE), the securing of much required support from the highest levels of the political directorate, cost-saving mechanisms through aggressive negotiations to reduce consultancy fees, virtual meetings, and webinars instead of physical meetings. The project has also showed efficiency in its efforts to reduce implementation risks by using public notices and phone calls to engage landowners since no public gatherings were allowed due to Covid regulations; wildlife monitoring with help from the Wallings community to stimulate interest and secure participation; the development of procedures/guidelines for the development of a thematic window for PA management within the SIRF Fund; and working with the Extension Division officers for the SMMA area to find women farmers and under-represented groups.

*The overall rating for Efficiency is 'Satisfactory'*

## E. Monitoring and Reporting

47. While all required reports are prepared and there is oversight by the Project Manager, there is no evidence of whether official project reports sent to UNEP have been seen and/or validated by the Project Management Committee (PMC) as part of the 'monitoring function' of project implementation, consistent with best practice in the implementation of GEF projects in many countries. Half Yearly Reports, Project Implementation Reports, Financial Reports, and independent Audit Reports are generally prepared and submitted in a timely manner to UNEP. However, those reports are not seen, reviewed, or vetted by the PMC before they are submitted to UNEP. The achievement of the project of the Ministerial Order for Declaration of SMMA as protected area will add 3,035 hectares to the protected areas system, consistent with the project's contribution to GEF 6 Core Indicator 1: Maintain globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services that it provides to society.

*The overall rating for Monitoring and Reporting is 'Satisfactory'*

## F. Sustainability

48. **Socio-political.** Political and social buy-in and support is required to sustain the functionality of the SIRF Fund and the Public Private Partnership arrangements for PA management. Currently, political support seems optimum, social, and private sector support needs strengthening.

49. **Financial.** The continuation of project results and the eventual impact of the project are dependent on whether the PES system and the PPP arrangements are successful. These require a period of testing and validation, with subsequent adjustments as necessary to maximize returns for biodiversity conservation and rural livelihoods. This is not yet visible at the MTR but can be substantially improved by the end of project.

50. **Institutional.** Institutionalization is influenced by socio-political and financial sustainability, and refers to government, non-government, and private sector. The institutionalization is in its infancy and not yet visible or producing tangible returns.

*The overall rating for Sustainability is ‘Moderately Likely’*

#### IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

##### A. Conclusions

51. The project “The Path to 2020 – Antigua and Barbuda” (GEF Project ID: 9402/UNEP Project ID: 01405), seeks to actualize protection and sustainable use of biodiversity and protected areas, under the umbrella of the newly passed Environmental Protection and Management Act (EPMA) of 2019. To achieve the stated objectives, the project must address dispersed and unclear responsibilities for PA management, the lack of institutional capacity to sustainably manage and conserve biodiversity and natural resources, insufficient information/data to support environmental decision-making, inadequate financial resources and mechanisms for protected areas, inadequate legislative framework to allow for innovative financing to complement biodiversity protection at the national level, insufficient awareness at the local and policy level, and inadequate support mechanisms for locally adapted crop varieties.

52. The project’s overall intervention strategy consists of three technical components, with ten (10) planned ‘Outputs’ all contributing to three (3) ‘Outcomes’, distributed across the components. At the time of the MTR the project has delivered the comprehensive assessment of the current state of existing PA sites in Antigua and Barbuda, including assessment of the roles and capacities of PA management authorities; the Biodiversity Gap Analysis; the Draft procedures for the development of PA Management Plans; national standards and key performance indicators for PA management; the development of cost-effective and participatory monitoring methods for protected areas; significant progress in the Protected Area Coordinating Mechanism and the Protected Area System Plan; the Legal Gap Analysis and drafting of legislation to facilitate enhanced private sector investments in agrobiodiversity and other genetic diversity protection activities, which has been incorporated into the Environmental Protection Management Act (EPMA) 2019, Section XXI; and the identification of sustainable livelihood, biodiversity and genetic resource investment and business development opportunities.

53. The project has also delivered the Ministerial Order for Declaration of SMMA as protected area, the final hydrological report for the SMMA, completion of bat monitoring in the Wallings Forest area, and development of a detailed PA Management & Business Plan for the Shekerley Mountain Area based on PA Systems Plan guidelines. Procedures for funding known as Term Sheets by the SIRF Fund, sustainable livelihood interventions, the Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC), training on sustainable agricultural practices, a Call for Proposals via the SIRF Fund, and screening of proposals for environmental and social risks, technical feasibility, and financial risks have all been delivered by the project at this MTR

54. Notwithstanding the progress described above, there are important delays being experienced by the project. The legal and regulatory action plan to address gaps in PA legislation has been developed but is yet to be presented to the Attorney General's Office. There are delays in the delivery of two key activities: training on assessment, planning and capacity building to strengthen PA management and the development of participatory Management Plans for two PAs. While there is progress in the delivery of Potential PA Financing Instruments and the ten-year strategic PA System Business Plan, there is a delay in their presentation to Cabinet. The development of an investment prospectus (IP) for a private operator to manage PAs under a ten-year Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) and/or Operations-Maintenance-Management (OMM) agreement is significantly delayed, and thus also results in a delay of developing the prospectus and the eventual legal agreements for PA management.

55. The project is facing delays linked to the gazettelement of the SMMA while the DOE awaits confirmation from the Chief Town and Country Planner. Additionally, several activities are delayed linked to the change of the Dunnings Forest ecosystem to Christian Valley as priority site for assessment and introduction of Payment for Ecosystem Services. Capacity building of the SMMA management agencies and stakeholders is substantially delayed and the design and operationalization of PES is still in its initiation stage. The scoping exercises for the equity pilot are still ongoing and the incorporating of equity into the SIRF Fund is proving to be challenging. There are substantial delays in the selection and award of technical assistance sustainable production grants and in the selection and award of innovative financing proposals. Also delayed is the identification and support to the development of proposals that can be submitted for grant and non-grant financing to the SIRF Fund, the private sector, and other investors. Delays in capacity building for PA management and in PPP arrangements have resulted in difficulties in measuring two key indicators at the mid-term that are linked to the global objective of the project: PA Capacity Scorecard scores increased by 15% over baseline and Financial Scorecard score increased by 75% over baseline.

56. At the MTR the project has made significant progress towards the achievement of Outcome 1 and Outcome 2, and less so for Outcomes 3, even though most processes required to deliver all three outcomes are either ongoing or are not planned for initiation until after the MTR. Delays are primarily due to COVID 19 in the early stage of project implementation and current contract delays by multiple consultants hired by the project. The assessment of outcomes considers the fact that some outcomes may rely on the collective delivery of multiple outputs, and that some outputs contribute to the delivery of multiple outcomes and may be across multiple project components, consistent with the reconstructed Theory of Change. Also, and based on the project's implementation plan, some outputs may not yet due

for delivery at the MTR, and therefore are not assessed as ‘delayed’ and/or negatively affecting the delivery of the relevant outcomes. Progress at the MTR shows the project is on track to deliver its contribution of 3,035 hectares to GEF 6 Core Indicator 1 - *Maintain globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services that it provides to society.*

57. In terms of Private Sector Engagement, the project has not been able to engage the Private Sector as the Investment Prospectus for a private operator to manage PAs and the Operations-Maintenance-Management Agreement are delayed. In terms of Environmental and Social Safeguards, the Department of Environment has a general Environmental and Social Safeguards Officer that oversees all related issues, but not necessarily at an individual project level. There is no systematic monitoring of Environmental and Social Safeguards by the project, other than brief statements in the Project Implementation Reports. In terms of gender, the Department of Environment has a general Gender Officer that oversees all gender issues, but not necessarily at an individual project level. There is no systematic monitoring of gender issues by the project. As far as this Mid-Term Review could establish, gender mainstreaming by the project seems to be restricted to proportion of participants that are females on the Project Management Committee and Technical Advisory Committee and in project-sponsored events, but there is no evidence of gender-sensitive messaging and/or which targeted gender in local communities. It is worth mentioning that a Gender Action Plan was not developed for the project during project design, which if existed, would allow for a more structured approach to gender mainstreaming. The project has engaged stakeholders on an as needed basis, especially in consultations on the SMMA Management Plan and the PA Systems Plan, the Technical Advisory Committee, and via the two Community Liaison Officers. This MTR did not come across evidence of a structured communication strategy for the project implemented via mainstream media or social media.

58. The Reconstructed TOC confirms that the project is following a robust theory of change with appropriately formulated outputs, direct outcomes, intermediate states, and long-term results. The outcome indicators are verifiable and appropriate for recording progress towards the achievement of the development objectives. Assessment of the drivers, assumptions for the change processes, delivery of the most significant outcomes, and the proportion of intermediate states achieved at the MTR all suggest that the likelihood of impact is ‘**Likely**’. A Summary Assessment and Rating is presented in Table 5.

59. The success of the project thus far has benefitted from assertive leadership and direction from the Department of Environment and competent project management. The Department of Environment has been successful in securing inter-institutional participation for the development of Protected Area Management Plans, National standards and key performance indicators for protected areas management, cost-effective and participatory monitoring methods for protected areas, and development of the Protected Area System Plan. The Department of Environment has been successful in securing political support for a Ministerial Order for Declaration of Shekerley Mountain Management Area as a protected area. The project has been very efficient in resolving obstacles including those related to the COVID-19 with instated restrictions on physical meetings and visits to field sites. The Department of Environment

and the Project Management Team must be commended for an exemplary display of commitment and leadership in ensuring significant delivery of project outputs and outcomes to date.

