COUNTRY

PORTFOLIO

EVALUATION

Vanuatu and SPREP (1991–2012)

Volume 1: Evaluation Report

gef IEO Independent Evaluation Office
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

FEBRUARY 2015

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OFFICE

GEF Country Portfolio Evaluation: Vanuatu and SPREP (1991–2012)

February 2015

EVALUATION REPORT NO. 98

This report was presented as an information document to the GEF Council in May 2014.

1818 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20433
Internet: www.gefeo.org
Email: gefevaluation@thegef.org

The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the GEF Council or the governments they represent.

The GEF Independent Evaluation Office does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this work. The boundaries, colors, denominations, and other information shown on any map in this work do not imply any judgment on the part of the GEF concerning the legal status of any territory or the endorsement or acceptance of such boundaries.

Rights and Permissions

ISBN: 1-933992-79-4
ISBN: 978-1-933992-79-2

Credits

Director of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office: Juha I. Uitto
Team Leader/Task Manager: Carlo Carugi, Senior Evaluation Officer, GEF Independent Evaluation Office

Editing and design: Nita Congress
Cover photo: Vanuatu women, by Leah Nimoho

Evaluation Report No. 98

A FREE PUBLICATION

Contents

TABLES

Foreword

The Vanuatu and Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) portfolio evaluation is one of four country-level evaluations that examined Global Environment Facility (GEF) support in the Asia and Pacific region during the GEF's fifth replenishment period. The evaluation covered the Vanuatu national portfolio and the 11 regional projects for which SPREP is the regional executing agency.

The GEF Independent Evaluation Office applied a cluster approach to this evaluation, whereby a number of small and similar country portfolios in a given geographic region were evaluated. This approach had been used previously in the Office's 2011 evaluation of six GEF beneficiary countries of the Organisation of the Eastern Caribbean States. That evaluation, the first of its kind for the Office, looked at the relevance, performance, and results of regional projects, one of the main GEF support modalities in small island developing states (SIDS). Building on this experience, the Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation provides an opportunity to compare regional to national project relevance and performance in SIDS in the South Pacific region.

The Office's director, jointly with the Vanuatu operational focal point, invited a large number of representatives from various stakeholder groups and institutions involved in GEF projects in the country and region to discuss the evaluation findings on March 13, 2013, in Port Vila; two senior SPREP representatives attended as well. During the workshop, the evaluation context and methodology were presented along with preliminary findings and emerging recommendations. A very fruitful open forum discussion followed.

The main findings and conclusions of this evaluation were included in the Office's *Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2013*, which synthesizes the main conclusions and recommendations from the four country-level evaluations conducted by the Office in the Asia and Pacific region: Vanuatu and SPREP, India, Sri Lanka, and Timor-Leste. This report was submitted as an information document to the GEF Council in May 2014.

The Vanuatu government response to the evaluation from the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation was transmitted to the GEF Independent Evaluation Office in June 2014. SPREP provided its response through an official communication to the Office in March 2014. Both letters, included in annex A of this report, endorse the evaluation conclusions and recommendations and promise active engagement in follow-up action.

The evaluation was conducted and completed when Rob D. van den Berg was Director of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office. The Office remains fully responsible for the content of this report.

Juha I. Uitto
Director, GEF Independent Evaluation Office

Acknowledgments

This report is the result of a collective effort. Carlo Carugi, Senior Evaluation Officer and Team Leader for country-level evaluations at the GEF Independent Evaluation Office, led the evaluation. A team composed of national and international evaluators provided by Industrial Economics Incorporated (IEc) supported the Office in gathering and analyzing data in both Vanuatu and the South Pacific region. The team was composed of Sam Sesega and Cedric Schuster of Samoa, and Daniel Kaufman and John McKenzie from the United States. Napoleão Dequech Neto and Ruchi Suhag, GEF Independent Evaluation Office, served as research assistants.

Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADMIRE	Actions for the Development of Marshall Islands' Renewable Energies
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CPE	country portfolio evaluation
DEPC	Department of Environment Protection and Conservation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FSP	full-size project
GBI	Global Benefits Index
GDP	gross domestic product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	greenhouse gas
IWP	International Waters Project
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MSP	medium-size project
NAP	national action plan
NAPA	national adaptation program of action
NBSAP	national biodiversity strategy and action plan
NCSA	national capacity self-assessment
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NIP	national implementation plan
PAA	priorities and action agenda
PACC	Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project
PAS	Pacific Alliance for Sustainability
PCB	polychlorinated biphenyl
PIC	Pacific Island country
PICCAP	Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Project
PIGGAREP	Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project
PIREP	Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Programme
PMIS	Project Management Information System
PNG	Papua New Guinea
POP	persistent organic pollutant
ROtI	review of outcomes to impact
SEDREA	Sustainable Economic Development through Renewable Energy Applications
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SIDS	small island developing states
SPBCP	South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme
SPREP	Secretariat for the Pacific Islands Regional Environment Programme
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention for Combating Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

All dollar amounts are U.S. dollars unless otherwise indicated.

1. Main Conclusions and Recommendations

1.1 Background

At the request of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council, the Independent Evaluation Office conducts country portfolio evaluations (CPEs) every year. CPEs aim to provide the GEF Council and the national governments with an assessment of results and performance of GEF-supported activities at the country level, and of how GEF-supported activities fit with national strategies and priorities as well as within the global environmental mandate of the GEF. In 2012, the Vanuatu national project portfolio and the regional project portfolio executed by the Secretariat for the Pacific Islands Regional Environment Programme (SPREP; previously the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme) were selected for evaluation.

In Vanuatu, the GEF has supported a portfolio totaling about $17.9 million, with some $70.0 million in cofinancing, for 13 national projects. As shown in table 1.1, these comprise five projects in biodiversity, five in climate change, one in land degradation, one in persistent organic pollutants (POPs), and one multifocal area project. These 13 national projects have been implemented solely in Vanuatu. At the time of the evaluation, nine projects had been completed, one was ongoing, and three were in the pipeline. Eight of the 13 projects are enabling activities. The GEF Agencies responsible for their implementation are the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the World Bank.

Since 1991, SPREP has been involved as regional executing agency through various GEF Agencies (UNDP, UNEP, the World Bank, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO]) in 11 projects totaling over $63.1 million in GEF financing, or $204.4 million including cofinancing (table 1.2). Regional projects include multiple countries throughout the Pacific region; all but one SPREP-executed project

TABLE 1.1 **Vanuatu National GEF Projects, by Focal Area and Funding**

Focal area	Number of projects	Total GEF support (million $)	Total cofinancing (million $)	% of GEF support by focal area
Biodiversity	5	1.24	0.84	6.95
Climate change	5	15.52	68.68	86.80
Land degradation	1	0.50	0.43	2.80
Persistent organic pollutants	1	0.39	0.02	2.20
Multifocal	1	0.22	0.06	1.26
Total	13	17.88	70.03	100.00

TABLE 1.2 **SPREP and Vanuatu Regional GEF Projects, by Focal Area and Funding**

Focal area	Number of projects	Total GEF support (million $)	Total cofinancing (million $)	% of GEF support by focal area
		SPREP regional		
Biodiversity	3	15.00	10.84	8.21
Climate change	6	32.32	116.28	17.69
International waters	1	12.29	8.12	6.73
POPs	1	3.50	6.05	1.92
Subtotal	11	63.11	141.29	34.55
		Vanuatu regional		
Biodiversity	1	6.63	11.79	3.63
Climate change	2	19.95	57.54	10.92
International waters	3	31.59	239.98	17.29
POPs	1	2.00	4.13	1.09
Multifocal	3	59.39	362.31	32.51
Subtotal	10	119.56	675.66	65.44
Total	21	182.68	817.03	100.00

NOTE: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding.

included Vanuatu.[1] As shown in the top half of table 1.2, these comprise three biodiversity projects, six climate change projects, one international waters project, and one POPs project. Eight of the 11 SPREP regional projects are full-size projects (FSPs), one is a medium-size project (MSP), and two are enabling activities. Seven of the 21 SPREP member small island developing states (SIDS)—Cook Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Samoa, and Tuvalu—are involved in at least nine SPREP-executed GEF projects.

As shown in the bottom half of table 1.2, the GEF has also committed around $119.6 million for other regional projects in which Vanuatu participates, but which are *not* executed by SPREP. All of these projects are FSPs, and the majority of the funding has gone to projects in the multifocal area, notably the Implementation of Global and Regional Oceanic Fisheries Conventions and Related Instruments in the Pacific Small Island Developing States project (GEF ID 4746), which received $45.6 million. Most of these projects were in the pipeline or ongoing at the time of the evaluation.

1.2 Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

As noted in the terms of reference (annex B),

> The purpose of the Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation is to provide the GEF Council with an assessment of how the GEF is implemented in Vanuatu and more broadly in the Pacific region, report on results from projects, and assess how these projects are linked to national and regional environmental and sustainable development agendas as well as to the GEF mandate of generating global environmental benefits within its focal areas.

The evaluation assesses the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, and efficiency of the GEF

[1] The exception is: PAS [Pacific Alliance for Sustainability] Implementing the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by Integrating the Conservation Management of Island Biodiversity (GEF ID 4023).

project portfolio in Vanuatu and the South Pacific from 1991 to 2012. Intended audiences for the evaluation results include the GEF Council, SPREP countries, and the GEF Agencies and partners.

The evaluation was conducted between October 2012 and August 2013 by an evaluation team comprised of staff from the GEF Independent Evaluation Office and consultants with extensive knowledge of environmental program evaluation, the environmental sector in Vanuatu, and SPREP. The methodology employed several qualitative and quantitative methods, including (1) interviews conducted with 40 people from 12 institutions; (2) quantitative analysis examining the efficiency of GEF support using standard metrics (e.g., the time and cost of preparing and implementing projects); (3) standardized analytic tools and project review protocols adapted to the Pacific context; and (4) development of review of outcomes to impact (ROtI) field studies for two completed projects: Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Programme (PIREP, GEF ID 1058) and Facilitating and Strengthening the Conservation Initiatives of Traditional Landholders and Their Communities to Achieve Biodiversity Conservation Objectives (GEF ID 1682). The evaluators triangulated across quantitative and qualitative data sources to confirm findings and strengthen confidence in the results.

1.3 Conclusions

RESULTS, EFFECTIVENESS, AND SUSTAINABILITY

CONCLUSION 1: **The GEF helped pave the way for the development of national plans, establishment of environmental agencies, and establishment of relevant environmental legislative frameworks in Vanuatu and SPREP countries in all focal areas through enabling activities.**

In Vanuatu, GEF support has focused primarily on enabling activities to develop national sectoral plans for climate change, POPs, land degradation, biodiversity, and capacity-building self-assessments; and establishment or strengthening of legislative frameworks and environmental institutions. Enabling activities have played a valuable role in the portfolio by enhancing capacity and building awareness of global environmental issues at the national level. GEF support through enabling activities has also facilitated implementation of international conventions on the environment by providing a regular, if limited, stream of support to key government agencies responsible for the conventions; and providing technical and financial assistance to develop capacity within these ministries and enhance multisectoral collaboration across government ministries, the private sector, and civil society.

Enabling activities generate information and build capacity for addressing environmental challenges and fulfilling commitments to international conventions, thereby laying the groundwork for MSPs and FSPs. Prior to GEF enabling activities, there was limited information on each of the GEF focal areas in Vanuatu and other SPREP countries. Through these enabling activities, Vanuatu produced its national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP), national adaptation program of action (NAPA), climate change policy framework, national implementation plan (NIP) for POPs, and national action plan (NAP) for land degradation—all of which provided the baseline information and assessment of threats at the country level and identified priority actions for each focal area. The NBSAP also directly contributed to the development of the Environmental Protection and Management Act 2006, identifying and developing multistakeholder consensus on priority issues, and proposing inputs that were mainstreamed into the approved legislation.

GEF-supported enabling activities have built awareness of environmental issues and helped attract donor funding to implement several of the priority actions identified in the national plans that were developed with GEF support. They have also

strengthened institutional capacity and multisectoral coordination, because multisectoral steering committees are required to produce these plans, and have promoted inclusive multistakeholder consultative processes.

Regionally, the level of technical capacity across focal areas was also quite limited prior to GEF support. In climate change, the need to address this limited technical capacity prompted the Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Project (PICCAP; GEF ID 336), which was executed by SPREP to assist countries in building their capacity. PICCAP produced national communications plans and conducted inventories and vulnerability assessments for climate change, which became the basis for much of the climate change work currently being implemented. The project also established multisector country teams that continue to spearhead the implementation of climate change actions at the national level as well as the effective participation of SPREP countries at international climate change forums.

PIREP, another SPREP-executed project, compiled national renewable energy assessments that have since been widely used to develop national plans for renewable energy in Pacific Island countries (PICs). PIREP also established national committees that have since been used to further implement the follow-up GEF Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP; GEF ID 2699). Some PICs have gone on to develop and adopt renewable energy legislation and policies. For example, Tonga's Renewable Energy Bill 2008 was developed with PIGGAREP support.[2] Cook Islands announced its Renewable Energy Chart in July 2011, acknowledging support from PIGGAREP and the GEF.[3] Changes in legislation and policies in Vanuatu, Samoa, and other countries are strongly linked to and built on the national renewable energy assessments carried out under PIREP and later continued with PIGGAREP.

CONCLUSION 2: **Replication and scaling up of community-based project outcomes has occurred at the subnational level; however, projects have faced constraints in scaling up to the national level.**

GEF project outcomes have been sustained when they could be replicated at a subnational scale (e.g., at the local community level) and with direct impact on individuals. This is reflected in the establishment of community conservation areas managed by traditional communities, as generated by the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme (SPBCP; GEF ID 403), the Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme of the Pacific Small Island Developing States project (referred to as the International Waters Project—IWP; GEF ID 530), the Vanuatu conservation initiatives project, and the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP). The community-based conservation approach piloted in the SPBCP is now widely adopted throughout the Pacific, in various forms and scales. The scaled-down version is helping overcome difficulties with shared boundaries on customary lands and with other land tenure issues and village capacities, while the integration of community livelihood issues into conservation plans strengthens their relevance and appeal to local communities.

The SPBCP supported 17 conservation area projects spread over 12 PICs. At least 12 are still operating, some as part of new larger-scale initiatives. Others are maintained by local communities at a low level of activity, with varying degrees of external funding and technical support. In this way, initial threats to biodiversity have been

[2] www.reeep.org/projects/clean-energy-policy-and-regulation-tonga.

[3] http://sids-l.iisd.org/news/cook-islands-announces-renewable-energy-plan/.

reduced or eliminated. Although some efforts have floundered because of internal village conflicts, others, such as the Takitimu Conservation Area Project in Cook Islands and the Kosrae Conservation Project in the Federated States of Micronesia have continued to flourish and grow—the former with strong ecotourism linkages; the latter with increasing partnerships and support from several international conservation organizations and funders.

However, sustaining and scaling up community activities to the *national* level has been limited, mostly by the lack of continued funding and technical support from government agencies or other donors after the end of GEF support. The projects generally did not develop financial sustainability strategies or mechanisms to sustain efforts at the same scale beyond the GEF funding period. In addition, the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation's (DEPC's) acute lack of capacity (both in terms of local budgetary resources and personnel) severely limits its ability to play an effective technical support role. The Conservation Area Regulation drafted in 2009 as part of the conservation initiatives project to legalize conservation areas and provide national support to traditional communities in managing them still has not been enacted, contributing to the uncertain state of many community conservation activities initiated under the conservation initiatives project.

CONCLUSION 3: GEF support has been instrumental in raising environmental awareness in all focal areas in Vanuatu and the SPREP countries.

The current level of awareness of environmental issues such as climate change, biodiversity, and conservation in Vanuatu and SPREP countries is very high among government officials and the general public. This is, to a large extent, a result of the considerable resources invested in producing environmental information and the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders in the GEF enabling activities. Much of the information and several publications (e.g., the NBSAP and NAPA) produced in Vanuatu projects such as the conservation initiatives project are still in use. In addition, the government of Vanuatu has incorporated biodiversity, climate change, and waste management issues into the primary and tertiary education curriculum.

CONCLUSION 4: The GEF paved the way for strengthening capacity at the individual, institutional, and system levels, but sustaining this capacity has been and still is problematic in all focal areas except climate change.

Some GEF projects produced useful capacity-building results, such as the strengthening of the DEPC during the conservation initiatives project, the establishment of multisectoral country teams used in PICCAP implementation; the training of conservation area support officers and similar project officers during the SPBCP and the IWP; and the preparation of the NBSAP, the NAP, and the NIP. Unfortunately, these country teams have been dormant since the completion of the above plans, thus most of the actions identified in the plans have not been used or mainstreamed by the relevant government agencies into their sectoral work. The DEPC, which is supposed to coordinate these committees, does not have the resources or staff to sustain them.

GEF projects invested heavily in building the capacity of the specific individuals involved with projects. Unfortunately, the government of Vanuatu has not been able to retain the individuals beyond the projects, and so the organization's capacity has reverted to zero. According to the DEPC, the department is developing a new organizational structure that aims to attract, sustain, and retain individual capacity.[4]

[4] Written comments from the government of Vanuatu, February 2, 2014.

The only exception to this general trend is in climate change. The national climate change country teams established during PICCAP continue to function effectively, despite staff transitions, due to the mainstreaming of such committees into national frameworks. These same country teams have been used for subsequent GEF projects such as PIREP, PIGGAREP, and the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project (PACC; GEF ID 3101). The ability to retain the country teams and continue working together at the national level proved to be effective in the sustainability of activities and for engaging in international forums on climate change. This underscores the need for new projects to build on existing systems and structures, such as those established under PACC, to maintain and leverage capacity gains from previous projects.

CONCLUSION 5: **Institutional capacity in Vanuatu to effectively implement national-level projects is insufficient.**

National projects in Vanuatu experience more delays and extensions than SPREP projects. Whereas regional project coordinators provide additional assistance to national coordinators in the preparation of project reports and implementation of activities for regional projects, regional coordinators do not have the institutional mechanisms to provide such support for nationally executed projects. The fact that the enabling activities for preparing the POPs NIP and the NAP remain open highlight this limitation. The proper records and financial acquittals have not been completed, even though project activities were completed several years ago. According to the DEPC, the department is undergoing reforms to better deliver projects on time and within budget.[5]

SPREP, on the other hand, has a strengthened technical capacity in several GEF focal areas and has been providing much-needed backstopping to national initiatives, notably in the climate change and biodiversity focal areas. SPREP technical support teams have been used extensively in implementation of the PIGGAREP and PACC projects, as well as in the PAS [Pacific Alliance for Sustainability] Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species in the Pacific Islands project (GEF ID 3664), which is just beginning implementation. In addition, SPREP has appointed a GEF support adviser and established a GEF support team within the Secretariat to strengthen its support for Pacific countries in GEF matters.[6]

RELEVANCE

CONCLUSION 6: **GEF support is highly relevant to Vanuatu and the SPREP region's environmental needs and challenges in all GEF focal areas.**

The evaluation found that all GEF focal areas are relevant to Vanuatu and the SPREP region. The majority of projects have addressed biodiversity and climate change. For Vanuatu, GEF support enabled the preparation of environmental sector national plans such as the NAPA, the NBSAP, the NAP, the NIP, and the national capacity self-assessment (NCSA) through seven completed enabling activities—one in climate change, four in biodiversity, one in POPs, and one multifocal. The SPBCP introduced community-based approaches to biodiversity and sustainable resource use that were adopted and replicated through other initiatives including the conservation initiatives project and smaller-scale SGP initiatives, to address threats of overexploitation of resources. Similarly, the IWP introduced an integrated and holistic approach to management of water resources, which complements and reinforces strategies for biodiversity conservation as well as climate change.

[5] Written comments from the government of Vanuatu, February 2, 2014.

[6] Written comments from SPREP, January 8, 2014.

The dominance of biodiversity and climate change projects in the GEF Vanuatu/SPREP portfolio reflects the importance of those focal areas in the SPREP Regional Plan and in Vanuatu. The impact of climate change is regularly felt in the SPREP region, including Vanuatu, and is reflected in projects mostly focusing on adaptation measures and improving resilience. Climate change is not only an environmental issue, but is now perceived in all PICs as the biggest source of economic vulnerability confronting Pacific economies. Biodiversity is a priority, as the region's fragile ecosystems are easily affected by invasive species and threatened by overexploitation.

To date, there has been less activity in the POPs and land degradation focal areas. Resources have been directed toward establishing baseline information in these areas and developing national plans.

CONCLUSION 7: GEF support in Vanuatu and SPREP has been highly relevant for accelerating the sustainable development agenda and meeting development needs. The GEF has been a major catalyst in helping move the environmental and sustainable development agenda to the national forefront.

The GEF-supported enabling activities that produced the NBSAP and PICCAP were catalytic in preparing Vanuatu's Environmental Management and Conservation Act, and in integrating the concept of sustainable development into national development plans. The SPBCP and the conservation initiatives project raised awareness and the profile of areas with globally significant biodiversity; together with the IWP, they also demonstrated community-based approaches that Vanuatu and other PICs have since increasingly adopted in managing biodiversity and natural resources on customary land areas. The PIREP and PIGGAREP projects have been influential in the development of national energy policies and the recent shift in emphasis to renewable energy technologies among PICs. Much of the planning information now available to countries in the GEF focal areas was generated from GEF projects. This information has not only been useful in the design of projects, but also in the formulation of sector policies.

Similarly, the GEF contributed to accelerating national sustainable development agendas elsewhere in the region. The outcomes of PICCAP, with its national greenhouse gas (GHG) and vulnerability assessments, helped frame the Pacific Forum Leaders Communiqué of the past 10 years, stressing the importance of actions to combat climate change and prioritize adaptation measures. In Fiji, the NBSAP project helped accelerate the development of national sustainable development plans. In Samoa, the outcomes of GEF projects have been instrumental in mainstreaming climate change, biodiversity, and land degradation into the country's Development Strategy 2012–2014. The GEF's contribution in the climate change focal area is particularly relevant, as Samoa and other PICs recognize the threat of climate change–induced extreme weather events as a major source of economic vulnerability for their development ambitions.

CONCLUSION 8: National ownership of GEF projects in Vanuatu is generally low, except for enabling activities.

The evaluation found a strong sense of national ownership of GEF enabling activities, with their expedited procedures and absence of a cofinancing component; seven of the nine completed Vanuatu national projects are enabling activities. The only two completed MSPs in Vanuatu—the conservation initiatives project and Capacity Building and Mainstreaming for Sustainable Land Management in Vanuatu (GEF ID 3502)—were both initiated by a GEF Agency.

SPREP regional projects including the SPBCP, the IWP, and PACC were based on SPREP meeting resolutions. These projects are intended to address issues common in the region as well as national concerns; however, the evaluation findings suggest that these projects have not always addressed specific national priorities. Country obligations under

various multilateral environmental agreements and initiatives of GEF Agencies in facilitating access to GEF funding are other drivers that prompt PICs to engage in activities that are not necessarily consistent with national priorities.

Consequently, the GEF supported some national plans in areas that were not fully aligned with the highest national priorities and were not supported by national budget allocations. As a result, the use or implementation of the outputs from these projects has been limited. Examples include the national biosafety framework, the POPs NIP, and—to an extent—the NAP for addressing land degradation and desertification.

EFFICIENCY

CONCLUSION 9: **The preparation time for GEF projects in Vanuatu and the SPREP region is excessive. This affects the efficiency of implementation in terms of changes in institutional memory, staff turnover, and national cofinancing allocations.**

The approval process takes 1.7 years on average for national projects and 2.4 years on average for regional projects. There is substantial variation across project modalities. For example, national FSPs in Vanuatu have a longer approval process (4.3 years) on average than SPREP-executed regional FSPs (2.5 years). On the other hand, enabling activities have been approved somewhat faster, on average, for Vanuatu national projects (1.2 years) compared to SPREP-executed regional enabling activities (1.4 years). Overall, these figures compare favorably with the GEF global average of 5.5 years (GEF IEO 2007), as well as with those reported for the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States cluster CPE (GEF IEO 2012a). However, the averages for MSPs and FSPs still exceed the GEF Secretariat standard of an 18-month approval process. Furthermore, interviewees from the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies acknowledged that the process takes longer than it should, considering the reforms introduced during GEF-4 (2006–10) and the rather small number of nationally executed projects in Vanuatu. Moreover, the average time required to approve national projects has increased, from less than 1 year in GEF-1 (1995–98) to 4.3 years in GEF-4. The GEF Council is aware of the delays and is continuing its efforts to streamline the approval process.

As projects take longer to prepare, priorities and commitments identified in the project documents may change, potentially affecting the efficiency of implementation. In most of the regional projects, a complete reworking of the project documents was undertaken after the GEF Council and GEF Agency approvals, reflecting changes that occurred in some countries concerning national priorities, the institutional memory of the national focal points, staff turnover, and budgetary constraints. In some instances, cofinancing initially allocated to those projects had to be shifted to newly emerging national needs. This was the case for the IWP and PACC projects and the Vanuatu conservation initiatives project.

CONCLUSION 10: **GEF project monitoring and evaluation produced very important information and lessons both for institutional capacity building and in identifying actions to address environmental concerns. The use of these lessons has varied, with some being successfully used and several others not having been used at all.**

All GEF projects have monitoring and evaluation (M&E) protocols in the form of annual project implementation reports, midterm reviews, and terminal evaluations. The evaluation team found that the M&E systems in place are used effectively for adaptive management during the life of the projects. All the completed regional and national projects include examples of improvements since the relevant midterm review took place.

Some good examples of adaptive management include the changes that UNDP and SPREP initiated to address delays in the disbursement of funds for the PACC project. This had been an issue since UNDP and SPREP started working together on GEF projects in the mid-1990s. The new approach

allows disbursement of funds only to those countries that have submitted the necessary reports on time, rather than waiting until all countries have submitted their reports before funds are disbursed to SPREP. Also, SPREP now only has to submit progress reports on a six-month basis rather than quarterly, freeing up staff time to work on project activities. SPREP reports that it will soon appoint an M&E adviser who will, in part, support SPREP's M&E activities relating to the GEF.[7]

The evaluation team also found that project terminal evaluations produced some very useful lessons and recommendations for future action. Unfortunately, these lessons do not appear to have been incorporated into the design of subsequent projects or taken up by the government in relevant work programs. Examples include recommendations from the conservation initiatives project to enact the Conservation Area Regulation in Vanuatu and providing support for communities to maintain their established conservation areas. The evaluation found that neither of these recommendations has been addressed. Other recommendations from the terminal evaluations of the conservation initiatives project, the NBSAP projects, and the IWP highlighted the need for strengthening the DEPC's capacity. Unfortunately, this has not happened, mainly due to a lack of political commitment to raising the profile of environmental issues at the national level.

1.4 Recommendations

TO THE GOVERNMENT OF VANUATU

RECOMMENDATION 1: **Identify and implement action items in GEF-funded action plans that are most closely aligned with national priorities.**

The GEF has supported the government in developing myriad strategies and action plans through enabling activities. These plans include suggested action items to address pressing environmental issues. While some of the recommended actions have been implemented, several others have not. The government should systematically review the pending action items in the national biosafety framework, the POPs NIP, and the NAP for addressing land degradation and desertification; decide which action items are most closely aligned with national priorities and available funding; and redouble efforts to implement the selected actions. This effort would not only benefit the specific areas highlighted in the plans, but would demonstrate the government's commitment to the environment while raising the profile of environmental issues in Vanuatu.

RECOMMENDATION 2: **Mainstream project coordination mechanisms into ongoing national planning processes to sustain progress and strengthen national capacity.**

Through GEF enabling activities, the government has established committees and teams to work on meeting the country's environmental obligations under various international agreements. While these arrangements have resulted in effective coordination during the lifetime of the projects, these mechanisms have not been integrated into broader national planning processes and have gone dormant, with the exception of committees and teams working on climate change issues. The government should actively consider opportunities to integrate coordination mechanisms established during GEF enabling activities into its ongoing national work programs. In so doing, the government should look for opportunities to improve cross-sector integration and coordination between the DEPC and other line ministries and organizations to ensure efficient use of resources and expertise.

[7] Written comments from SPREP, January 8, 2014.

TO THE GEF COUNCIL

RECOMMENDATION 3: **Continue to work on reducing the time required to approve GEF projects, while accounting for delays in project execution.**

The time required to approve MSPs and FSPs exceeds the GEF's 18-month target. This evaluation was not able to fully determine the causes of delays because of missing and inaccurate data; going forward, the GEF should track this issue carefully to identify and address the sources of delays. As indicated in many other GEF CPEs, excessive approval time is an ongoing challenge. While making every effort to shorten the approval process over the medium to long term, the GEF should acknowledge that delays are likely to be encountered within the current process and plan projects accordingly. For example, the evaluation finds that national priorities and resources often change in the time between when proposals are developed and projects are approved; the GEF may want to set aside additional resources for stakeholder consultations after projects have been approved to reaffirm national commitment and make any needed changes to project plans based on recent developments.

TO THE GEF COUNCIL AND SPREP

RECOMMENDATION 4: **Further strengthen knowledge management by integrating communication and outreach components in GEF projects and disseminating lessons learned more broadly through SPREP's regional platform.**

While the evaluation finds some successful examples of knowledge sharing, it also finds that lessons from past projects are not being fully utilized. The GEF should ensure that communication and outreach are integrated in project designs to facilitate ongoing learning and dissemination. For its part, SPREP should include learning and adaptive management as a permanent webpage on its website. This should build on the existing resources available on the website and help crystallize good practices and lessons for specific types of projects. In addition, SPREP technical staff should draw on this knowledge when helping countries design and implement projects. For example, SPREP could help ensure that lessons learned are reflected in the design of new projects.

TO SPREP

RECOMMENDATION 5: **Continue and reinforce SPREP's role of providing technical assistance for GEF projects, particularly after GEF funding ends.**

Evaluation stakeholders identified SPREP as playing an important role in providing technical support for project design, implementation, replication, and scale-up. The evaluation findings suggest that countries would benefit from even more technical assistance, particularly after GEF funding ends. SPREP should continue to build its technical expertise in climate change and biodiversity, in addition to other focal areas that are aligned with its mandate. In addition, it should look for opportunities to leverage and coordinate technical expertise throughout the region to address country-specific capacity needs.

2. Evaluation Framework

2.1 Background

The Independent Evaluation Office conducts CPEs every year at the request of the GEF Council. GEF-eligible countries are chosen for CPEs based on their size, diversity, and the maturity of their project portfolios. These evaluations usually cover all national projects, and include a selection of the most important regional and global projects in which the country participates.

In fiscal year 2011, the CPE team conducted a different type of CPE, taking a cluster approach that analyzed the portfolios of six GEF beneficiary countries of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States. That evaluation, the first of its kind for the CPE team, looked at the relevance, performance, and results of regional projects, one of the main support modalities in SIDS. Building on this experience, the Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation provides an opportunity to compare regional to national project relevance and performance in SIDS in the South Pacific region.

The region comprises 22 countries scattered over one-third of the globe, covering about 30 million square kilometers, mostly oceanic. The region is tremendously diverse in its geography, culture, languages, social-political organization, size, and natural resource endowment (Haberkorn 2008). At the same time, Pacific countries face a full range of geologic and climatic hazards, including population increase, waste management, climate change and sea level rise, and economic and institutional capacity.

