

Terminal Evaluation Review form, GEF Evaluation Office, APR 2013

1. Project Data

| Summary project data | | | |
|--|--------------|--|------------------------|
| GEF project ID | | 1188 | |
| GEF Agency project ID | | UNDP: 858; UNEP: 2328-2731-4809 | |
| GEF Replenishment Phase | | GEF - 3 | |
| Lead GEF Agency (include all for joint projects) | | United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Lead IA) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) | |
| Project name | | Combating Living Resource Depletion and Coastal Area Degradation in the Guinea Current LME through Ecosystem-based Regional Actions (GCLME) | |
| Country/Countries | | Regional (16 countries): Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone and Togo | |
| Region | | Africa | |
| Focal area | | International Waters | |
| Operational Program or Strategic Priorities/Objectives | | OP#9 – Integrated Land and Water Component | |
| Executing agencies involved | | United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) | |
| NGOs/CBOs involvement | | None noted in the TE but some involvement noted in a UNDP's PIR. | |
| Private sector involvement | | Some involvement possible but the TE does not provide the specifics | |
| CEO Endorsement (FSP) /Approval date (MSP) | | 8/20/2004 | |
| Effectiveness date / project start | | January 2005 | |
| Expected date of project completion (at start) | | 06/30/2009 | |
| Actual date of project completion | | 06/30/2012 | |
| Project Financing | | | |
| | | At Endorsement (US \$M) | At Completion (US \$M) |
| Project Preparation Grant | GEF funding | 0.637 | 0.637 |
| | Co-financing | 0.712 | 0.712 |
| GEF Project Grant | | 20.81 | 20.04 |
| Co-financing | IA/EA own | 0.330 | 1.360 |
| | Government | 32.44 | 8.037 |
| | Other* | 1.200 | 0.600 |
| Total GEF funding | | 21.44 | 20.68 |
| Total Co-financing | | 34.68 | 10.70 |
| Total project funding (GEF grant(s) + co-financing) | | 56.13 | 31.39 |
| Terminal evaluation/review information | | | |
| TE completion date | | May 2012 | |
| TE submission date | | November 2012 | |
| Author of TE | | Sarah Humphrey and Christopher Gordon | |
| TER completion date | | 01/22/2014 | |
| TER prepared by | | Inela Weeks | |
| TER peer review by (if GEF EO review) | | Joshua Schneck | |

*Includes contributions mobilized for the project from other multilateral agencies, bilateral development, cooperation agencies, NGOs, the private sector, and beneficiaries.

2. Summary of Project Ratings

| Criteria | Final PIR | IA Terminal Evaluation | IA Evaluation Office Review | GEF EO Review |
|---|-----------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Project Outcomes | S | MU | MU | MU |
| Sustainability of Outcomes | Not rated | ML | ML | MU |
| M&E Design | Not rated | MS | MS | MS |
| M&E Implementation | Not rated | MU | MU | MU |
| Quality of Implementation | S | MS | MS | MS |
| Quality of Execution | Not rated | MS | MS | MU |
| Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report | N/A | N/A | Not rated | HS |

3. Project Objectives

3.1 Global Environmental Objectives of the project:

The project had a focus on the priority problems and issues identified by the 16 GCLME countries that have led to unsustainable fisheries and use of other marine resources, as well as the degradation of marine and coastal ecosystems by human activities. The project aimed to address several priority problems including: resource depletion, loss of biodiversity (including habitat loss and coastal erosion), and land- and sea-based pollution.

Spanning 16 countries, the GCLME is ranked among the most productive coastal and offshore waters of the world with rich fishery resources, oil and gas reserves, precious minerals, a high potential for tourism and an important reservoir of marine biological diversity of global significance.

3.2 Development Objectives of the project:

The overall development objective of this Project, was to create an ecosystem-wide assessment and management framework for sustainable use of living and non-living resources in the GCLME to: (1) recover depleted fish stocks; (2) restore degraded habitat; and (3) reduce land and ship-based pollution in the GCLME.

The Project had five main components with associated objectives: (1) Finalize SAP and develop sustainable financing mechanism for its implementation; (2) Recovery and sustainability of depleted fisheries and living marine resources including marine aquaculture; (3) Planning for biodiversity conservation, restoration of degraded habitats and developing strategies for reducing coastal erosion; (4) Reduce land and sea-based pollution and improve water quality; and (5) Regional coordination and institutional sustainability.