Table 5: Summary Assessment and Rating

| Criterion   | Summary Assessment   | Rating    |
|---|--|-----------|
| <b>A. Strategic Relevance</b>   |  | <b>HS</b> |
| 1. <i>Alignment to UNEP’s MTS, POW and strategic priorities</i>                     | In terms of UN Environment MTS and POW, the project is aligned with, and shows clear contributions to UNEP’s Strategic Focus on Ecosystem Management, Expected Accomplishment 3 (a) and 3(b). The project, however, is deficient in its articulation of linkages to the Bali Strategic Plan and to South-South Cooperation.  | S         |
| 2. <i>Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partner strategic priorities</i>                       | The project is aligned with and responds to GEF Strategic Objective BD-1 Program 1, BD-1 Program 2, and BD-3 Program 7. The project is also aligned with Aichi Targets 1,2, 5, 13, 14, and 20 and with Sustainable Development Goals SDG 2 (2.5.1), SDG 15.1(15.1.1 & 15.1.2), 15.6 (15.6.1), 15.9 (15.9.1a), and 15.a (15.a.1).   | HS        |
| 3. <i>Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities</i> | The project is aligned with Antigua and Barbuda’s <u>National Physical Development Plan (2012)</u> , the country’s <u>Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) (2015-2020)</u> , the <u>Antigua and Barbuda Environmental Management Strategy and Action Plan (2004 – 2009) (NEMS)</u> , the <u>Antigua and Barbuda’s National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2014-2020)</u> , and Antigua’s 2015 report on its <u>Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)</u> . The project is aligned with the ‘United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework in the Caribbean’ cities Priority Area 4 ‘A Sustainable and Resilient Caribbean’. | HS        |
| 4. <i>Complementarity with existing interventions</i>                               | The project shows complementarity with other GEF-UNEP projects at the national and regional levels.  | HS        |
| <b>B. Effectiveness</b>   |  | <b>S</b>  |
| 1. <i>Availability of outputs</i>   | In terms of delivery, 1 output is at 92%; 1 at 90%; 1 at 74%; 1 at 66%; 2 at 62%; 1 at 53%; 1 at 38%; 1 at 36% and 1 at 19%. Seven of ten outputs have been delivered more than 50% at the midterm.  | S         |
| 2. <i>Achievement of project outcomes</i>   | At the MTR the project has made significant progress towards the achievement of Outcome 1 and Outcome 2, and less so for Outcomes 3, even though most processes required to deliver all three outcomes are either ongoing or are not planned for initiation until after the MTR. The most significant outcomes in support of the project’s global objective and GEF Core Indicators are on tract at the MTR.   | S         |
| 3. <i>Likelihood of impact</i>  | Assessment of the drivers, assumptions for the change processes, delivery of the most significant outcomes, and the proportion of intermediate states achieved at the MTR all suggest the likelihood of impact.  | L         |
| <b>C. Financial Management</b>  |  | <b>S</b>  |
| 1. <i>Adherence to UNEP’s policies and procedures</i>                               | UNEP’s approval of expenditures and provision of replenishments are evidence of compliance with required policies and procedures.  | HS        |
| 2. <i>Completeness of project financial information</i>                             | Project financial information are complete and up to date in terms of GEF funds. Co-financing information is not available for review in   | MS        |

| Criterion  | Summary Assessment   | Rating |
|--|--|--------|
|  | project reports. Project expenditures are reported as per UNEP's budget lines and are not available by project component, outcome, or output. This restricts the ability of the reviewer to assess expenditure by component to determine adherence with budget distribution as approved by the GEF for project execution.  |        |
| <i>3. Communication between finance and project management staff</i> | Better communication between the finance and project management staff and UNEP could have addressed challenges in the reporting of co-financing in a timely manner. There is no evidence of error in communications.   | S      |
| <b>D. Efficiency</b>   | The project has efficiently resolved numerous obstacles including the sustained impacts of COVID 19, securing the buy-in from stakeholders, and in securing the right consultant skills to deliver the wide variety of assessments and technical inputs required to produce project results. However, several key consultancies tied to critical project outputs are delayed and require assertive project management input. | S      |
| <b>E. Monitoring and Reporting</b>                                   |  | S      |
| <i>2. Monitoring of project implementation</i>                       | While all required reports are prepared and there is oversight by the Project Manager, there is no evidence of whether official project reports sent to UNEP have been seen and/or validated by the Project Management Committee (PMC) as part of the 'monitoring function' of project implementation, consistent with best practice in the implementation of GEF projects in many countries.                                | S      |
| <i>3. Project reporting</i>  | Half Yearly Reports, Project Implementation Reports, Financial Reports, and independent Audit Reports are generally prepared and submitted in a timely manner to UNEP. However, those reports are not seen, reviewed, or vetted by the PMC before they are submitted to UNEP.  | S      |
| <b>F. Sustainability</b>   |  | ML     |
| <i>1. Socio-political sustainability</i>                             | Political and social buy-in and support is required to sustain the functionality of the SIRF Fund and the Public Private Partnership arrangements for PA management. Currently, political support seems optimum; social and private sector support needs strengthening.  | ML     |
| <i>2. Financial sustainability</i>                                   | The continuation of project results and the eventual impact of the project are dependent on whether the PES system and the PPP arrangements are successful. These require a period of testing and validation, with subsequent adjustments as necessary to maximize returns for biodiversity conservation and rural livelihoods. This is not yet visible at the MTR but can be substantially improved by the end of project.  | ML     |
| <i>3. Institutional sustainability</i>                               | Institutionalization is influenced by socio-political and financial sustainability, and refers to government, non-government, and private sector. The institutionalization is in its infancy and not yet visible or producing tangible returns.  | ML     |

| Criterion  | Summary Assessment   | Rating   |
|--|--|----------|
| <b>G. Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues<sup>2</sup></b> |  | <b>S</b> |
| <i>1. Preparation and readiness</i>  | Project preparation is deemed to be well done; however, a TOC was not developed during preparation and a sustainability exit strategy relies on potentially fragile PES and PPP arrangements.  | MS       |
| <i>2. Quality of project management and supervision<sup>3</sup></i>          | Project Management is of a satisfactory quality, especially considering the challenges caused by the COVID 19 pandemic. The Executing Agency and the Project Management Team have kept the project on track for the most part, despite challenges of COVID-19.   | S        |
| <i>3. Stakeholders' participation and cooperation</i>                        | Most government stakeholders support and seem to know of the project, though some show knowledge of just a very specific aspect of the project. Some stakeholders have manifested the need for more meaningful consultations by the project with stakeholders, while one stakeholder in particular feel underutilized by the project. Some stakeholders during the MTR expressed not knowing enough about the project to be able to participate meaningfully in the MTR. | MS       |
| <i>4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity</i>                   | The Department of Environment has a Gender Officer that is directly engaged in project decisions; however, there is no reporting on gender in a structured way.  | MS       |
| <i>5. Environmental, social, and economic safeguards</i>                     | The Department of Environment has an Environmental Safeguards Officer tasked with ensuring projects' compliance with ESS; however, there is no reporting on gender in a structured way. One key safeguard consideration, stakeholder participation and buy-in, needs to be improved for the remainder of the project and beyond.   | MS       |
| <i>6. Country ownership and driven-ness</i>                                  | This has been exemplary with optimum government support as evidenced by the direction and leadership of the DOE and the political support received by the project to date.   | HS       |
| <i>7. Communication and public awareness</i>                                 | The project has engaged stakeholders on an as needed basis, especially in consultations on the SMMA Management Plan, the PA Systems Plan, the Technical Advisory Committee, and via the two Community Liaison Officers. This MTR did not come across evidence of a structured communication strategy for the project implemented via mainstream media or social media.   | S        |
| <b>Overall Project Rating</b>  |  | <b>S</b> |

<sup>2</sup> While ratings are required for each of these factors individually, they should be discussed within the Main Review Report as cross-cutting issues as they relate to other criteria. Note that catalytic role, replication and scaling up are expected to be discussed under effectiveness if they are a relevant part of the TOC.

<sup>3</sup> In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the Executing Agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP, as the Implementing Agency.



## **B. Lessons Learned**

60. This project has demonstrated the need for dedicated full-time staff specific to the project, at both the project coordination and technical levels, to ensure timely and quality dedication to the implementation, reporting and quality control needs of the project.
61. Institutional leadership and competent staff are indispensable to the successful development of project processes and ultimately, the delivery of project outputs and outcomes.
62. The lack of a Theory of Change and ‘output to outcome’ analysis during the project design resulted in lost opportunities to better test project assumptions and drivers, which would have provided valuable data to inform and refine project implementation strategies and approach early in the project cycle. This could allow for better risk management and the avoidance of significant delays in implementation at the mid-term.
63. The lack of a Gender Action Plan during project design resulted in limited efforts to truly mainstream gender perspectives into project processes, tools, manuals, and protected areas management and business plans. While this Mid-Term Review recognizes the existence of Environmental and Social Safeguards and gender policies at the Department of Environment, this lesson highlights the need for and importance of a project-specific Gender Action Plan that is prescriptive and responsive to the needs of the project.
64. The lack of a reporting tool or template for compliance with Environmental and Social Safeguards makes it difficult to truly assess how the project ensures compliance with Global Environment Facility and United Nations Environment Programme policies in this regard. Consistent with the lesson above, a generic Environmental and Social Safeguards compliance checklist may not necessarily cover all the needs of this specific project.
65. The project’s primary exit and upscaling strategy, which rely heavily on the definition and consolidation of a Payment for Ecosystem Services system and on robust Public-Private Partnership arrangements should have been prioritized for early project implementation to minimize implementation risks and compromise of the project’s global objective. At the time of this Mid-Term Review it is clear the project will be subject to substantial pressure to put these systems in place by the project’s end, especially since they will require time for testing and validation before the anticipated impact on biodiversity conservation may be tangible and measurable. Also of note is that the ‘innovation’ the project is expected to deliver also rests with the successful design, testing, and validation of the Public-Private Partnership arrangements.
66. Stakeholders buy-in and support needed for the institutionalization of the project’s outcomes and to ensure sustainability of project results cannot be taken for granted and must be continuously nurtured. This Mid-Term Review revealed that some stakeholders believe there is much more the project can do to better engage them to the benefit of both the project and stakeholders.



67. While the project is using a multi-pronged approach to communication and awareness, not having a well-structured communication and awareness strategy may result in challenges to effectively implement a Knowledge Management Strategy for the project, which must be ongoing, systematic, and sufficiently institutionalized to inform future upscaling and sustainability of project results beyond project implementation.

### **C. Recommendations**

68. Determine a strategy that will incorporate and make visible gender dimension within the course of the project implementation, including a tool for systematic reporting at the project level.

69. Develop a reporting tool that will allow for the systematic reporting of compliance with Environmental and Social Safeguards at the project level.

70. The Department of Environment, Project Management, and United Nations Environment Programme should develop a procedure or tool to correctly estimate and report counterpart contribution, consistent with the expectations and spirit of the GEF Co-financing Policy.

71. Develop measures to raise awareness of and demonstrate management practices that reduce the impact of agriculture on sensitive habitats and biodiversity in and around protected areas, especially those activities that include the movement of livestock.

72. Seek institutional and political support to ensure timely incorporation by the Board of equity into the Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund.

73. The project must immediately prioritize four critical issues that are indispensable for the project's success: (1) formalization of the change from Dunnings Forest to Christian Valley, (2) design and consolidation of the Payment for Ecosystem Services system, (3) a Build-Operate-Transfer and/or Operations-Maintenance-Management agreement for protected areas management; and (4) getting resources on the ground to support livelihoods in rural communities. This latter activity is critical for boosting the project's budget execution rate and to produce tangible results for local communities.

74. Once the change from Dunnings Forest ecosystem to Christian Valley is finalized, all relevant project texts must be updated accordingly, including the Project Results Framework, and this must be reported in the Project Implementation Reports for upload the Global Environment Facility portal.

75. It is understood that within the context of an Operations-Maintenance-Management agreement for protected areas management, the private partner (Operator) will be expected to make up-front investments, such as the purchase of vessels, vehicles, signage, equipment, multimedia technologies, etc.,

and to finance and manage the primary on-going management and operational activities, including: staff salaries, general operations and maintenance, collection of visitor / user fees, conservation programs and scientific monitoring, etc. While current global marketing conditions may negatively affect the risk appetite of investors, the project must exercise flexibility in devising an attractive package which provides comfort to investors in the event of unpredictable global economic shocks such as that caused by the COVID 19 pandemic. The investment risks must be seen as shared between the investor and the Government of Antigua & Barbuda. The project simply does not have the time to wait for global market conditions to improve, which by its nature is full of uncertainties and not always predictable.