SPREP is an intergovernmental organization established in 1982 by the governments and administrations of the South Pacific region to address environmental issues in the region. SPREP is composed of 25 countries, including all 21 Pacific Island countries and territories, and 4 developed countries (U.S. Department of State n.d.). It is charged with promoting cooperation, supporting protection and improvement of the Pacific Islands environment, and ensuring its sustainable development. SPREP focuses on climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem management, waste management and pollution control, and environmental monitoring and governance.

2.2 Objectives and Scope

The main focus of this evaluation is the 13 national projects implemented within Vanuatu and the 11 regional projects executed by SPREP. The evaluation also considers 10 regional projects that were not executed by SPREP.

Based on the overall purpose of GEF CPEs and their standard terms of reference (annex B), the evaluation has the following objectives:

- Independently evaluate the **relevance** and **efficiency** of GEF support in the region from several points of view: national environmental frameworks and decision-making processes, the

GEF mandate and the achievement of global environmental benefits, and GEF policies and procedures[1]

- Assess the **effectiveness** and **results** of completed projects aggregated by focal area[2]
- Provide **additional evaluative evidence** to other evaluations conducted or sponsored by the Office
- Provide **feedback and knowledge sharing** to (1) the GEF Council in its decision-making process to allocate resources and to develop policies and strategies; (2) the countries on their participation in, or collaboration with, the GEF; and (3) the different agencies and organizations involved in the preparation and implementation of GEF-funded projects and activities

The evaluation results will be used to provide information and evidence to inform other evaluations being conducted by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office.

This evaluation assesses GEF support for projects in Vanuatu and the South Pacific. It analyzes the performance of individual projects as part of the overall GEF portfolio. CPEs do not attempt to evaluate or rate the performance of the GEF Agencies, partners, or national governments.

[1] *Relevance:* the extent to which the activity is suited to local and national environmental priorities and policies and to global environmental benefits to which the GEF is dedicated; *efficiency:* the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible.

[2] *Effectiveness:* the extent to which the GEF activity's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance; *results:* the output, outcome or impact (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of a GEF activity.

2.3 Methodology

The evaluation was conducted between October 2012 and August 2013 by an evaluation team comprised of staff from the GEF Independent Evaluation Office and consultants with extensive knowledge of environmental evaluation and the South Pacific region. The methodology used qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and standardized analytical tools. Qualitative data sources included the following:

- At the **project level**, project documents, project implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, reports from monitoring visits, and technical documents produced by projects
- At the **country level**, national sustainable development agendas, environmental priorities and strategies, GEF-wide focal area strategies and action plans, and global and national environmental indicators
- At the **GEF Agency level**, country assistance strategies and frameworks and their evaluations and reviews
- **Evaluative evidence** from the GEF Independent Evaluation Office
- **Interviews** with roughly 40 GEF stakeholders and beneficiaries—10 percent from civil society, 50 percent from national government institutions, 30 percent from SPREP, and 10 percent from GEF Agencies (see annex D for a list of Interviewees)
- **Field visits** to selected project sites (annex E)
- Information from **national consultation workshops** (see annex F for a list of workshop participants)

The quantitative analysis used standard indicators to assess the efficiency of GEF support using projects as the unit of analysis, particularly the time and cost of preparing and implementing projects.

The evaluation team used standardized analytical tools and project review protocols for the evaluation and adapted these to the South Pacific context. Twenty-two person-days were spent on fieldwork, including interviews and site visits conducted in Vanuatu, Samoa, and Fiji. ROtI field studies were undertaken for two projects—PIREP and the conservation initiatives project—that had been completed at least two years prior.[3]

A triangulation analysis was undertaken by comparing data collected from each of the evaluation methods to synthesize answers to the key evaluation questions (annex C). Based on this analysis of the evaluative evidence, the evaluation team produced preliminary findings, which were summarized in an aide-mémoire that was distributed to stakeholders for factual correction and identification of additional evaluative evidence. Stakeholder comments on the aide-mémoire, received at the consultation workshop held in March 2013, were taken into account in finalizing the conclusions and recommendations contained in this report.

2.4 Limitations

The following limitations were taken into account and addressed wherever possible while conducting the evaluation:

- Country-level evaluations are challenging, as the GEF does not yet operate by establishing country programs that specify expected achievement through programmatic objectives, indicators, and targets. Many projects do not clearly or appropriately specify the expected impact and sometimes even the outcomes of projects. This evaluation sought to overcome these difficulties by undertaking field verifications to ongoing projects and two field ROtIs and interviews with other related organizations not directly associated with GEF projects. The results presented in this report are based on triangulation across various sources, including project reports, interviews, focus groups, field visits, desk reviews, portfolio analysis, global environmental benefits assessment, environmental legal framework, two field ROtIs, meta-analysis of prior studies, literature review, and websites.
- The lack of a filing system within the office of the main GEF operational focal point meant that most of the information used in the desk reviews was limited to whatever was available in the GEF database and other websites. The team used the interviews and field assessments to supplement the written record and relied highly on the individual interviews conducted.
- Weaknesses of M&E at the project and GEF program levels have been mentioned in past country-level evaluations and other evaluations of the Office. These weaknesses were also a challenge in conducting the Vanuatu and SPREP CPE.
- As in previous CPEs, the analysis of the portfolio proved challenging for a number of reasons, including inconsistencies in the GEF Project Management Information System (PMIS) and incomplete data for some projects. This posed particular difficulties for the efficiency analysis of the time required to complete the project approval process, as many projects were missing dates for some phases, or the dates provided were apparently inaccurate (e.g., implementation start dates preceded project approval dates). Efforts were made by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office to follow up directly with the GEF Agencies and by the consultants during the fieldwork to clarify the anomalies in the data; however, the team was not able to reconcile all of the discrepancies. Instead, the team extrapolated missing data points using the available

[3] The Office's *ROtI Handbook* provides further details about the methodology used to conduct the ROtIs; see GEF IEO (2009).

data.[4] This approach is based on taking averages between phases and across different types of projects; while this should provide a reasonable estimate of the project cycle overall, it does not allow isolation of which steps of the process took the longest for specific projects.

- The lack of technical capacity in the PICs, including Vanuatu, and high turnover made it difficult to find knowledgeable project staff for interviews.
- Travel within the Pacific, let alone Vanuatu, is expensive and very difficult, as flights are mostly once a week to the outer islands where some of the project sites are located.
- As foreseen in the terms of reference, it is difficult to assign attribution to observed results. The evaluation does not attempt to provide a direct attribution of development and even of environmental results to the GEF, but assesses the contribution of GEF support to overall achievements.

Despite the methodological challenges, the evaluation team managed to establish a clear and reliable set of data on projects and project documentation through the methods and approaches discussed above and throughout this evaluation report.

[4] The evaluation team used the following methodology to backfill missing dates:

To fill in *missing pipeline entry/received (A) dates, where the entry work program/project identification form (PIF) clearance (B) date is available*: FSPs—take the average time from A-B (across FSPs) and subtract this value from the B date; enabling activities—take the average time from A-B (across all projects, because no data are available for just enabling activities) and subtract this value from the B date.

To fill in *missing A dates, where the B date is not available*: enabling activities (the only ones in this category)—take the average time from A-C (across enabling activities) and subtract this value from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) approval or CEO endorsement (C) date.

To fill in missing B dates: all project types—take the midpoint between the A and C dates.

To fill in missing C dates: only one case, an FSP—take the average from A-B (across FSPs) and add this to the B date.

3. Context of the Evaluation

This chapter summarizes the context for the evaluation in terms of both the environmental framework of Vanuatu and the South Pacific island countries, and the mandate and operations of the GEF.[1]

3.1 SPREP Region and Vanuatu: General Description

SPREP REGION

The Pacific islands constitute a diverse region which includes 14 nation states and 8 territories scattered over-one third of the globe, covering an area of around 30 million square kilometers. Of the total area, only 0.4 percent is covered by land, made up of between 20,000 and 30,000 small islands, with Papua New Guinea (PNG) covering 83 percent of the region's land area.

As shown in table 3.1, the Pacific island nations range in size and population, from PNG—which is spread over 400,000 square kilometers and has a population of over 5 million—to Niue, with a population of roughly 1,500 residing on a land area of 259 square kilometers. Population growth rates for the region are relatively high, averaging 2.2 percent per year. Countries that have high emigration rates such as Samoa, Tonga, and Tuvalu normally have less than 1 percent growth rates; while Niue and Cook Islands with New Zealand citizenship have had negative growth rates for the last 10 years.[2]

The Pacific economies are primarily dependent on agriculture (20–40 percent of gross domestic product [GDP]), fishing (10 percent of GDP), and tourism (up to 40 percent of GDP in some countries) (ESCAP 2010). For Samoa and Tonga, remittances from workers overseas to their home countries account for 25 percent and 32 percent of their respective GDP.

The continental high islands of the Melanesian group have extractive industries such as logging and mining as additional major contributors to their economies. The resource-rich Melanesian states have higher GDPs than the Polynesian and Micronesian states. PNG's GDP is $7.906 billion, Fiji's is $3.061 billion, the Solomon Islands' is $715 million, and Vanuatu's is $729 million. The rest of the region—which includes Cook Islands, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Tonga, and Tuvalu—have GDPs ranging from $523 million in Samoa to $54 million in Nauru.

With the exception of PNG, the Pacific's populations predominantly reside in rural coastal areas, thus making them particularly vulnerable to sea level rise and tsunamis.

[1] An extended account of the country context, global environmental benefits, and the environmental legal framework is included in volume 2 of this report.

[2] http://www.spc.int/sdp/; accessed November 2012.

TABLE 3.1 **Key Characteristics of SPREP Countries**

Country	Land area (km^2)	EEZ area (km^2)	Population (est. mid-2009)	GDP/capita ($)	GDP growth rate 2007 (est.)	HDI[a]
Cook Islands	237	1,830,000	15,636	10,007	0.40	0.829
Fiji Islands	18,272	1,290,000	843,8833	3182	–3.90	0.718
Kiribati	811	3,550,000	98,989	656	—	0.597
Marshall Islands	181	2,131,000	54,065	2,851	2.0	0.708
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	701	2,978,000	110,899	2,1830	0.10	0.716
Nauru	21	310,000	9,771	2,820	0.20	0.637
Niue	259	390,000	1,514	5,854	—	0.821
Palau	444	616,000	20,397	8,423	5.50	0.810
PNG	462,840	3,120,000	6,609,745	1,062	6.20	0.437
Samoa	2,935	120,000	182,578	2,860	4.70	0.762
Solomon Islands	28,370	1,340,000	535,007	1,100	6.30	0.579
Tonga	650	700,000	103,023	1,874	–3.50	0.737
Tuvalu	26	900,000	11,093	1,563	3.00	0.691
Vanuatu	12,190	680,000	238,903	1,908	4.70	0.640

SOURCES: Secretariat for the Pacific Community database, South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission database, draft Pacific Human Development Report 2009, and UN Statistics Division National Accounts Main Aggregates Database.
NOTE: — = not available; EEZ = exclusive economic zone; HDI = Human Development Index.
a. The HDI is a composite statistic of education and income indexes, and life expectancy published by UNDP.

VANUATU

Vanuatu is comprised of an irregular Y-shaped chain of some 80 islands, with a total land area of about 12,190 square kilometers. The country's total population was estimated to be 240,000 in 2010, and it has an annual population growth rate of 2.3 percent.[3] Vanuatu is located in a seismically and volcanically active region with high exposure to geologic hazards, including volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tsunamis, and landslides.[4]

Vanuatu's GDP was approximately $729 million in 2010 with a growth rate of 4.7 percent and per capita income of $1,908 as shown in table 3.1. Agriculture and tourism are the main productive sectors contributing to Vanuatu's economy. Agriculture contributes 21.5 percent of GDP; tourism contributes 19 percent of GDP.[5] The vast majority of Vanuatu's population is engaged in informal subsistence economic activities. Seventy-nine percent of Vanuatu's population lives in rural villages, ranging from one family to 1,000 people, meeting subsistence and cash needs from locally available terrestrial and in-shore marine resources. The monetized commercial sector accounts for less than one-third of all economic activity.

[3] http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2012/03/26/000356161_20120326004949/Rendered/PDF/E30040EA0P-1126020Box367891B00353352.pdf; accessed November 2012.

[4] http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2010/02/25/000333037_20100225012651/Rendered/PDF/532100WP0P1120110VANUATU1ASSESSMENT.pdf; accessed November 2012.

[5] World Travel and Tourism Council, http://www.wttc.org/site_media/uploads/downloads/vanuatu2012.pdf; accessed November 2012.

Vanuatu ranks 118th on the Human Development Index and 52nd on the Human Poverty Index. Poverty levels stubbornly remain at about 40 percent of the population, with about 26 percent living on less than $1 per day. The low economic and social statistics for Vanuatu are a major stumbling block in implementing the national plans developed as part of the Rio Conventions as the limited national budget is spread thinly over several sectors of society.

3.2 Environmental Benefits in Key GEF Support Areas

The Global Benefits Index (GBI) is a measure of the potential of each country to generate global environmental benefits in a particular GEF focal area. Separate indexes are determined for the biodiversity and climate change focal areas as shown in table 3.2.

The GBI for biodiversity seeks to measure the potential global benefits from biodiversity-related activities in a country. It reflects the complex, highly uneven distribution of species and threats to them across the world's ecosystems, both within and across countries. The GBI for climate change seeks to measure the potential global benefits that can be realized from climate change mitigation activities in a country. The approach reflects the objectives of the GEF climate change operational programs to address long-term priorities to mitigate climate change. Adaptation funding is through the Least Development Countries Fund, the Adaptation Fund, and the Special Climate Change Fund, which are outside the GBI calculations.

As shown in table 3.2, the climate change GBIs for individual nations in the Pacific islands are zero—and yet these countries are highly vulnerable to the effects of global climate change due to their small size and tropical location. In addition, the

TABLE 3.2 **Global Benefits Index for SPREP Countries**

	Climate change		Biodiversity	
Country	GBI	% share of GBI	GBI	% share of GBI
Cook Islands	10	0	10.7	0.1
Fiji	782	0	27.2	0.4
Kiribati	0	0	7.6	0.1
Marshall Islands	0	0	18.4	0.0
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	0	0	9.3	0.0
Nauru	41	0	0.0	0.0
Niue	2	0	2.6	0.0
Palau	78	0	8.8	0.1
PNG	2144	0	179.0	2.4
Samoa	159	0	11.7	0.2
Solomon Islands	95	0	30.8	0.4
Tonga	75	0	6.8	0.1
Tuvalu	—	0	1.9	0.0
Vanuatu	193	0	14.7	0.2

SOURCES: "GEF Benefits Index (GBI) for Biodiversity: Initial and Revised July 2008"; "GEF Benefits Index (GBI) for Climate Change: Initial and Revised July 2008."
NOTE: — = not available.

Pacific is home to a very high and rich biodiversity, as reflected in the biodiversity GBIs.

BIODIVERSITY

In the Region

The Pacific islands region is one of the richest areas of terrestrial and marine ecosystems on Earth, with habitats ranging from mountain forest ecosystems to volcanic islands and low-lying coral atolls and extensive coral reef systems. The New Guinea Islands (the west is part of Indonesia, and the east part of PNG) alone are home to over 5 percent of global terrestrial biodiversity, with two-thirds of these species found nowhere else in the world, despite being less than 1 percent of the global landmass. The western Pacific, which includes the Melanesian countries and Palau, is recorded as having the highest marine biodiversity along with the most extensive coral reef system in the world. The region's isolated islands provide ideal conditions for the evolution of new species. As a consequence, Pacific islands have high numbers of endemic species, including more than 400 bird species (ESCAP 2010).

The huge expanse of ocean supports the most extensive and diverse coral reefs in the world, the largest tuna fishery, the deepest oceanic trenches, and the healthiest and—in some cases—largest remaining populations of many globally rare and threatened species including whales, sea turtles, dugongs, and saltwater crocodiles. The Pacific's rich biodiversity is evident in the presence of biodiversity hotspots that include both terrestrial and marine ecosystems. Eastern Melanesia, New Guinea Island, and New Caledonia are recognized for their rich and diverse terrestrial areas (table 3.3).

Primarily due to the small size of most of the islands, many of the unique plants and animals of the Pacific region have very small populations and are among the most endangered in the world. The Pacific currently has about 25 percent of the world's threatened bird species and has already lost many. Worldwide, the largest number of documented extinctions (28 between 1600 and 1899 and 23 in the 20th century) has occurred on the islands of Oceania, which now have more threatened species (110) than any other region. Estimates identify that there are roughly 7 times more endangered bird species per capita in the South Pacific than in the Caribbean, 50 times more than in South America, and a 100 times more than in North America or Africa. The Polynesia-Melanesia hotspot is considered the epicenter of the current global extinction crisis (CEPF 2007).

In Vanuatu

Vanuatu belongs to the East Melanesian Islands biodiversity hotspot. As shown in table 3.3, the

TABLE 3.3 **Pacific Islands Biodiversity Hotspots and Endemic Species**

Hotspot	Plant	Bird	Reptile	Mammal	Coral	Fish
Polynesia-Micronesia	5,330	242	61	15	—	—
New Guinea Island	15–20,000 3,000 (orchids)	760	—	250	800	600
East Melanesia	8,000	360	42 (amphibians)	86	—	52 (freshwater fish)
Coral Triangle	—	—	—	—	600	3,000
Vanuatu	1,100	—	—	13	297	469

SOURCE: "Hotspots," Conservation International, http://www.conservation.org/where/priority_areas/hotspots/asia-pacific, accessed November 2012.
NOTE: — = not available.

hotspot is rich in biodiversity and high in endemic plant, mammal, bird, amphibian, and freshwater fish species.[6] A review of studies of the flora and fauna for the Vanuatu Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan noted the presence of more than 1,100 plant species, 297 coral species, 80 insect species, 13 mammal species, and more than 469 shallow fish species. Vanuatu's terrestrial ecosystems are classified into five main vegetation types: lowland rainforests, montane cloud forests, seasonal forest, scrub and grasslands, and coastal vegetation. The rich marine ecosystems include coral reefs; mangrove forests; seagrass beds; wetlands; and rare marine biodiversity such as sea turtles, whales, dugongs, and dolphins.

CLIMATE CHANGE

In the Region

Climate change is disproportionately affecting the islands of the Pacific. Although islanders have done little to contribute to the increase in carbon emissions—less than 0.03 percent of current global GHG emissions—they are among the first to be affected. Most islands are experiencing climate change impacts on communities, infrastructure, water supply, coastal and forest ecosystems, fisheries, agriculture, and human health as well as tourism.

Agriculture, which is mostly rain-fed in the region, is susceptible to changes in rainfall distribution. Intense and prolonged rainfall could damage seedlings, resulting in greater runoff and soil erosion and encouraging conditions that promote pests and disease. Droughts, combined with higher temperatures, would create added thermal stress on plants. Projected increases in sea surface temperatures, together with increased ocean acidification (from increased carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere), are likely to put pressure on the marine food chain (particularly reef systems and other calcifying organisms such as plankton)—which in turn potentially threaten aspects of the marine food supply and associated livelihoods. The incidence of vector-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever, and water-borne diseases such as dysentery and diarrhea, are likely to increase and shift in distribution (e.g., malaria is likely to extend further southwards) (Government of the Republic of Vanuatu 2009).

The impacts of climate change and sea level rise on the Pacific island nations are real and life threatening. For example, citizens on some of PNG's islands have been relocated in response to rising sea levels. Kiribati and Tuvalu have been seeking countries for their people to relocate to in the near future as the sea level continues to rise, inundating their low-lying atoll islands. Droughts and cyclones are threatening the national economies and livelihoods of Pacific people.

In Vanuatu

Vanuatu's location in the "ring of fire" and the "cyclone belt" of the Pacific makes it extremely vulnerable to a range of natural hazards. Since 1939, Vanuatu has experienced 124 tropical cyclones, of which 45 were categorized as having hurricane-force winds. Several of these disasters have caused loss of human life, disrupted livelihoods, and resulted in millions of dollars in infrastructure damage. Cyclone Prema, which occurred in 1993, caused some $60 million in damages, and Dani in 1999 resulted in damage estimated at $8 million. The Penama earthquake and tsunami of November 1999 affected 23,000 people (GEF 2010). Vanuatu is also affected by the cycles of El Niño, which brings changes in precipitation patterns (drought) associated with increased mean temperatures; and La Niña, which brings increased rainfall. The effects of global climate change increase Vanuatu's vulnerability to cyclones and sea level rise.

The country's vulnerability is further heightened by a number of socioeconomic factors.

[6] http://www.conservation.org/where/priority_areas/hotspots/asia-pacific/East-Melanesian-Islands/Pages/biodiversity.aspx, accessed November 2012.

Vanuatu's narrow economic base is comprised of subsistence small-scale agriculture, which contributes 65 percent of the country's GDP; fishing, offshore financial services, and tourism making up the remainder. Some 80 percent of the population are rural and depend on agriculture, but productivity is low and the domestic market for agricultural products is limited. Therefore, the population is extremely vulnerable to disruptions to the nation's economy caused by extreme weather events.

Vanuatu has completed both a NAPA and a NAP for disaster risk reduction. Additionally, the national government's commitment is reflected in the merging and upgrading of the former National Advisory Committee on Climate Change and the National Disaster Management Committee to the National Advisory Board for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction. The establishment of the project management unit for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction was resourced with funding from both the Vanuatu government and the GEF and other development partners.

INTERNATIONAL WATERS

The Pacific Ocean covers an area of nearly 40 million square kilometers, or over 7.9 percent of the Earth's surface. The Coral Triangle lies in the Pacific and is considered one of the richest marine biodiversity areas in the world. This area stretches from Southeast Asia to encompass PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, and Palau. This vast and complex marine system contains an enormous and largely undocumented array of biodiversity.

The many thousands of islands are, with the exception of some larger Melanesian islands, entirely coastal, often with limited freshwater resources. The islands are surrounded by a rich variety of ecosystems including mangroves, seagrass beds, estuarine lagoons, and coral reefs.

The Pacific hosts the world's largest remaining stocks of tuna, providing approximately one-third of the world's catches of tuna and related species. The western and central Pacific Ocean tuna industries have a total landed value of around $2 billion per year and an estimated market value of $6–8 billion per year. About half of this annual catch is taken from the exclusive economic zones of Pacific SIDS. Annual licensing fees for the predominantly foreign fishing fleets provide revenues of about $60–70 million to the region. As a consequence, responsible and effective stewardship is a priority, as overfishing of two key species—big eye and yellow-fin tuna—puts stock levels in jeopardy.

The ocean and its resources have been the lifeline for Pacific people for millennia, but with declining fishery resources, rising sea levels, warming ocean temperatures, ocean acidification, and pollution, the ocean is changing rapidly. These changes are degrading the livelihoods, and threatening the very survival, of Pacific islanders.

LAND DEGRADATION

In the Region

Land degradation is a pivotal issue for most of the smaller Pacific island countries. Already, Nauru has no native forest left because of years of mining; Tonga (12 percent remaining native forest) and Kiribati (15 percent remaining native forest) face problems for future land use and management. Land degradation from clearing of native forests for logging operations, commercial plantations and farms, and increasing urban settlements poses additional problems such as the contamination of the underground water lens and resulting threats to the livelihood and food security of the resident populations.

In Vanuatu

The volcanic origins of the Vanuatu archipelago make most of the islands steep and mountainous. About 37 percent of the country is forested, and just under 10 percent of Vanuatu's total land area is arable. Approximately 60 percent of low-lying coastline areas are utilized for agricultural, human settlement, and industrial activities.

There have been numerous changes in the way land is used in Vanuatu in the last decade, particularly in the urban areas of Vila and Louganville. In rural communities, land remains primarily under customary ownership; a large proportion of it is under cultivation. The extent of land degradation in Vanuatu is largely unknown. The impacts of land degradation on local economic and subsistence activities and national economic and political aspirations have not been assessed.

PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

In the Region

All 14 Pacific island nations have signed the Stockholm Convention on POPs, but are in various stages of developing and implementing their NIPs. Unfortunately, because most of the Pacific countries still have not completed their national assessments and NIPs, a regional overview on global environmental benefits could not be adequately ascertained.

In a regional study of hazardous waste conducted by SPREP in 13 Pacific countries (all except PNG), a total of 131 tons of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and 10.4 tons of dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT) were recorded at over 20 sites. The chemicals were mostly disposed of by burial or by sealing them off from human contact (SPREP 2000). The results of this study were used as the basis for the Pacific Regional POPs project under consideration for GEF-5 funding.

In Vanuatu

Vanuatu lacks the capacity to record, control, or monitor releases of dioxins and furans. The knowledge and application of best available techniques and best environment practices for new or existing sources in Vanuatu is very limited or nonexistent.

The NIP confirmed that DDT was used for the control of malaria-carrying mosquitos until 1989, and some of the used stocks of electrical transformers in Vanuatu contained PCBs. The report for the inventory of chemical imports has shown that the main sources of dioxin and furan releases in Vanuatu are from the incineration of quarantine and medical wastes and uncontrolled burning, including landfills and backyard rubbish fires (Government of the Republic of Vanuatu 2008).

3.3 Environmental Legal and Policy Framework in the South Pacific Region and Vanuatu

The environmental legal framework in the South Pacific consists of international and regional agreements that countries have signed and ratified/acceded to, nonbinding strategies and plans endorsed at high-level international conferences, and national-level legislation and regulations, along with accompanying institutional arrangements for their administration. For Pacific island states, the lines of demarcation between obligations and responsibilities at these different levels are often blurred in practice—largely because obligations for reporting, information sharing, and implementation often overlap.

REGIONAL CONVENTIONS

Three important regional conventions govern environmental activities in the Pacific: the Apia Convention, the Noumea Convention, and the Waigani Convention.

- **Apia Convention (1976).** The objective of the Apia Convention is to take action for the conservation, utilization, and development of the natural resources of the South Pacific region through careful planning and management for the benefit of present and future generations.
- **Noumea (SPREP) Convention (1986).** The objective of the SPREP Convention is to protect and manage the natural resources and environment of the South Pacific region.

- **Waigani Convention (1995).** The 1995 Waigani Convention bans the export of hazardous or radioactive waste to Pacific Islands Forum countries, and prohibits Forum countries from importing such waste.

Table 3.4 shows the countries that have ratified, signed, or acceded to the conventions.

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

All Pacific island states are party to a large number of multilateral environmental agreements, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the United Nations Convention for Combating Desertification (UNCCD). Their participation reflects the serious regional concern regarding their vulnerability to the transboundary impacts of environmental impacts such as marine pollution, climate change, loss of biodiversity, and ozone depletion. The multilateral environmental agreements not only provide Pacific island states access to a global stage on which to express their issues—and sometimes grievances—but also the opportunity to cooperate with the international community and access financial resources to support the implementation of their activities. Those that are of relevance to the GEF as a funding mechanism—i.e., the CBD, the UNFCCC, and the UNCDD—are particularly well supported.[7]

OTHER REGIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

Regional policies, plans, and frameworks—often endorsed at high-level international and regional meetings—constitute an important part of the larger framework within which SPREP and its member countries operate. While these are not legally binding, compliance with them is important for political and other reasons, including access to financial resources. Many of these policies, plans, and frameworks directly support international conventions and agreements. For instance, one of the purposes of the Pacific Plan 2005 is "to guide the region's efforts toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals" (PIFS 2011). The Action Plan for the Implementation of the Climate Change Framework will, as noted at the 2005 Pacific Islands Climate Change Roundtable in Madang, PNG, "be guided by decisions and activities at the level of the UNFCCC and GEF" (SPREP 2005).

Most regional frameworks are developed through highly inclusive and consultative regional processes. Because they are formally endorsed and adopted by high-level meetings of Pacific leaders, they command a high degree of legitimacy and recognition both at the national level and with development partners. Volume 2 of this report summarizes the international and regional frameworks, strategies, and plans that are widely recognized and used in the Pacific region.

TABLE 3.4 **Status of Ratification of Regional Conventions**

Country	Apia	Noumea	Waigani
Cook Islands	R	R	R
Fiji Islands	R	R	R
Kiribati			R
Marshall Islands		R	
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	R		R
Nauru		R	S
Niue			R
Palau		S	S
PNG	R	R	R
Samoa	R	R	R
Solomon Islands		R	R
Tonga			R
Tuvalu		S	A
Vanuatu			R

SOURCE: SPREP, www.sprep,org/attachments/MEA_database.pdf; accessed January 2013.
NOTE: A = acceded; R = ratified; S = signed.

[7] Volume 2 includes a table of the countries supporting each agreement.

SPREP

SPREP is an important addition to the institutional arrangements for supporting environmental activities in the region. It was established in 1993, "to promote co-operation, and provide assistance in order to protect the environment and to ensure the sustainable development for present and future generations" [8] The Secretariat is located in Samoa. It has a director, and a complement of professional and support staff who implement the organization's annual work program and respond to country-specific requests for assistance and support. In 2011, SPREP had a total of 69 professionals and support staff and an operating budget of $14.3 million (SPREP 2012).

The Secretariat reports to the annual SPREP meeting consisting of representatives of all 25 member states and territories. The meeting approves the organization's annual budget and work program. The current work program addresses four strategic priorities: climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem management, waste management and pollution control, and environmental monitoring and governance.

SPREP assists its member countries by coordinating regional input and providing technical and legal advice (e.g., in convention negotiations) and Conference of the Parties participation; directly implementing regional programs and activities in pursuit of its strategic priorities, including donor-funded programs and projects; and responding to specific country requests for assistance.

In collaboration with other regional and international organizations, SPREP has also been instrumental in setting up and supporting the operation of regional coordinating mechanisms that bring together and link a broad range of stakeholders including funders, international and regional nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, and civil society groups. These coordinating mechanisms share a common interest: to collectively strategize and coordinate their activities; and to share information, resources, and experiences. Two highly successful networks are the Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation and the Pacific Islands Climate Change Roundtable.

[8] Agreement Establishing the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), 1993.

VANUATU NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

Environmental Legal Framework

Vanuatu's constitution (revised in 1988) holds that it is a fundamental duty of all "to protect the Republic of Vanuatu and to safeguard the national wealth, resources and environment in the interests of the present generation and of future generations." To implement this constitutional provision, the government is empowered to enact specific laws and create institutions to protect and manage the environment.

The principal environmental legislation is the Environmental Management and Conservation Act No. 12 of 2002. The act's main parts deal with administration, environmental impact assessments, biodiversity and protected areas, and offenses under the act. The act provides for a department to develop, implement, and coordinate the government's environmental policies and programs. Further, it makes it mandatory to prepare and publish a national state of the environment report at least once every 10 years, and to maintain a publicly accessible environmental registry. The act provides for establishment of a biodiversity Advisory Council, and specifically covers the issues of bio-prospecting and community conservation areas.

The act also governs the management of POPs, with the minister empowered to regulate (among other things) the environmental effects associated

with the import and transport of hazardous substances, pests and weeds, waste management, and air and water pollution.

The act grants considerable powers to the director, including the power to appoint staff from outside the department, determine if a development application requires an environmental impact assessment and the manner in which the assessment must be compiled, and to stop any specified activity due to noncompliance with the terms under which its assessment was approved. This discretionary authority has been a source of some controversy.

Vanuatu has also taken steps to address waste management and pollution. Since 1994, the Public Health Act No. 22 has provided the basic requirements for sanitary systems for all dwellings in rural and urban areas. A National Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan 2010–2015 is now in place. The Pollution Control Bill and the Waste Management Bill were drafted and submitted to Parliament in 2012 (*Vanuatu Daily Post* 2012) and are expected to be enacted before June 2013.[9]

Institutional Framework

This section provides an overview of the main government institutions that are responsible for protecting the environment in Vanuatu.

- **Department of Environment Protection and Conservation.** Vanuatu's environment agency, previously called the Vanuatu Environment Unit, was upgraded to become the DEPC in 2009. It is hosted under the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources and is responsible for the administration of the Environmental Management and Conservation Act 2002. The DEPC also leads the preparation of both the National Conservation Strategy and the NBSAP, and is involved in the development of the National Waste Management Strategy. It is the operational focal point for international environmental conventions including the CBD, the UNFCCC, the UNCCD, and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. However, as discussed in chapter 5, the DEPC's capacity is still quite limited as a result of historical and ongoing challenges. Past institutional instability and a lack of capacity effectively mean that progress on the implementation of legislation and obligations under international environmental treaties has been very slow.

  To its credit, however, notwithstanding its limited capacity, the DEPC has been successful in other areas, notably in promoting and facilitating the establishment of community conservation areas; the total registered area has increased from 194 square kilometers in 2005 to 16,259 square kilometers in 2008. Because the DEPC is not well resourced, a multi-agency approach is being taken in managing environmental actions. For example, the Climate Change Division is housed within the Ministry of Meteorology and Disaster Management. A number of agencies have responsibilities that are integral to the health of coastal environments,[10] but the absence of policy leadership on integrated coastal management is likely to lead to suboptimal management.

- **Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Unit.** The government of Vanuatu established a multisectoral Climate Change Advisory Committee in 1990 in the lead-up to the Earth Summit of 1992 to coordinate national activities on climate change. This same committee

[9] Personal communication from Trinison Tari, Department of Conservation, January 28, 2013.

[10] The DEPC, for instance, is responsible for biodiversity and environmental management through the 2003 Environmental Management and Conservation Act, and the Vanuatu Fisheries Department has responsibility for managing the harvesting of marine resources, the 2005 Fisheries Management Act No. 55, and the 2008–2013 Aquaculture Development Plan.

continued until 2012, when it was became the National Advisory Board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction. With this change, the government established a centralized project management unit for climate change within the Department of Meteorology and Geo-Hazards. The Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction unit now has over 20 staff dealing with international conventions and policies, adaptation, mitigation, communications, and corporate services. The unit's work is managed through the National Advisory Board made up of permanent secretary and director–level personnel from all the relevant government agencies affected by climate change. The unit's work is guided by the Climate Change Policy Framework in the absence of climate change legislation.

- **Other responsible national agencies.** Environmental management is also implemented through sector-specific legislation (see volume 2 of this report). In the land sector, the Land Lease Act (1983) and the Urban Land Act (1993) guide the operations of Vanuatu's Land Use Planning Office. Many other land use policies have also been formulated to ensure effective management of lands and related resources, such as the National Land Use Plan and Policy, the Provincial Land Use Plans and Strategies, and Land Suitability Criteria. Laws that regulate the use of natural resources by other sectors include the Mines and Minerals Act, the Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Act, the Geothermal Energy Act, the Forestry Act, the Fisheries Act, the Foreshore Development Act, and the Pesticides Act.

  The Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources under the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources administers the Geothermal Energy Act of 1987, which regulates the exploitation of geothermal energy; as well as the Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Act of 1993, which regulates the search for and production of petroleum on land. This includes land beneath water, the seabed, and the subsoil beneath the territorial seabed; and the seabed and the subsoil of the continental shelf or beneath the waters of the exclusive economic zone.

  The Ministry of Land and Natural Resources implements the Mines and Minerals Act (1986), which regulates the exploration and development of minerals and related matters through a licensing and permit system. Quarrying is the only current mining activity, but the presence of gold on Santo and Malekula has been confirmed. There may be reserves of petroleum, although this is not yet proven.

National Environmental Policies and Strategies

Vanuatu does not have a national sustainable development strategy. However, the country's Priorities and Action Agenda (PAA) includes sustainable development of Vanuatu's forests and marine resources. Vanuatu's first national conservation strategy was prepared in 1993, with assistance from SPREP, AusAID, and IUCN. The highest priorities were identified as improving environmental education and awareness, improving legislation and law enforcement, strengthening existing environment institutions, preserving natural resources and taboo areas, and (5) using resources more efficiently.

Some of the strategies identified in 1993 were implemented, while many others were not. Other national strategies and plans have since been developed, including under GEF-funded enabling activities.[11]

[11] National strategies and plans include the Forest Policy (1997), the NBSAP (1999), the NAPA (2005), the National Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan 2010–2015, the NAP for Disaster Risk Reduction 2006–2010, the NAP to Address Land Degradation and Mitigate the Effects of Drought (2009), the Tuna Management Strategy (2009), the National Water Strategy 2008–2018, the National Energy Policy (draft only,

International Agreements

Vanuatu is party to several international agreements and conventions, as shown in table 3.5.

ROLE OF GEF-FUNDED INTERVENTIONS

The extent to which GEF-funded interventions contributed to the development and strengthening of the environmental legal framework in Vanuatu is partly evidenced in the explicit acknowledgment of GEF support expressed in national planning documents and reports, where one of the outputs of the GEF enabling activities was the production of these documents themselves. Acknowledgments of GEF involvement are found in the NBSAP, the NAPA, and the NCSA.

GEF influence can also be inferred from the chronology of events, wherein GEF activities preceded the ratification of conventions, the enactment of national legislation, and the adoption of national strategies and plans.[12] For example, the sequence of events resulting in the adoption of the NBSAP began with ratification by Vanuatu of the CBD, the enactment of the CBD Ratification Act by the Vanuatu Parliament—all before implementation of the NBSAP enabling activity. The development of the NAPA followed a similar sequence. These sequences are illustrated in figures 3-1 and 3-2, respectively.

In the case of the NAPA, two regional enabling activities (PICCAP Phases 1 and 2) were implemented before the NAPA was prepared, with a focus on gathering information for NAPA formulation—e.g., compiling GHG inventories, identifying and assessing various options for climate change mitigation and adaptation, and developing different scenarios of future changes in climate and sea level.

The influence of GEF-funded interventions in strengthening the framework for POPs management took a different track relative to that taken in the development of the NBSAP and the NAPA, as shown in figure 3-3. Where in the case of the former two plans, GEF assistance followed Vanuatu's ratification of the relevant convention (respectively the CBD and the UNFCCC), in the case of the Stockholm Convention, the GEF intervened to prepare the groundwork for ratification and

2009), and the National Tourism Development Master Plan (1994).

[12] Volume 2 includes a detailed chronology.

TABLE 3.5 **Status of Vanuatu's Ratification of Various Multilateral Environmental Agreements**

Agreement	Year of ratification or accession
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	1993 (Ratified)
United National Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)	1999 (Ratified)
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	1993 (Ratified)
Kyoto Protocol	2001 (Acceded)
Vienna Convention	1994 (Acceded)
Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer	1994 (Acceded)
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	1999 (Ratified)
World Heritage Convention	2002 (Ratified)
Barcelona (MARPOL) Convention	1986 (Acceded)
Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (Stockholm Convention)	2005 (Ratified)
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species	1989 (Ratified)

SOURCE: SPREP, www.sprep.org/attachments/MEA_database.pdf; accessed January 2013.

initial reporting requirements through an enabling activity on NIP preparation. Vanuatu's subsequent ratification of the convention paved the way for its participation in a GEF-funded regional POPs project that is currently being implemented. The Pollutions Bill and the Waste Management Bill—both dealing with aspects of hazardous waste management and presently before the parliament for enactment—are not an intended output of the GEF project. However, GEF activities helped raise the profile of hazardous waste management at the time the legislation was presented to the parliament. The two pieces of legislation will also address some of Vanuatu's obligations under the Stockholm Convention, including obligations for appropriate legal and administrative measures under Article 3.

The GEF's influence on the development of environmental legislation in Vanuatu is evident in the NBSAP, which called for and supported the development of environmental management and conservation legislation, and in setting in motion a process of stakeholder consultation that generated discussion of and brokered consensus on specific actions and provisions to be considered in the drafting of this legislation. The NBSAP made nine specific recommendations on issues for inclusion in the Environmental Management and Conservation Act:

FIGURE 3.1 **Sequence of Activities Leading to the Adoption of Vanuatu's NBSAP**

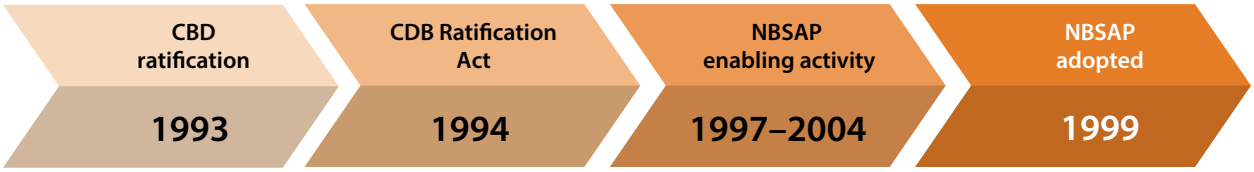


FIGURE 3.2 **Sequence of Activities Leading to the Adoption of Vanuatu's NAPA**

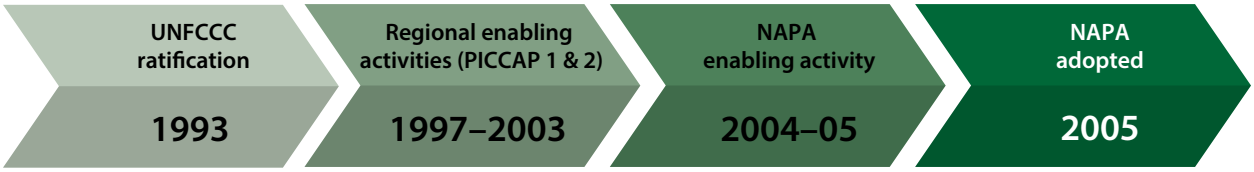
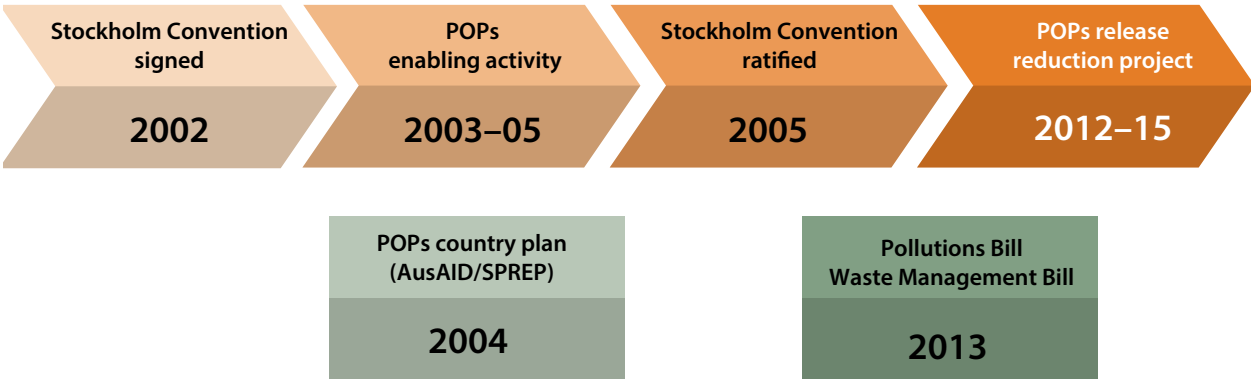


FIGURE 3.3 **Sequence of Activities Linking the GEF to Vanuatu's POPs-Related Actions**



- Controls on the introduction of living materials
- Management regulations for designated terrestrial species including measures for size limits and closed seasons for birds, flying foxes, crabs, and freshwater prawns
- Establishment of an environmental impact assessment process
- Establishment of an environment trust fund to fund biodiversity research and conservation work
- Establishment of a legal mechanism to protect the intellectual property rights of the nationals and citizens of Vanuatu with respect to their knowledge and use of biodiversity
- Appropriate controls for the import and export of rare species
- Appropriate controls for the import and safe handling of living modified organisms
- Establishment of a scientific research council responsible for issuing permits for environment and natural resource–focused research within Vanuatu
- Setting up a high-level environment coordinating committee responsible for the use and management of biological resources

The enacted legislation—Environmental Management and Conservation Act 2002—contained provisions for four of the nine areas proposed for consideration: the environmental impact assessment (Part 3, Sections 11–28), bio-prospecting (Part 4, sections 29–34), living modified organisms (Part 6, under Section 45), and regulating the harvesting of marine organisms (Part 6, under Section 45).

3.4 General Description of the GEF

The GEF provides funding to achieve global environmental benefits in biodiversity, climate change, international waters, depletion of the ozone layer, land degradation, and POPs, according to the respective international agreement.

GEF activities are carried out through 10 Agencies: UNDP, UNEP, the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. GEF Agencies have direct access to funding through a memorandum of understanding with the GEF.

GEF support modalities include the following:

- **FSPs**, which have funding of more than $1 million
- **MSPs**, which have funding of $1 million or less
- **Enabling activities**, which are intended to help countries meet their obligations under the various conventions for which the GEF serves as a financial mechanism; these provide support for developing environmental policies, strategies, and action plans and for formulating NCSAs
- **Project preparation grants** (PPGs)—formerly known as project development facility (PDF) grants—which provide funding for the preparation and development of projects
- **Small grants**, which have funding of less than $50,000 and are directed to NGOs and local organizations; small GEF grants are structured into the SGP administered by UNDP

The GEF officially began with a two-year pilot phase from 1992 to 1994. This was followed by three regular four-year replenishment periods: GEF-1 (1995–98), GEF-2 (1999–2002), GEF-3 (2003–06), and GEF-4 (2006–10). In July 2010, GEF-5 was initiated; it continues through June 2014. Until and including GEF-3, there were no country allocations, and eligible GEF member countries submitted their requests to the various windows through the different GEF Agencies on a demand basis.

4. The Vanuatu and SPREP GEF Portfolio

This chapter presents an overview of GEF support to Vanuatu in terms of financial resources and number of projects, project modality, GEF focal area, GEF Agency, and GEF phase. The GEF provided $218.2 million for projects in Vanuatu and the surrounding region. This includes $17.9 million for national projects, $182.0 million for regional projects ($63.1 million for SPREP-executed regional projects, and $119.6 million for Vanuatu regional projects not under SPREP), and $18.4 million for global projects. Additionally, Vanuatu received $975,000 for SGP projects. This chapter describes the project portfolio in further detail.

4.1 National Projects in the Vanuatu GEF Portfolio

The GEF portfolio in Vanuatu includes 13 national projects, which received $17.9 million in GEF funding and $70.0 million in cofinancing. Tables 4.1–4.3 summarize the national project portfolio by project status, focal area, and modality.

Most of the national projects have been completed, and were implemented through UNDP or UNEP. Five projects are in biodiversity, five are in climate change, one is in land degradation, one is multifocal, and one is in the POPs focal area. Though 8 of the 13 national projects are enabling activities, these projects received only $1.7 million of total GEF support. Most of the funding for national projects is for two climate change FSPs in the pipeline stage (78 percent of GEF funding). In contrast with the completed projects, which are mostly enabling activities, all of the pipeline projects are FSPs or MSPs. Additionally, the only national projects that are in the pipeline or that are ongoing are climate change projects; in contrast, the completed projects are mostly in biodiversity.

4.2 Regional Projects Involving Vanuatu

The GEF has committed $182.7 million to projects in the SPREP region, which have also received $817.0 million in cofinancing. These include 11 SPREP projects and 10 other regional projects in which Vanuatu participates.[1]

Tables 4.4–4.7 summarize the regional project portfolio. The 11 SPREP regional projects received $63.1 million in GEF funding, most of which has gone to projects in the climate change focal area. Most of the SPREP projects are either ongoing or completed, and only one is in the pipeline phase. The majority of the projects are implemented through UNDP or UNEP, and are FSPs.

The GEF has also committed $119.6 million for Vanuatu regional projects that are not executed by SPREP. All of these projects are FSPs, and the

[1] Vanuatu participated in all but one SPREP-executed project (PAS Implementing the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by Integrating the Conservation Management of Island Biodiversity).

TABLE 4.1 **Vanuatu GEF Portfolio: National Projects**

GEF ID	Project	Status	Focal area	Modality	GEF Agency	Total GEF support (mil. $)	Total cofinanc-ing (mil. $)
3798	Increasing Resilience to Climate Change and Natural Hazards	P	CC	FSP	WB	50.73	60.01
4281	Geothermal Power and Electricity Sector Devel-opment Project	P	CC	MSP	WB	0.91	280.21
5049	Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zone in Vanuatu	P	CC	FSP	UNDP	80.28	340.43
	National Communications Programme for Cli-mate Change - 2nd National communication to UNFCCC (Child project)	O	CC	EA	UNDP	0.41	0.01
146	National Biodiversity Strategies, Action Plan, and First National Report to the CBD	C	BD	EA	UNEP	0.21	0.00
486	Clearing House Mechanism Enabling Activity	C	BD	EA	UNEP	0.01	0.00
860	Assessment of Capacity-building needs for Bio-diversity and Participation in CHM	C	BD	EA	UNEP	0.13	0.07
875	Biosafety	C	BD	EA	UNEP	0.12	0.06
1682	Facilitating and Strengthening the Conservation Initiatives of Traditional Landholders and their Communities to Achieve Biodiversity Conserva-tion Objectives	C	BD	MSP	UNDP	0.77	0.71
1914	National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment (NCSA) for Global Environmental Management	C	MF	EA	UNEP	0.22	0.06
1942	POPs Enabling Activities for the Stockholm Con-vention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs): National Implementation Plan for Vanuatu	C	POPs	EA	UNEP	0.39	0.02
1970	National Adaptation Programme of Action	C	CC	EA	UNDP	0.20	0.02
3502	Capacity Building and Mainstreaming for Sus-tainable Land Management in Vanuatu	C	LD	MSP	UNDP	0.50	0.43

NOTE: C = completed, O = ongoing, P = pipeline; BD = biodiversity, CC = climate change, LD = land degradation, MF = multifocal; EA = enabling activity; WB = World Bank.

TABLE 4.2 **Vanuatu National Projects, by Focal Area and Funding**

Focal area	Number of projects	Total GEF support (million $)	Total cofinancing (million $)	% of GEF support by focal area
Biodiversity	5	1.24	0.84	6.95
Climate change	5	15.52	68.68	86.80
Land degradation	1	0.50	0.43	2.80
POPs	1	0.39	0.02	2.20
Multifocal	1	0.22	0.06	1.26
Total	13	17.88	70.03	100.00

TABLE 4.3 **GEF Funding of Vanuatu National Projects, by Modality and Focal Area (million $)**

Modality	Biodiversity	Climate change	Land degradation	POPs	Multifocal	Total
Enabling activity	0.47	0.61	0.00	0.39	0.22	1.69
FSP	0.00	14.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	14.01
MSP	0.77	0.91	0.50	0.00	0.00	2.18
Total	1.24	15.52	0.50	0.39	0.22	17.88

TABLE 4.4 **Vanuatu GEF Portfolio: SPREP Regional Projects**

GEF ID	Project	Status	Focal area	Modality	GEF Agency	Total GEF support (mil. $)	Total cofinancing (mil. $)
4066	PAS Pacific POPs Release Reduction Through Improved Management of Solid and Hazardous Wastes	P	POPs	FSP	Multi-Agency	3.50	6.05
2699	Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP)	O	CC	FSP	UNDP	5.23	27.98
2944	Sustainable Energy Financing	O	CC	FSP	WB	9.48	48.99
3101	Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project (PACC)	O	CC	FSP	UNDP	13.48	39.20
3664	PAS Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species in the Pacific Islands	O	BD	FSP	UNEP	3.18	3.98
4023	PAS Implementing the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by Integrating the Conservation Management of Island Biodiversity	O	BD	FSP	UNEP	1.82	2.56
336	Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Project (PICCAP)	C	CC	EA	UNDP	2.44	0.00
403	South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme	C	BD	FSP	UNDP	10.00	4.30
530	Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) of the Pacific Small Island Developing States	C	IW	FSP	UNDP	12.29	8.12
850	Expedited Financing of Climate Change Enabling Activities (Phase II) - PICCAP	C	CC	EA	UNDP	1.00	0.00
1058	Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Programme (PIREP)	C	CC	MSP	UNDP	0.70	0.11

NOTE: C = completed, O = ongoing, P = pipeline; BD = biodiversity, CC = climate change, IW= international waters; EA = enabling activity; WB = World Bank.

TABLE 4.5 **Vanuatu GEF Portfolio: Non-SPREP Regional Projects**

GEF ID	Project	Status	Focal area	Modality	GEF Agency	Total GEF support (mil. $)	Total cofinancing (mil. $)
3420	PAS GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability	P	MF	FSP	WB	0.38	0.44
3647	CTI The Coral Triangle Initiative (PROGRAM)	P	MF	FSP	Multi-Agency	45.60	338.02
4746	Implementation of Global and Regional Oceanic Fisheries Conventions and Related Instruments in the Pacific Small Island Developing States	P	IW	FSP	Multi-Agency	10.20	70.31
4935	Continuing Regional Support for the POPs Global Monitoring Plan under the Stockholm Convention in the Pacific Region	P	POPs	FSP	UNEP	2.00	4.13
5037	Climate Proofing Development in the Pacific	P	CC	FSP	ADB	14.50	50.62
2586	PAS Implementing Sustainable Integrated Water Resource and Wastewater Management in the Pacific Island Countries - under the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability	O	IW	FSP	Multi-Agency	9.75	90.58
3591	PAS Strengthening Coastal and Marine Resources Management in the Coral Triangle of the Pacific - under the Pacific Alliance for Sustainability Program	O	MF	FSP	ADB	13.42	23.85
3641	PAS: Promoting Energy Efficiency in the Pacific	O	CC	FSP	ADB	5.45	6.92
3819	PAS Forestry and Protected Area Management	O	BD	FSP	FAO	6.63	11.79
2131	Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project	C	IW	FSP	UNDP	11.64	79.09

NOTE: C = completed, O = ongoing, P = pipeline; BD = biodiversity, CC = climate change, IW= international waters, MF = multifocal; WB = World Bank.

TABLE 4.6 **SPREP and Vanuatu Regional Projects, by Focal Area and Funding**

Focal area	Number of projects	Total GEF support (million $)	Total cofinancing (million $)	% of GEF support by focal area
SPREP regional				
Biodiversity	3	15.00	10.84	8.21
Climate change	6	32.32	116.28	17.69
International waters	1	12.29	8.12	6.73
POPs	1	3.50	6.05	1.92
Subtotal	11	63.11	141.29	34.55
Vanuatu regional				
Biodiversity	1	6.63	11.79	3.63
Climate change	2	19.95	57.54	10.92
International waters	3	31.59	239.98	17.29
POPs	1	2.00	4.13	1.09
Multifocal	3	59.39	362.31	32.51
Subtotal	10	119.56	675.66	65.44
Total	21	182.68	817.03	100.00

NOTE: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding.

TABLE 4.7 **GEF Funding of Vanuatu Regional Projects, by Modality and Focal Area (million $)**

Modality	Biodiversity	Climate change	International waters	POPs	Multifocal	Total
Enabling activity	0.00	3.44	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.44
FSP	21.63	48.13	43.88	5.50	59.39	178.54
MSP	0.00	0.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.70
Total	21.63	52.27	43.88	5.50	59.39	182.68

majority of the funding has gone to projects in the multifocal area, notably the Implementation of Global and Regional Oceanic Fisheries Conventions and Related Instruments in the Pacific Small Island Developing States project, which received $45.6 million. Most of these projects are in the pipeline or ongoing.

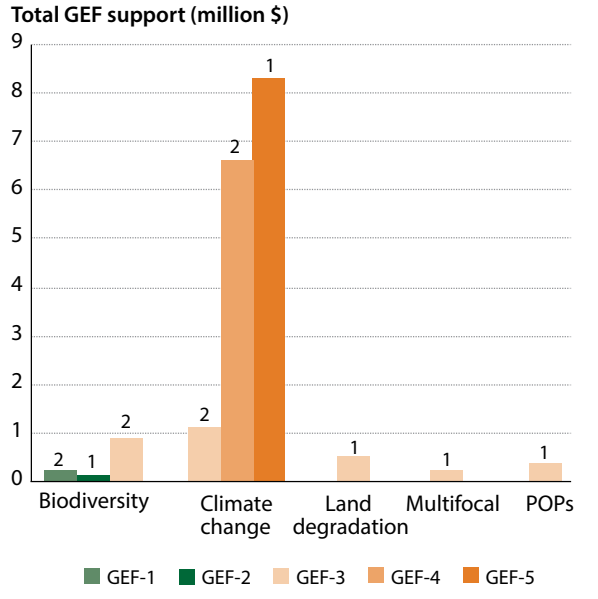
There are differences between the SPREP-executed and the other regional projects: 9 of the 11 SPREP projects are in the climate change or biodiversity focal area, while international waters and multifocal area projects are more heavily represented in the non-SPREP regional portfolio. Across both the SPREP and Vanuatu regional projects, the majority of GEF funding has gone to FSPs in the multifocal area.

4.3 Evolution of GEF Funding in the South Pacific Region

The GEF national portfolio in Vanuatu has evolved from GEF-1 to GEF-5 (figure 4.1). GEF funding increased substantially in GEF-4 and GEF-5. During GEF-1 and GEF-2, the only projects that received GEF funding were in the biodiversity focal area. During GEF-3, GEF support for national projects expanded to encompass all focal areas (except international waters). In contrast, during GEF-4 and GEF-5, only projects in the climate change focal area received funding. Only one national project was funded in GEF-5, Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zone in Vanuatu (GEF ID 5049). This is a full-size climate change project implemented through UNDP, and it received the greatest amount of funding of all Vanuatu's national projects—$8.3 million.

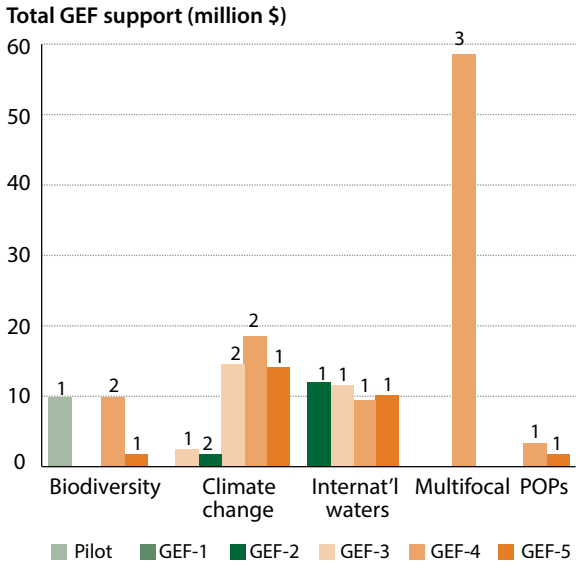
Figure 4.2 shows GEF funding for regional projects executed by SPREP or another agency over time. There does not appear to be a clear trend in regional funding over time, except for a surge in GEF funding for the multifocal area during GEF-4. The regional project portfolio appears to be much more diverse than the national portfolio, with projects increasingly spanning all GEF focal areas over time. The GEF funded one biodiversity project in the pilot phase and one climate change project in GEF-1. During GEF-2 and GEF-3, the GEF funded projects in two focal areas: international waters and

FIGURE 4.1 **GEF Funding for National Projects by Focal Area across GEF Phases**



NOTE: Numbers indicate number of projects.

FIGURE 4.2 **GEF Funding for Regional Projects by Focal Areas across GEF Phases**



NOTE: Numbers indicate number of projects.

climate change. Climate change projects in GEF-3 received much more funding than those in GEF-2, while international waters received slightly less. GEF-4 and GEF-5 showed much greater diversity in projects. During GEF-4, two projects were funded in biodiversity, two in climate change, one in international waters, three in the multifocal area, and one in POPs. In GEF-5, the GEF funded one project in biodiversity, one in climate change, one in international waters, and one in POPs. The GEF has not funded any regional projects in land degradation.

4.4 Implementation Status of National and Regional Projects

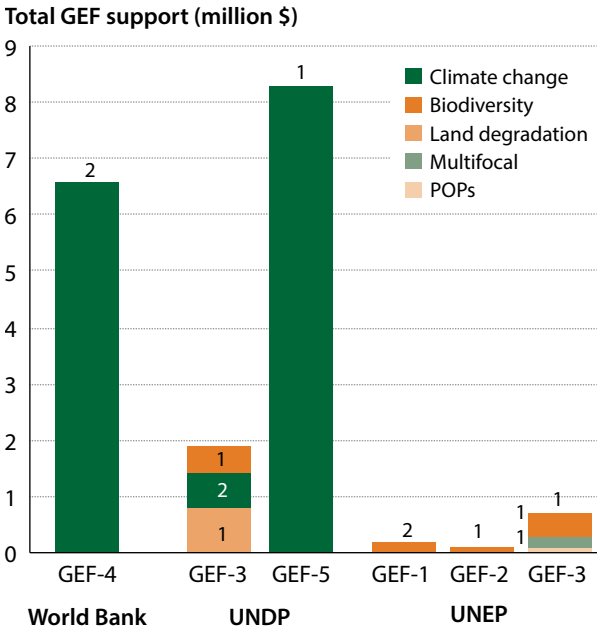
Of the 13 Vanuatu national projects supported by the GEF, only one—the enabling activity National Communications Programme for Climate Change: 2nd National Communication to UNFCCC—is currently under implementation. All other national enabling activities have been completed. Two FSPs and one MSP are in the pipeline; all three are in the climate change focal area. Among the SPREP and other regional projects, nine are ongoing, six are in the pipeline, and six have been completed. Most of the ongoing regional projects are in the climate change and biodiversity focal areas. The regional pipeline includes projects in a diverse range of focal areas, including POPs, climate change, international waters, and the multifocal area.

4.5 National and Regional Allocations by GEF Agency

Figure 4.3 presents the evolution of GEF support to Vanuatu national projects by Agency across the different GEF replenishment periods. GEF national projects have been implemented by UNDP, UNEP, and the World Bank.

About 57 percent of GEF funding for national projects in Vanuatu has gone to projects implemented through UNDP; the majority of this funding has been for projects in the climate change focal area. UNDP projects received funding in GEF-3 and GEF-5.

FIGURE 4.3 **GEF Funding to National Projects by GEF Agency across GEF Phases**



NOTE: Numbers indicate number of projects.

World Bank projects have received about 37 percent of the GEF support for national projects. All of this funding has been dedicated to two projects in the climate change focal area, both of which were funded in GEF-4.