76. Take all necessary steps to provide an updated measure (beyond the baseline) of all Results Framework indicators that are linked to the project's global objective, for example, Protected Area Capacity Scorecard scores increased by 15% over baseline and Financial Scorecard score increased by 75% over baseline

77. For all future design of projects, it is crucial to include a detailed Theory of Change analysis, which thoroughly assesses assumptions and drivers, to allow for early identification of possible intermediate states and alternative outcome to impact pathways, thus allowing for a more diverse identification of project implementation strategies. This will allow for a more effective and efficient project implementation, the strategic positioning of key project drivers, an elimination of unrealistic assumptions, and a minimization of overall project risks.

78. It is recommended that the Project Management Committee reviews and vets all project reports that are submitted to the United Nations Development Programme. This is consistent with best practice in the governance of projects funded by the Global Environment Facility.

79. The delays experienced by the project in key activities that are critical to its upscaling, sustainability of results, and long-term success will require time beyond the planned closing date of February 2023. The low budget execution rate cannot be substantially improved without an extension of the time available for implementation. This Mid-Term Review estimates that an extension of 12 months may be appropriate.

## Annex 1: Mid Term Review TORs



### ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

#### Department of Environment

#### Terms of Reference

#### Mid-Term Review of the UNEP/GEF project Path to 2020- GEF ID: 9402

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Job Title</b>             | Mid-Term Review of the UNEP/GEF project- Path to 2020   |
| <b>Contracting Authority</b> | Department of Environment, Ministry of Health and the Environment, Antigua and Barbuda  |
| <b>Date of Issue</b>         | 17 December 2021  |
| <b>Deadline of Issue</b>     | 6 January 2022  |
| <b>Duration</b>              | 4 months  |
| <b>To Apply</b>              | <p>Interested persons are invited to apply for this opportunity. Please email the Procurement Officer at <a href="mailto:DOE@ab.gov.ag">DOE@ab.gov.ag</a> and copied to <a href="mailto:antiguaenvironmentdivision@gmail.com">antiguaenvironmentdivision@gmail.com</a> the following:</p> <p>Submit the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cover Letter</li> <li>2. Curriculum Vitae</li> <li>3. Technical Proposal how the objectives outlined are to be achieved</li> <li>4. A work plan showing the timeline for expected deliverables</li> <li>5. Writing sample (copy of a published report authored by the applicant)</li> <li>6. A COVID-19 Contingency Plan for the conduct of data collection and stakeholder consultations</li> <li>7. Financial Proposal</li> <li>8. Contact information for three (3) references</li> </ol> <p>Please use email subject line: "Application for Mid-Term Review of the UNEP/GEF project- Path to 2020"</p> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <i>In the event that clarification questions are asked, the answers will be found at this site:</i> <a href="https://www.environment.gov.ag/procurement-opportunities#procurements/opportunities">https://www.environment.gov.ag/procurement-opportunities#procurements/opportunities</a>  |
| <b>EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO)</b> | The Department of Environment (DoE) provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, colour, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation. The DoE also strives to achieve equal employment opportunity in all personnel operations through continuing diversity enhancement programs. |
| <b>LATE BIDS</b>                          | Late bids will not be opened and will be returned to Bidder.   |

**Terms of Reference**  
**Mid-Term Review of the UNEP/GEF Project- Path to 2020**  
**GEF ID: 9402**

Introduction

The Department of Environment is an agency within the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment in the Government of Antigua and Barbuda (GOAB). The overall mission of the Department of Environment (DOE) is to provide technical advice on the environment and to design and implement projects on behalf of the Government and the people of Antigua and Barbuda. These interventions are designed to protect and enhance the country's environment, as well as seek common solutions to national, regional, and global environmental challenges. The Department is seeking an Independent Consultant to conduct an evaluation of its project titled “Path-to-2020 Antigua and Barbuda.” The Path-to-2020 Project is funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) with United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) serving as the Implementing Entity.

**Background and Context of Project**

**Table 1. Project summary**

|                                    |   |                                     |   |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>UNEP Sub-programme:</b>         | <b>Subprogramme 3: Healthy and productive ecosystems</b>  | <b>UNEP Division/Branch:</b>        | <b>Ecosystems Division, Biodiversity and Land Branch</b>  |
| <b>Expected Accomplishment(s):</b> | <b>EA 3 (a):</b> The health and productivity of marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are institutionalized in education, monitoring and cross-sector and | <b>Programme of Work Output(s):</b> | <b>EA3 (a)(3)</b> Support to UN and global efforts to standardize valuation and accounting of ecosystem services and goods and inclusion of natural capital in sustainable development monitoring |

|                                |  |  |  |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
|                                | transboundary collaboration frameworks at the national and international levels<br><br><b>EA 3 (b):</b> Policymakers in the public and private sectors test the inclusion of the health and productivity of ecosystems in economic decision-making |  | systems, including inclusive wealth accounting<br><b>EA3 (a)(7)</b> Support to cross-sectoral institutional frameworks and agreements for ecosystem management<br><br><b>EA3 (b)(1)</b> Support to public institutions to pilot the inclusion of ecosystem health and resource availability considerations in economic decision-making |
| <b>SDG(s) and indicator(s)</b> | SDG 2 (2.5.1), SDG 15.1(15.1.1 & 15.1.2), 15.6 (15.6.1), 15.9 (15.9.1a), 15.a (15.a.1)   |  |  |

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Project Title:</b> | The Path to 2020 – Antigua and Barbuda |
|-----------------------|--|

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Executing Agency:</b> | Department of the Environment, Ministry of Health and the Environment<br>Antigua and Barbuda |
|--------------------------|--|

|                          |                                      |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Project partners:</b> | Ministry of Agriculture, CARDI, IICA |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|

|                            |          |
|----------------------------|----------|
| <b>Geographical Scope:</b> | National |
|----------------------------|----------|

|                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Participating Countries:</b> | Antigua and Barbuda |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|

|  |                       |                                     |                              |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>GEF project ID:</b>                   | 9402                  | <b>IMIS number*<sup>4</sup>:</b>    | GFL/11207-14AC0003-SB-006383 |
| <b>Focal Area(s):</b>                    | Biodiversity          | <b>GEF OP #:</b>                    |                              |
| <b>GEF Strategic Priority/Objective:</b> | BD-1 Programs 1, 2, 7 | <b>GEF approval date*:</b>          | 27 September 2018            |
| <b>UNEP approval date:</b>               | 27 September 2018     | <b>Date of first disbursement*:</b> | 22 February 2019             |

<sup>4</sup> Fields with an \* sign (in yellow) should be filled by the Fund Management Officer

|  |                   |   |                  |
|--|-------------------|---|------------------|
| <b>Actual start date<sup>5</sup>:</b>                  | 08 February 2019  | <b>Planned duration:</b>  | 48 months        |
| <b>Intended completion date*:</b>                      | February 2023     | <b>Actual or Expected completion date:</b>                            | February 2023    |
| <b>Project Type:</b>                                   | Full Size Project | <b>GEF Allocation*:</b>   | USD 2,729,153    |
| <b>PPG GEF cost*:</b>                                  |                   | <b>PPG co-financing*:</b>   |                  |
| <b>Expected MSP/FSP Co-financing*:</b>                 | USD 5,501,791     | <b>Total Cost*:</b>   | USD 8,230,944    |
| <b>Mid-term Review/eval. (Planned date):</b>           | August 2021       | <b>Terminal Evaluation (actual date):</b>                             | N/A              |
| <b>Mid-term Review/eval. (Actual date):</b>            | May 2022          | <b>No. of revisions*:</b>   | 3                |
| <b>Date of last Steering Committee meeting:</b>        | 24 November 2021  | <b>Date of last Revision*:</b>  | 21 May 2021      |
| <b>Disbursement as of 31 March 2022*:</b>              | USD 786,214.68    | <b>Date of financial closure*:</b>                                    | 31 December 2024 |
| <b>Date of Completion<sup>6</sup>*:</b>                | February 2023     | <b>Actual expenditures reported as of 31 March 2022<sup>7</sup>:</b>  | USD 495,291.77   |
| <b>Total co-financing realized as of 31 March 2022</b> | USD 1,262,029.26  | <b>Actual expenditures entered in UMOJA as of 30 September 2021*:</b> | N/A              |
| <b>Leveraged financing:<sup>8</sup></b>                |                   |   |                  |

## 2. Project Rationale

The GEF-UNEP Path-to-2020 Project is a four-year project that aims to implement Objective 1 of Antigua and Barbuda’s National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2014 – 2025): A national system, including protected areas, for the management and conservation of biodiversity conservation is developed and established. By strengthening institutional coordination for protected areas, supporting legal frameworks, and blending local co-investment with international financing, this project will position Antigua and Barbuda to tap into global opportunities in conservation investments. The project will use innovative financing to enable the private sector and NGOs to participate in the management and sustainable use of protected areas.

## 3. Project Results Framework

<sup>5</sup> Only if different from first disbursement date, e.g., in cases where a long time elapsed between first disbursement and recruitment of project manager.

<sup>6</sup> If there was a “Completion Revision” please use the date of the revision.

<sup>7</sup> Information to be provided by Executing Agency/Project Manager

<sup>8</sup> See above note on co-financing

Project Objectives and Components

**i. Component 1 Strengthening regulations, institutions, and financing mechanisms for the national Protected Areas System:** The indicator for this Component is: *Safeguarding of biodiversity and ecosystem services through strengthening capacity of PA system (17,704 hectares) to conserve and enhance critical habitats and watershed areas.*