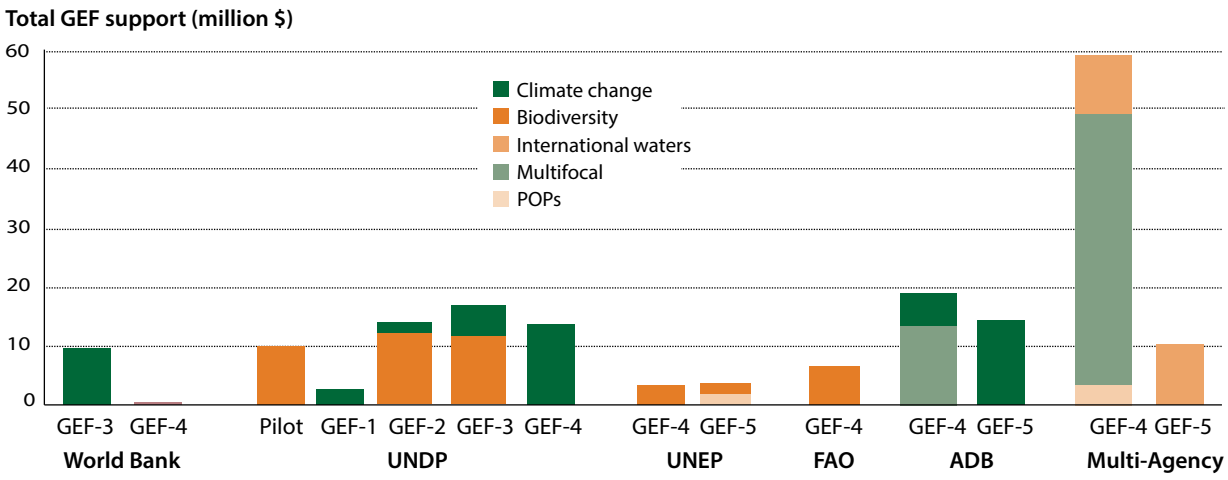
About 6 percent of the GEF support has gone to projects implemented through UNEP, in the biodiversity, POPs, and multifocal areas. Four of the six UNEP projects are in the biodiversity focal area. The UNEP-implemented projects were financed during GEF-1, GEF-2, and GEF-3.

Figure 4.4 shows GEF support to regional projects executed by SPREP or other agencies by GEF Agency and focal area over time. The regional projects have been implemented through the World Bank, UNDP, UNEP, FAO, and ADB. Four of the regional projects have been implemented through multiple agencies: e.g., the Coral Triangle Initiative (GEF ID 3647) is being implemented jointly through ADB, UNDP, FAO, and the World Bank. Multi-Agency projects appear to have received the greatest amount of funding, but this was mostly for the Coral Triangle Initiative.

4.6 Small Grants Programme

The SGP is funded by the GEF and implemented through UNDP. Table 4.8 displays GEF SGP support to Vanuatu by SGP program phase. Most of the SGP projects, and most of the funding, occur in Phase 4, and are in the biodiversity and multifocal areas.

FIGURE 4.4 **GEF Funding to Regional Projects by GEF Agency across GEF Phases**



NOTE: All bar segments represent a single project, except for UNDP's GEF-2 climate change work, which accounted for two projects.

TABLE 4.8 **Funding and Number of GEF SGP Projects in Vanuatu by SGP Phase**

	Biodiversity		Climate change		International waters		Land degradation		POPs		Multifocal		Total	
Phase	$	#	$	#	$	#	$	#	$	#	$	#	$	#
4	223,557	8	87,130	2	36,590	1	2,500	1			221,663	8	571,440	20
5	118,068	3					42,553	1	2,500	1	240,640	5	403,761	10
Total	341,625	11	87,130	2	36,590	1	45,053	2	2,500	1	462,303	13	975,201	30

SOURCE: SGP website (http://sgp.undp.org/); accessed May 2013.

5. Effectiveness, Results, and Sustainability of GEF Support

GEF support in Vanuatu has covered the full range of GEF focal areas for which the country has been eligible through national projects and through regionally implemented projects. The results of these activities are assessed in this chapter. A focal area approach is adopted, which provides a clear delineation between projects, the accumulation of results from outputs toward long-term impacts, and global environmental benefits. Where trends are discernible within and across focal areas, these are discussed and commented on. The chapter concludes with an assessment of institutional and other forms of capacity development, and the mainstreaming, replication, and up-scaling of project-level impacts.

5.1 Results

Within each focal area, the GEF has supported three broad categories of interventions. The first (enabling activities) is that of **foundational capacity-building projects**, supporting and strengthening Vanuatu's capacity to fulfill its national obligations under various multilateral environmental agreements. These are targeted activities such as national communications to various convention secretariats and the preparation of national plans such as the NBSAP, the NAPA, and the NAP. The output of these activities has been important because it has allowed Vanuatu to progress toward development and implementation of further MSPs and FSPs, which have the potential to deliver tangible results on the ground. Beyond these, the enabling activities have raised awareness of environmental issues and strengthened capacities within the government of Vanuatu. Part of this capacity includes the gathering of baseline information and the adoption of a systematic and science-based approach to environmental planning, whose utility extends well beyond the immediate needs of the enabling activities' intended outputs. Equally important, the enabling activities encouraged and facilitated the use of inclusive consultative processes and dialogue among multiple stakeholders that hitherto were not regularly involved in national and sector-level planning processes, including civil society groups and local community representatives. These consultative processes have since been effectively mainstreamed in most if not all levels of planning in the country. This is an important achievement in Vanuatu's transition to sustainable development.

The second category of intervention has been that of **pilot/demonstration projects**. The earliest opportunities for such pilots and demonstrations were provided by the SPREP-implemented SPBCP and IWP during GEF-1. The influence of both projects, which promoted context-specific community-based approaches to biodiversity conservation and water catchment management on customary land, can be seen in modified forms in the conservation initiatives project and the community-based activities of the Vanuatu SGP. In GEF-2 and GEF-3, the completed PIREP and the ongoing PIGGAREP,

respectively, promoted renewable energy as part of climate change mitigation and adaptation, with the latter going beyond demonstration by providing small-scale investment in renewable energy generation with funding from the government of Italy.

The third category of GEF intervention is **investment projects**. Vanuatu is just entering this phase with three projects (two FSPs and one MSP) in the pipeline in the climate change focal area.

The progression from enabling activities to demonstration/pilots to investment interventions shows the continuing growth and maturation of the GEF portfolio, most notably in the climate change focal area. This emphasis is consistent with the Vanuatu PAA focus on the development of risk reduction and disaster management programs.

BIODIVERSITY

The GEF-funded enabling activities in biodiversity were satisfactorily completed with the intended outputs produced, including the NBSAP, the first national report to the CBD, establishment of the Clearing House Mechanism, completion of the assessment of capacity-building needs for biodiversity and participation in the Clearing House Mechanism, and the national biosafety framework. Both the NBSAP and the national biosafety framework have been formally approved by the government of Vanuatu.

The impact of the NBSAP, in particular, has been significant. As discussed in the analysis of the environmental legal framework, the NBSAP's influence is seen in the formulation of the Environmental Protection and Management Act 2006 and its continuing use as the framework and roadmap for biodiversity action in the country. Based on the NBSAP recommendation and SPBCP experience, the DEPC developed the conservation initiatives MSP proposal, which was funded during GEF-3 and implemented over a five-year period from 2005 to 2010. As documented in the ROtI (see volume 2 of this report), the project initially supported traditional leaders and communities in 12 sites (3 in Tanna, 3 in Santo, and 6 in Gaua) to protect and sustainably manage targeted species and habitats in line with traditional taboos. Most of the participating communities made progress in the following areas: (1) acquiring a strong sense of community pride in their endemic and native species and habitats, and a strong interest in their protection; (2) establishing local committees trained in monitoring that were motivated by positive changes in the populations and improved conditions of targeted species and habitats observed within taboo areas; and (3) growing interest from the provincial governments to extend support to the conservation areas.[1]

Project reports noted increases in species populations within taboo areas including fish, crabs, freshwater prawns, and birds at the 12 initial sites in the early years of project implementation (UNDP 2009). The project also targeted a 50 percent increase in sites by its completion. After three years, some 30 new sites were using traditional taboos in Gaua; the provinces of Tanna and Santo have three new sites each. Unfortunately, environmental monitoring data for the latter part of the conservation initiatives project were not analyzed, due to the premature departure of the M&E specialist. Consequently, other than anecdotal and qualitative reports of increases in populations of several marine and bird species within taboo areas, the full extent of the project's impact could not be ascertained.

The conservation initiatives project sustained and expanded on existing in-country efforts, including collaborations with the Vanuatu Culture Centre on documenting and protecting traditional knowledge, support for the Wan Small Bag's environmental awareness programs, the Forestry and Fisheries Departments' work on conservation and

[1] For instance, the Santo provincial government was reported to have employed a full-time staff member to assist the conservation areas and to promote replication in other communities.

sustainable harvesting of biodiversity resources, Reef Check Vanuatu's monitoring training for local communities, and the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific project on community governance for sustainable forestry management and gardening. These organizations and stakeholders became partners in the GEF conservation initiatives project's implementation, extending their activities and sharing technical expertise to benefit the project's targeted communities and objectives.

Postproject sustainability of the conservation initiatives project is at best mixed. The ROtI found that most project-initiated sites were left unsupported after project closure, as the DEPC lacked the budgetary resources to absorb project staff or incorporate project activities into its work program. However, there are a few positive exceptions. After the project ended, the DEPC helped two project communities in Tanna prepare SGP proposals that secured funding for coconut crab monitoring and marine protected area support. The DEPC was also instrumental in nominating Lake Letes as a World Heritage Site (it has since been put on the tentative list) and in promoting the inclusion of the Gaua sites (Lake Letes and upland forests) in the PAS Forestry and Protected Area Management project (GEF ID 3819).

Of the SPREP-executed biodiversity projects, Vanuatu was one of the 12 SPREP member countries that participated in the SPBCP, which was implemented from 1994 until 2001. With SPBCP support, the Vatthe Conservation Area in Santo was established to demonstrate a community-based conservation area approach that sought to combine conservation and sustainable resource use—in this case, using a mix of traditional and modern management tools and ecotourism. The Vatthe Conservation Area brought under conservation management 2,720 hectares of native forests and a significant diversity of endemic flora and fauna species. An additional 16 conservation areas were established in other participating PICs.

The Vatthe Conservation Area Project established under the SPBCP has continued successfully 12 years after SPBCP support ended in 2001, with the level of activities fluctuating depending on available resources and funding. The fundamental requisite for sustainability—the landowning communities' continued interest in and commitment to the conservation of area biodiversity—remains strong.

The critical contributing factor to its longevity to date is the availability of technical support and funding for its key activities from outside partners. For instance, collaborations fostered during the SPBCP with the Royal Forests and Birds Society of New Zealand in support of ecotourism continue. An annual tour of the Vatthe Conservation Area Project by ecotourists generates income for the community, and provides free labor and expertise for specific project activities. The Espiritu Santos Tourism Association and the Vanuatu Bungalow Association and Island Safaris continue to promote the area on their websites as a tourist destination; several market hotels in Santos as being near the Vatthe Conservation Area. In 2004, the DEPC and the Vanuatu National Museum nominated the area to UNESCO for consideration as a World Heritage Site, based on natural criteria; the site has since been included on UNESCO's tentative list. In the same year, Conservation International contributed $20,000 to compensate a local landowner to help resolve a major land ownership dispute that threatened the project (Zeppel 2006). In 2010, New Zealand's Forest & Bird organization and the local group Eco-Livelihood Development Associates collaborated to secure a $50,000 GEF SGP grant to assist with community efforts to control the *Merremia peltata* vine, which is the major threat to the native forest.

At the regional level, of the total 17 conservation areas established with SPBCP support,[2]

[2] SPBCP support for the Komarindi Conservation Area in the Solomon Islands was later withdrawn due to ethnic unrest in the country.

GEF project reports noted that as of 2001 the sustainability of the sites had not yet been secured: "7 CAs [conservation areas] [are] very likely to be sustainable beyond the period of SPBCP funding and a further 7 sites may possibly be sustainable, while 3 are considered unlikely." The final project evaluation report in 2002 assessed the sustainability of all 17 conservation areas using an eight-point system (8—most likely to be sustainable to 0—unsustainable). Table 5.1 presents these results, along with status updates for each area based on a range of information sources including various websites and national environmental agencies. The updates show that two conservation areas no longer exist, two have no recent information available and their current status could not be ascertained, and 13 are ongoing at widely varying levels of operation.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The GEF funded two nationally executed climate change enabling activities in Vanuatu. There are also two FSPs and one MSP in the pipeline in this focal area. Vanuatu participated in five SPREP-executed regional climate change projects, including three enabling activities (see table 4.2), an MSP (PIREP), and an FSP (PIGGARREP). Vanuatu has also received support for climate change projects under the SGP.

Vanuatu's first nationally executed enabling activity produced a NAPA in 2007, a countrywide plan identifying immediate and urgent project-based adaptation activities in priority sectors to address present and future adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events. This project built on results from earlier regional

TABLE 5.1 **Sustainability of SPBCP Conservation Area Projects as Assessed in 2002 and Updated in 2013**

Country	Project	2002 rating	2013 status
Cook Islands	Takitumu	5	Ongoing; bird conservation, ecotourism
Fiji	Koroyanitu	4	Ongoing; Koroyanitu National Heritage Park, ecotourism
Kiribati	North Tarawa	—	Ongoing; seabird and marine conservation, ecotourism
Kiribati	Kiritimati	—	—
Marshall Islands	Jaluit Atoll	—	Ongoing; ecotourism
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	Kosrae. Utwe-Walung	4	Ongoing; waste management, mangrove conservation, ecotourism
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	Pohnpei	7	Ongoing; conservation management, invasive species
Niue	Huvalu Forest	—	Ongoing; conservation management, hiking/tourism
Palau	Rock Islands	6	Ongoing; conservation management, ecotourism
Palau	Ngeremeduu Bay	5	Ongoing; conservation management, ecotourism
Samoa	Sa'anapu-Sataoa	4	Ongoing; mangrove conservation, integrated into larger district marine protected area, ecotourism
Samoa	Uafato	5	Not operational since 2002 due to internal community conflicts
Solomon Islands	Komarindi	—	Formally closed in 1998 due to ethnic unrest
Solomon Islands	Arnarvon Islands	7	Ongoing; conservation management, fishing
Tonga	Ha'apai Islands	5	Ongoing; conservation management, sustainable fishing
Tuvalu	Funafuti	3	—
Vanuatu	Vatthe	—	Ongoing; conservation management, ecotourism

NOTE: — = not available. Sustainability ratings are based on a scale of 0 (unsustainable) to 8 (most likely to be sustainable).

activities, in particular PICCAP Phases 1 and 2. The full-size climate change projects presently in the pipeline were identified from the NAPA, which is presently being updated. The second climate change enabling activity—the National Communications Programme for Climate Change, Second National Communication to UNFCCC—is in progress.

Vanuatu's participation in the regionally executed PICCAP 1 and 2 significantly enhanced its understanding of and capacity for planning for climate change adaptation. PICCAP supported the development of national inventories for GHG sources and sinks; the identification of mitigation options for climate change and sea level rise, as well as of areas of vulnerability to climate change and sea level rise; and the development of adaptation options and national implementation plans. Further, PICCAP supported the preparation of Vanuatu's initial national communication for the UNFCCC, which was submitted in October 1999.

Vanuatu is benefiting from its participation in PIREP and PIGGAREP. As discussed in the ROtI, PIREP, which was completed satisfactorily in September 2006, raised awareness and understanding of the possible role of and potential for renewable energy in the region and identified barriers hindering the widespread adoption of renewable energy. PIREP-funded national assessments also generated valuable baseline information for national energy policy making and planning. The same information contributed to the development of the GEF PIGGAREP project proposal that also includes Vanuatu, and which is currently under implementation. Under PIGGAREP, Vanuatu's potential for wind- and hydropower generation is being studied. This effort includes the Talise and Myno Island hydro studies, the latter of which is supported by IUCN.

Regionally, SPREP has implemented two climate change enabling activities (PICCAP 1 and 2), an MSP (PIREP), and two FSPs (PIGGAREP and PACC). PICCAP was designed to strengthen the capacities of participating countries (which included Vanuatu) to meet their reporting commitments under the UNFCCC. On completion of PICCAP 1 and 2, 10 PICs had completed GHG inventories and vulnerability assessments, nine had completed and submitted their initial national communications to the UNFCCC, and six had completed their national implementation strategies. PICCAP made a significant contribution to building capacity in participating countries in the methodologies for inventorying GHG sources and sinks, and climate change vulnerability and adaptation assessment. The latter involved representatives from 12 participating countries on a six-month course at the International Global Change Institute at the University of Waikato, New Zealand. These trainings not only benefited the targeted 10 PICs, but also Niue, Palau, PNG, and Tonga.[3] All four countries have since submitted national communications.

The benefits of the regionally implemented PIREP for the other 14 participating countries are similar to those for Vanuatu. As discussed in the RoTI (see volume 2 of this report), PIREP strengthened the capacity of all 15 participating PICs by producing baseline studies that have since been widely used for other planning purposes. These purposes have included the development of national energy policies (as in Cook Islands, Samoa, and Tonga), the new Sustainable Energy Financing Program supported by the World Bank and the GEF which will be implemented in five PICs (Fiji, Marshall Islands, PNG, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu), and two UNDP GEF MSP proposals—Actions for the Development of Marshall Islands' Renewable Energies (ADMIRE), and Palau's Sustainable Economic Development through Renewable Energy Applications (SEDREA). According to

[3] http://www.asiapacificadapt.net/adaptation-practices/pacific-islands-climate-change-assistance-programme-piccap; accessed November 2012.

stakeholders consulted, the awareness and knowledge of renewable energy technologies, barriers, and capacity needs identified by PIREP have been the catalyst and major source of information for sector policies that have since been developed in many PICs; further progress has been made with support from PIGGAREP.

PIGGAREP commenced implementation in 2007 and is scheduled for completion at the end of 2013. Covering 11 PICs, its purpose is to reduce the growth of GHG emissions from fossil fuel use in the PICs through the removal of barriers to widespread and cost-effective use of feasible renewable energy technologies. The full extent of its effectiveness in delivering on its designed outcomes will not be known until a final evaluation is completed. So far, UNDP annual progress reports have noted satisfactory progress in the early stages of project implementation; disruptions stemming from the departure of the first project coordinator stalled this momentum for over a year while a replacement coordinator was recruited. A more recent progress report (UNDP 2011) noted a number of completed outputs at the national and regional levels including (1) establishment of the Sustainable Energy Industry Association of the Pacific Islands; (2) preparation and endorsement of a new Pacific Regional Energy Framework, including a policy as well as a strategic action plan; (3) establishment of a close partnership with the $66 million Japanese-funded Pacific Environment Community Fund, which entailed preparatory work for a $4 million Samoa grid-connected photovoltaic project and a the design of a $1 million Rakahanga minigrid photovoltaic project in the Cook Islands to be funded by PIGGAREP; and (4) planning and initiation of wind resource monitoring in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands.

PIGGAREP is in the late stages of implementation and questions of postproject sustainability are at best speculative at this stage. However, a number of issues relevant to discussions of sustainability are intimated in the project's midterm review. According to the review, the continuing reliance on donor funding for energy projects in PICs over many years has led to a lack of knowledge among renewable energy advocates, politicians, decision makers, donors and their advisers, and the public of the true cost of energy supply (whether fossil fuel–based or renewable) in urban, rural, and remote island PIC settings. The midterm review also noted that the true cost of energy supply is not widely known, and the real commercial and postproject sustainability lessons from the many previous (often unsuccessful) renewable energy demonstrations and projects undertaken to date in PICs are still not being learned. Further, SPREP sees the lack of in-country capacity as another major hindrance to project sustainability in all focal areas including climate change.

Issues exist regarding the lack of quantitative reporting in PIGGAREP country reports. It is therefore difficult to determine how far the project has progressed in meeting its targets. Estimates in a recent progress report (UNDP 2010) indicated that emissions avoided since the start of the project were 12,509 metric tons and 12,695 metric tons of carbon dioxide in 2009 and 2010, respectively; however, it is not clear from the available information how this volume of emissions avoided relates to the stated target of a 30 percent reduction by 2015.

The other major climate change intervention, PACC, is an FSP working to help 13 countries develop resilience to climate change in three areas: food production and food security, coastal management capacity, and water resource management.[4] PACC commenced implementation in 2009 and

[4] Fiji, Palau, PNG, and the Solomon Islands focus on food production and food security; the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Samoa, Tokelau, and Vanuatu are developing coastal management capacity; and Nauru, Niue, the Marshall Islands, Tonga, and Tuvalu are looking to strengthen their water resource management.

was scheduled for completion in 2012, but is now likely to be completed in 2013. The latest report available for this evaluation (UNDP 2011) indicates that PACC is on track to produce tangible adaptation benefits for participating countries, primarily through its Component 2, which includes implementation of pilot adaptation measures in coastal management, agricultural management, and water management.

So far, PACC has been effective in strengthening national coordinating mechanisms and building national capacities in adaptation planning, climate change assessment, vulnerability identification, selection of adaptation options, formulation of policy options using agreed national and sectoral policy frameworks, and analysis of existing policies for mainstreaming climate change adaptation measures. Concerns have been raised about persistent operational bottlenecks. According to the 2011 UNDP progress report, the bottlenecks are due to PACC's very complex project structure—which involves 13 national projects through national execution–type arrangements between SPREP and countries and a set of regionally executed activities managed by the Regional Project Management Unit—as well as the capacity of national coordinators to produce quality reports on a timely basis.

A midterm review for PACC was scheduled for July–October 2012, but the review is not in the project file. Country progress reports presented in the 2012 Multipartite Review in Nauru provide some insights into issues and challenges that have implications for postproject sustainability.[5] These issues and challenges include a lack of sectoral integration of climate change concerns into policies and programs (Cook Islands), the sustainability of increasing adaptive capacity (Cook Islands), sustaining the support of communities post project (Samoa), PACC working in isolation (Fiji), a lack of coordination among agencies with roles in climate change adaptation and disaster risk management (Fiji, Palau, between states in the Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Tuvalu), a lack of in-country capacity (Niue, Tuvalu), and a lack of institutional support (PNG). Each country report identified actions for addressing these challenges, but with limited time remaining to PACC completion, the possible impact of these challenges on the sustainability of its outcomes is magnified.

INTERNATIONAL WATERS

The GEF-funded IWP was comprised of two components: one involving oceanic fisheries management and the other involving integrated coastal and watershed management. The Secretariat for the Pacific Commission and Forum Fisheries Agency implemented the oceanic fisheries management component, which began in February 2000 with the participation of 14 PICs.[6] The SPREP implemented the integrated coastal and watershed management component. The oceanic fisheries management component was officially closed in January 2005. While records indicate that the integrated coastal and watershed management component continued until 2006, no final project evaluation report has been received. This evaluation focuses on the SPREP-implemented integrated coastal and watershed management component.

In the absence of a final project evaluation report, the following assessment is based largely on information from the last available UNDP progress report and consultations with project stakeholders. UNDP (2006) reported that all project activities were making good progress toward achievement of IWP outcomes, albeit with a two-year extension in

[5] SPREP, https://www.sprep.org/pacc-publications/3rd-multipartite-review-meeting-2012-2; accessed December 2015.

[6] Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

project duration. Momentum in implementation had picked up in the final year of the project, under new management, which the UNDP regional technical adviser noted to be "refreshingly committed to building sustainability, replication and where appropriate, achieving more meaningful scale" (UNDP 2006).

Overall, IWP generated an impressive amount of baseline data with which communities, governments, and GEF Agencies can effectively plan and implement future IWP-related projects and programs. This information was obtained through a number of project activities including community situation analysis, root cause (of environmental concerns) analysis, stakeholder analysis, socioeconomic baseline assessment, resource/ecological assessments, economic valuation, and solution identification exercises. While the national projects aimed at protecting water catchment areas, IWP also helped address land degradation issues such as deforestation and soil erosion, which contribute to the pollution of rivers from which many island people draw their drinking water. Raising awareness about the impacts of land clearing on drinking water and the coastal waters contributed not only to the protection of freshwater supplies, but also to the conservation of important biodiversity that would have been lost through land-clearing operations. Moreover, some countries have adopted positive changes in their sectoral policies, due in part to the legal and technical support provided by the project.

UNDP (2006) intimated that sustainability for country-level activities depended largely on the willingness of the national governments to absorb the activities into national programs. In the final year of implementation (2006), the project coordinating unit was working closely with countries to develop sustainability strategies that would identify activities that could be easily integrated into national agency workplans, and other strategies and plans that would require support from other funders. The report and consultations found that the Cook Islands, Fiji, the Federated States of Micronesia, PNG, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, and Tonga had indicated their willingness to absorb IWP activities and staff. Some partnerships for funding IWP activities (integrated coastal and watershed management component) at the national level were secured during the project for a limited number of countries—namely, Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu (UNDP 2005). Overall, however, finding implementation and funding partners (e.g., other national organizations and bilateral donors) has been very difficult for participating PICs. Without this support, project activities may not be sustained.

While individual PICs have faced challenges finding partners and funding, SPREP has reportedly been successful in integrating parts of IWP into its own programs, most notably in wastewater management (UNDP 2006). SPREP has also been disseminating lessons from the project learned through various media and stakeholder forums (UNDP 2006).

LAND DEGRADATION

The GEF funded one national land degradation project in Vanuatu during GEF-3, an MSP entailing sustainable land management. Implementation commenced in April 2008 and was scheduled for completion in April 2012. There were no SPREP-implemented land degradation initiatives.

The GEF sustainable land management project was intended to improve the system of land administration and decision making and ensure that, at its highest level, the government of Vanuatu considers the long-term environmental health of land resources and the adverse effects of land degradation when making economic and development decisions. The project was intended to build capacity for sustainable land management horizontally across sectors, and vertically from the individual landowner to community leaders to provincial and national governments. The targeted outcomes were to produce a NAP for combating land

degradation, mainstream sustainable land management in national planning and farm management techniques, develop capacities for sustainable land management, and formulate a medium-term investment plan.

To date, the project's status is incomplete. Reports and information gleaned from stakeholder consultations and former project staff indicate that three of the four project outcomes have been completed satisfactorily; only the development of the medium-term investment plan remains outstanding. According to stakeholders, continuing delays in funding from the UNCCD Secretariat have constrained the ability of project proponents to meet this objective. According to the DEPC, these delays result from procedural arrangements governing the UNCCD Secretariat's disbursement of funds, in that funds cannot be disbursed to requesting parties until a minimum of 75 requests for grants from parties/countries have been received. Vanuatu's request was submitted in 2011.

According to the former project coordinator, the NAP has been approved formally by the government and transmitted to the UNCCD Secretariat. The NAP's key feature is a matrix of proposed actions for integrating sustainable land management principles into national and sector-level plans. The actions can be stand-alone projects or sector programs. For each action, the NAP identifies the lead agency and partners for implementation and the approximate duration. Agencies identified include the Departments of Land, Forestry, Agriculture, Environment, Tourism, Planning and Finance, Water Resources, and Meteorology.

With the exception of the NAP, completion reports for other project outcomes cannot be validated. Similarly, the assessment of sustainability is severely constrained by a lack of information to verify and confirm the limited anecdotal information received from stakeholders. No written progress reports were received and, because the project is still incomplete, no GEF end-of-project evaluation has been conducted.

PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

The GEF has funded two projects in the POPs focal area, one a completed national enabling activity during GEF-3; the second a recently launched (GEF-5) full-size regional project, PAS Pacific POPs Release Reduction Through Improved Management of Solid and Hazardous Wastes (GEF ID 4066). Because the FSP is entering its first year of implementation, this evaluation focuses on the completed enabling activity.

The enabling activity—POPs Enabling Activities for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs): National Implementation Plan for Vanuatu (GEF ID 1942)—was designed to lay the groundwork for ratification and implementation of the convention in Vanuatu, help Vanuatu meet its reporting and other obligations under the convention, and strengthen the country's national capacity to manage POPs and chemicals. The expected outcomes were assessment and strengthening of national capacity to implement the Stockholm Convention; preliminary POPs inventories; an NIP, including specific action plans and strategies as required under Articles 5 and 6 of the convention; a strengthened POPs management infrastructure and raised public awareness of POPs; and capacity to meet convention reporting obligations. The project is on record to have been implemented from April 2003 to May 2005, but no standard progress reports were received. According to stakeholders consulted, a NIP was developed but is still in draft form. The Stockholm Convention's official website noted the status of the Vanuatu NIP as "transmission pending" as of September 2013. No copy of the draft NIP was available, and there is no information on the status of the other expected outcomes.

The GEF-funded enabling activity appears to have overlapped with an AusAID-funded and SPREP-implemented regional initiative, the POPs

in PICs project, which Vanuatu also participated in during the same period. The intended outputs of that project are similar to those of the GEF intervention, including compiling an inventory of POPs and developing a plan for their containment, collection, and removal; and management of contaminated sites. The POPs in PICs project completed the Vanuatu POPs country plan and a detailed inventory of POPs and pesticides; thus, these outputs seem attributable to the AusAID project rather than the GEF project.

MULTIFOCAL

The GEF funded one national enabling activity in the multifocal area, the NCSA for Global Environmental Management (GEF ID 1914), which was approved during GEF-3 with UNEP as the GEF Agency. Project implementation started in June 2004. The UNEP website listed the project as ongoing, suggesting the absence of proper project closure including a final project evaluation and financial acquittal reports.

The project produced two main outputs: a national capacity needs action plan, and a stock-taking assessment of capacity needs for the CBD (Malosu 2006). It also set up a NCSA steering committee and technical advisory group which assisted in and oversaw project implementation. However, the extent to which the action plan has been implemented appears limited at best. According to Vanuatu's third national report to the CBD (Government of the Republic of Vanuatu 2006), the NCSA had not yet implemented any concrete actions. A 2009 SPREP assessment of institutional capacity in Melanesian countries to effectively respond to climate change made use of its findings and recommendations, but made no comment as to any NCSA-implemented activities (Wickham, Kinch, and Lal 2009).

Vanuatu is participating in one ongoing regional multifocal project—PAS Strengthening Coastal and Marine Resources Management in the Coral Triangle of the Pacific (GEF ID 3591). The project, which is being implemented through ADB, is providing technical assistance to five Pacific countries (Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, and Vanuatu) to strengthen the resilience of their coastal and marine ecosystems. In Vanuatu, activities will focus on helping the Department of Environment within the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources develop planning in coastal communities on integrated coastal resource management and coastal fisheries management.[7] No project implementation reports have been received, nor does the website provide information about outcomes achieved in Vanuatu.

Two other regional multifocal projects are in the pipeline: the Coral Triangle Initiative Program and the Pacific Alliance for Sustainability project (GEF ID 3420).

5.2 Institutional Sustainability and Capacity Development

The lack of capacity in managing GEF interventions is an all-pervasive constraint inhibiting effective project implementation in all focal areas in Vanuatu and throughout the Pacific islands region. Capacity constraints affect all stages of the project cycle. Hardly any GEF interventions commence on time due to delays in recruiting project staff or local consultants. In almost all cases, situation analyses in project documents identify the lack of capacities, and project designs include sizable investments of project resources in capacity building. A common source of disruption to project implementation is when project staff depart prematurely, often to another donor-funded intervention. Finally, sustaining outcomes after projects end has been challenging, largely because of human and financial capacity constraints. The persistence of capacity limitations over time and

[7] http://www.coraltriangleinitiative.net/programs-and-projects/adb-coral-triangle-pacific-program, accessed November 2012.

across all GEF focal areas raises a fundamental concern about limited absorptive capacity in Vanuatu and the region.

GEF projects have attempted to address capacity issues across all major focal areas, as discussed in the remainder of this section.

BIODIVERSITY

The full range of GEF-supported capacity-strengthening measures in the biodiversity focal area is diverse. Support includes physical assets and office equipment, personnel, multistakeholder mechanisms for project coordination, and support for participation in regional and international meetings.

In the conservation initiatives project and SPBCP, capacity-building efforts focused on the project field staff, local resource owners, and communities to ensure that project outcomes would be sustained. Capacity building involved transferring skills, building facilities, fostering a deeper understanding of why conservation and sustainable use is necessary, and building community pride in the uniqueness of the local biodiversity. Planning engaged diverse segments of the community—leaders, women, and youth—and prioritization and decision making were based on consensus. SPBCP also invested heavily in developing skills in alternative income-generating activities, such as ecotourism in Vatthe; and developing links and networks with other local tourism operators. Several SPBCP-funded regional workshops brought together conservation area support officers for training and consultations, and to share experiences and lessons learned.[8] In other cases, groups of community leaders from one country/conservation area project were funded to travel to other countries to observe and share experiences. Investments in community-level training are paying dividends in terms of the continued longevity demonstrated by the 12 SPBCP conservation area projects in Vanuatu and throughout the region.

SPBCP also played a major role in starting the Pacific Islands Community-Based Conservation course, in collaboration with the University of the South Pacific and International Centre for Protected Landscapes. The course offers interested students and conservation practitioners formal training in community-based conservation area management. SPREP, the University of the South Pacific, and International Centre for Protected Landscapes have since consolidated this initiative, and the course is now a core requirement for the postgraduate diploma in sustainable islands and oceans development offered by the university. The initiative transcends the immediate needs of SPBCP, but is highly significant in terms of addressing the more fundamental issue of enlarging Vanuatu's and the Pacific region's absorptive capacity in biodiversity conservation.

Unfortunately, the DEPC's limited capacity continues to affect Vanuatu's ability to fully meet its requirements under the CBD. The department's severely limited capacity was highlighted in the NCSA 2006 report, which noted that the DEPC (which was then still the Vanuatu Environment Unit) lacked capacity in terms of finance, human resources, information, and necessary equipment. According to the DEPC director, the local budget allocation of $150,000 (which covers both salaries and operating costs) has remained unchanged over the last three years. Five project-funded staff officers comprise 70 percent of the DEPC's biodiversity conservation management staff; the sustainability of this capacity is uncertain once projects end.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Institutional capacity development in climate change adaptation and mitigation, and in renewable energy mobilization and development, are

[8] However, the SPBCP final evaluation noted that training and capacity building were heavily concentrated on the conservation area support officers, with not enough involvement of government agencies and other stakeholders.

important aims of past and current GEF-funded interventions such as PICCAP, PIREP, PIGGAREP, and PACC. The following discussion reviews and assesses the overall contributions of these initiatives to the development of country and regional capacities and institutional sustainability in climate change.

The earliest interventions—PICCAP 1 and 2—assisted 10 PICs that signed and ratified the UNFCCC with their reporting, training, and capacity building under the convention. In the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu, PICCAPP set up climate change country teams and climate change country coordinators to create inventories of GHG sources and sinks, identify and evaluate mitigation options to reduce GHG emissions, assess vulnerabilities to climate change, develop adaptation options, and develop national implementation strategies for mitigating and adapting to climate change over the long term. Eight countries completed and submitted initial national communications during the project to coincide with the Fifth Conference of the Parties.

PIREP produced national assessment reports on renewable energy for 14 participating countries and Tokelau, a regional synthesis report, and three special topic reports (financing mechanisms, technology support system, and demonstration projects to showcase energy service delivery). The reports provide excellent descriptions of the baseline situations in PICs and are reportedly being used widely in the countries. PIREP also produced the PIGGAREP project proposal, which is now being implemented, and engaged 11 PICs. In addition, the Marshall Islands and Palau each developed a UNDP-GEF proposal (ADMIRE and SEDREA, respectively) as a spin-off of PIREP preparatory activities, and are in the process of implementing those activities.

PIGGAREP contributes to climate change mitigation by promoting the wider use of renewable energy technologies to reduce the Pacific islands' dependence on fossil fuels. The project aims to achieve this by removing existing barriers to wider use of renewable energy technology. The midterm review identified several capacity-related challenges, including the need to strengthen the project management office with additional staff, and sharpen its focus on implementing a more strategic barrier removal strategy. Additional staff has since been recruited, but the office's ability to take effective adaptive measures in response to the midterm review's recommendations remains to be seen.

PACC is the second FSP in the climate change focal area and is in the final phase of implementation. It is the first major adaptation project to be implemented in the Pacific islands region that directly addresses the issue of improving the effectiveness of the response to climate change in the Pacific, while enhancing systemic and institutional capacity to undertake adaptation across the region. It is also "the main means of sharing practical adaptation experiences, as well as pooling related expertise and raising other initiatives."[9] The UNDP 2010 progress report noted that the project is hindered by capacity-related bottlenecks at the national and regional levels, including time-consuming set-up phases for national project management units, lack of project management skills and experience by national coordinators, and issues concerning SPREP's role in providing strategic leadership and technical support to the regional project management unit. The same report also listed capacity-related activities that had been successfully completed, including strengthening national coordination mechanisms to address climate change, setting up national climate change country teams or equivalent mechanisms in eight project countries (the Cook Islands, Fiji, the

[9] Project description, http://www.apan-gan.net/adaptation-practices/pacific-adaptation-climate-change-pacc-various-pacific-countries; accessed December 2015.

Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Niue, the Solomon Islands, Palau, and Tuvalu) and strengthening existing national climate change country teams in two countries (Vanuatu and Samoa), and strengthening and further harmonizing national sector coordination bodies in four countries (Nauru, PNG, Tonga, and Tuvalu). The report noted the involvement of more than 100 institutions in the 13 countries based on engagement in PACC teams and committees. Additionally, SPREP has established partnerships with a number of other regional organizations.

INTERNATIONAL WATERS

A number of participating PICs in IWP indicated their willingness to absorb project activities and staff into their national programs. The 2006 IWP project implementation report noted that, for the project's integrated coastal and watershed management component, changes in sector policies had been made in some countries; this included new legislation adopted to empower local communities to manage the environment and natural resources in their jurisdictions. In the Cook Islands, the Environment Unit indicated its commitment to supporting the project staff to continue the national effort to protect freshwater resources; the Solomon Islands Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources agreed to institutionalize IWP as the coastal fisheries management unit, with a focus on supporting community-based initiatives to establish marine protected areas; the PNG Department of Environment and Conservation was to incorporate IWP (including existing staff) into its 2007 program of work to continue IWP-initiated efforts to support community-based initiatives to manage local waste; and in Samoa, demonstration activities for watershed protection were integrated into the workplan of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Water Resources Division. In Fiji, IWP also served as the nucleus of post-2006 activities by the Department of Squatter Settlements, Environment and Conservation to strengthen the government's efforts in waste management.

LAND DEGRADATION

The NAP is an important addition to Vanuatu's institutional capacity in combating land degradation. It identifies the causes and effects of land degradation in Vanuatu, the existing capacity limitations for UNCCD implementation, vulnerabilities of different provinces, proposed strategies for mainstreaming the NAP into national and sector strategies and plans, and institutional arrangements for coordinating NAP implementation and monitoring. The matrix of actions sets out priority areas for implementation and responsible agencies. The NAP also incorporated resolutions from the 2006 National Land Summit, which is an important first step in translating the national consensus and priorities into actionable measures.

PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

Vanuatu's NIP for the Stockholm Convention was developed, but is still in draft form. Vanuatu nominated the director of the DEPC as its official contact point for the convention secretariat in April 2011 for the performance of administrative functions and all formal communications under the convention. While the convention also requires the official designation of a national focal point for the exchange of information (as specified under Article 9), no national focal point for Vanuatu is listed on the convention website. There is no record of any other capacity-building activity being implemented in the POPs focal area, except for activities under the AusAID-funded intervention, which was carried out separately from the GEF project.

5.3 Mainstreaming, Replication, and Scaling-Up

The GEF aims to expand the reach and scale of its impact beyond individual projects to affect broader changes in policies, practices, and institutions, thereby leveraging its investments to achieve significant global environmental impacts. While various pathways can lead to broad-based impacts, recent GEF literature identifies three pathways that are particularly relevant for the Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation (GEF IEO 2012b). These include (1) **mainstreaming**, whereby lessons, information, or outputs of GEF support are incorporated into broader policy or administrative reforms; (2) **replication**, whereby a technology or approach is demonstrated and then taken to scale, often in geographic locales beyond the boundaries of the project; and (3) **scaling-up**, whereby an activity is expanded to larger geographical, ecological, or administrative tiers.

The extent to which GEF support in Vanuatu and SPREP has resulted in mainstreaming, replication, and scaling-up varies across focal areas, as discussed below.

BIODIVERSITY

The NBSAP made a direct contribution to the development of the Environmental Protection and Management Act 2006, identifying and developing multistakeholder consensus on priority issues, and proposing inputs that were mainstreamed into the approved legislation. The NBSAP was also the catalyst for the conservation initiatives project, identifying priority species and sites for potential projects of global environmental significance—including those subsequently targeted in the GEF-funded conservation initiatives project. The rapid biodiversity assessments and other biodiversity information-gathering activities for the NBSAP also provided the DEPC—which developed the conservation initiatives project proposal—with the baseline information that was used to justify GEF funding. The DEPC's nomination of the Vatthe Conservation Area, Lake Letes, and the Vanuatu Museum as UNESCO World Heritage sites is not a specific recommendation of the NBSAP, but the momentum generated by the NBSAP for biodiversity conservation action—and the raised profile and awareness of the conservation values of the Vatthe Conservation Area generated by SPBCP—contributed to this outcome, according to stakeholders.

Regionally, NBSAPs have become the primary roadmap for biodiversity conservation for PICs, identifying national needs and priorities and proposing potential project profiles for funding consideration. Their recognition by external funders and regional conservation organizations is evident in the 2008–2012 Pacific Islands Action Strategy for Nature Conservation, which mainstreams the NBSAP priorities for PICs in determining regional priorities and actions.

The other GEF enabling activity outcome, the national biosafety framework, appears to have had negligible impact. As a tool for supporting decision making regarding the acceptability of proposed introductions of living modified organisms through a process of prior informed consent based on thorough screening and risk assessment, the framework by its very nature does not lend itself to mainstreaming or replication, nor was it intended to serve these purposes. The extent to which it has been effectively applied in practice is not known due to the lack of information available for this evaluation. The CBD Secretariat's Biosafety Clearing House website shows, however, that Vanuatu has not received any notifications/requests from potential living modified organism importers that would have necessitated its use.

The conservation initiatives MSP generated significant community interest and was quickly replicated in other nontargeted communities across the country. In the absence of technical support and monitoring after the project, it was not

possible to verify the current status of conservation efforts in most of these replication areas.

The regionally implemented SPBCP was perhaps the most comprehensive and extensive effort in terms of geographic coverage, with a focus on promoting the community-based conservation area approach. This approach has now been replicated throughout the region and, judging from the number of its conservation area projects (12 of 17) that are still in action, SPBCP deserves recognition for its contribution. It should be noted that SPBCP was not the only intervention promoting community-based conservation; several other similar or related independent initiatives including other GEF-funded interventions were emerging in parallel or soon after within Vanuatu and throughout the Pacific region.[10] Attribution issues aside, the community-based conservation approach is now widely replicated in various forms and designs. According to Vanuatu's third national report to the CBD (Government of the Republic of Vanuatu 2006), the following areas were established in Vanuatu:

- **Community-based conservation and sanctuary areas in place for over 10 years (as of 2006):** Loru Protected Area, Vatthe Conservation Area, Ringhi te Suh (Maskelynes), Hideaway Island (Efate), Narong Marine Reserve (Uri Island), and Mystery Island Reef (Aneityum)
- **New community-based conservation areas:** Nguna-Pele Marine Protected Area, Epi, Central Pentecost, Lelepa (marine protected area), Mangaliliu (marine protected area), Spuaki Conservation Area (Nguna), and Wiawi (Malekula)

There are also many (unquantified) small locally protected taboo and resource management areas declared under custom authority. Johannes and Hickey (2002) observed 51 marine resource management measures within a sample of 21 villages; they did not consider nonmarine sites.

SPBCP was the first regional project to promote the community-based conservation area approach; several country-specific activities of other donors and conservation organizations were mobilized at around the same time or shortly thereafter. The approach was endorsed by the Fifth South Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in 1993 (Axford 2007); later, the SPREP Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the South Pacific Region 1994–1998 acknowledged SPBCP's work in this area. SPBCP established 17 conservation areas in 12 PICs between 1991 and 2001, bringing under conservation management a wide range of internationally significant biodiversity. During much of the same period and continuing after SPBCP, an additional 17 community-based conservation projects were initiated by other groups and donors throughout the region. These included activities funded by New Zealand Overseas Development Assistance, the USAID-funded Biodiversity Support Network funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the WWF.[11] SPBCP was, according to

[10] In Vanuatu, these initiatives included the GEF-funded IWP and ADB's Capacity Building for Environmental Management Project. The latter was a collaboration with the Vanuatu Cultural Center in documenting and developing a database of traditional resource management methods. In 1995, a British group—the Vanuatu Protected Area Initiative—was also working with one traditional landowner to establish the Loru Protected Area, which incorporated traditional environmental elements to strengthen nontraditional approaches to conservation. Also, the Foundation for Peoples of the South Pacific–Vanuatu had several years of experience in working with traditional landowners in sustainable forest management focusing more on small-scale logging and eco-timber certification standards.

[11] Activities funded by New Zealand Overseas Development Assistance during this period included a conservation area project in PNG, a bird park in Tonga, a community-based ecotourism project in Fiji, and World Heritage sites in the Solomon Islands. The Biodiversity Support Network supported projects that combined conservation with social and economic development, including the Crater Mountain Wildlife

the GEF's final evaluation report, effectively the de facto biodiversity program for SPREP during the period. In this role, it was instrumental in partnering with the Nature Conservancy to establish the Pacific Island Roundtable for Nature Conservation—the major forum for coordinating and monitoring implementation of the Pacific Islands Action Strategy for Nature Conservation, and a major champion for community-based conservation in the region.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change evolved from an issue of global concern demanding the commitment of countries to collective action in the early 1990s, to a major source of economic vulnerability that is the top priority for many PICs today. This progression is matched by the evolving nature of GEF funding from the foundational enabling activities in GEF-1 and GEF-2—which focused on awareness raising, baseline studies and inventories, and capacity assessments in the NCSA and PICCAP 1 and 2—to demonstration and pilot activities, and feasibility studies in PACC and PIGGAREP in subsequent GEF phases. The region is now poised for a number of investment initiatives that were identified in and that emerged out of activities such as PIGGAREP, PACC and, to some extent, PIREP.

The extent to which PIGGAREP and PACC, in particular, will facilitate the wider replication and or/scaling-up of renewable energy and climate change adaptation measures remains to be seen. But some positive signs of their potential impact are gradually emerging. PIGGAREP has been referred to as the major regional driver of renewable energy in the PICs (UNDP 2010). Its focus on clarifying and raising awareness of the link between climate change, the impacts of escalating fossil fuel prices on PIC economies, and renewable energy as a viable strategy and option for generating global climate change mitigation benefits and strengthening local economic resilience is reported to have raised the profile of renewable energy to an unprecedented level—so much so that it is now one of the key deliberation points for the annual meetings of the PIC leaders, according to UNDP 2010.

This increased emphasis on renewable energy is reflected in the growing number of PICs with national energy policies declaring major shifts from fossil fuels to renewable energy in the immediate future. There is a corresponding increase in donor interest and funding to support renewable energy development. For instance, a total of $72 million in new capital funding is reported for renewable energy projects in Kiribati and Tonga; there is also a $66 million regional initiative funded by the Pacific-Japan Leaders' Meeting-5 (PALM-5) Pacific Environment Community administered by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. PIGGAREP also works closely and in collaboration with renewable energy initiatives of other Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific agencies and donor partners in the region.[12]

The catalytic and replication effects of PACC activities will be fully assessed once the project is completed and a proper project evaluation conducted. Recent reporting (UNDP 2011) refers to

Management Area in PNG, a community marine conservation and enterprise development in the Solomon Islands, and community-based conservation areas in Fiji and Vanuatu (in association with the South Pacific Action Committee on Human Ecology and the Environment and the Biodiversity Conservation Network).

[12] According to the SPREP website, this includes the GEF-funded ADMIRE and SEDREA; renewable energy activities of the Pacific Power Association, the Secretariat for the Pacific Community, and the University of the South Pacific; IUCN's Energy, Ecosystems for Sustainable Livelihoods Initiative; the European Union's Support to the Energy Sector in Five ACP Pacific Island Countries; ADB's Energy for All Initiative; the World Bank's Energizing the Pacific initiative; FAO's Bioenergy and Food Security effort; and the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership. http://www.sprep.org/Pacific-Islands-Greenhouse-Gas-Abatement-through-Renewable-Energy-Project/partners; accessed November 2012.

the significant momentum PACC is creating at the regional level. There is donor endorsement of the manner in which the project is structured; UNDP (2011) calls it "a reliable structure that can provide successful results in adaptation to climate change." This confidence is evident in a recent AusAID agreement to contribute AU$7.8 million to scale-up project results.

INTERNATIONAL WATERS

Some IWP outputs are showing signs of replication. For instance, according to stakeholder consultations, a number of communities were composting their green waste as opposed to burning and dumping it. Compost toilets were also gaining acceptance as a more practical option to flush toilets in low-lying areas where septic tanks are often flooded during high seas or heavy rain.

IWP has also contributed significantly to setting a path for governments, communities and other stakeholders in the Pacific to follow as they try to deal with the multitude of issues affecting the region's environment and natural resources. The project introduced new and innovative ways of addressing the escalating waste problem of small atoll countries in the Pacific. It provided a mechanism for improved collaboration between and among government agencies, communities, and NGOs through the establishment of interagency national task forces, and created a pool of well-trained and skilled nationals to lead project implementation in the future.

LAND DEGRADATION

The main project output was a NAP. Although apparently approved by the government and transmitted to the UNCCD Secretariat, there is no information as to whether the NAP's sustainable land management principles have been mainstreamed into national policies or sector plans.

PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

There is no indication of mainstreaming or replication effects from GEF support in the POPs focal area. It appears that AusAID's POPs in PICs project (funded separately from the GEF project) was the catalyst for the POPs country plan and the POPs inventory.

6. Relevance of GEF Support

This chapter assesses the relevance of GEF support to national environmental priorities, strategies, and action plans; the region's sustainable development agenda and national priorities; global environmental benefits in the South Pacific; emerging or evolving issues in the region; capacity, needs, and priorities of the SPREP countries; and regional approaches to country needs.

6.1 Relevance to National Environmental Priorities and GEF Focal Area Strategies and Action Plans

GEF support enabled Vanuatu to fulfill its obligations as a party to a number of multilateral environmental agreements, most notably the CBD, the UNFCCC, the Stockholm Convention on POPs, and the UNCCD. Table 6.1 shows that GEF funding supported the development of national action plans, legislation, and requirements under international conventions. Of particular note, for the CBD, GEF support assisted with national reporting and the development of national strategies and plans for the protection and conservation of its biodiversity. Vanuatu completed and submitted its first national report in 1998, its second in 2002, and its third in 2006. The NBSAP also contributed to the formulation of the Environmental Management and Conservation Act No. 12 of 2002, which addressed several legal obligations under the CBD and initiated the formulation of the conservation initiatives project proposal that—together with SPBCP—helped Vanuatu with in-situ conservation as required under Article 8 of the convention. The NBSAP provides Vanuatu with a clear list of national priorities and an action plan for biodiversity conservation for the government and other stakeholders, including funding agencies.

GEF support is also relevant to Vanuatu's national development priorities, as evidenced by the high degree of congruence between the goals, objectives, and sector priorities in the Vanuatu PAA 2006–2015 and the GEF focal areas. The PAA's primary priority is "'to create an environment for private sector led economic growth including activities in the primary sectors of agriculture, forestry and fisheries as well as tourism" (Government of the Republic of Vanuatu 2006a). It reaffirms the government's commitment to the United Nations Millennium Declaration in 2000 and the Millennium Development Goals; in fact, the Millennium Development Goal targets and indicators were included as PAA performance indicators. Eight sector-level priorities are identified in the PAA, addressing the following issues: implementation of the Environmental Management and Conservation Act, development of protected areas, waste management and pollution control, ecotourism, risk reduction from natural hazards, and the Port Vila development plan. These priorities are directly related to GEF's biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, and POPs focal areas.

TABLE 6.1 **Relevance of GEF Support to Vanuatu National and SPREP Regional Environmental Priorities and Action Plans**

GEF ID	Project	Legislation	Strategies and action plans	Conventions
	Vanuatu national projects			
146	National Biodiversity Strategies, Action Plans and First National Report to CBD	■	■	■
	National Communications Programme for Climate Change—2nd National Communication to UNFCCC			■
1682	Facilitating and Strengthening the Conservation Initiatives of Traditional Landholders and their Communities			■
1942	POPs Enabling Activities for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs): National Implementation Plan for Vanuatu			■
1970	National Adaptation Programme of Action		■	
3502	Capacity Building and Mainstreaming for Sustainable Land Management in Vanuatu		■	■
	SPREP regional projects			
336	Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Project (PICCAP—Phase 1)		■	
403	South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme			■
850	Expedited Financing of Climate Change Enabling Activities (PICCAP Phase 2)		■	

6.2 Relevance to Region's Sustainable Development Agenda and National Priorities

GEF support has been relevant to meeting both the Pacific Island countries' sustainable development agenda and environmental priorities as well as the SPREP mandate. According to SPREP,[1] many countries have incorporated sustainable development and environmental considerations into their national sustainable development strategies and national planning frameworks; others have recognized the importance of environmental issues and are working to mainstream environmental considerations into their national sustainable development agendas. SPREP's mandate—to promote cooperation in the Pacific islands region and to provide assistance in order to protect and improve the environment and ensure sustainable development for present and future generations—is pursued through programs in climate change, biodiversity, land degradation, international waters, POPs, and ozone depletion. These areas are consistent with the GEF mandate and focal areas.

All regionally implemented projects—including SPBCP, IWP, PIREP, PICCAP, PIGGAREP, and PACC—were developed from proposals that involved wide regional consultations coordinated by SPREP and that included national agencies, NGOs, and donor representatives. The proposals for SPBCP, IWP, PICCAP, PIREP, PIGGAREP, and PACC were formally endorsed by the countries through SPREP meetings and by the SPREP governing body before formal submission to the GEF. For SPBCP, PIGGAREP, and PACC, the initial mandates to develop a project proposal were originated by the PICs through SPREP meetings and, in some cases, Pacific Islands Forum communiqués.[2]

[1] Comments on the GEF evaluation dated August 2013.

[2] For PACC, the decisions are found in the Pacific Forum communiqués of 2003–2007; Pacific Regional Environment Programme decisions 2003–2006; and Reports of the 15th, 16th, and 17th SPREP meetings.

GEF-funded interventions are also consistently tied to regional priorities defined in regional plans and frameworks. For SPBCP, this included the SPREP action plan and earlier nature conservation strategies. The Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the South Pacific Region 1994–1998 strongly endorsed the regionwide application of the community-based conservation area approach, acknowledging the work carried out by SPBCP. PACC is similarly closely aligned with the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change 2006–2015, the Pacific Plan, and the regional Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Management. PACC's regional activities are also consistent with common goals and priorities identified in regional consultations such as the Fourteenth Pacific Regional Environment Programme Council Meeting in 2003, and the GEF-supported PICCAP.

The IWP Strategic Action Plan, according to its project document, also incorporated national and regional priorities as identified in country state of the environment reports and/or national environmental management strategies—namely, the SPREP Action Plan for Managing the Environment of the South Pacific Region 1997–2000, the Draft Regional Strategy for Development Priorities of the Forum Island Countries, the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the South Pacific Region 1994–1998, and the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities.

PIREP and PIGGAREP were prompted by a request from PICs to UNDP and SPREP to pursue a regional GHG mitigation project on renewable energy within the framework of SPREP's Climate Change, Sea Level Rise and Variability program (PIGGAREP project document). According to the PIREP and PIGGAREP project documents, the Pacific Island Leaders' Forum meetings had consistently called for the adoption of concrete measures to develop and utilize renewable energy technologies as an effective means of addressing these problems, highlighting the importance Forum members place on domestic actions to reduce emissions. The Regional Framework for Action on Climate Variability, Change and Sea Level Rise, adopted by Pacific Island Forum countries in 2000,[3] highlighted renewable energy, energy efficiency, and forestry as priority GHG mitigation options for the PICs.

6.3 Relevance to Global Environmental Benefits in the South Pacific

The GEF-funded projects in the biodiversity focal areas targeted the in-situ protection of globally significant biodiversity. The project areas of the conservation initiatives project in Gaua, Santos, and Tanna constitute part of the Solomons-Vanuatu-Bismarck Moist Forest, which is among the WWF's Global 200 Ecoregions, the Eastern Melanesian Hotspot under Conservation International's Biodiversity Hotspots, and BirdLife International's Vanuatu and Temotu Important Bird Area. The area extends from the Santa Cruz Islands of the Temotu Province of the Solomon Islands to the Torres Islands, Banks Islands (including Gaua Islands), and Espiritu Santos Island. SPBCP targeted the Vatthe lowland rainforest. Details of the globally significant biodiversity within these areas are discussed in chapter 3 of this report.

GEF projects within the climate change focal area, especially PIREP and PIGGAREP, target the reduction of GHG emissions by reducing the region's use of imported fossil fuels and increasing the use of renewable energy. The climate change enabling activities contributed to building in-country capacity to assess country situations and their vulnerability to climate change, as well as the capacity to best prepare and respond to climate

[3] http://rmimces.info/files/17thSummitPresentations/Pacific%20Adaptation%20of%20Climate%20Change%20%28PACC%29.pdf, accessed November 2012.

change impacts. PACC is pioneering a number of adaptation measures that are hoped to generate lessons learned and best practices that will benefit the rest of the developing world.

6.4 Relevance to Emerging or Evolving Issues in the Region

The Pacific Islands region has clearly identified, through national development strategies and regional and international forums, the impacts of extreme events associated with climate change as the biggest source of economic vulnerability and environmental degradation, and the main threat to their sustainable development. Previous predictions of more frequent and more intense weather events including cyclones, storm surges, floods, and droughts are now a painful reality with severe economic, social, and environmental consequences. Over the last two decades since the signing by most PICs of the UNFCCC in 1992, the PIC response to climate change has progressively shifted from advocating for global recognition of the special case of SIDS, to in-country planning and mainstreaming, to (more recently) direct investment in mitigation and adaptation. Presently, while there is recognition of the importance of mitigation—such as in the increased use of renewable energy technologies—climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction are emerging as leading priorities and strategies in combating this threat. In their NAPAs, PICs have identified their most vulnerable sectors and have prioritized these in their climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies. PACC is a regional intervention targeting vulnerable sectors as nominated by participating countries. The GEF has been responsive to these emerging priorities: the increasing number of climate change interventions in the pipeline relative to other focal areas is evidence of this shift and of the GEF's ability to respond.

Flowing from the challenge of addressing climate change is the realization of its cross-cutting nature and the resulting demand for a coordinated "whole of country" approach to planning and implementation. Mainstreaming climate change impacts and climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies into the policies and plans of all vulnerable sectors is already under way in Vanuatu and other SPREP countries under PACC. Strengthening adaptive institutional capacity was highlighted by a 2009 SPREP report (Wickham, Kinch, and Lal 2009). These are initial steps in what is likely to be an ongoing challenge.

6.5 Relevance to Capacity, Needs, and Priorities of SPREP Countries

The lack of capacity across all GEF focal areas within the Pacific countries has been consistently reported by all past GEF project documents and project assessments. It is also confirmed by other donor-funded studies including those supported by SPREP (Wickham, Kinch, and Lal 2009) and ADB (2007a). In response, capacity building has been and is an integral part of all past and current GEF interventions at the local, national, and regional levels. The capacity-building results, and outcomes of completed and ongoing initiatives, have been discussed in chapter 5 of this report.

Overall, GEF interventions in the Vanuatu and SPREP portfolios have satisfactorily delivered on their intended capacity-building outputs. The extent to which these results are useful in addressing the priority capacity gaps in PICs is partly tied to the overall relevance of GEF assistance to national development priorities as identified in national planning documents including the NCSA, the NBSAP, the NAPA, the NAP, the NIP, and similar convention-related plans.

In the case of the Vanuatu national portfolio, the evaluation found that GEF assistance is closely tied to national priorities in the Vanuatu PAA and to country commitments made to international conventions and agreements. The strongest connections are in climate change and biodiversity

conservation. The priority assigned to implementation of the all-encompassing Environmental Management and Protection Act means that POPs, land degradation, and international waters are also highly relevant. Similarly, priorities for capacity building targeted in GEF-funded MSPs and FSPs flow from the findings of needs assessments conducted in project preparatory exercises such as PIREP, the NBSAP, the NAPA, the NAP, and the NIP.

GEF-funded projects contribute to informing and fine-tuning capacity needs assessments by identifying specific capacity deficiencies confronted during implementation. At the national level, for instance, PIGGAREP's midterm review highlighted the lack of capacity in public utility companies and the private sector that are essential to the up-scaling and sustainability of renewable energy projects, as well as the lack of renewable energy costing information and its implication for long-term renewable energy development and sustainability. PACC's midterm review country reports highlighted a lack of capacity at the national and local levels as one of the main challenges facing the sustainability of national projects two years away from the end of PACC. The conservation initiatives project's incomplete reporting of results due to the lack of M&E analysis of field monitoring data highlighted the lack of this expertise within the DEPC and its importance for project reporting overall. Similar lessons were learned earlier from SPBCP and IWP.

Problems related to the recruitment of national personnel and consultants were a common cause of delays and disruptions in the implementation of SPBCP, IWP, the conservation initiatives project, PIREP, PIGGAREP, and PACC. Analyses offered by all project assessments confirm what is generally widely known—i.e., the severely limited pool of qualified and experienced locals in environmental protection and conservation-related work throughout the PICs, compounded by a high rate of staff turnover.

In Vanuatu, the DEPC remains understaffed and underresourced—despite having been upgraded from a unit to a government department in 2009.[4] Project-funded staff is heavily relied upon for some of the DEPC's core functions, but due to budgetary constraints, the staff are not absorbed into its structure and are let go when projects are completed. The conservation initiatives project highlighted this weakness; it is also a looming threat to the DEPC's current biodiversity capacity, in that five of its existing six staff members are funded by the project. DEPC capacity limitations underscore the need for and important role of government inputs and support to build on gains made through GEF-funded interventions.

Weaknesses in capacity within Vanuatu and regionwide that were identified in GEF-funded interventions have also been cited by SPREP and other non-GEF-funded SPREP-implemented assessments. These deficiencies include weaknesses in project coordination, contingency planning, and project management.[5] Although multistakeholder mechanisms were created as part of the GEF enabling activities, and in response to multilateral environmental agreement requirements including national steering committees such as those for the NBSAP, the National Advisory Committee for Climate Change and others, ineffective vertical and horizontal integration is hindering effective adaptive institutional capacity (Wickham, Kinch, and Lal 2009). This remains a major constraint to effective project implementation, notably in the climate change focal area. The Cook Islands and Samoa are notable exceptions in terms of aid coordination, but other PICs are seen to have

[4] An annual local budget of $150,000 for the last three years provides for both DEPC salaries and operating costs.