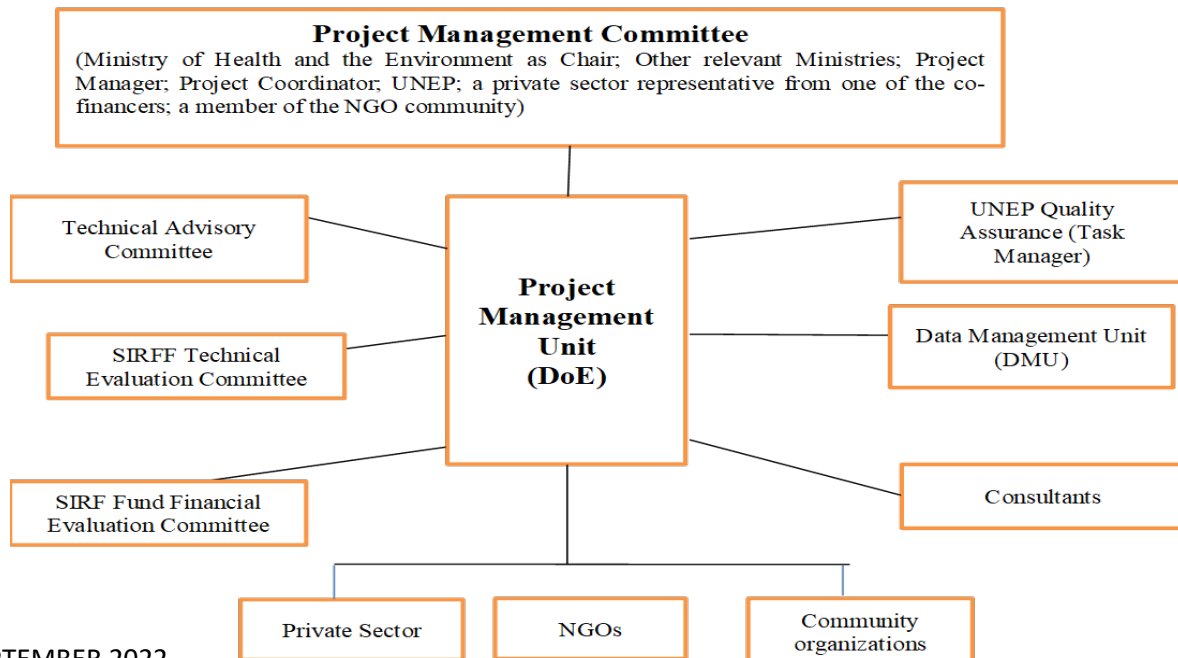
**ii. Component 2 Expansion of protected areas in support of species conservation:** The indicator for this Component is: *Increased protection for biodiversity of global significance over 3,035 hectares, including the only remaining wet forest ecosystem (moist evergreen closed canopy forest) in the country, and several restricted-range bird species and the island's most rare fern species.*

**iii. Component 3 Pilot livelihood financing mechanisms that support conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and plant genetic resources in the newly designated Shekerley Mountain Management Area:** This component is expected to raise significant financing from the private sector as co-financing for the overall project. The indicator for this Component is: *Ensuring the conservation of genetic resources and the sustainable use of at least 10 locally adapted crop varieties.*

**4. Executing Arrangements**

This project is being executed by the Department of Environment on behalf of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, with UNEP as Implementing Agency (IA). The Department of Environment (DoE) within the Ministry of Health and the Environment acts as the project’s Executing Agency (EA), with responsibility for project execution at the national level. Overall project supervision is the responsibility of UNEP as Implementing Agency (IA), and UNEP’s Task Manager (TM) and Programme Assistant (PA) provide support and works closely with DoE personnel, who carry out all project management related issues.

*Decision-making Flowchart and Organizational Chart for the Path to 2020 Project*





## 5. Project Cost and Financing

The project falls under the full-size project (FSP) category, with an overall project budget of USD 8,230,944 comprised of a GEF allocation of USD 2,729,153 and co-financing support of USD 5,501,791 from various partners, both in cash and in-kind. The table below shows the itemized budget by component and funding source.

| Focal Area Objectives      | FA Objectives  | Trust Fund | Grant Amount (\$) | Cofinancing (\$) |
|----------------------------|--|------------|-------------------|------------------|
| BD 1.1                     | Improved management effectiveness of protected areas   | GEFTF      | 954,153           | 2,000,000        |
| BD 1.2                     | Increase in area of terrestrial and marine ecosystems of global significance in new protected areas and increase in threatened species of global significance protected in new protected areas | GEFTF      | 1,000,000         | 2,000,000        |
| BD 1.7                     | Increased genetic diversity of globally significant cultivated plants and domesticated animals that are sustainably used within production systems   | GEFTF      | 775,000           | 1,501,791        |
| <b>Total project costs</b> |  |            | <b>2,729,153</b>  | <b>5,501,791</b> |

| Project Components   | (in \$)               |                  |
|--|-----------------------|------------------|
|  | GEF Project Financing | Co-financing     |
| <b>Component 1:</b> Strengthening regulations, institutions and financing mechanisms for the national Protected Areas System   | 408,653               | 386,791          |
| <b>Component 2:</b> Expansion of protected areas in support of species conservation  | 1,042,400             | 3,773,000        |
| <b>Component 3:</b> Pilot livelihood financing mechanisms that support conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and plant genetic resources in the newly designated Shekerley Mountain Management Area | 1,003,300             | 1,008,000        |
| PMC  | 128,800               | 248,000          |
| M&E  | 146,000               | 86,000           |
| <b>Total Project Cost</b>  | <b>2,729,153</b>      | <b>5,501,791</b> |

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

### 6. Objective of the Review

In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy<sup>9</sup> and the UNEP Programme Manual<sup>10</sup>, the Mid-Term Review is undertaken approximately half-way through project implementation to analyze whether the project is on-track, what problems or challenges the project is encountering, and what corrective actions are required. The MTR will assess project performance to date (in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency), and determine the likelihood of the project achieving its intended outcomes and supporting their sustainability.

### 7. Key Review Principles

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

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

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

A Mid-Term Review is a formative assessment, which requires that the consultants go beyond the assessment of “what” the project performance is and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of “why” the performance is as it is. (i.e., what is contributing to the achievement of the

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/policies-and-strategies>

<sup>10</sup> <https://wecollaborate.unep.org>

project's results). This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project at the mid-point and the recommendations that support adaptive management for the remainder of the project.

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

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

## 8. Key Strategic Questions

In addition to the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 10 below, the Review will address the **strategic questions** listed below (no more than 3 questions are recommended). These are questions of interest to UNEP and to which the project is believed to be able to make a substantive contribution. Also included are three questions that are required when reporting in the GEF Portal and these must be addressed in the MTR:

- To what extent is the project following a robust theory of change and capacity building with appropriately formulated outputs, direct outcomes, intermediate states, and long-term results?
- What revisions are required to ensure that implementation can be effectively evaluated at the end the project? This includes consideration of whether the outcome indicators are verifiable and appropriate for recording progress towards the achievement of the development objectives.
- The extent to which the design and implementation of the models that are to demonstrate viable forest management (SFM) livelihoods under Component 3 are meeting the intended impact with the likelihood of sustainability and scaling-up.

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

- a) Under Monitoring and Reporting/Monitoring of Project Implementation:  
What is the performance at the project's mid-point against Core Indicator Targets? *(For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided).*
- b) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation:  
What has been the progress, challenges, and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program? *(This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval)*
- c) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality:  
What has been the progress, challenges, and outcomes regarding gender-responsive measures and any intermediate gender result areas? *(This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent)*
- d) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Environmental and Social Safeguards:  
What has been the experience at the project's mid-point against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval? The risk classifications reported in the latest PIR report should be verified and any measures taken to address identified risks assessed. *(Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant during this review should be shared with the Task Manager for uploading in the GEF Portal)*
- e) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Communication and Public Awareness:  
What has been the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding the implementation of the project's Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g., website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions. *(This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval)*

## 9. Evaluation Criteria

All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Sections A-G below, outline the scope of the criteria and a link to a table for recording the ratings is provided in Annex 1. A weightings table will be provided in excel format (see notes in Annex 1) to support the determination of an overall project rating.

### A. Strategic Relevance

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

- i. ***Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy<sup>11</sup> (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities***

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<sup>11</sup> UN Environment's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UN Environment's programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UN Environment's thematic priorities, known as Sub-programmes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes,

The Review should assess the project's alignment with the MTS and POW under which the project was approved and include, in its narrative, reflections on the scale and scope of any contributions made to the planned results reflected in the relevant MTS and POW. UNEP strategic priorities include the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building<sup>12</sup> (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The BSP relates to the capacity of governments to comply with international agreements and obligations at the national level; promote, facilitate and finance environmentally sound technologies and to strengthen frameworks for developing coherent international environmental policies. S-SC is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology, and knowledge between developing countries.

**ii. *Alignment to Donor/Partner Strategic Priorities***

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

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

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

**iv. *Complementarity with Existing Interventions/Coherence*<sup>13</sup>**

An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization<sup>14</sup>, took account of ongoing and planned initiatives (under the same sub-programme, other UNEP -programmes, or being implemented by other agencies within the same country, sector, or institution) that address similar needs of the same target groups. The Review will consider if the project team, in collaboration with Regional Offices and Sub-Programme Coordinators, made efforts to ensure their own intervention was complementary to other interventions, optimized any synergies and avoided duplication of effort. Examples may include work within UNDAFs or One UN programming. Linkages with other interventions should be described and instances where UNEP's comparative advantage has been particularly well applied should be highlighted.

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known as Expected Accomplishments (EAs), of the Sub-programmes. <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/our-evaluation-approach/un-environment-documents>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.unep.fr/ozonaction/about/bsp.htm>

<sup>13</sup> This sub-category is consistent with the new criterion of 'Coherence' introduced by the OECD-DAC in 2019.

<sup>14</sup> A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

## **B. Effectiveness**

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

### **Availability of Outputs<sup>15</sup>**

The Review will assess the project's success in producing the programmed outputs and achieving targets and milestones as per the project design document (ProDoc). Any formal modifications/revisions made during project implementation will be considered part of the project design. Where the project outputs are inappropriately or inaccurately stated in the ProDoc, a table should be provided showing the original formulation and the amended version for transparency. The delivery of outputs will be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality, and the assessment will consider their usefulness and the timeliness of their provision. It is noted that emphasis is placed on the performance of those outputs that are most important to achieve outcomes. The Review will briefly explain the reasons behind the success or shortcomings of the project in delivering its programmed outputs and meeting expected quality standards.

#### ***i. Achievement of Project Outcomes<sup>16</sup>***

The achievement of project outcomes is assessed as performance against the project outcomes defined in the Project Results Framework<sup>17</sup>. These are outcomes that are intended to be achieved by the end of the project timeframe and within the project's resource envelope. Emphasis is placed on the achievement of project outcomes that are most important for attaining intermediate states. As with outputs, a table can be used where substantive amendments to the formulation of project outcomes is necessary to make them consistent with UNEP guidelines. Where possible, the Review should report evidence of attribution, contribution or credible association between UNEP's intervention and the project outcomes.

#### ***ii. Likelihood of Impact***

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

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<sup>15</sup> Outputs are the availability (for intended beneficiaries/users) of new products and services and/or gains in knowledge, abilities and awareness of individuals or within institutions (UNEP, 2019)

<sup>16</sup> Outcomes are the use (i.e. uptake, adoption, application) of an output by intended beneficiaries, observed as changes in institutions or behavior, attitude or condition (UNEP, 2019)

<sup>17</sup> UNEP staff are currently required to submit a Theory of Change with all submitted project designs. The level of 'reconstruction' needed during an evaluation will depend on the quality of this initial TOC, the time that has lapsed between project design and implementation (which may be related to securing and disbursing funds) and the level of any changes made to the project design. In the case of projects pre-dating 2013 the intervention logic is often represented in a logical framework and a TOC will need to be constructed in the inception stage of the evaluation.

The Review will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute, to unintended negative effects (e.g., will vulnerable groups such as those living with disabilities and/or women and children, be disproportionately affected by the project?). Some of these potential negative effects may have been identified in the project design as risks or as part of the analysis of Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards<sup>18</sup>. The Review will consider the extent to which the project is playing a catalytic role or is promoting longer-term scaling up and/or replication<sup>19</sup>.

### **C. Financial Management**

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

### **D. Efficiency**

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

### **E. Monitoring and Reporting**

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

#### *i. Monitoring of Project Implementation*

Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART<sup>20</sup> results towards the achievement of the project's outputs and outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender, marginalisation, or vulnerability, including those living with disabilities. The Review will assess the use and quality of the monitoring plan. In particular, the evaluation will assess the relevance and appropriateness of the project indicators as well as the methods used for tracking progress against them as part of conscious results-based management.

<sup>18</sup> Further information on Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards (ESES) can be found at <http://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/8718><http://www.unep.org/about/eses/>

<sup>19</sup> *Scaling up* refers to approaches being adopted on a much larger scale, but in a very similar context. Scaling up is often the longer-term objective of pilot initiatives. *Replication* refers to approaches being repeated, or lessons being explicitly applied in new/different contexts e.g. other geographic areas, different target group etc. Effective replication typically requires some form of revision or adaptation to the new context. It is possible to replicate at either the same or a different scale.

<sup>20</sup> SMART refers to results that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented. Indicators help to make results measurable.



This assessment will include consideration of whether the project gathered relevant and good quality baseline data that is accurately and appropriately documented. The Review will assess whether the monitoring system is operational and facilitates the timely tracking of results and progress towards project milestones and targets throughout the project implementation period. It will also consider the quality of the information generated by the monitoring system during project implementation and how it was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensure sustainability. The Review should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring are being used to support this activity.

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

*ii. Project Reporting*

Projects funded by GEF have requirements about verifying documentation and reporting (i.e., the Project Implementation Reviews, Tracking Tool, and CEO Endorsement template<sup>21</sup>), which will be made available by the Task Manager. The Review will assess the extent to which both UNEP and GEF reporting commitments have been fulfilled. Where corrective action is indicated in the annual Project Implementation Review reports (e.g., as an identified risk), the Review Consultant will record whether this action has been taken.

## **F. Sustainability**

Sustainability<sup>22</sup> is understood as the probability of the benefits associated with the project outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the intervention. The Review will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of benefits at the outcome level. Some factors of sustainability may be embedded in the project design and implementation approaches while others may be contextual circumstances or conditions that evolve over the life of the intervention. Where applicable an assessment of bio-physical factors that may affect the sustainability of project outcomes may also be included.

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

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<sup>21</sup> The Consultant(s) should verify that the annual Project Implementation Reviews have been submitted, that the Tracking Tool is being kept up-to-date and that in the CEO Endorsement template Table A and Section E have been completed.

<sup>22</sup> As used here, 'sustainability' means the long-term maintenance of outcomes and consequent impacts, whether environmental or not. This is distinct from the concept of sustainability in the terms 'environmental sustainability' or 'sustainable development', which imply 'not living beyond our means' or 'not diminishing global environmental benefits' (GEF STAP Paper, 2019, Achieving More Enduring Outcomes from GEF Investment)

governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. are robust enough to continue delivering the benefits associated with the project outcomes after project closure.

## **G. Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues**

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

### *i. Preparation and Readiness*

This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project. The Review will assess whether appropriate measures were taken to either address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. The Review will consider the nature and quality of engagement with stakeholder groups by the project team, the confirmation of partner capacity and development of partnership agreements as well as initial staffing and financing arrangements.

### *ii Quality of Project Implementation and Execution*

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

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

### *ii. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation*

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

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

*iii. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity*

The Review will ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on the human rights-based approach (HRBA) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Within this human rights context the Review will assess to what extent the intervention adheres to UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment<sup>23</sup>.

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

The progress, challenges, and outcomes regarding gender-responsive measures and any intermediate gender result areas should be reviewed. This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent,

*iv. Environmental and Social Safeguards*

UNEP projects address environmental and social safeguards primarily through the process of environmental and social screening, risk assessment and management (avoidance or mitigation) of potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with project and programme activities. The evaluation will confirm whether UNEP requirements<sup>24</sup> were met to: screen proposed projects for any safeguarding issues; conduct sound environmental and social risk assessments; identify and avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, mitigate, environmental, social, and economic risks; apply appropriate

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<sup>23</sup>The Evaluation Office notes that Gender Equality was first introduced in the UNEP Project Review Committee Checklist in 2010 and, therefore, provides a criterion rating on gender for projects approved from 2010 onwards. Equally, it is noted that policy documents, operational guidelines and other capacity building efforts have only been developed since then and have evolved over time. [https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7655/-Gender\\_equality\\_and\\_the\\_environment\\_Policy\\_and\\_strategy-2015Gender\\_equality\\_and\\_the\\_environment\\_policy\\_and\\_strategy.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y](https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7655/-Gender_equality_and_the_environment_Policy_and_strategy-2015Gender_equality_and_the_environment_policy_and_strategy.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y)

<sup>24</sup> For the review of project concepts and proposals, the Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) was introduced in 2019 and replaced the Environmental, Social and Economic Review note (ESERN), which had been in place since 2016. In GEF projects safeguards have been considered in project designs since 2011.

environmental and social measures to minimize any potential risks and harm to intended beneficiaries and report on the implementation of safeguard management measures taken.

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

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

*v. Country Ownership and Driven-ness*

The Review will assess the quality and degree of engagement of government / public sector agencies in the project. The Review will consider the involvement not only of those directly involved in project execution and those participating in technical or leadership groups, but also those official representatives whose cooperation is needed for change to be embedded in their respective institutions and offices. This factor is concerned with the level of ownership generated by the project over outputs and outcomes and that is necessary for long term impact to be realised. Ownership should extend to all gender and marginalised groups.

*vi. Communication and Public Awareness*

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

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

### Section 3. REVIEW APPROACH, METHODS, AND DELIVERABLES

The Mid-Term Review will use a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the review process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used as appropriate to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes, and impacts. It is highly recommended that the Review Consultant maintains close

communication with the project team and promotes information exchange throughout the review implementation phase to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the review findings.

Where applicable, the Review Consultant should provide a geo-referenced map that demarcates the area covered by the project and, where possible, provide geo-reference photographs of key intervention sites (e.g., sites of habitat rehabilitation and protection, pollution treatment infrastructure, etc.)

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

**A desk review of:**

- Relevant background documentation,
- Project Document and Appendices
- Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework and its budget.
- Half-Year Progress Reports (HYPR), Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports, and financial reports (in the UNEP Anubis data management system), progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence and including the Tracking Tool etc.
- Communication strategy
- Evaluations/Reviews of similar projects.

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

- UNEP Task Manager (TM) and UNEP Programme Assistant.
- Project Manager (PM) and team members; Department of Environment (DOE), the Forestry Unit, Department of Physical Planning, The Department of Agriculture (DOA)
- UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO); and
- Representatives from civil society and specialist groups such as the Southern Farmers Association

**Field visits:** One

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

## **10. Review Deliverables and Review Procedures**

The Review Consultant will prepare:

**Inception Report:** (see Annex 3 for guidance on structure and content) containing confirmation of the results framework and Theory of Change of the project, project stakeholder analysis, review framework and a tentative review schedule.

**Preliminary Findings Note:** typically, in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, the sharing of preliminary findings is intended to support the participation of the project team, act to ensure all information sources have been accessed and provide an opportunity to verify emerging findings.

**Draft and Final Review Reports:** (see Annex 4 for guidance on structure and content) containing an Executive Summary that can act as a stand-alone document; detailed analysis of the review findings organised by evaluation criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations and an annotated ratings table.

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

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

## 11. The Review Consultant

The Review Consultant who will work under the overall responsibility of the Project Manager Ambassador Diann Black-Layne of the Department of Environment (DOE) in consultation with the Task Manager Christopher Cox and Team Assistant Gloritzel Frangakis, the Portfolio Manager Johan Robinson and the Fund Management Officer, Weldon Lemein. The consultant will liaise with the Task Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the Review. It is, however, the consultants' individual responsibility to arrange for their travel, visa, plan meetings with stakeholders (with assistance from the DOE), organize online surveys, and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The Project Team, supported by the Task Manager will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the Review Consultant to conduct the Review as efficiently and independently as possible.

The Review Consultant will be hired over a period of 4 months [January 2022 to April 2022] and should have the following: a university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other related fields; a minimum of 10 years of technical / evaluation experience is required, preferably to include elaboration and design of projects, evaluating large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; a broad understanding of multi-sectorial projects or initiatives analysis and evaluation, including multilateral funding or support agencies. English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For this consultancy, fluency in oral and written English is a requirement. Working knowledge of the UN system and specifically the work of UNEP is an added advantage. The work will be home-based and expected to be facilitated by telecommuting, considering COVID -19 protocols.

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

## 12. Schedule of the Review

The table below presents the tentative schedule for the Review.

**Table 3. Tentative schedule for the Review**

| Milestone   | Indicative Timeframe       |
|---|----------------------------|
| Kick-off meeting (via Skype, Zoom, etc.)                            | January 2022               |
| Inception Report  | January 2022               |
| Data collection and analysis, desk-based interviews, and surveys    | January 2022–February 2022 |
| PowerPoint/presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations | February 2022              |
| Draft Report to Project Manager                                     | February 2022              |
| Draft Report shared with the wider group of stakeholders            | March 2022                 |
| Final Main Review Report  | April 2022                 |
| Final Main Review Report shared with all respondents                | April 2022                 |

## 13. Contractual Arrangements

The Review Consultant will be selected and recruited by the Department of Environment (DOE) under a service Contract for approval by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda through the Ministry of Environment on a “fees only” basis (see below). By signing the service contract with the DOE, the consultant certifies that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of the contract) with the project’s executing or implementing units.