[5] Prepared comments on lessons learned from project development and management in the Pacific received in July 2013 from Meapelo Maiai, GEF Adviser to SPREP.

problems with poor coordination between central planning agencies and line ministries.[6] Ineffective contingency planning for project management is a regionwide problem that appears rooted in the limited pool of local experts readily available to provide backup. SPREP cited the lack of career development opportunities and staff retention policies as factors in loss of staff. It also observed that the common practice of assigning project management responsibilities to current senior staff already fully occupied with other responsibilities denies aid-funded projects the attention and focus they deserve to ensure effectiveness.

The experience from past and current GEF interventions in Vanuatu and the SPREP portfolios clearly shows that the GEF is, and will remain, an essential and effective vehicle for delivering capacity strengthening to PICs within its focal areas. But while GEF capacity-building activities tend to focus on existing project staff and other project stakeholders, and on short-term project-based needs, the fundamental issue of expanding and widening the pool of experts and expertise within each PIC is a larger challenge that transcends the GEF's project-based approach. The evaluation findings indicate that the GEF's contribution through project-driven training and capacity strengthening is an essential part of what should be a more comprehensive programmatic approach that PICs should lead—ultimately resulting in a regular and predictable flow of qualified practitioners and graduates at all levels of environmental management.

6.6 Relevance of Regional Approaches to Country Needs

Regional approaches have been justified in terms of cost-effectiveness, the high cost of any country "going it alone," and the limited capacities within PICs for project management and implementation. The experience of SPREP and other regional organizations indicates that this approach is justified. Many project activities are more cost-effectively implemented regionally, given the high costs of logistics and travel between countries and the lack of local expertise. High-level training in a wide range of skill areas (including project coordination and management, project development and design, M&E, and international negotiations) can help support this approach. Similarly, national-level consultations to fine-tune regional design of projects and to agree on regional synthesis and priorities can be accomplished by bringing national representatives together in regional workshops and meetings. SPREP has over the years been prudent in minimizing costs, often by piggybacking on other regional events to maximize PICs' participation.

Regional approaches have been used to pioneer and try new approaches in addressing environmental problems. The aim is to identify best practices and to gain knowledge and lessons that would inform and improve future project design and implementation. SPBCP and IWP were partly designed to achieve these objectives. Among the key outputs are toolkits and how-to manuals; and technical reports to assist with regional, national, and local planning and implementation. Projects have also sponsored study tours for community leaders and representatives to share experiences with other communities, and regional forums including the Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation. PIREP was a project preparatory initiative for PIGGAREP and generated baseline information that has significantly improved participating countries' capacities to develop policies and design other interventions. The PACC project demonstrates a framework of action that fuses top-down (mainstreaming) and bottom-up approaches to climate change vulnerability assessments and action. This dual approach encourages actions that are consistent with both community and national priorities and plans.

[6] Prepared comments from Meapelo Maiai.

The relevance of these regional approaches to country needs can be inferred from the high level of PIC support and participation in these endeavours. Furthermore, community-based approaches advocated in SPBCP and IWP remain relevant—albeit in various modified forms—in dealing with biodiversity, land degradation, and climate change adaptation. Similarly, planning tools developed through interventions including PICCAP, PIGGAREP, and PACC—including methodologies for GHG and waste inventories, vulnerability and risk assessments, and baseline information collected in enabling activities—are important components of institutional capacities whose value and utility remain beyond the completion of GEF-funded activities.

7. Efficiency of GEF-Supported Activities

This chapter examines various aspects of the efficiency of GEF support to Vanuatu and the SPREP region, including the time, effort, and financial resources required to approve national and regional projects; the GEF's catalytic financing role; roles and levels of coordination among stakeholders in project development and implementation; and synergies for GEF programming and implementation among GEF Agencies, national and regional institutions, GEF projects, and other donor-supported activities. The chapter concludes with an assessment of M&E and learning.

7.1 Time, Effort, and Financial Resources for Project Processing

This analysis distinguishes among the three main types of GEF projects—enabling activities, MSPs, and FSPs—as the project cycle differs slightly by modality. The analysis also distinguishes between national and regional projects, as the latter require synchronizing resources and personnel across several countries, which can influence project cycle duration. Missing and unreliable data are accounted for as discussed in section 2.4. Throughout this chapter, extrapolated (for missing dates) or revised (for unreliable dates) data points are indicated and explained in the table notes. Annex G presents the complete list of national and regional projects along with detailed notes on the methodology for calculating project duration.

PROCESSING TIME

This evaluation covers the full life of the GEF, but the GEF project cycle has evolved over the years, which makes assessing project cycle durations over time challenging. Following the Office's 2006 Joint Evaluation of the GEF Activity Cycle and Modalities, the project cycle was revised in 2007 (at the beginning of GEF-4), and processing time frame limits adjusted. For example, a limit of 22 months for project development was imposed during GEF-4; this was reduced to 18 months for GEF-5. Figure 7.1 provides an overview of the project cycle before 2007. Figures 7.2 and 7.3 give an overview of the current project cycle, presented

FIGURE 7.1 **GEF Project Cycle prior to 2007 Revision**

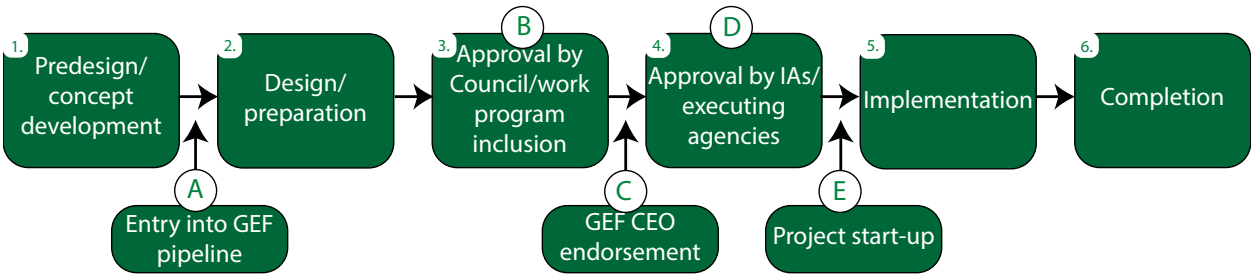


FIGURE 7.2 **GEF Current Full-Size Project Cycle**

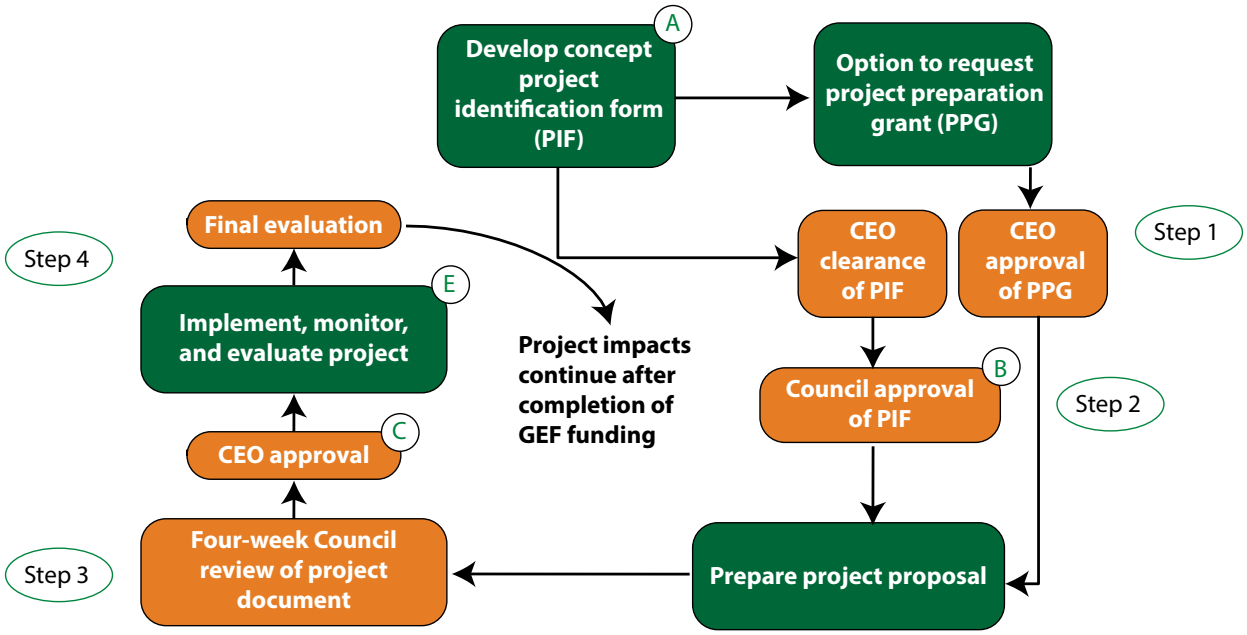
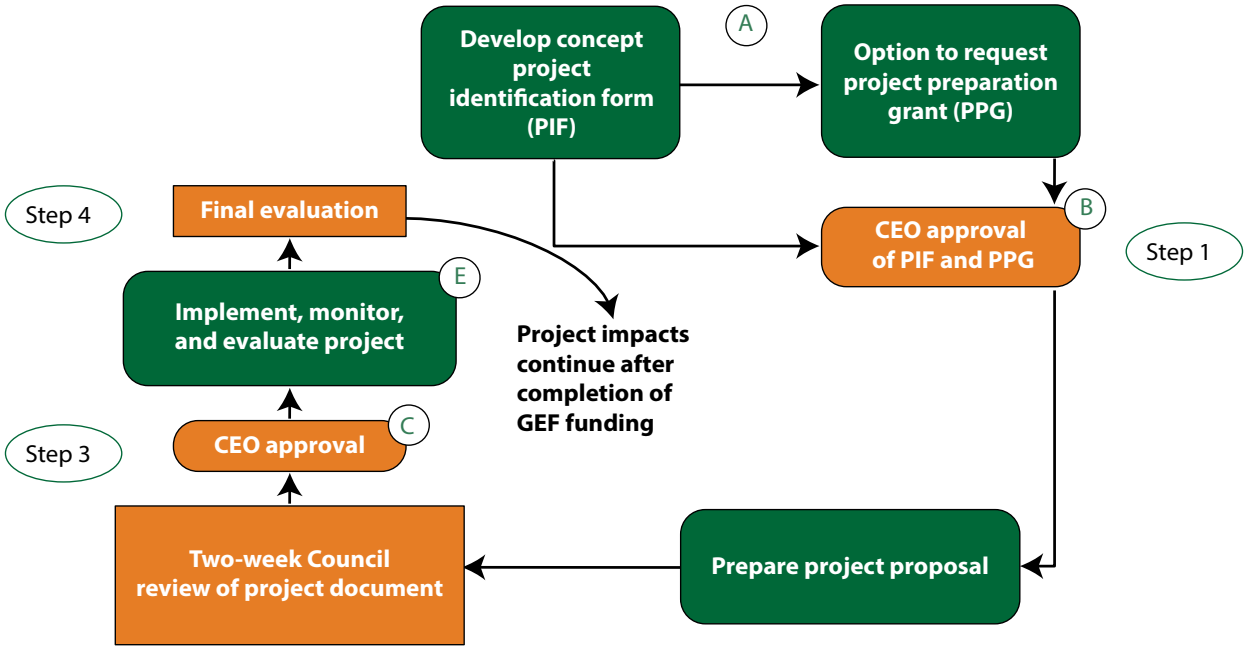


FIGURE 7.3 **GEF Current Medium-Size Project Cycle**



separately for FSPs and MSPs, as the cycle varies slightly for each of these modalities.

The approval process for national projects is summarized in tables 7.1 and 7.2. Overall, the approval process takes 636 days on average (1.7 years) for the national projects in the GEF Vanuatu portfolio. This compares favorably with the GEF global average of 5.5 years as reported by the Office in 2007 (GEF IEO 2007); however, it exceeds the goal of an 18-month (1.5-year) approval process. Moreover, the trend seems to be going in the wrong direction, from less than 1 year in GEF-1 to 4.3 years in GEF-4. (GEF-5 is ongoing, and it is too early to assess the overall efficiency in the current GEF phase.) This trend is likely due, in part, to the evolution from enabling activities (which are relatively simple to prepare) to MSPs and FSPs (which are larger and more complex).

While the reforms implemented in GEF-4 were intended to streamline the process, concerns about efficiency persist. The longest delay occurs between Chief Executive Officer (CEO) approval/endorsement (C) and GEF Agency approval (D). Delays stem from the requirements of the GEF Agencies, and the need to coordinate between the GEF Agencies and the GEF. For example, the World Bank's Increasing Resilience to Climate Change and Natural Hazards project (GEF ID 3798) had to meet the requirements of three separate funders: the World Bank, the European Union, and the GEF. Delays are also caused by factors within Vanuatu, including limited capacity for developing strong project proposals and lack of a strong national coordination mechanism.

As shown in table 7.2, the approval time for FSPs tends to exceed the time for enabling activities and MSPs, which might be expected given the relative size and complexity of FSPs.

The processing time for regional projects is summarized in tables 7.3 and 7.4. Overall,

TABLE 7.1 **Average Time Needed to Develop and Approve Vanuatu National Projects by GEF Phase (days)**

Phase	Number of projects	A→B	B→C	C→D	D→E	B→E	A→E
GEF-1	2	34	34	15	151	200	234
GEF-2	1	34	34	480	0	514	548
GEF-3	7	47	47	445	88	581	628
GEF-4	2	23	518	959	62	1,539	1,582
GEF-5	1	111	—	—	—	—	—
Overall	13	45	86	417	89	593	636

NOTE: — = not available. See figure 7.1 for stages of the GEF project cycle A–E. Both projects undertaken in GEF-1 required estimation of dates for A and B. The GEF-2 project required estimation of dates for A and B. Two of the seven projects in GEF-3 required estimation of dates for A and B; the other five required estimation of the date for B.

TABLE 7.2 **Average Time Needed to Develop and Approve Vanuatu National Projects by Modality (days)**

Modality	Number of projects	A→B	B→C	C→D	D→E	B→E	A→E
Enabling activity	8	34	34	248	115	397	431
FSP	2	77	518	959	62	1,539	1,582
MSP	3	54	81	823	0	903	984
Overall	13	45	86	417	89	593	636

NOTE: See figure 7.1 for stages of the GEF project cycle A–E. All eight enabling activities required estimation of dates: five for A and B; three for B only. Two of the three MSPs required estimation of the date for B.

TABLE 7.3 **Average Time Needed to Develop and Approve Regional Projects by GEF Phase (days)**

Phase	Number of projects	A→B	B→C	C→D	D→E	B→E	A→E
Vanuatu regional projects							
GEF-3	1	691	48	50	22	120	811
GEF-4	6	341	488	38	28	662	1,155
GEF-5	3	189	—	—	—	—	—
SPREP regional projects							
Pilot	1	269	440	284	0	724	993
GEF-1	1	320	535	20	0	555	875
GEF-2	3	143	242	70	0	312	454
GEF-3	2	208	373	83	5	460	667
GEF-4	3	454	613	115	37	641	1,217
GEF-5	1	48	642	85	7	734	782
Overall	21	304	436	79	15	528	881

NOTE: — = not available. See figure 7.1 for stages of the GEF project cycle A–E. The SPREP regional project in the pilot phase required estimation of dates for A and C. The SPREP regional project in GEF-1 required estimation of the date for A. One of the SPREP regional projects in GEF-2 required estimation of the dates for A and B, one for A, and one for B.

TABLE 7.4 **Average Time Needed to Develop and Approve Regional Projects by Modality (days)**

Modality	Number of projects	A→B	B→C	C→D	D→E	B→E	A→E
Vanuatu regional projects							
FSP	10	366	415	40	27	553	1,086
SPREP regional projects							
Enabling activity	2	177	285	40	0	325	501
FSP	8	295	529	113	13	608	915
MSP	1	126	126	120	0	246	371
Overall	21	304	436	79	15	528	881

NOTE: See figure 7.1 for stages of the GEF project cycle A–E. Both of the SPREP regional enabling activities required estimation of the date for A, and one also required estimation for B. Two of the SPREP regional FSPs required estimation of the date for A; one of these also required estimation of the date for C. The SPREP regional MSP required estimation of the date for B.

the approval process for regional projects takes 881 days on average (2.4 years), which exceeds the average for national projects. This average may reflect the relative complexity of preparing regional projects, which entails traveling to and coordinating with multiple countries. Also, many countries in the South Pacific region have had difficulty understanding GEF procedures and the requirements for formulating a "GEF-able" project, although large regional efforts such as the PAS have raised awareness about GEF requirements.

As with national projects, the average time for stages A-E (pipeline to implementation) is longest for GEF-4 projects, and the time between stages tends to be longer for FSPs than for MSPs or enabling activities. Unlike national projects, where the longest delay occurs between CEO endorsement (C) and GEF Agency approval (D), the longest delay for regional projects occurs between project identification form (PIF) clearance (B) and CEO approval/endorsement (C). Getting from A (pipeline entry/received) to B (PIF clearance) also takes

much longer for regional projects than for national projects. This lag is consistent with the finding that countries in the SPREP region have difficulty in preparing projects that can pass the GEF approval process.

A consequence of the excessive approval time is that, by the time projects are approved, the national situation and priorities may have changed. As a result, the project may not have the same level of momentum as when it was conceived. In other cases, new circumstances require further consultations to refine the project's objectives and activities. Further delays sometimes occur due to staff recruitment and training, as well as ongoing reporting requirements. For example, it took six months after the conservation initiatives project was approved in 2005 to hire needed staff and clarify goals and activities.

PROJECT PREPARATION COSTS

A summary of project preparation costs for national and regional projects is shown in tables 7.5 and 7.6, respectively. Both national and regional FSPs have the highest preparation costs and total project allocations compared to MSPs and enabling activities. The preparation costs appear very low compared to total project costs; overall, they represent only about 1.2 percent and 0.7 percent of the average cost for national and regional projects, respectively.

Interviews and project documents indicate that preparation costs funded by the GEF are not sufficient to conduct adequate consultations to FSP and MSP implementation. It is not uncommon to spend the first year of project implementation on activities that might better be classified as preparation—such as holding consultations to discuss intended outcomes, and rewriting the project objectives and logframe. For example, after the GEF approved the PAS invasive species project, it was necessary to return to the participating countries to engage in adequate consultations. Similarly, IWP was approved without much national input; but after the project was approved, it became apparent that national priorities were not fully aligned with project objectives. The initial phase of the project was thus spent bringing the project goals and national objectives into alignment. Similarly, PACC did not have sufficient preparation funding to conduct the necessary travel and stakeholder consultations.

TABLE 7.5 **Project Preparation Costs for Vanuatu National Projects, by Modality (million $)**

Modality	Number of projects	Total preparation cost	Average preparation cost	Total project allocation	Average project allocation	Preparation cost as % project cost
Enabling activity	8	0.03	0.00	1.94	0.24	1.29
FSP	2	0.96	0.48	54.45	27.22	1.76
MSP	3	0.07	0.02	31.53	10.51	0.24
Total	13	1.06	0.08	87.91	6.76	1.21

TABLE 7.6 **Project Preparation Costs for Regional Projects, by Modality (million $)**

Modality	Number of projects	Total preparation cost	Average preparation cost	Total project allocation	Average project allocation	Preparation cost as % project cost
Enabling activity	2	0.0	0.0	3.44	1.72	0.0
FSP	18	6.60	0.37	995.46	55.30	0.66
MSP	1	0.11	0.11	0.81	0.81	13.69
Total	21	6.71	0.32	999.71	47.61	0.67

After the project was approved, SPREP had to work with the participating countries to develop their priorities, and the project changed as a result.

7.2 Cofinancing

Cofinancing ratios for national and regional projects are shown in figures 7.4 and 7.5, respectively. For national projects, cofinancing ratios increased through GEF-4, and have decreased slightly in GEF-5. National MSPs show the highest cofinancing ratio compared to other project types (13.5). Across focal areas, climate change projects have the highest overall cofinancing ratio of 4.4.

The regional projects show very different trends in cofinancing ratios. Unlike national projects, the regional projects do not show an increase in cofinancing ratios over time. Additionally, the FSPs have the highest cofinancing ratios among the modalities (4.6); neither of the regional enabling activities had any cofinancing. By focal area, international waters and the multifocal area received the highest cofinancing, with ratios of 5.7 and 6.1, respectively.

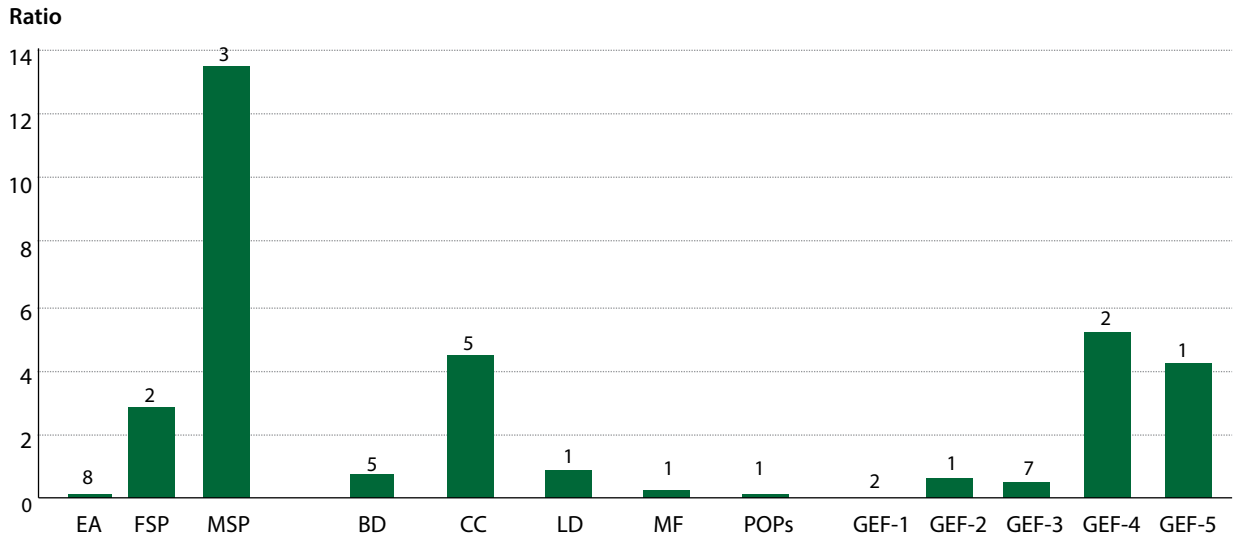
Interviewees noted several caveats that should be considered when interpreting the cofinancing ratios for national and regional projects. Cofinancing ratios appear to be high, but may be artificially inflated as there is an incentive to demonstrate high cofinancing ratios to get projects approved by the GEF. Cofinancing includes cash and in-kind contributions; it also includes funds committed to other government activities that are aligned with GEF projects. For regional projects, cofinancing contributions are primarily from donors rather than the participating countries; this is especially true for climate change projects. Moreover, the cofinancing committed during the project approval stage does not always materialize upon project completion. Therefore, the cofinancing ratio may not be a good proxy for national commitment to GEF projects.

7.3 Roles and Responsibilities

The GEF Secretariat has established processes and procedures to ensure that GEF-funded projects are country driven. One important mechanism for ensuring country ownership is the endorsement of the country's operational focal point. The operational focal point is the main point of contact for in-country stakeholders, the GEF Secretariat, and GEF Agencies. GEF Agencies formulate the project concept and, with the focal point's endorsement, submit the proposal to the GEF Secretariat. Although this process is supposed to guarantee national ownership, in-country stakeholders have a perception that they are not sufficiently engaged in formulating projects. Interviewees indicated that they are engaged later, after the project is farther along in the approval process—or even after the project has been approved. This situation partly reflects the limited time and capacity of local stakeholders to formulate and prepare projects that can pass muster with the GEF, but it has sometimes resulted in less national ownership of GEF projects.

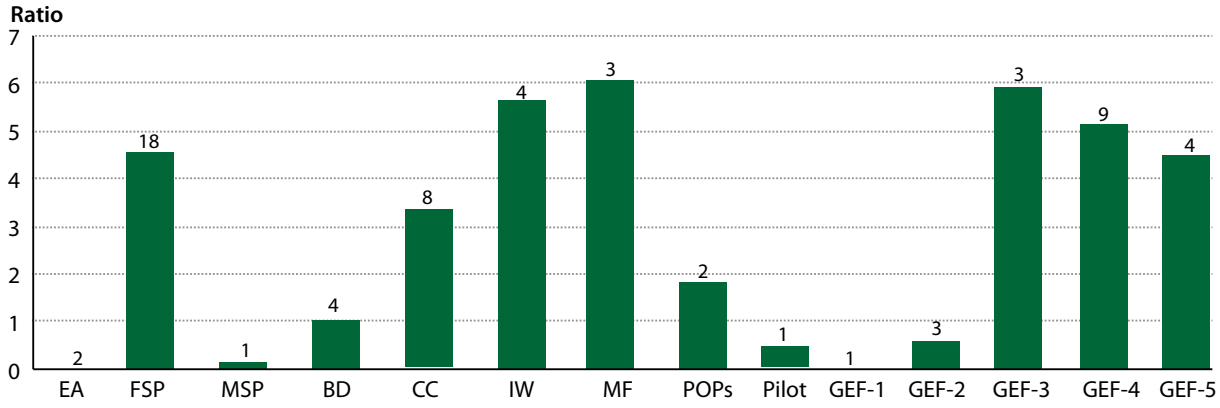
After approval, GEF Agencies implement projects through an executing agency such as SPREP. Typically, executing agencies hire project coordinators to manage daily logistics and monitor activities. Recruitment has generally not been problematic, with the exception of PIREP. However, findings from interviews and fieldwork suggest that project coordinators are often recruited based primarily on their technical expertise, with little or no project management skills. This skills lack can be exacerbated by GEF Agency reporting requirements: project officers for PACC and PIGGAREP, e.g., have reportedly spent up to one-third of their time writing monitoring reports to satisfy UNDP reporting requirements. This administrative burden can be seen as a source of inefficiency and a cause of delays in project implementation.

FIGURE 7.4 Cofinancing Ratio for National Vanuatu Projects by Modality, Focal Area, and GEF Phase



NOTE: EA = enabling activity; BD = biodiversity, CC = climate change, LD = land degradation, MF = multifocal. Ratio is calculated by dividing total cofinancing by total GEF support; both of these values include any project development facility or project preparation grants. The numbers above the bars indicate the number of projects in each category.

FIGURE 7.5 Cofinancing Ratio for Regional Vanuatu Projects by Modality, Focal Area, and GEF Phase



NOTE: EA = enabling activity; BD = biodiversity, CC = climate change, IW = international waters, MF = multifocal. Ratio is calculated by dividing total cofinancing by total GEF support; both of these values include any project development facility or project preparation grants. The numbers above the bars indicate the number of projects in each category.

7.4 Coordination and Synergies

The evaluation finds that synergies are occurring in some areas, but could be improved. At the national level, coordination occurs more often when projects are implemented under the same national steering committees or ministries. Cooperation across some national ministries and units has proved challenging. In general, existing projects are not coordinated with each other as much as they could be. The absence of a strong national coordination mechanism delays the time required to prepare project proposals for GEF consideration.

In general, there is more coordination across projects at the regional level than at the national level. Regionally executed projects draw on a wider technical capacity and can access knowledge and resources more easily than national projects. For example, in the PIGGAREP project, SPREP was able to locate wind testing equipment more quickly than Vanuatu could have done on its own.

In the past, there has sometimes been competition between the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific agencies. For example, there was disagreement between SPREP and SOPAC about who would be the Executing Agency for the PIGGAREP project. However, coordination is improving among regional heads and in regional working groups for specific areas such as climate change. Regional coordination has also facilitated the use of Secretariat for the Pacific Community agriculture experts for PACC projects in countries dealing with food security issues.

Cost can hamper regional coordination. As discussed in chapter 3, the SPREP region consists of small, geographically disparate and remote islands. In theory, regional projects should generate efficiencies by lowering the transaction costs associated with engaging each individual island nation. In practice, this has proven to be challenging—due, in part, to a lack of sufficient resources devoted to regional project coordination. The PAS was conceived as a regional program, but it did not commit the funding required to establish a robust coordinating mechanism at a sufficient scale. Similarly, the IWP budget initially underestimated the costs of traveling throughout the Pacific; steps are now being taken to address the issue.

Unfortunately, the evaluation found scant evidence of coordination between regional and nationally executed projects in Vanuatu. In particular, regional-national coordination could have occurred, but did not, in the biodiversity focal area. Similarly, PIGGAREP did not appear to be coordinated with national energy-efficiency efforts in Vanuatu; the projects were implemented by different executing agencies and government departments. On the other hand, there has been strong coordination between national and regional energy-efficiency projects in Samoa, as the same individuals serve on the steering committees of both projects.

At the donor level, there are some positive examples of coordination, such as European Union–World Bank efforts to address climate change resilience in Vanuatu. However, other projects that should have been coordinated have not been coordinated; this has resulted in less harmonized and less effective projects. For example, the inability of the PAS to establish a regional coordination mechanism was partly due to disagreements between the GEF and the World Bank as to where the unit should be located.

7.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

All GEF projects have M&E protocols in the form of annual project implementation reports, midterm reviews, and terminal evaluations. The M&E systems in place are used effectively for adaptive management during the life of the projects. Many of the completed national and regional projects include examples of improvements that have been adopted since the relevant midterm review took place.

Some examples of adaptive management include the changes that UNDP and SPREP

initiated to address delays in the disbursement of funds for the PACC project. This had been an issue since UNDP and SPREP began working together on GEF projects in the mid-1990s. The new approach allows funds to be disbursed to those countries that have submitted the requisite reports on time, rather than having to wait for all countries to have submitted their reports before funds can be disbursed to SPREP. Also, SPREP now only has to submit progress reports on a biannual basis rather than quarterly, freeing up staff time to work on project activities.

Another example of good adaptive project management is demonstrated by the GEF PAS invasive species project. Project managers switched from a single regional inception workshop to 10 in-country inception workshops. This change helped facilitate greater stakeholder involvement and participation at the national level in the review of workplans and prioritization of activities following initial review of strategies and project design, and consultations with partners and countries. In addition, national project coordinators were relieved of project administration responsibilities, allowing them to focus on implementation of project field activities rather than on reporting.

Terminal evaluations produced some very useful lessons and recommendations for future action. Unfortunately, these lessons do not appear to have been incorporated into the design of subsequent projects or taken up by governments in their daily work programs. Examples include recommendations from the conservation initiatives project to enact the Conservation Area Regulation in Vanuatu and provide support for communities to maintain their established conservation areas. The GEF evaluation found that neither of these recommendations has been acted upon. Recommendations from the terminal evaluation of the conservation initiatives project, the NBSAP project, and IWP all highlighted the need to strengthen DEPC capacity. Unfortunately, this has not happened, mainly due to a lack of political commitment for raising the profile of environmental issues at the national level.

Institutionalizing M&E within the participating ministry or department beyond the lifetime of a project has proved challenging. Limited capacity is to blame—most ministries do not have a dedicated M&E specialist—as is staff turnover. Once a project ends, project officers often leave, taking with them the knowledge gained during the project.

Overall, the CPE finds that lessons learned from completed projects are not taken up as much as they could be. Two examples were noted where lessons learned from one project have supported—or could support—the development of future projects. The conservation initiatives project incorporated lessons from SPBCP, tailored to the national context. Also, lessons from IWP have been documented and shared with other stakeholders in the Pacific, and may provide a foundation for designing future projects.

Annex A: Country Response

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

Private Mail Bag 9063
Port Vila
REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

Tel: (678) 25302

Fax: (678) 22227

BUREAU DE LA PROTECTION DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET LA CONSERVATION

Sac Postage Privé 9063
Port Vila
REPUBLIQUE DE VANUATU

Email: environment@vanuatu.com.vu

Ref: ENV 301/0015/2014/TT/tt

25 June 2014

Robert Van Den Berg
Director
GEF Evaluation Office
1818H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20433 USA
rvandenberg@thegef.org

Attention: Mr. Carlo Carugi
Senior Evaluation Officer
ccarugi@thegef.org

Dear Mr. Carugi

Subject: Vanuatu Government Endorsement of GEF Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation

The Government of Vanuatu appreciates the great effort of the GEF Evaluation Team for the preparation of the GEF Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation (1991-2012) during the period October 2012 to August 2013.

We believe that the findings and recommendations in the report will be useful for Vanuatu to further improve performance of GEF supported activities that have been fitted into the national strategies and priorities as well as within the global environmental mandate of the GEF.

Furthermore Vanuatu endorses many of its recommendations within this report as it has come at a time when national planning and regional planning will be reviewed and such an evaluation will be encompassed in this process.

We also note there have been 2 specific recommendations for the Government of Vanuatu in this report and we would also like to make some further recommendations to those already stated:

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

Private Mail Bag 9063
Port Vila
REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

Tel: (678) 25302

Fax: (678) 22227

BUREAU DE LA PROTECTION DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET LA CONSERVATION

Sac Postage Privé 9063
Port Vila
REPUBLIQUE DE VANUATU

Email: environment@vanuatu.com.vu

Recommendation 14.1: Identify and Implement action items in GEF-funded action plans that are most closely aligned with national priorities.

The GEF has supported the Government in developing a myriad of strategies and action plans through EAs. These plans include suggested action items to address pressing environmental issues. While some of the recommended actions have been implemented, several others have not. The Government should systematically review the pending action items in the National Biosafety Frameworks, POPs National Implementation Plans, and National Action Plans for addressing land degradation and desertification; decide which action items are most closely aligned with national priorities and available funding; and redouble efforts to implement the selected actions. This effort would not only benefit the specific areas highlighted in the plans, but would demonstrate the Government's commitment to the environment while raising the profile of environmental issues in Vanuatu.

Recommendation 2: **Mainstream project coordination mechanisms into ongoing national planning processes to sustain progress and strengthen national capacity.**

Through GEF EAs, the Government has established committees and teams to work on meeting the country's environmental obligations under various international agreements. While these arrangements have resulted in effective coordination during the lifetime of the projects, these mechanisms have not been integrated into broader national planning processes and have gone dormant, with the exception of committees and teams working on climate change issues. The Government should actively consider opportunities to integrate coordination mechanisms established during GEF EAs into its ongoing national work programs. In so doing, the Government should look for opportunities to improve cross-sector integration and coordination between DEPC and other line ministries and organizations to ensure efficient use of resources and expertise.

Vanuatu's commitment – This recommendation has come at the most appropriate time where the National Government is reviewing its next national priorities for the next 15 years. The government through many of these GEF project coordination mechanisms is now seeing for the first time the Environment been sustained through long term government planning which will

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

Private Mail Bag 9063
Port Vila
REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

Tel: (678) 25302

Fax: (678) 22227

BUREAU DE LA PROTECTION DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET LA CONSERVATION

Sac Postage Privé 9063
Port Vila
REPUBLIQUE DE VANUATU

Email: environment@vanuatu.com.vu

allow for many of these priorities highlighted in many of these plans and strategies to be able to be reflected in the next planning for the national government.

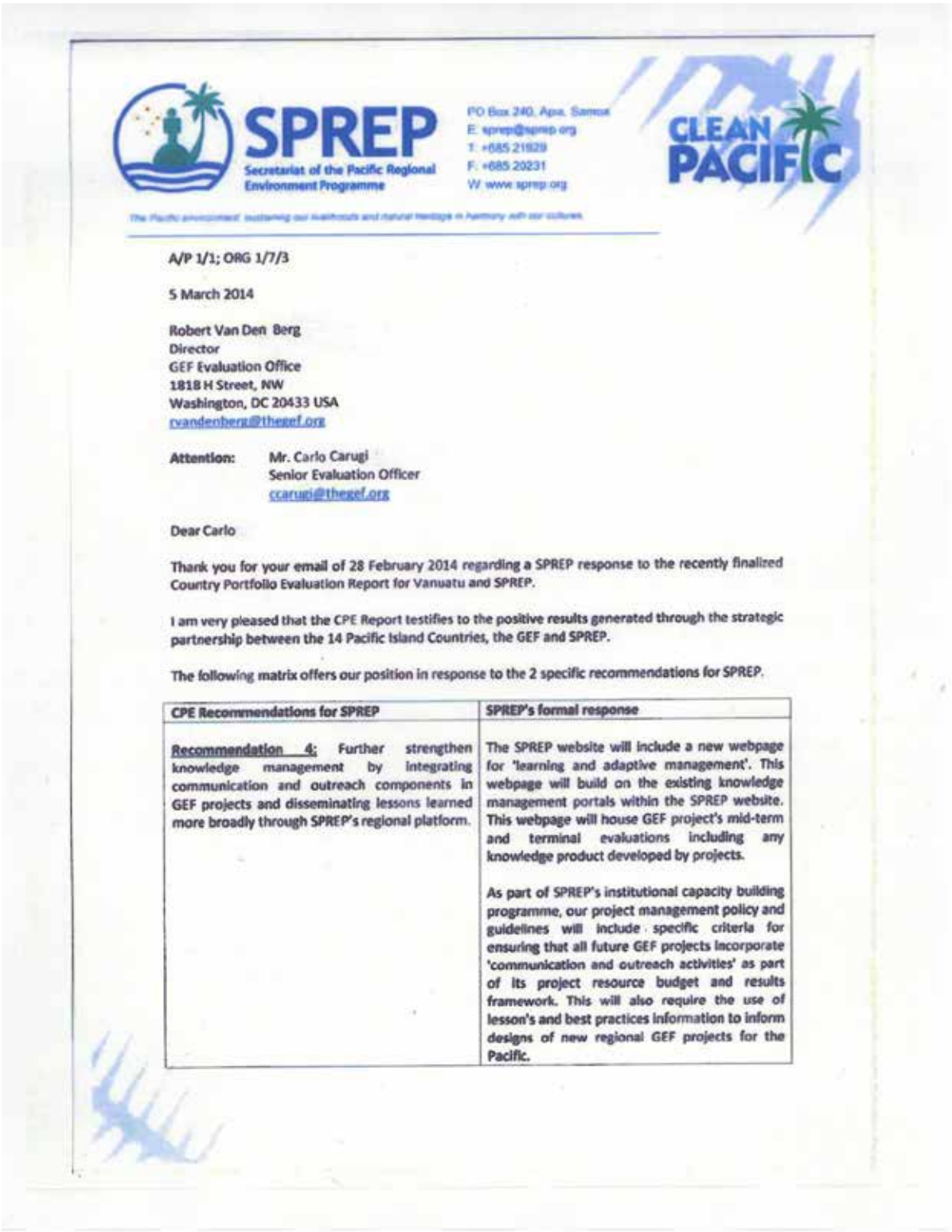
The Government recently established a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit to which will also assist in the implementation of many programs within these strategies.

We also take note the recommendations for SPREP in this evaluation report and look forward to closely working with this regional institution in order to improve the partnerships within the region.

We greatly appreciate the work of the GEF Evaluation Team for a consolidated report; the government also endorses the recommendations and look forward to a fruitful partnership with GEF in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr. Albert Abel Williams
GEF Operational Focal Point Vanuatu
Acting Director General
Ministry of Climate Change, Energy, Natural Disasters and Environment



SPREP
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

PO Box 240, Apia, Samoa
E: sprep@sprep.org
T: +685 21929
F: +685 20231
W: www.sprep.org

CLEAN PACIFIC

The Pacific environment: sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures

A/P 1/1; ORG 1/7/3

5 March 2014

Robert Van Den Berg
Director
GEF Evaluation Office
1818 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20433 USA
rvandenberg@thegef.org

Attention: Mr. Carlo Carugi
Senior Evaluation Officer
ccarugi@thegef.org

Dear Carlo

Thank you for your email of 28 February 2014 regarding a SPREP response to the recently finalized Country Portfolio Evaluation Report for Vanuatu and SPREP.

I am very pleased that the CPE Report testifies to the positive results generated through the strategic partnership between the 14 Pacific Island Countries, the GEF and SPREP.

The following matrix offers our position in response to the 2 specific recommendations for SPREP.

CPE Recommendations for SPREP	SPREP's formal response
Recommendation 4: Further strengthen knowledge management by integrating communication and outreach components in GEF projects and disseminating lessons learned more broadly through SPREP's regional platform.	The SPREP website will include a new webpage for 'learning and adaptive management'. This webpage will build on the existing knowledge management portals within the SPREP website. This webpage will house GEF project's mid-term and terminal evaluations including any knowledge product developed by projects. As part of SPREP's institutional capacity building programme, our project management policy and guidelines will include specific criteria for ensuring that all future GEF projects incorporate 'communication and outreach activities' as part of its project resource budget and results framework. This will also require the use of lesson's and best practices information to inform designs of new regional GEF projects for the Pacific.

Recommendation 5: Continue and reinforce SPREP's role of providing technical assistance for GEF projects, particularly after GEF funding ends.	SPREP will continue to provide catalytic support for generating and sustaining lasting environmental outcomes in the Pacific. It will achieve this through leveraging additional resources from both the GEF and other donors that can assist with the continuity of project results post completion. Effective planning within SPREP's project management cycle will ensure continuity from parent to offspring projects. We will continue to provide technical, policy and advisory support to Pacific Island Countries on GEF and related matters.

I am confident that our two organizations will continue to work together to support national efforts in the Pacific Region, especially in carrying forward the good work established by the GEF-SPREP partnership since 1991.

We will reference the findings of this independent study with our other development partners who have great interest in our work with Pacific Island Governments.

May I take this opportunity to congratulate you and your team for successfully completing the CPE report for Vanuatu and SPREP.

Yours sincerely,

David Sheppard
Director General

DS/MM/rmg

Cc: **SPREP GEF Team**

Senior Management Team, SPREP

Annex B: Terms of Reference

This annex presents the terms of reference for the Vanuatu and SPREP Country Portfolio Evaluation approved by the GEF Evaluation Office Director on December 11, 2012. Minor edits have been made for consistency.

B.1 Background and Introduction

Country portfolio evaluations are one of the main evaluation streams of work of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office.[1] By capturing aggregate portfolio results and performance of the GEF at the country level, they provide useful information for both the GEF Council and the countries. CPEs' relevance and utility have increased in GEF-5 with the increased emphasis on country ownership and country-driven portfolio development.

GEF-eligible countries are chosen for CPEs based on a selection process and a set of criteria including the size, diversity, and maturity of their portfolio of projects (GEF IEO 2010). These evaluations usually cover all national projects, and include a selection of the most important regional and global projects in which the country participates. In fiscal year 2011, the CPE team conducted a different type of CPE, taking a cluster approach that analyzed the portfolios of six GEF beneficiary country members of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States. That evaluation, a first of its kind for the CPE team, allowed the team to look at the relevance, performance, and results of regional projects, one of the main support modalities in SIDS. The Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation is expected to progress further along this line of analysis, by providing an opportunity to compare regional and national project relevance and performance in SIDS in the South Pacific region.[2] Furthermore, the portfolios of Vanuatu and SPREP include several ongoing, completed/closed projects with significant emphasis on biodiversity, climate change, and POPs.

The South Pacific region comprises 22 countries scattered over one-third of the globe, covering about 30 million square kilometers, mostly oceanic. These countries include 20,000–30,000 small islands.[3] The South Pacific region represents an enormous diversity in physical geography, culture, languages, social-political organization, size, and natural resource endowment. Although containing just 0.1 percent of the world's population, the region contains one-third of the world's languages and an enormous cultural diversity encompassing

[1] For a complete list of countries having undergone CPEs, please refer to the GEF Independent Evaluation Office website.

[2] These SIDS evaluations include the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States cluster CPE, the Cuba CPE and the Jamaica Country Portfolio Study.

[3] http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/arm/pac.htm; accessed November 2012.

social, political, and behavioral complexities. This situation is most pronounced across Melanesia, where 700 languages are spoken in Papua New Guinea alone, and more than 100 each in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu (Haberkorn 2008). Agriculture, fishing, and tourism are the major industries contributing to national economies.

Vanuatu, formerly the Anglo-French condominium of the New Hebrides, is an irregular Y-shaped chain of some 80 islands, with a total land area of about 4,710 square miles and a total coastline of 1,571 miles. The total population of Vanuatu was estimated to be 240,000 in 2010, and it has an annual population growth rate of 2.3 percent.[4] In 2010, Vanuatu's GDP was approximately $729 million with a growth rate of 3 percent and per capita income of $3,042. Agriculture and tourism are the main productive sectors contributing to Vanuatu's economy. Agriculture contributes 21.5 percent of GDP; tourism contributes 19 percent.[5] Vanuatu ranks 118th on the Human Development Index (HDI) and 52nd on the Human Poverty Index. Poverty levels stubbornly remain at about 40 percent of the population, with about 26 percent living on less than $1 per day.

SPREP is an intergovernmental organization established in 1982 by the governments and administrations of the Pacific region. SPREP is composed of 25 countries, consisting of all 21 Pacific island countries and territories, and 4 developed countries (U.S. Department of State n.d.). It is charged with promoting cooperation, supporting protection and improvement of the Pacific islands environment, and ensuring its sustainable development.[6] The key focal areas under SPREP projects are climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem management, waste management, pollution control, environmental monitoring, and governance. Adaptation to climate change and rising sea levels, improvement in natural disaster preparedness, prevention of worsening freshwater shortages, protection of coastal ecosystems and coral reefs from pollution and overfishing, development of solar and renewable energy, managing tourism growth to protect the environment and cultural integrity, and biodiversity conservation have been prioritized by SPREP.[7]

Pacific countries face a full range of geologic and climatic hazards including increase in population, waste management (including of solid, nuclear, and chemical wastes), climate change and sea level rise, and economic and institutional capacity. The Vanuatu islands are located in a seismically and volcanically active region and have high exposure to geologic hazards, including volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tsunamis, and landslides.[8] The key drivers of environmental change are a rapidly growing economy, a young population and rapid population growth, urban drift, land speculation, agricultural intensification, deforestation, inadequate fisheries and marine management, industry and trade, tourism, imported energy and transportation needs, extractive industries, and the global rise in GHG emissions.

Since 1991, the GEF has funded a total of $13.9 million in Vanuatu with $65.3 million in cofinancing, through 11 national projects (table B.1). These comprise four climate change

[4] http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2012/03/26/000356161_20120326004949/Rendered/PDF/E30040EA0P-1126020Box367891B00353352.pdf; accessed November 2012.

[5] World Travel and Tourism Council, http://www.wttc.org/site_media/uploads/downloads/vanuatu2012.pdf; accessed November 2012.

[6] http://www.sprep.org/About-Us; accessed November 2012.

[7] http://www.sprep.org/att/IRC/eCOPIES/Countries/Vanuatu/71.pdf; accessed November 2012.

[8] http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2010/02/25/000333037_20100225012651/Rendered/PDF/532100WP0P1120110VANUATU1ASSESSMENT.pdf; accessed November 2012.

TABLE B.1 **GEF Support to Vanuatu National Projects by Focal Area and GEF Agency**

Focal area	Agency	GEF ($)	Cofinancing ($)	Total ($)	Number of projects
Climate change	World Bank	3,486,363	31,360,000	34,846,363	2
	UNDP	8,230,000	32,451,217	40,681,217	2
	Subtotal	11,716,363	63,811,217	75,527,580	4
Biodiversity	UNEP	352,197	72,531	424,728	3
	UNDP	745,910	709,933	1,455,843	1
	Subtotal	1,098,107	782,464	1,880,571	4
Land degradation	UNDP	500,000	596,200	1,096,200	1
	Subtotal	500,000	596,200	1,096,200	1
POPs	UNEP	393,000	20,000	413,000	1
	Subtotal	393,000	20,000	413,000	1
Multifocal	UNEP	199,500	61,500	261,000	1
	Subtotal	199,500	61,500	261,000	1
Total		13,906,970	65,271,381	79,178,351	1

projects, four projects in biodiversity, one in land degradation, and one multifocal area project. Six projects have either closed (five) or been completed (one). UNEP has been implementing five projects with total GEF grants of $0.94 million and cofinancing of $0.15 million; UNDP has been implementing four projects totaling $9.5 million in GEF grants with cofinancing of $33.7 million; and the World Bank is implementing two projects with $3.5 million in GEF grants and cofinancing of $31.4 million.

Since 1991, the GEF has funded a total of $62 million with $142.3 million cofinancing in 11 regional projects executed through SPREP (table B.2). These consist of six climate change projects, three projects in biodiversity, one in

TABLE B.2 **GEF Support to SPREP-Executed Regional Projects by Focal Area and GEF Agency**

Focal area	Agency	GEF ($)	Cofinancing ($)	Total ($)	Number of projects
Climate change	UNDP	22,490,000	72,597,799	95,087,799	5
	World Bank/IFC	9,480,000	48,985,131	58,465,131	1
	Subtotal	31,970,000	121,582,930	153,552,930	6
Biodiversity	UNEP	4,772,415	6,541,192	11,313,607	2
	UNDP	10,000,000	0	10,000,000	1
	Subtotal	14,772,415	6,541,192	21,313,607	3
International waters	UNDP	12,000,000	8,118,383	20,118,383	1
	Subtotal	12,000,000	8,118,383	20,118,383	1
POPs	UNEP/FAO	3,275,000	6,052,290	9,327,290	1
	Subtotal	3,275,000	6,052,290	9,327,290	1
Total		62,017,415	142,294,795	204,312,210	11

NOTE: IFC = International Finance Corporation.

international waters, and one in POPs. UNDP has been implementing seven projects through SPREP with a total of $44.5 million in GEF grants and $80.7 million in cofinancing; UNEP has two projects totaling $4.8 million in GEF support with $6.5 million in cofinancing; the World Bank is implementing one project with a $9.5 million GEF grant and $48.9 million in cofinancing; and UNEP and FAO are jointly implementing one project with a $3.3 million GEF grant and $6 million in cofinancing. Seven out of the 21 SPREP member countries—namely Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Tuvalu, Vanuatu—are involved in at least nine SPREP-executed GEF projects.

B.2 Objectives of the Evaluation

The purpose of the Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation is to provide the GEF Council with an assessment of how the GEF is implemented in Vanuatu and more broadly in the Pacific region, report on results from projects, and assess how these projects are linked to national and regional environmental and sustainable development agendas as well as to the GEF mandate of generating global environmental benefits within its focal areas. This evaluation has the following objectives:

- Independently evaluate the *relevance* and *efficiency* of GEF support from several points of view: national and regional environmental frameworks and decision-making processes, the GEF mandate and the achievement of global environmental benefits, and GEF policies and procedures
- Assess the *effectiveness* and *results* of completed projects aggregated at the focal area
- Provide *additional evaluative evidence* to other evaluations conducted or sponsored by the Office
- Provide *feedback and knowledge sharing* to (1) the GEF Council in its decision-making process to allocate resources and to develop policies and strategies, (2) the countries on their participation in or collaboration with the GEF, and (3) the different agencies and organizations involved in the preparation and implementation of GEF-funded projects and activities

The performance of the GEF national portfolio in Vanuatu and the portfolio of SPREP-executed regional projects will be assessed in terms of relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness, and of the contributing factors to this performance. The Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation will analyze the performance of individual projects as part of the overall GEF portfolio, but without rating such projects. CPEs do not aim at evaluating or rating the performance of the GEF Agencies, partners, or national governments.

KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

GEF CPEs are guided by a set of key questions that should be answered based on the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the evaluative information and perceptions collected during the evaluation exercise. The Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation will be guided by the following key questions.

Effectiveness, results, and sustainability[9]

- What are the results (outcomes and impacts) of GEF support at the project level and at the aggregate level (portfolio and program) by focal area? What are the results of GEF support at the regional level?

[9] *Effectiveness:* the extent to which the GEF activity's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance; *results:* in GEF terms, results include direct project outputs, short- to medium-term outcomes, and progress toward longer-term impact including global environmental benefits, replication effects, and other local effects; *sustainability:* the likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion; projects need to be environmentally as well as financially and socially sustainable.

- Is GEF support effective in producing results related to the dissemination of lessons learned in GEF projects and with partners?
- Is GEF support effective in producing results which last in time and continue after project completion?
- Has GEF support contributed to build adequate institutional capacity to allow direct execution at the national level in the Pacific region?
- Has GEF support facilitated the channeling of additional resources for climate financing that up-scales efforts for achieving global environmental benefits in the Pacific region?
- Has GEF support been effective in producing tangible concrete results (in terms of outputs, outcomes, and impacts) that go beyond foundational activities?

Relevance[10]

- Is GEF support relevant to the Vanuatu and other Pacific countries' sustainability development agendas and environmental priorities, in particular for what concerns sustainable land management and land degradation?
- Is GEF support to Vanuatu and more broadly to the Pacific region relevant to the objectives linked to the different global environmental benefits in the biodiversity, GHG, international waters, land degradation, and chemicals focal areas?
- Is GEF support relevant to the Vanuatu and other Pacific countries' development needs and challenges?
- Are the GEF and its Agencies supporting environmental and sustainable development prioritization, country ownership, and the decision-making process in Vanuatu and more broadly in the Pacific region?
- Are Vanuatu and other Pacific countries supporting the GEF mandate and focal area programs and strategies with their own resources and/or with support from other donors?

Efficiency[11]

- How much time, effort, and financial resources does it take to formulate and implement projects, by type of GEF support modality in the Pacific region?
- What are the roles and level of coordination and communication among stakeholders in project development and implementation, particularly national and regional institutions?
- What are the synergies for GEF programming and implementation (including among GEF focal areas) among GEF Agencies, national agencies and regional institutions, GEF projects, and other donor-supported projects and activities in the Pacific region?
- What role does M&E play in increasing project adaptive management and overall efficiency?

Each of these questions is complemented by a set of indicators, potential sources of information, and evaluation tools and methods described in the evaluation matrix presented in annex C. The matrix contains a tentative list of indicators or basic data, potential sources of information, and methodology components.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation will cover all types of GEF-supported activities in the two portfolios under analysis (Vanuatu national

[10] *Relevance:* the extent to which the activity is suited to local and national environmental priorities and policies and to global environmental benefits to which the GEF is dedicated.

[11] *Efficiency:* the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible.

and SPREP regional projects) at all stages of the project cycle (pipeline, ongoing, and completed) and implemented by all GEF Agencies in all focal areas, including applicable GEF corporate activities such as the SGP. The evaluation will look at all the Vanuatu national projects and all the SPREP-executed projects, be they FSPs, MSPs, or enabling activities, with a view to continuing, deepening, and enriching the comparative analysis started with the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States cluster CPE, by analyzing strengths and weaknesses of the national (i.e., the Vanuatu national projects portfolio) and the regional (i.e., the SPREP-executed regional projects portfolio) project modalities in SIDS contexts. The stage of the project will determine the expected focus of the analysis (table B.3).

The GEF does not establish country programs that specify expected achievements through programmatic objectives, indicators, and targets. However, since 2010, the GEF has started supporting countries in undertaking national portfolio formulation exercises on a voluntary basis. These exercises serve as a priority-setting tool for countries and as a guide for GEF Agencies as they assist recipient countries. These country programming efforts are rather recent, which limits their usefulness in CPEs that look back to the start of GEF operations some 20 years ago. This is why generally CPEs entail some degree of retrofitting of frameworks to be able to judge the relevance of the aggregated results of a diverse portfolio of projects. Accordingly, the standard CPE evaluation framework described here will be adapted along with the other relevant national and GEF Agency strategies, country programs, and/or planning frameworks as a basis for assessing the aggregate results, efficiency, and relevance of the GEF country portfolio.

GEF support is provided through partnerships with many institutions operating at many levels, from the local to the national and international. It is therefore challenging to consider GEF support separately. The Vanuatu and SPREP CPE will not attempt to provide a direct attribution of development results to the GEF, but will address the contribution of GEF support to overall achievements—i.e., to establish a credible link between GEF-supported activities and their implications. The evaluation will address how GEF support has contributed to overall achievements in partnership with others, through questions on roles and coordination, synergies and complementarities, and knowledge sharing.

The assessment of results will be focused, where possible, at the level of outcomes and impacts rather than outputs. Project-level results will be measured against the overall expected impact and outcomes from each project. Progress toward impact of a representative sample of sufficiently mature projects (i.e., completed for least two years) will be looked at through field ROtI studies. Expected impacts at the focal area level will be assessed in the context of GEF objectives and indicators of global environmental benefits. Outcomes at the focal area level will be primarily assessed in relation to catalytic and replication effects, institutional sustainability and capacity building, and awareness.

TABLE B.3 **Focus of Evaluation by Project Status**

Status	Relevance	Efficiency	Effectiveness[a]	Results[a]
Completed	Full	Full	Full	Full
Ongoing	Full	Partially	Likelihood	Likelihood
Pipeline	Expected	Processes	n.a.	n.a.

NOTE: n.a. = not applicable.
a. On an exploratory basis.

The context in which these projects were developed and approved and are being implemented constitutes another focus of the evaluation. This includes a historic assessment of national sustainable development and environmental policies, strategies and priorities, and the legal environment in which these policies are implemented and enforced; GEF Agency country strategies and programs; and GEF policies, principles, programs, and strategies.

B.3 Methodology

The Vanuatu and SPREP CPE will be conducted by staff of the GEF Independent Evaluation Office and national and international consultants—i.e., the evaluation team—led by a task manager from the Office. The team includes technical expertise on national environmental and sustainable development strategies, evaluation methodologies, and the GEF.

The selected firm qualifies under the GEF Independent Evaluation Office ethical guidelines, and its undertaking the evaluation does not raise concerns related to conflict of interest. Operational focal points in Vanuatu and in a selection of SPREP member countries will be asked to act as resource persons in facilitating the CPE process by identifying interviewees and source documents; and organizing interviews, meetings, and field visits.

The methodology includes a series of components using a combination of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods and tools. The expected sources of information include the following:

- *Project level:* project documents, project implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, reports from monitoring visits, and any other technical documents produced by projects
- *Country and regional levels:* national and regional sustainable development agendas, environmental priorities and strategies, GEF-wide, focal area strategies and action plans, and global and national environmental indicators
- *Agency level:* country assistance strategies and frameworks and their evaluations and reviews
- *Evaluative evidence* at the country level from other evaluations implemented either by the Office, by the independent evaluation offices of GEF Agencies, or by other national or international evaluation departments
- *Interviews* with GEF stakeholders, including the GEF operational focal points and all other relevant government departments, regional organizations, bilateral and multilateral donors, civil society organizations, and academia (including both local and international NGOs with a presence in the countries), GEF Agencies, SGP and the national United Nations convention focal points
- *Interviews* with GEF beneficiaries and supported institutions, municipal governments and associations, and local communities and authorities
- *Field visits* to selected project sites
- Information from *national consultation workshops*

The quantitative analysis will use indicators to assess the relevance and efficiency of GEF support using projects as the unit of analysis (i.e., linkages with national and regional priorities, time and cost of preparing and implementing projects, etc.) and to measure GEF results (i.e., progress toward achieving global environmental benefits) and performance of projects (such as implementation and completion ratings). Available statistics and scientific sources, especially for national environmental indicators, will also be used.

The evaluation team will use standard tools and protocols for the CPEs and adapt these to the national and regional contexts. These tools include a project review protocol to conduct the desk and field reviews of GEF projects and interview guides to conduct interviews with different stakeholders.

The Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation will include visits to project sites. The criteria for selecting the sites will be finalized during implementation of the evaluation, with emphasis placed on both ongoing and completed projects. The evaluation team will decide on specific sites to visit based on the initial review of documentation and balancing needs of representation as well as cost-effectiveness in conducting the field visits.

Quality assurance will be performed internally by the Office at key stages of the evaluation process. Issues to be covered include (1) adherence of the interim and final evaluation products to these terms of reference, (2) soundness of the evaluation methods and tools used and the processes followed, (3) solidity and completeness of the evidence base underpinning the findings and conclusions, and (4) concreteness and feasibility of the recommendations formulated in the final report. Possibilities to have the final report externally peer reviewed by the Institute of Development Studies under its memorandum of understanding with the Office are being explored.

PROCESS AND OUTPUTS

These country-specific terms of reference have been prepared based on an initial GEF Independent Evaluation Office visit to Vanuatu and to SPREP Headquarters in Samoa in October 2012, conducted with the purpose of scoping the evaluation and identifying key issues to be included in the analysis. The mission was also an opportunity to officially launch the evaluation, while at the same introduce the selected consultants to GEF national stakeholders. These terms of reference conclude the Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation preparatory phase, and set the scene for the evaluation phase, during which the evaluation team will complete the following tasks:

- Complete the ongoing *literature review* to extract existing reliable evaluative evidence.
- Prepare specific inputs to the CPE, including
  - the *GEF portfolio database* which describes all GEF support activities in Vanuatu and all the SPREP-executed regional projects, basic information (GEF Agency, focal area, implementation status), project cycle information, GEF and cofinancing financial information, major objectives and expected (or actual) results, key partners per project, etc.;
  - the *regional environmental legal framework* which provides a historical perspective of the context in which the GEF projects have been developed and implemented in the Pacific region, to be based on information on national and regional environmental legislation, environmental policies of each government administration (plans, strategies, etc.), and the international agreements signed by Vanuatu and other Pacific countries presented and analyzed through time so as to be able to connect with particular GEF support;
  - the *global environmental benefits assessment* which provides an assessment of the countries' contribution to the GEF mandate and its focal areas based on appropriate indicators, such as those used in the System for the Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) (biodiversity, climate change, and land degradation) and others used in project documents; and
  - *ROtI* field studies of one regional and one national project completed for at least two years, selected in consultation with the Independent Evaluation Office staff.
- Conduct *field visits* of ongoing national and regional projects, selected in consultation with Office staff.
- Conduct the evaluation analysis and *triangulation* of collected information and evidence from various sources, tools, and methods. This will be done internally by the evaluation team at the

end of the evaluation data gathering and analysis phase. The aim will be to consolidate the evidence gathered so far and fill in any information and analysis gaps before generating findings, conclusions, and preliminary recommendations.

- Conduct a *final consultation workshop* for government and national and regional stakeholders, including project staff, donors, and GEF Agencies, to present and gather stakeholder feedback on the main Vanuatu and SPREP CPE preliminary findings, to be included in an *aide-mémoire*.[12] The workshop will also be an opportunity to verify errors of fact or analysis in case these are supported by adequate additional evidence brought to the attention of the evaluation team.
- Prepare a *draft Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation report*, which incorporates comments received at the final consultation workshop. The draft report will be sent to external peer reviewers before circulation to stakeholders.
- Consider the eventual incorporation of comments received to the draft report and prepare the *final Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation report*. The GEF Independent Evaluation Office will bear full responsibility for the content of the report.