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

Schedule of Payment for the Consultant:



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

Fees only contracts:

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

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

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

**Department of Environment Evaluation Criteria**

**The evaluation criteria and weightings that will be applied to this TOR are as follows:**

| <b>Category</b> | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Weighting</b> |
|-----------------|--|------------------|
| 1               | Qualifications of consultant and availability of named individuals including national experts          | 25               |
| 2               | Adherence to TOR specifications and related requirements: Clear understanding of required deliverables | 35               |
| 3               | Experience with similar work   | 25               |
| 4               | Demonstrated track record of success, supported by references  | 15               |
|                 | Total  | 100              |

## Annex 2. Persons Engaged During the MTR Process


| Name of Agency                                    | Name of Stakeholder   | Email Address  |
|---|---|--|
| Ministry of Health, Wellness, and the Environment | Ms. Ena Dalso-Henry, Permanent Secretary and Chair of the PMC   | <a href="mailto:ena.henry@ab.gov.ag">ena.henry@ab.gov.ag</a>                                       |
| Ministry of Health, Wellness, and the Environment | Ms. Carol Mason, Principal Assistant Secretary and Member of the PMC  | <a href="mailto:carol.mason@ab.gov.ag">carol.mason@ab.gov.ag</a>                                   |
| Department of Environment (DOE)                   | Ambassador Diann Black-Layne, Director of the DOE and Project Manager   | <a href="mailto:diann.black-layne@ab.gov.ag">diann.black-layne@ab.gov.ag</a>                       |
| Department of Environment (DOE)                   | Mr. Daryl George, Senior Environment Officer, PMC Secretariat, Head of Public Education Training and Information Unit | <a href="mailto:daryl.george@ab.gov.ag">daryl.george@ab.gov.ag</a>                                 |
| Wallings Nature Reserve                           | Ms. Refica Attwood, Executive Director  | <a href="mailto:commissioner@wallingsnaturereserve.org">commissioner@wallingsnaturereserve.org</a> |
| Environmental Awareness Group (EAG)               | Ms. Arica Hill, Executive Director  | <a href="mailto:arica.eag@gmail.com">arica.eag@gmail.com</a>                                       |
| Ministry of Tourism                               | Ms. Vashti Ramsey-Casimir, Senior Tourism Officer   | <a href="mailto:vashti.ramsey@ab.gov.ag">vashti.ramsey@ab.gov.ag</a>                               |
| Southern Farmers Association                      | Mr. Adolph Audain, President, Chief Town and Country Planner  | <a href="mailto:adolphaudain@gmail.com">adolphaudain@gmail.com</a>                                 |
| Development Control Authority (DCA)               | Mr. Frederick Southwell,  | <a href="mailto:southwellfred@gmail.com">southwellfred@gmail.com</a>                               |
| Department of Environment (DOE)                   | Dr. Helena Jeffery Brown, Technical Coordinator   | <a href="mailto:Helena.jefferybrown@ab.gov.ag">Helena.jefferybrown@ab.gov.ag</a>                   |
| Department of Environment (DOE)                   | Ms. Katecia Thompson, Project Coordinator   | <a href="mailto:katecia.thompson@ab.gov.ag">katecia.thompson@ab.gov.ag</a>                         |
| Department of Environment (DOE)                   | Ms. Jenniael Flermius, Project Technical Officer  | <a href="mailto:jenniael.flermius@ab.gov.ag">jenniael.flermius@ab.gov.ag</a>                       |
| United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)       | Mr. Christopher Cox, UNEP-GEF Task Manager  | <a href="mailto:christopher.cox@un.org">christopher.cox@un.org</a>                                 |
| United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)       | Ms. Gloritzel Frangakis-Cano, Financial and Administrative Support  | <a href="mailto:gloritzel.frangakis@un.org">gloritzel.frangakis@un.org</a>                         |

### **Annex 3. List of Key Documents Consulted**

#### List of Key Documents Consulted:

1. Project Information form (PIF): The Path to 2020 – Antigua and Barbuda
2. GEF REQUEST FOR CEO ENDORSEMENT: The Path to 2020 – Antigua and Barbuda
3. UNEP Project Document: The Path to 2020 – Antigua and Barbuda
4. Path to 2020 Project Implementation Plan
5. UN Environment Programme GEF PIR Fiscal Year 2020 (July 2019 to 30 June 2020)
6. UN Environment Programme GEF PIR Fiscal Year 2021 (July 2020 to 30 June 2021)
7. Half Yearly Progress Report for July to December 2019
8. Half Yearly Progress Report for July to December 2020
9. Half Yearly Progress Report for July to December 2021
10. Stakeholder Consultation/Engagement Report – Path 2020
11. LIFEPLAN/Bat Monitoring Success Story
12. Shekerley Mountain Management Area (SMMA) Development Plan
13. Shekerley Mountain Management Area (SMMA) Management Plan 2021-2026
14. Shekerley Mountain Management Area (SMMA) Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool at the Project's Mid Term (March 2022)
15. Path to 2020 Quarterly Financial Report 2019 – 2022
16. Matrix of Implementation Progress of Path to 2020 at May 2022
17. Implementation Plan: Training and Capacity Development Consultancy
18. PA System Specialist Desk Review
19. Draft report on the status of PAs and the roles and responsibilities of PA agencies
20. Biodiversity Gap Analysis
21. Graphic: SIRF Fund Business Structure
22. Technical Advisory Committee Attendance Register
23. GEF Evaluation Office: The ROTI Handbook


## Annex 4. Communication and Outreach (PowerPoint Presentation)



Mid-Term Review of the UNEP/GEF project  
“The Path to 2020 – Antigua and Barbuda”  
GEF ID Number- 9402

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

1st JULY 2022



**Objectives of the MTR**

- ▶ Analyze whether the project is on-track
- ▶ Determine what problems or challenges the project is encountering
- ▶ Determine what corrective actions are required
- ▶ Assess project performance to date (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency)
- ▶ Determine the likelihood of the project achieving its intended outcomes and supporting their sustainability.



## Activities Conducted to Date

- ▶ Review of project documentation as part of MTR inception process (Revised GEF PIF; GEF CEO Endorsement Request + Annexes)
- ▶ Preparation of MTR Evaluation Framework
- ▶ MTR Inception Meeting with members of the Project Team and UNEP
- ▶ Preparation of the draft and final MTR Inception Reports, inclusive of an assessment of Project Design Quality (PDQ), Reconstructed Theory of Change, and final Evaluation Framework.
- ▶ Interviews with project stakeholders
- ▶ Further review of project documentation (PIRs, HYPRs, Work Plans, technical reports and other deliverables produced by the project).
- ▶ Preliminary assessment of delivery and performance at the mid-term in accordance with the Evaluation framework



## Preliminary Findings

| Outputs  | Progress at MTR (%) | Summary Evidence of Progress at MTR  |
|--|---------------------|--|
| <b>Outcome 1: PA management and financing framework in Antigua and Barbuda strengthened and coordinated to support biodiversity conservation and to enable a Public Private Partnership agreement for future management of the PA system</b> |                     |  |
| 1.1 – Protected Areas System Plan for Antigua and Barbuda updated and formally approved  | 90%                 | PA System Specialist Desk Review; Draft report on the status of PAs and the roles and responsibilities of PA agencies; METT at MTR; PMC Resolution showing approval to establish PACM; Biodiversity Gap Analysis; procedures for the development of PA Management Plans drafted; National standards and key performance indicators for PA management; cost-effective and participatory monitoring methods for protected areas; and Final draft PA System Plan. |
| 1.2 – Protected Areas legal and regulatory action plan and development of new regulations  | 92%                 | Legal Gap Analysis; legal and regulatory action plan to address gaps in PA legislation; and Environmental Protection Management Act (EPMA) 2019, Section XXX.  |
| 1.3 – Technical assistance provided for PA management actions and development of the public private partnership strategy   | 62%                 | Selection of Nelson's Dockyard for management plan development; and investment and business development opportunities.   |
| 1.4 – PA System Business Plan developed for triple bottom line revenue generation  | 66%                 | Potential PA Financing Instruments and National PA Business Plan.  |
| 1.5 – Public Private Partnership for management of Antigua and Barbuda's Protected Areas System established  | 36%                 | Process initiated for development of an investment prospectus (IP) for a private operator to manage PAs under a ten-year Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) and/or Operations-Maintenance-Management (OMM) agreement.  |
| <b>Outcome 2: Globally significant biodiversity &amp; agrobiodiversity conserved, managed, and sustainably used to improve livelihoods and generate PA revenues</b>  |                     |  |
| 2.1 – Gazettement and management of the Shekerley Mountain Management Area and the Dunnings Forest ecosystem   | 62%                 | Ministerial Order for Declaration of SMMA as protected area; Concept note and Cabinet Note on change of Dunnings Forest ecosystem to Christian Valley; Final hydrological report and final bat assessment report; SMMA management plan; SMMA business plan; Community Liaison officers; and monthly update to Information Management and Advisory System (EMAS).   |
| 2.2 – Payment for ecosystem services pilot in the Dunnings Forest ecosystem  | 19%                 | Inception Reports for design and operationalization of PES system and potential for PES systems.   |
| <b>Outcome 3: Reduced negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services through enhanced sustainable livelihoods in rural communities</b>  |                     |  |
| 3.1 – Updated policies and regulations in place for the SIRF Fund's non-grant financing instruments  | 74%                 | Term Sheet for Path to 2020 Funding Programme; Call for Applications/Proposal Forms, Applicant Review Forms for sustainable livelihood interventions; and SIRF Fund Manual.  |
| 3.2 – Technical assistance and financing provided to pilot grant and non-grant biodiversity conservation and mainstreaming activities in the Shekerley Mountain Management Area  | 53%                 | Call for Applications/Proposal Forms via SIRF Fund; Applicant Review Forms; Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) convened; and training provided on sustainable agricultural practices. Ongoing review of proposals for sustainable production grants.   |
| 3.3 – Lessons learned documented and used to facilitate up-scaling through additional grant and non-grant financing from various investors   | 38%                 | 5 CBOs/NGOs identified for financing training and ongoing process to support the development of at least 5 proposals that can be submitted for grant and non-grant financing to the SIRF Fund, the private sector, and other investors.  |



### Preliminary Assessment of Delivery and Performance at the Mid-Term

| Criterion   | Summary Assessment   | Rating    |
|---|--|-----------|
| <b>A. Strategic Relevance</b>   |  | <b>HS</b> |
| <i>1. Alignment to UNEP's MTS, POW and strategic priorities</i>                     | In terms of UN Environment MTS and POW, the project is aligned with, and shows clear contributions to UNEP's Strategic Focus on Ecosystem Management, Expected Accomplishment 3 (a) and 3(b). The project, however, is deficient in its articulation of linkages to the Bali Strategic Plan and to South-South Cooperation.  | S         |
| <i>2. Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partner strategic priorities</i>                       | The project is aligned with and responds to GEF Strategic Objective BD-1 Program 1, BD-1 Program 2, and BD-3 Program 7. The project is also aligned with Aichi Targets 1,2, 5, 13, 14, and 20 and with Sustainable Development Goals SDG 2 (2.5.1), SDG 15.1(15.1.1 & 15.1.2), 15.6 (15.6.1), 15.9 (15.9.1a), and 15.a (15.a.1).   | HS        |
| <i>3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities</i> | The project is aligned with Antigua and Barbuda's <u>National Physical Development Plan (2012)</u> , the country's <u>Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) (2015-2020)</u> , the <u>Antigua and Barbuda Environmental Management Strategy and Action Plan (2004 – 2009) (NEMS)</u> , the <u>Antigua and Barbuda's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2014-2020)</u> , and Antigua's 2015 report on its <u>Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)</u> . The project is aligned with the 'United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework in the Caribbean' cities Priority Area 4 'A Sustainable and Resilient Caribbean'. | HS        |
| <i>4. Complementarity with existing interventions</i>                               | The project shows complementarity with other GEF-UNEP projects at the national and regional levels.  | HS        |

### Preliminary Assessment of Delivery and Performance at the Mid-Term

|   |  |          |
|---|--|----------|
| <b>B. Effectiveness</b>                   |  | <b>S</b> |
| <i>1. Availability of outputs</i>         | In terms of delivery, 1 output is at 92%; 1 at 90%; 1 at 74%; 1 at 66%; 2 at 62%; 1 at 53%; 1 at 38%; 1 at 36% and 1 at 19%. Seven of ten outputs have been delivered more than 50% at the midterm.  | S        |
| <i>2. Achievement of project outcomes</i> | At the MTR the project has made significant progress towards the achievement of Outcome 1 and Outcome 2, and less so for Outcomes 3, even though most processes required to deliver all three outcomes are either ongoing or are not planned for initiation until after the MTR. The most significant outcomes in support of the project's global objective and GEF Core Indicators are on tract at the MTR. | S        |
| <i>3. Likelihood of impact</i>            | Assessment of the drivers, assumptions for the change processes, delivery of the most significant outcomes, and the proportion of intermediate states achieved at the MTR all suggest the likelihood of impact.  | L        |



## Likelihood of Impact – based on progress towards delivery of Theory of Change

**A GUIDE FOR THE RATING LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT**

Reset Form      Select Response

|  | Select Response    | Likelihood of impact |   |    |    |   | Likelihood of impact |   |    |    |   |
|--|--------------------|----------------------|---|----|----|---|----------------------|---|----|----|---|
|  |                    | HU                   | U | MU | ML | L | HU                   | U | MU | ML | L |
| Outcomes to support transition from Outcomes to Project Outcomes are ...                     | Partially in place | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 |
| Assumptions for the change processes from Outcomes to Project Outcomes ...                   | Hold               | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 |
| Preparation of Project Outcomes fully or partially achieved?                                 | Some               | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 |
| Which Project Outcomes are most important to address intermediate status impact on citizens? | Others             | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 |
| Level of Project Outcomes achievement?   | Partial            | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 |
| Outcomes to support transition from Project Outcomes to Intermediate Status are ...          | Partially in place | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 |
| Assumptions for the change processes from Project Outcomes to Intermediate Status ...        | Partially hold     | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 |
| Preparation of Intermediate Status achieved?   | Some               | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 |
| Level of Intermediate Status achievement?  | Partial            | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 |
| Outcomes to support transition from Intermediate Status to Impact are ...                    | Partially in place | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 |
| Assumptions for the change processes from Intermediate Status to Impact ...                  | Partially hold     | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 | 1                    | 1 | 1  | 1  | 1 |
| <b>OVERALL RATING</b>  |                    |                      |   |    |    |   |                      |   |    |    |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Very High</b>  |                    |                      |   |    |    |   |                      |   |    |    |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>High</b>   |                    |                      |   |    |    |   |                      |   |    |    |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Medium</b>   |                    |                      |   |    |    |   |                      |   |    |    |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Low</b>  |                    |                      |   |    |    |   |                      |   |    |    |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Very Low</b>   |                    |                      |   |    |    |   |                      |   |    |    |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>LIKELY</b>   |                    |                      |   |    |    |   |                      |   |    |    |   |

## Preliminary Assessment of Delivery and Performance at the Mid-Term

| <b>C. Financial Management</b>                                       |  | <b>S</b> |
|--|--|----------|
| <b>1. Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures</b>                | UNEP's approval of expenditures and provision of replenishments are evidence of compliance with required policies and procedures.  | HS       |
| <b>2. Completeness of project financial information</b>              | Project financial information are complete and up to date in terms of GEF funds. Co-financing information is not available for review in project reports. Project expenditures are reported as per UNEP's budget lines and are not available by project component, outcome, or output. This restricts the ability of the reviewer to assess expenditure by component to determine adherence with budget distribution as approved by the GEF for project execution. | MS       |
| <b>3. Communication between finance and project management staff</b> | Better communication between the finance and project management staff and UNEP could have addressed challenges in the reporting of co-financing in a timely manner. There is no evidence of error in communications.   | S        |

Preliminary Assessment of Delivery and Performance at the Mid-Term

| Criterion            | Summary Assessment   | Rating   |
|----------------------|--|----------|
| <b>D. Efficiency</b> | The project has efficiently resolved numerous obstacles including the sustained impacts of COVID 19, securing the buy-in from stakeholders, and in securing the right consultant skills to deliver the wide variety of assessments and technical inputs required to produce project results. However, several key consultancies tied to critical project outputs are delayed and require assertive project management input. | <b>S</b> |

Preliminary Assessment of Delivery and Performance at the Mid-Term

|  |   |          |
|--|---|----------|
| <b>E. Monitoring and Reporting</b>             |   | <b>S</b> |
| <i>2. Monitoring of project implementation</i> | While all required reports are prepared and there is oversight by the Project Manager, there is no evidence of whether official project reports sent to UNEP have been seen and/or validated by the Project Management Committee (PMC) as part of the 'monitoring function' of project implementation, consistent with best practice in the implementation of GEF projects in many countries. | <b>S</b> |
| <i>3. Project reporting</i>                    | Half Yearly Reports, Project Implementation Reports, Financial Reports, and independent Audit Reports are generally prepared and submitted in a timely manner to UNEP. However, those reports are not seen, reviewed, or vetted by the PMC before they are submitted to UNEP.   | <b>S</b> |

## Preliminary Assessment of Delivery and Performance at the Mid-Term

| <b>F. Sustainability</b>                 |   | <b>ML</b> |
|--|---|-----------|
| <i>1. Socio-political sustainability</i> | Political and social buy-in and support is required to sustain the functionality of the SIRF Fund and the Public Private Partnership arrangements for PA management. Currently, political support seems optimum; social and private sector support needs strengthening.   | ML        |
| <i>2. Financial sustainability</i>       | The continuation of project results and the eventual impact of the project are dependent on whether the PES system and the PPP arrangements are successful. These require a period of testing and validation, with subsequent adjustments as necessary to maximize returns for biodiversity conservation and rural livelihoods. This is not yet visible at the MTR but can be substantially improved by the end of project. | ML        |
| <i>3. Institutional sustainability</i>   | Institutionalization is influenced by socio-political and financial sustainability, and refers to government, non-government, and private sector. The institutionalization is in its infancy and not yet visible or producing tangible returns.   | ML        |

## Preliminary Assessment of Delivery and Performance at the Mid-Term

| <b>G. Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues<sup>1</sup></b> |  | <b>S</b> |
|--|--|----------|
| <i>1. Preparation and readiness</i>  | Project preparation is deemed to be well done; however, a TOC was not developed during preparation and a sustainability exit strategy relies on potentially fragile PES and PPP arrangements.  | MS       |
| <i>2. Quality of project management and supervision<sup>2</sup></i>          | Project Management is of a satisfactory quality, especially considering the challenges caused by the COVID 19 pandemic. The Executing Agency and the Project Management Team have kept the project back on track for the most part, despite challenges of COVID-19.  | S        |
| <i>3. Stakeholders' participation and cooperation</i>                        | Most government stakeholders support and seem to know of the project, though some show knowledge of just a very specific aspect of the project. Some stakeholders have manifested the need for more meaningful consultations by the project with stakeholders, while one stakeholder in particular feel underutilized by the project. Some stakeholders during the MTR expressed not knowing enough about the project to be able to participate meaningfully in the MTR. | MS       |
| <i>4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity</i>                   | The Department of Environment has a Gender Officer that is directly engaged in project decisions; however, there is no reporting on gender in a structured way.  | MS       |
| <i>5. Environmental, social, and economic safeguards</i>                     | The Department of Environment has an Environmental Safeguards Officer tasked with ensuring projects' compliance with ESS; however, there is no reporting on gender in a structured way. One key safeguard consideration, stakeholder participation and buy-in, needs to be improved for the remainder of the project and beyond.   | MS       |
| <i>6. Country ownership and <u>driveness</u></i>                             | This has been exemplary with optimum government support as evidenced by the direction and leadership of the DOE and the political support received by the project to date.   | HS       |
| <i>7. Communication and public awareness</i>                                 | The project has engaged stakeholders on an as needed basis, especially in consultations on the SMMA Management Plan and the PA Systems Plan, and via the Technical Advisory Committee. This MTR did not come across evidence of a structured communication strategy for the project implemented via mainstream media or social media.  | S        |

Preliminary Assessment of Delivery and Performance at the Mid-Term

|                               |  |          |
|-------------------------------|--|----------|
| <b>Overall Project Rating</b> |  | <b>S</b> |
|-------------------------------|--|----------|

### Annex 5. Summary of Project Financing Status as of May 31, 2022.

|                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Total GEF Funds                   | US\$2,729,153    |
| Total Disbursements at MTR        | US\$2,271,726.16 |
| Total Project Expenditure at MTR  | US\$545,149.05   |
| Percent GEF Funds Executed at MTR | 19.97%           |

### Summary of Project Co-financing Status as of May 26, 2022

| Source                            | Co-Financing Secured to Date |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Department of Environment (Grant) | 1,231,029.26                 |
| Ministry of Agriculture (In-kind) | 21,000.00                    |
| CARDI (In-kind)                   | NA                           |
| IICA (In-kind)                    | 10,000.00                    |
| UNEP (In-kind)                    | NA                           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                      | <b>US\$1,262,029.26</b>      |

## Annex 6: Brief CV of MTR Consultant

**Position:** Senior Monitoring & Evaluation Consultant

**Name of Firm:** Institutional Development and Management Consultants Limited (ID&M)

**Name of Staff:** Noel Devany Jacobs

**Date of Birth:** 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1967 **Nationality:** Belize

**Residence:** Deeping St. Nicholas, Spalding, Lincolnshire, United Kingdom

**Company website:** [www.idmcservices.com](http://www.idmcservices.com)

### Education:

| School, college and/or University Attended                            | Degree/certificate or other specialized education obtained | Date Obtained |
|---|--|---------------|
| National Polytechnic Institute (CINVESTAV)<br>Merida, Yucatan, Mexico | Master's Degree in Marine Biology                          | 1996          |
| Technical Institute of the Sea<br>Guaymas, Sonora, Mexico             | Bachelor's Degree in Aquaculture Engineering               | 1992          |

### Membership of Professional Associations:

Fellow of the Institute of Consulting (FIC), Chartered Management Institute – UK

### Other Training:

**March 2017 – The Strategy Consultant;** Chartered Management Institute (CMI)/Institute of Consulting (IC)/Advanced Management Skills (AMS); London, England, United Kingdom.

**March 2017 – The Lean Operations Consultant;** Chartered Management Institute (CMI)/Institute of Consulting (IC)/Advanced Management Skills (AMS); London, England, United Kingdom.

**March 2017 – The Professional Consultant;** Chartered Management Institute (CMI)/Institute of Consulting (IC)/Advanced Management Skills (AMS), London, England, United Kingdom.

**May 2012 – Advanced Level Organizational Development Certified Consultant Program (ODCC);** Institute of Organization Development (IOD), Fort Lauderdale, Florida, U.S.A.

**March 2009 - Practitioner's Program in the Critical Components of Effective Governance;** BoardSource, Arlington, Virginia, U.S.A.