As was the case during the scoping mission, the national GEF operational focal points will assist the evaluation team and consultants in identifying key people to be interviewed; communication with relevant government departments; support to organize interviews, field visits, and meetings; and identification of main documents. The GEF Agencies will be asked to assist the evaluation team and selected consultants regarding their specific GEF-supported projects and activities, including identification of key project and Agency staff to be interviewed and provision of project documentation and data.

EVALUATION KEY MILESTONES

The evaluation commenced in October 2012 and is expected to be completed in May 2013. The key milestones of the evaluation are presented in table B.4.

[12] It was agreed during the scoping mission to hold the workshop in Vanuatu.

TABLE B.4 **Vanuatu and SPREP CPE Key Milestones**

Milestone	Deadline
Finalization and disclosure of Vanuatu and SPREP CPE specific terms of reference/evaluation matrix	December 10, 2012
Finalization and analysis of the GEF portfolio database	December 21, 2012
Global environmental benefits assessment	December 22, 2012
Regional environmental legal framework	December 22, 2012
ROtI field studies	February 8, 2013
Data collection/interviews and project review protocols	February 8, 2013
Consolidation and triangulation of evaluative evidence, additional analysis/gap filling	February 20–22, 2012
Final consultation workshop	March 13, 3013
Draft Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation report sent to stakeholders for comment	April 20, 2013
Incorporation of comments received in a final Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation report	May 30, 2013
Country response to the evaluation	June 20, 2013

Annex C: Evaluation Matrix

Key question	Indicators/data	Source of information	Methodology
Effectiveness, results, and sustainability			
What are the results (outcomes and impacts) of GEF support at the project, aggregate (portfolio and program) by focal area, and regional levels?	• Project outcomes and impacts • Existing ratings for project outcomes (i.e., self-ratings and independent ratings) of expected versus actual results • Effectiveness of different GEF modalities • Effectiveness of regional approaches versus national projects • Changes in GBI and other global environmental indicators • Project replication and/or integration into host national agency program • Integration and mainstreaming of measures addressing environmental issues with the national and regional development agenda and policy frameworks • Regional and national contributions to GEF-related multilateral environmental agreements • Catalytic effect (i.e., replication and up-scaling) • Adequate accounting in project design for risks specific to Pacific island countries and the region as a whole • Effective regional participation in international forums (Conference of the Parties, UN Forum, Commonwealth Leaders Dialogue, etc.) • Regional frameworks for multi-jurisdictional environmental issues (e.g., ocean scapes, migratory species, etc.)	• Project staff, local stakeholders, local and national government officials • Project-related reviews, (implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, etc.) • Data from projects financed by other donors and/or by the government	• Stakeholder consultation: individual interviews, focus groups • ROtI studies • Project field visits • Desk review: project review protocols • Desk review: meta-analysis of evaluation reports • Literature review • Global environmental benefits assessment • Regional environmental legal framework

Key question	Indicators/data	Source of information	Methodology
Is GEF support effective in producing results related to the dissemination of lessons learned in GEF projects and with partners?	• Project design, preparation, and implementation have incorporated lessons from previous projects within and outside the GEF • Quality and application of M&E and knowledge management systems and tools • Replication of GEF projects by other donors, organizations, or governments	• Project-related reviews, (implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, etc.) • GEF Secretariat • GEF Agency staff • NGO staff, project staff, local stakeholders, local and national government officials • Regional organization staff	• Desk review: project review protocols • Desk review: meta-analysis of evaluation reports • ROtI studies • Stakeholder consultation: individual interviews, focus groups
Is GEF support effective in producing results that last over time and continue after project completion?	• Availability of financial resources • Availability of technical capacity • Stakeholder ownership • Existence of an adequate institutional and legal framework • Mainstreaming of projects into national policies and programs	• Project-related reviews, (implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, etc.) • GEF Agency staff • Executing agency staff • Project staff, local stakeholders, local and national government officials	• Desk review: project review protocols • Desk review: meta-analysis of evaluation reports • Project field visits • Stakeholder consultation: individual interviews, focus groups • ROtI studies
Has GEF support contributed to build adequate institutional capacity to allow direct execution at the national level in the Pacific region?	• Increasing ability of institutions and organizations to originate and drive project development process • Increasing ability of government to respond to and effectively manage environmental issues • Increasing ability of government to implement international environmental conventions • Increasing use of local or regional technical capacity, as appropriate • Share of investment focused on local/regional capacity development (individual or institutional) • Level of public awareness and engagement on globally significant environmental issues	• Project-related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, etc.), PMIS, GEF Agency project databases • GEF Agency staff • Executing agency staff • Project staff, local stakeholders, local and national government officials • Regional organization staff	• Desk review: project review protocols • Desk review: meta-analysis of evaluation reports • Project field visits • Stakeholder consultation: individual interviews, focus groups • Regional environmental legal framework
Has GEF support facilitated the channeling of additional resources for climate financing that up-scale efforts for achieving global environmental benefits in the Pacific region?	• Climate financing mechanisms resulting from GEF initiatives • New climate financing approaches developed within the region and at the national level • Input from the region into international forums to develop and access new financing mechanisms for climate work	• Project-related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, etc.), PMIS, GEF Agency project databases • Executing agency staff • Project staff, local stakeholders, local and national government officials • Regional organization staff • Regional policies, programs, and positional statements at international forums	• Desk review: project review protocols • Desk review: meta-analysis of evaluation reports • Project field visits • Stakeholder consultation: individual interviews, focus groups • Literature review

Key question	Indicators/data	Source of information	Methodology
Relevance			
Is GEF support relevant to the Vanuatu and SPREP member country national sustainability development agendas and environmental priorities, in particular for what concerns sustainable land management and land degradation?	• Coherence of GEF support with country environmental priorities • Linkage of GEF support to national environmental action plans, NBSAPs, national communications to UNFCCC, POPs NIPs, NCSA, NAPA, sustainable land management and land degradation as well as relevant regional strategies and action plans, etc. • Coherence of GEF support with regional environmental priorities, regional action plans, and policies • Level of GEF funding compared to other official development assistance in the environment sector • Level of country and/or regional stakeholder ownership in GEF-supported project concept origin, design, and implementation • Existence of mechanisms/processes within Vanuatu and SPREP countries and within the region to coordinate GEF support and ensure relevance	• Relevant literature: country-level sustainable development and environment policies, strategies, and action plans • GEF-supported enabling activities and products (NCSA, national environmental action plans, NAPA, national communications to UN conventions, etc.) • SGP country and regional strategies • Local and national government officials, GEF Agency staff, donors, and civil society representatives • Project-related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, etc.), PMIS, GEF Agency project databases • Available databases (international and regional such as World Bank, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, etc., and national, i.e., department of statistics, other)	• Literature review • Desk review: GEF portfolio analysis • Desk review: project related documentation • Stakeholder consultation: individual interviews, focus groups • Regional environmental legal framework
Is GEF support to Vanuatu and SPREP member countries linked to the different global environmental benefits (i.e., biodiversity, GHG, international waters, POPs, land degradation, etc.)?	• Relation of project outcomes and impacts to RAF/STAR Global Environmental Benefit index (for biodiversity, climate change, and land degradation) and to other global indicators for POPs, land degradation and international waters • Relation of project outcome and impacts to threats identified by non-GEF sources to globally significant environmental resources • Linkage of GEF support to national implementation of conventions	• National convention action plans, RAF, STAR, biodiversity scorecard, etc. • Project-related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, etc.), PMIS, GEF Agency project databases • Local and national government officials, GEF Agency staff, donors, and civil society representatives	• Desk review: GEF portfolio analysis • Project field visits • Desk review: project review protocols • Regional environmental legal framework • Stakeholder consultation: individual interviews, focus groups • Global environmental benefits assessment

Key question	Indicators/data	Source of information	Methodology
Is GEF support relevant to the Vanuatu and SPREP member country development needs?	• National development plans and regional plans • Linkage of GEF support to national implementation of conventions	• National development plans and regional action plans • National and regional positional statements at international forums • Plans and strategies for support by donors and development partners	• Literature review • Websites • Stakeholder consultations
Are the GEF and its Agencies supporting environmental and sustainable development prioritization, country ownership, and the decision-making process in Vanuatu and more broadly in the Pacific region?	• National development plans and regional plans • Linkage of GEF support to national implementation of conventions • Relation of project outcome and impacts to threats identified by non-GEF sources to globally significant environmental resources	• National development plans and regional action plans • National and regional positional statements at international forums • Plans and strategies for support by donors and development partners • National convention action plans, RAF, STAR, biodiversity scorecard, etc. • Project-related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, etc.), PMIS, GEF Agency project databases	• Literature review • Websites • Stakeholder consultations • Desk review: project review protocols • Regional environmental legal framework
Are Vanuatu and SPREP member countries supporting the GEF mandate and focal area programs and strategies with their own resources and/or with the support from other donors?	• Regional and national action plans identifying GEF focal areas for implementation • Project outcomes including cofinancing from governments and/or support from other donors	• National development plans and regional action plans • National and regional positional statements at international forums • Plans and strategies for support by donors and development partners • National convention action plans, RAF, STAR, biodiversity scorecard, etc. • Project-related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, etc.), PMIS, GEF Agency project databases	• Literature review • Websites • Stakeholder consultations • Desk review: project review protocols • Regional environmental legal framework

Key question	Indicators/data	Source of information	Methodology
Efficiency			
How much time, effort, and financial resources does it take to formulate and implement projects, by type of GEF support modality in the Pacific region?	• Process indicators: processing timing (according to project cycle steps) (also linked with timeliness of relevance), preparation, and implementation cost by type of modalities, etc. • Adequacy of budgets for management, implementation, and follow-up • Level of project oversight from GEF Agencies • Adequacy of communication of GEF policies and procedures (and of changes as they occur) • Timeliness of disbursements • Project drop-outs from project development facility and cancellations • GEF funding versus cofinancing	• Project-related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, etc.), PMIS, Agency project databases • GEF Secretariat • GEF Agency staff • Executing agency staff • Regional organization staff • Local and national government officials, donors, NGOs, local stakeholders	• Desk review: GEF portfolio analysis • Desk review: project review protocols • Desk review: meta-analysis of evaluation reports • Stakeholder consultation: individual interviews, focus groups • Project field visits
What are the roles, and level of coordination and communication, among stakeholders in project development and implementation, particularly between national and regional institutions?	• Balance between national and regional components and activities of regional projects • Extent of engagement in different steps of the process • Balance of use of external versus national/regional technical capacity • Roles and responsibilities of GEF actors • Level of participation of relevant stakeholders throughout project cycle • Levels of coordination and communication between GEF projects, including between national and regional projects • Existence and efficiency of a national/regional coordination mechanism for GEF support • Balance of competing regional interests • Examples of adaptive management/flexibility	• Project-related reviews, (implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, etc.) • Project staff, government officials • GEF Secretariat • GEF Agency staff • Executing agency staff • Regional organization staff	• Desk review: project review protocols • Desk review: meta-analysis of evaluation reports • Stakeholder consultation: individual interviews, focus groups • Project field visits

Key question	Indicators/data	Source of information	Methodology
What are the synergies for GEF programming and implementation (including by GEF focal area) among GEF Agencies; national and regional institutions, Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific agencies and GEF Agencies; and GEF support and that of other donors in programming and implementation?	• Coordination and complementarity between projects of different institutions • Effective communication and technical support between national and regional institutions	• Project-related reviews, (implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, etc.) • Regional, national, and local government officials • GEF Secretariat • GEF Agency staff • Executing agency staff • Regional organization staff	• Desk review: project review protocols • Desk review: meta-analysis of evaluation reports • Stakeholder consultation: individual interviews, focus groups • Project field visits
What role does M&E play in increasing project adaptive management and overall efficiency?	• Quality of M&E information • Quality and level of adaptive management applied to projects and programs • Project compliance with GEF and GEF Agency M&E policies • Existence of needs or gaps in M&E coverage for regional approaches • Level of independence, quality, and timeliness of external evaluations	• Project-related reviews, (implementation reports, midterm reviews, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, etc.) • Local and national government • GEF Secretariat staff • GEF Agency staff • Executing agency staff • Regional organization staff	• Desk review: project review protocols • Desk review: meta-analysis of evaluation reports • Stakeholder consultation: individual interviews, focus groups • Project field visits

NOTE: RAF = Resource Allocation Framework; STAR = System for the Transparent Allocation of Resources.

Annex D: Interviewees

D.1 SPREP/Samoa

Easter Galuvao, Biodiversity Adviser, SPREP; former UNDP Program Officer

Tepa Suaesi, Environmental Planning Officer, SPREP; former Principal Officer, Division of Environment and Conservation, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Wairarapa Young, Team Leader, Renewable Energy Division, Electric Power Corporation, Samoa

Fonoti Perelini Perelini, Acting Project Manager, EPC Project Management Unit

D.2 Vanuatu

Albert Williams, Director, Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation

Donna Kalftak, Senior Biodiversity Officer, Government of Vanuatu

Trinison Tari, Senior Information and Education Officer, Government of Vanuatu

Touasi Tiwok, Principal Environment Officer, Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation

Amos Kalo, Project Officer, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources

Leah Nimoho, SGP/GEF Project Manager

Ralph Regenvanu, Member of Parliament; former Director, Vanuatu Cultural Centre

Ernest Bani, former Director, Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation; Managing Director, BECON Environmental Consultants, Port Vila

Presly Dovo, Project Coordinator, FAO/GEF Project, Government of Vanuatu

Russell Nari, Deputy Director, Mama Groan Project, Government of Vanuatu

William Ganileo, Sustainable Land Management Project Coordinator, Government of Vanuatu

Nancy Wells, Country Liaison Officer, ADB

Leo Moli, Principal Energy Officer, Government of Vanuatu

D.3 United States

Nicole Glineur, GEF Secretariat

Rawleston Moore, GEF Secretariat

Isabelle Vanderbeck, Task Manager, GEF International Waters Project, UNEP

Sam Wedderburn, Senior Natural Resources Management Specialist, World Bank

Kamlesh Khelawan, Senior Energy Specialist, World Bank

D.4 Kenya

Maryam Niamir-Fuller, Director, GEF Coordination Office, UNEP

Annex E: Sites Visited

E.1 Vanuatu

Port Vila

Efate

E.2 Samoa

Apia

Taelefaga, Fagaloa Bay

Falelauniu

Papa Uta

E.3 Fiji

Nadi

Suva

Annex F: Workshop Participants

Erickson Sammy, Department of Water Resources

Tekon Timothy Tumukon, Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Markets Access Program

Sanlan William, Department of Foreign Affairs

Reginald Tabi, Department of Environment Protection and Conservation/IAS Project

Amos Kalo, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources

Williams Ganileo, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources

Ernest Bani, Consultant

Livo Meleo, Ministry of Agriculture

Sefabaua Bawade, SPREP

Taito Nakalevu, SPREP

Leah Nimoho, GEF SGP Vanuatu

Christopher Bartlett, GEF Advisory/NAB

Rebecca Meteo, NAB/Project Management Unit

Annex G: Duration of the Project Cycle in Vanuatu and SPREP

TABLE G.1 **Duration of the Project Cycle for GEF-Supported Enabling Activities (days)**

Scope	Project	A→B	B→D	D→E	B→E	A→E
Vanuatu national	Assessment of Capacity-bldg Needs for Biodiversity & Participation in CHM[a]	34	514	0	514	548
	Biosafety[a]	34	88	619	707	741
	Clearing House Mechanism Enabling Activity[a]	34	49	301	350	384
	National Adaptation Programme of Action[b]	17	525	0	525	542
	Nat'l Biodiversity Strategies, Action Plan, and First Nat'l Report to the CBD[a]	34	49	0	49	83
	National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment (NCSA) for Global Environmental Management[b]	24	73	0	73	97
	National Communications Programme for Climate Change - 2nd National Communication to UNFCCC (Child project)[a]	34	864	0	864	898
	POPS Enabling activities for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs): National Implementation Plan for Vanuatu[b]	61	93	0	93	154
SPREP regional	Expedited Financing of Climate Change Enabling Activities (Phase II) - PICCAP[b]	34	94	0	94	128
	Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Project (PICCAP)[c]	320	555	0	555	875
Global	Climate Change Training Phase II - Training Programme to Support the Implementation of the UNFCCC[c]	320	331	1,069	1,400	1,720

NOTE: See figure 7.1 for stages of the GEF project cycle A–E.
a. Required estimation of the dates for A and B.
b. Required estimation of the date for B.
c. Required estimation of the date for A.

TABLE G.2 **Duration of the Project Cycle for GEF-Supported MSPs (days)**

Scope	Project	A→B	B→C	C→D	D→E	B→E	A→E
Vanuatu national	Facilitating and Strengthening the Conservation Initiatives of Traditional Landholders and their Communities to Achieve Biodiversity Conservation Objectives	29	29	351	0	380	408
	Geothermal Power and Electricity Sector Development Project	2					
	LDC/SIDS Portfolio Project: Capacity Building and Mainstreaming for Sustainable Land Management in Vanuatu[a]	133	133	1,294	0	1,427	1,559
SPREP regional	Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Programme (PIREP)	126	126	120	0	246	371
Global	SFM Facilitating Financing for Sustainable Forest Management in SIDS and LFCCs	26	396	210	13	619	645

NOTE: See figure 7.1 for stages of the GEF project cycle A–E.
a. Required estimation of the date for B.

TABLE G.3 **Duration of the Project Cycle for GEF-Supported FSPs (days)**

Scope	Project	A→B	B→C	C→D	D→E	B→E
Vanuatu national	Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zone in Vanuatu	111				
	Increasing Resilience to Climate Change and Natural Hazards	43	518	959	62	1,539
Vanuatu regional	Climate Proofing Development in the Pacific					
	Continuing Regional Support for the POPs Global Monitoring Plan under the Stockholm Convention in the Pacific Region					
	CTI The Coral Triangle Initiative (PROGRAM)	34	56			
	Implementation of Global and Regional Oceanic Fisheries Conventions and Related Instruments in the Pacific Small Island Developing States	189				
	Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project	691	48	50	22	120
	PAS Forestry and Protected Area Management	109	776	-18	65	823
	PAS GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability	41				
	PAS Implementing Sustainable Integrated Water Resource and Wastewater Management in the Pacific Island Countries - under the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability	1,112	223	84	0	307
	PAS Strengthening Coastal and Marine Resources Management in the Coral Triangle of the Pacific - under the Pacific Alliance for Sustainability Program	93	929	35	48	1,012
	PAS: Promoting Energy Efficiency in the Pacific	659	455	49	0	504
SPREP regional	Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) of the Pacific Small Island Developing States[a]	269	566	29	0	595
	Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project (PACC)	781	197	127	0	324
	Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP)	124	455	140	0	595
	PAS Implementing the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by Integrating the Conservation Management of Island Biodiversity	48	642	85	7	734
	PAS Pacific POPs Release Reduction Through Improved Management of Solid and Hazardous Wastes	210	860			
	PAS Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species in the Pacific Islands	371	783	102	73	958
	South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme[b]	269	440	284	0	724
	Sustainable Energy Financing	291	290	25	9	324
Global	Enhancing the Conservation Effectiveness of Seagrass Ecosystems Supporting Globally Significant Populations of Dugong Across the Indian and Pacific Oceans Basins (Short Title: The Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project)	69				
	Support to GEF Eligible Parties (LDCs & SIDs) for the Revision of the NBSAPs and Development of Fifth National Report to the CBD - Phase 1	85	209	63	10	282
	Support to GEF Eligible Parties for Alignment of National Action Programs and Reporting Process under UNCCD	41	40	16	30	86

NOTE: See figure 7.1 for stages of the GEF project cycle A–E.
a. Required estimation of the date for A.
b. Required estimation of the dates for A and C.

Bibliography

All URLs were originally accessed November 2012–January 2013 and confirmed December 2015.

References

ADB (Asian Development Bank). 2007a. "Country Environmental Analysis—Vanuatu." Draft. ADB, Manila.

Axford, Joanna. 2007. "What Constitutes Success in Pacific Island Community Conserved Areas." Doctoral thesis, University of Queensland. Cited by the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Islands Region 2008–2012.

CEPF (Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund). 2007. "Ecosystem Profile: Polynesia-Micronesia Biodiversity Hotspot."

ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific). 2010. "Sustainable Development in the Pacific: Progress and Challenges. Pacific Regional Report for the 5 year review of Mauritius Strategy for Further Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of SIDS (MSI+5)." ESCAP, Suva, Fiji.

GEF (Global Environment Facility). 2010. "Increase Climate Resilience Climate Change and Natural Hazards in Vanuatu." Project document.

GEF IEO (Global Environment Facility Independent Evaluation Office, formerly the GEF Evaluation Office). 2007. *Joint Evaluation of the GEF Activity Cycle and Modalities.* Evaluation Report No. 33.

———. 2009. *The ROtI Handbook: Towards Enhancing the Impacts of Environmental Projects.* OPS4 Methodological Paper #2.

———. 2010. "Note on the Selection Process and Criteria for the GEF Country Portfolio Evaluations."

———. 2012a. *GEF Cluster Country Portfolio Evaluation: GEF Beneficiary Countries of the OECS (1992–2011) (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines).* Evaluation Report No. 72.

———. 2012b. "Terms of Reference and Budget for the Fifth Overall Performance Study of the GEF and OPS5 Draft Approach Paper."

Government of the Republic of Vanuatu. 2006a. "Priorities and Action Agenda 2006–2015: An Educated, Healthy and Wealthy Vanuatu."

———. 2006b. "Third National Report to the Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biodiversity."

———. 2008. "Vanuatu National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on POPs." Draft.

———. 2009. "National Action Program to Address Land Degradation and Mitigate the Effects of Drought."

Haberkorn, G. 2008. "Pacific Islands' Population and Development: Facts, Fictions and Follies." *New Zealand Population Review* 33/34: 95–127.

Johannes, R.E., and F.R. Hickey. 2004. "Evolution of Village-Based Marine Resource Management in Vanuatu between 1993 and 2001." Coastal Region and Small Island Papers 15. UNESCO, Paris. (Cited in Government of the Republic of Vanuatu 2006b.)

Malosu, Catherine. 2006. "Stock Take and Thematic Assessment Report for the National Capacity Self Assessment on the implementation of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), Final Report."

PIFS (Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat). 2011. "2011 Pacific Regional MDGs Tracking Report." PIFS, Suva.

SPREP (South Pacific Regional Environment Programme). 2000. *Management of Persistent Organic Pollutants in Pacific Island Countries: Waste and Obsolete Chemicals and Chemical Contaminated Sites*. Apia, Samoa: SPREP.

———. 2005. "Action Plan for the Implementation of the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change 2006-2015." 19th SPREP Meeting Paper 19SM/Officials/WP.9.2.1/Att.1.

———. 2012. "SPREP Annual Report—2011." Apia, Samoa: SPREP.

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). 2005. "Annual Progress Report/Project Implementation Report."

———. 2006. "Annual Progress Report/Project Implementation Report."

———. 2009. "Annual Progress Report."

———. 2010. "Annual Progress Report."

———. 2011. "Annual Progress Report."

U.S. Department of State. n.d. "South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)." Archive 2001–2009.

Vanuatu Daily Post. 2012. "Pollution and Waste Management Scrutinized by Stakeholder Representatives." June 12.

Wickham, Frank, Jeff Kinch, and Padma Lal. 2009. "Institutional Capacity within Melanesian Countries to Effectively Respond to Climate Change Impacts, with a Focus on Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands." Apia, Samoa: SPREP.

Zeppel, H. 2006. "Indigenous Ecotourism—Sustainable Development and Management." Ecotourism Series No. 3. CABI International, Cambridge, MA.

Other Works Consulted

African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States. 2012. "ACP, EU Take Joint Stand on Sustainable Development at Rio +20." Press release.

———. 2012. "ACP-EU Council to Talk Development, Trade in Vanuatu." Press release.

Asian Development Bank. 2007. "Regional: Mainstreaming Environmental Considerations in Economic and Development Planning Processes in Selected Pacific Developing Member Countries." Project Number: 38031.

———. 2008. "Strategy 2020: The Long-Term Strategic Framework of the Asian Development Bank, 2008–2020."

———. 2009. "Country Partnership Strategy for Vanuatu 2010–2014."

———. 2009. "Mainstreaming Climate Change in ADB's Operations: Climate Change Implementation Plan Pacific Islands Region (2009–2015)."

———. 2011. "Asian Development Bank & Vanuatu Fact Sheet."

CBDAMPIC Vanuatu. n.d. "Community Vulnerability & Adaptation Assessment & Action Report."

Desmond, Yoli, Tom Tavala, and Marie Tiana Hakwa. 2004. "Review of Environmental Legislation and Policies in Vanuatu." IWP-Pacific Technical Report No. 7. International Waters Project.

EuropeAid. n.d. "Civil Society: Helping People Take Their Destiny in Their Hands in Remote Islands in Vanuatu."

European Commission. 2011. "European Commission Welcomes Vanuatu's Accession to the World Trade Organisation." Press release.

Global Environment Facility. 2010. "Country Profile for Vanuatu."

Government of the Republic of Vanuatu. 1998. "Convention on Biological Diversity: Vanuatu National Report to Conference of the Parties."

———. 1999. "Vanuatu National Communication to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change."

———. 2007. "Third National Report to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)."

———. 2008. "Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) 2008–2012 between the Government of Vanuatu and United Nations Development Programme Fiji Multi-Country Office."

———. 2011. "National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for Land-Based Resources (2012–2022)." Second draft.

Government of Vanuatu and the European Commission. n.d. "The Country Strategy & National Indicative Programme Vanuatu: 10th EDF Programme of the European Commission (2008–2013)."

International Labour Organization. 2009. "Decent Work Country Programme for Vanuatu."

Liu, John. 2010. "Final Evaluation Report—Environment Projects Landowners Conservation Initiatives. Liu Service Consultancy." Vanuatu.

Lunnay, Chris, Jim Fingleton, Michael Mangawai, Edward Nalyal, and Joel Simo. 2007. "Vanuatu: Review of National Land Legislation, Policy and Land Administration."

Mele, Livo. 2011. "Vanuatu Forest Policy 2011–2020."

Nexus Associates. 2010. "Review of IFC PEP-Pacific Final Report."

Prime Minister's Office, Republic of Vanuatu. 2010. "Millennium Development Goals 2010 Report for Vanuatu."

Radio Vanuatu. 2010. "Vanuatu to Become Member of IFAD."

Ronneberg, Espen. n.d. "A Pacific Regional Perspective on Capacity Building for Climate Change." Presentation from SPREP Bonn meeting.

Secretariat of the Pacific Community and GIZ. 2011. "Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Islands Region (CCCPIR): Vanuatu Programme Brief."

UNICEF. n.d. "Vanuatu: 'Plus 5' Review of the 2002 Special Session on Children and World Fit for Children Plan of Action, Country Report."

United Nations. 2002. "Vanuatu: United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2003–2007)."

———. 2011. "Ex-Ante Impact Assessment of Likely Consequences of Graduation of Vanuatu from the Least Developed Country Category." CDP2012/PLEN/10a.

United Nations Development Programme. n.d. "Millennium Development Goals Support in Vanuatu Project Document."

Van den Akker, Jan. 2006. ASCENDIS. "Final Evaluation of the UNDP/GEF/SPREP Project RAS/02/G35, Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Project (PIREP)."

"Vanuatu National Assessment Report: 5 Year Review of the Mauritius Strategy for Further Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for Sustainable Development." 2010.

Weaver, Sean. 2007. "Vanuatu Summary Report." UNFCCC Workshop on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation in Developing Countries. Cairns, Australia, 6–9 March 2007.

Weaver, Sean, Robert O'Sullivan, and Ioan Viji. 2007. "Vanuatu Forests: Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation." Presentation. UNFCCC, SBSTA Workshop, Cairns, Australia, March 2007.

Welegtabit, Shadrack R. 2001. "Food Security Strategies for Vanuatu." Working paper. CGPRT Centre.

World Bank. n.d. "Opportunities to Improve Social Services in Vanuatu." Summary report.

———. n.d. "Reducing the Risk of Disasters and Climate Variability in the Pacific Islands: Republic of Vanuatu Country Assessment." Paper 53210.

World Health Organization. 1998. *The First Action Plan for Food and Nutrition Policy: WHO European Region 2000–2005.*

Recent GEF Independent Evaluation Office Publications

Evaluation Reports

97	Joint GEF-UNDP Evaluation of the Small Grants Programme	2015
96	Joint GEF–Sri Lanka Country Portfolio Evaluation (1991–2012)	2015
95	GEF Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2014	2015
94	Midterm Evaluation of the System of Transparent Allocation of Resources	2014
93	Midterm Evaluation of the National Portfolio Formulation Exercise	2014
92	GEF Annual Performance Report 2013	2014
91	GEF Annual Impact Report 2013	2014
90	Impact Evaluation on Climate Change Mitigation: GEF Support to Market Change in China, India, Mexico and Russia	2014
89	Report of the Second Professional Peer Review of the GEF Evaluation Function	2014
88	OPS5: Final Report: At the Crossroads for Higher Impact—Summary	2014
87	GEF Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2013	2014
86	OPS5: Final Report: At the Crossroads for Higher Impact	2014
85	Annual Thematic Evaluations Report 2012	2013
84	GEF Country Portfolio Evaluation: India (1991–2012), Volumes 1 and 2	2013
83	GEF Annual Performance Report 2012	2013
82	Evaluación de la cartera de proyectos del FMAM en Cuba (1992–2011), Volumens 1 y 2	2013
81	Avaliação de Portfólio de Projetos do GEF: Brasil (1991–2011), Volumes 1 e 2	2013
80	GEF Annual Performance Report 2011	2013
79	OPS5: First Report: Cumulative Evidence on the Challenging Pathways to Impact	2013
78	Evaluation of the GEF Focal Area Strategies	2013
77	GEF Country Portfolio Study: Timor-Leste (2004–2011)	2013
76	GEF Annual Impact Report 2012	2013
75	The GEF in the South China Sea and Adjacent Areas	2013
74	GEF Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2012	2012
73	Evaluation of the Special Climate Change Fund	2012
72	GEF Beneficiary Countries of the OECS (1992–2011) (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines), Volumes 1 and 2	2012
71	Evaluación de la cartera de proyectos del FMAM en Nicaragua (1996–2010), Volumens 1 y 2	2012
70	Evaluation of GEF National Capacity Self-Assessments	2012
69	Annual Thematic Evaluation Report 2011	2012
68	GEF Annual Impact Report 2011	2012
67	Estudio de la cartera de proyectos del FMAM en El Salvador (1994–2010), Volumens 1 y 2	2012
66	GEF Country Portfolio Study: Jamaica (1994–2010), Volumes 1 and 2	2012
65	GEF Annual Performance Report 2010	2011
64	GEF Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2011	2011
63	GEF Annual Impact Report 2010	2011
62	Review of the Global Environment Facility Earth Fund	2011
61	Evaluation of the GEF Strategic Priority for Adaptation	2011
60	GEF Country Portfolio Evaluation: Turkey (1992–2009)	2011
59	GEF Country Portfolio Evaluation: Moldova (1994–2009)	2011

Evaluation Documents

ED-4	The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy 2010	2010
ED-3	Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations	2008
ED-2	GEF Evaluation Office Ethical Guidelines	2008

Learning Products

LP-3	The Journey to Rio+20: Gathering Evidence on Expectations for the GEF	2012
LP-2	Climate Change and the GEF	2010
LP-1	Biodiversity and the GEF	2010

To see all GEF Independent Evaluation Office publications, please visit our webpage.

Global Environment Facility
Independent Evaluation Office
1818 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20433
USA