**June 2007 – Certified Fund-Raising Manager (CFRM);** Centre on Philanthropy, Indiana University, Indianapolis, U.S.A.

**November 2003 – Certificate in Negotiation and Decision-Making Strategies;** Columbia University Graduate School of Business, New York, U.S.A

**June 2002 - Leaders in Development: Managing Political & Economic Reform;** John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

**Countries of Work Experience:**

Antigua & Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guyana, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Madagascar, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Suriname, The Bahamas, Trinidad & Tobago, and Uruguay

**Languages:**

| Language | Speaking             | Reading          | Writing          |
|----------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| English  | <i>Mother Tongue</i> |                  |                  |
| Spanish  | <i>Excellent</i>     | <i>Excellent</i> | <i>Excellent</i> |

**Employment:**

From: July 2007 - Present

Employer: Institutional Development and Management Consultants Limited (ID&M)

Position Held: Institutional Development/Project Design/Monitoring & Evaluation Consultant

From: July 2001 – June 2007

Employer: Central American Commission for Development and Development/Global Environment Facility

Position Held: Regional Director, Mesoamerican Barrier Reef Systems Project

From: August 1998 - April 1999

Employer: Caribbean Community (CARICOM/Canadian International Development Agency)

Position Held: Director, Lobster & Conch Resource Management Program

From: September 1996 - July 1998

Employer: Government of Belize

Position Held: Fisheries Administrator

**Experience Relevant to this Assignment:**

| Consultancies Performed  |
|--|
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> <u>Climate Action and Blue Finance for the Mesoamerican Reef – Concept Note</u></p> <p><b>Year:</b> 2021 - 2022</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico</p> <p><b>Client:</b> International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)</p> <p><b>Position held:</b> GCF Project Development Consultant</p> |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> <u>Energy Efficiency for the Transition to Carbon Neutral Cities in Colombia</u></p>  |



|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Year:</b> 2021 – 2022<br/> <b>Location:</b> Colombia<br/> <b>Client:</b> Development Bank of Latin America (CAF)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF-7 Project Development Consultant</p>  |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> <u>Promoting sustainability in the agave-mezcal value chain through restoration and integrated management of biocultural landscapes in Oaxaca, Mexico</u><br/> <b>Year:</b> 2021 – 2022<br/> <b>Location:</b> Mexico<br/> <b>Client:</b> United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/Global Environment Facility (GEF)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF-7 Project Development Consultant</p>   |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> <u>Mid-Term Evaluation of the Project “Strengthening access and benefit sharing (ABS) in the Bahamas”</u><br/> <b>Year:</b> 2020 – 2021<br/> <b>Location:</b> The Bahamas<br/> <b>Client:</b> Government of The Bahamas/United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/Global Environment Facility (GEF)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E) Consultant</p>  |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> <u>Mid-Term Evaluation of the Project “Effective Implementation of the Access and Benefit Sharing and Traditional Knowledge Regime in Peru in accordance with the Nagoya Protocol”</u><br/> <b>Year:</b> 2020 – 2021<br/> <b>Location:</b> Peru<br/> <b>Client:</b> Government of Peru/United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/Global Environment Facility (GEF)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E) Consultant</p>   |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Implementing Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) Site Conservation and Preventing Global Extinctions<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2020 – 2021<br/> <b>Location:</b> Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Madagascar<br/> <b>Client:</b> American Bird Conservancy (ABC)/United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/Global Environment Facility (GEF)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF-7 Project Development Consultant</p>  |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in the tourism sector of the protected areas and strategic ecosystems of San Andres, Old Providence, and Santa Catalina islands<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2020 – 2021<br/> <b>Location:</b> Colombia<br/> <b>Client:</b> World Wildlife Fund (WWF)/Global Environment Facility (GEF)/Government of Colombia<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF-7 Project Development Consultant</p>  |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Development of Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT)’s Entity Work Programme for the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Three (3) Concept Notes for Submission to the GCF<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2020 - 2021<br/> <b>Location:</b> Belmopan, Belize.<br/> <b>Client:</b> Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre/PACT<br/> <b>Position held:</b> Team Leader and Project Development Specialist</p>   |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Gap Analysis and the Update Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) and Gender Policies, Procedures and Tools; Development and Implementation of an ESS and Gender Capacity Development Plan for the Protected Areas Conservation Trust.<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2020 – 2021<br/> <b>Location:</b> Belize<br/> <b>Client:</b> Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> Institutional Development Expert</p>  |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Promoting National Blue Economy Priorities Through Marine Spatial Planning in the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2020 – 2021<br/> <b>Location:</b> Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Panama, St. Lucia<br/> <b>Client:</b> Development Bank of Latin America (CAF)/Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations/Global Environment Facility (GEF)/Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF-7 Project Development Consultant</p> |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> UAVs/Drones for Equitable Climate Change Adaptation: Participatory Risk Management through Landslide and Debris Flow Monitoring in Mocoa, Colombia<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2019-2020<br/> <b>Location:</b> Colombia<br/> <b>Client:</b> Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Corpoamazonia<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF Project Development Consultant</p>   |

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Conservation of wildcats and prey species through public-private partnerships and human-jaguar conflict management in Panama<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2019 – 2020<br/> <b>Location:</b> Panama<br/> <b>Client:</b> United Nations Environment Programme – UNEP<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF Project Development Consultant</p>  |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management in St. Kitts and Nevis<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2018<br/> <b>Location:</b> St. Kitts &amp; Nevis<br/> <b>Client:</b> United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment)/GEF/IUCN<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF Project Development Consultant</p>  |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Ecosystem-based biodiversity friendly cattle production framework for the Darien Region of Panama<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2018<br/> <b>Location:</b> Panama<br/> <b>Client:</b> Development Bank of Latin America (CAF)/Global Environment Facility (GEF)/ANCON-Panama<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF Project Development Consultant</p>   |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Mid-Term Evaluation of the Project “Sustainable Pathways – Protected Areas and Renewable Energy in Antigua &amp; Barbuda”<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2018<br/> <b>Location:</b> Antigua &amp; Barbuda<br/> <b>Client:</b> United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment)/Global Environment Facility<br/> <b>Position held:</b> Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E) Consultant</p>                               |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Design of a Monitoring &amp; Evaluation System for the Portfolio of GEF Projects in the Development Bank of Latin America<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2017-2018<br/> <b>Location:</b> Peru<br/> <b>Client:</b> Development Bank of Latin America (CAF)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E) Consultant</p>   |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Mid-Term Evaluation of the project “Management and Protection of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA)”<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2018<br/> <b>Location:</b> Belize<br/> <b>Client:</b> World Bank/Global Environment Facility (GEF)/Government of Belize/PACT<br/> <b>Position held:</b> Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E) Consultant</p>  |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Development of an Institutional Monitoring &amp; Evaluation Framework for the Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT) with Alignment to the National Protected Areas System (NPAS)<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2017-2018<br/> <b>Location:</b> Belize<br/> <b>Client:</b> Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT)/Government of Belize<br/> <b>Position held:</b> Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E) Consultant</p> |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Cetaceans and Ocean Health in South America: Flagship Species as Bio-indicators of Mercury Pollution<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2017<br/> <b>Location:</b> Argentina, Chile, Uruguay<br/> <b>Client:</b> Development Bank of Latin America (CAF)/Global Environmental Facility (GEF)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF Project Concept Note Development Consultant</p>   |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Sustainable Landscapes of Northern Tropical Peru<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2017<br/> <b>Location:</b> Peru<br/> <b>Client:</b> Development Bank of Latin America (CAF)/Global Environmental Facility (GEF)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF Project Concept Note Development Consultant</p>  |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Latin American Cacao Initiative – Strengthening the Value Chain of Fine Aromatic Cacao<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2017<br/> <b>Location:</b> Panama, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Ecuador, Colombia, Dominican Republic<br/> <b>Client:</b> Development Bank of Latin America (CAF)/Global Environmental Facility (GEF)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF Project Concept Note Development Consultant</p>                          |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Sustainable Landscapes of the Peruvian Amazonian Region of Madre de Dios<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2017<br/> <b>Location:</b> Peru<br/> <b>Client:</b> Development Bank of Latin America (CAF)/Global Environmental Facility (GEF)</p>   |

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Position held:</b> GEF Project Concept Development Consultant</p>   |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Mid-Term Evaluation of Project “Marine Conservation and Climate Adaptation Project (MCCAP)”<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2017<br/> <b>Location:</b> Belize<br/> <b>Client:</b> World Bank/Adaptation Fund/Government of Belize/PACT<br/> <b>Position held:</b> Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E) Consultant</p>   |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Mid-Term Evaluation of Project “Advancing the Nagoya Protocol in Countries of the Caribbean Region”<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2017<br/> <b>Location:</b> Antigua &amp; Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada, Republic of Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Federation of St. Kitts &amp; Nevis, Republic of Trinidad &amp; Tobago<br/> <b>Client:</b> United Nations Environment Program (UN Environment – GEF – IUCN)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E) Consultant</p> |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Assessment of Institutional Capacity in the Caribbean Sub-Region in Support of Biosafety Systems<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2016<br/> <b>Location:</b> Antigua &amp; Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St. Kitts &amp; Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent &amp; the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad &amp; Tobago<br/> <b>Client:</b> United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/University of the West Indies</p>                           |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> ‘Transformation of the Panela (sugar cane) Sub-Sector in Colombia Through Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) to the Impacts of Climate Change’<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2016<br/> <b>Location:</b> Colombia<br/> <b>Client:</b> Development Bank of Latin America (CAF)/Global Environment Facility (GEF)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF Project Development Consultant</p>   |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Andes Adaptation to the Impacts of Climate Change on Water Resources (AICCA)’<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2016<br/> <b>Location:</b> Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru<br/> <b>Client:</b> Development Bank of Latin America (CAF)/ Global Environment Facility (GEF)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF Project Development Consultant</p>   |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Coastal Protection for Climate Change Adaptation in the Small Island States in the Caribbean project<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2016<br/> <b>Location:</b> Jamaica, Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent &amp; the Grenadines<br/> <b>Client:</b> International Union for the Conservation of Nature (ORMACC)/Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC)/German Development Bank (KfW).<br/> <b>Position held:</b> Project Development and M&amp;E Consultant</p>                 |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Final Evaluation of Project “Making Tourism Benefit Communities Adjacent to Archaeological Sites” (MTBCAAS)”<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2015<br/> <b>Location:</b> Belize<br/> <b>Client:</b> Belize Tourism Board (BTB)/European Union<br/> <b>Position held:</b> Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E) Consultant</p>   |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Mid-Term Evaluation of Project “Making Tourism Benefit Communities Adjacent to Archaeological Sites” (MTBCAAS)”<br/> <b>Year:</b> 2014<br/> <b>Location:</b> Belize<br/> <b>Client:</b> Belize Tourism Board/European Union<br/> <b>Position held:</b> Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E) Consultant</p>  |
| <p><b>Name of the project:</b> Project Preparation and Design Coordinator – Mesoamerican Barrier Reef Systems Project<br/> <b>Year:</b> 1999-2001<br/> <b>Location:</b> Belize, Guatemala, Honduras &amp; Mexico<br/> <b>Client:</b> Central American Commission for Environment &amp; Development (CCAD)<br/> <b>Position held:</b> GEF Project Development Consultant</p>   |