Priority action areas include reversing coastal area degradation and living resources depletion, relying heavily on regional capacity building. As such, the GCLME was a foundational project designed to produce a strategic action programme (SAP) for management of the GCLME and to contribute to the creation of enabling conditions for its implementation through capacity building and development of a Guinea Current Commission. The project also set out to implement demonstration and priority activities in the areas of fisheries, habitats and pollution, including through implementation of six national and three regional demonstration projects.

3.3 Were there any **changes** in the Global Environmental Objectives, Development Objectives, or other activities during implementation?

The TE does not describe any change to the GEO or the PDO but changes to the Project 's logframe, including demonstration projects, timeframes, and budgets have occurred.

The Project was extended four times, with the final extension to June 2012 leading to an operational phase of seven and a half years (instead of the initial five). There were irregularities in project execution and UNIDO's Office of Internal Oversight Services (IOS) conducted an investigation between September 2007 and June 2008. Project activities were frozen on 14 December 2007. The UNIDO Project Manager was dismissed in February 2008 and the Project Director resigned on April 2008. UNDP suspended approval of budget revisions in December 2007 and UNEP suspended disbursement of funds in June 2008. Further, sub-component/output 5.7 was suspended between January and June 2011 due to disagreement between UNEP and UNIDO on the process to be used in facilitating the GCLME countries to establish the Guinea Current Commission.

After the investigation, the Project was re-launched and a new work plan and logframe were developed in November 2008 and Project activities were re-launched in January 2009. The remaining budget was reallocated and budgets that had been submitted for the demonstration projects and by the RACs were adjusted to be more realistic, according to the TE.

One major change in Project direction was a decision to recognize and support five Regional Activity Centres (RACs) as centers of excellence in the areas of marine productivity, fisheries, environmental information management, pollution and risk. The first three of these RACs came to be identified with delivery of the three regional demonstration projects on the same themes. The TE notes that the process and rationale behind selection and creation of the RACs is not well documented and appears to have been *ad hoc*. The concept of RACs was introduced in the Project Director's report to the first PSC meeting in 2005 in the context of regional networking. The TE notes several issues regarding the establishment of RACs. Memoranda of understanding (MOUs) were signed between the Project Director and the RACs but these MOUs were of poor quality with only general commitments and without reference to budgets, reporting requirements, or timing. The TE notes that although their legal status is highly questionable, these have been considered valid during the life of the project. In two cases (EIMSC and Pollution) they appear to have been the basis for endowment of the centers with equipment valued at nearly US\$ 680 000 between 2005 and 2007.

The TE noted that very little first-hand information was available on the history of the project and on changes in strategic direction implemented during its early years, including decisions related to the RACs and demonstration projects. This is in part due to changes in key staff including the Project Coordinator and Project Manager in UNIDO and in part due to poor documentation.

4. GEF EO assessment of Outcomes and Sustainability

Please refer to the GEF Terminal Evaluation Review Guidelines for detail on the criteria for ratings.

Relevance can receive either a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory rating. For Effectiveness and Cost efficiency, a six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess. Sustainability ratings are assessed on a four-point scale: Likely=no or negligible risk; Moderately Likely=low risk; Moderately Unlikely=substantial risks; Unlikely=high risk. In assessing a Sustainability rating please note if, and to what degree, sustainability of project outcomes is threatened by financial, sociopolitical, institutional/governance, or environmental factors.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 4.1 Relevance | Rating: Satisfactory |
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This Project conforms to the GEF Operational Programs (OP) #9 - International Waters: Integrated Land and Water, where there is a focus on an integrated management approach to the sustainable use of [land and] water resources on an area-wide basis. The OP #9 emphasizes the need to introduce and practice ecosystem-based assessment and management action while supporting "institutional building ... and specific capacity-strengthening measures so that policy, legal and institutional changes can be enacted in sectors contributing to transboundary environmental degradation." This Project aimed to support institutional capacity building for long-term regional cooperation and to strengthen regional capacities in environmental management, monitoring of priority pollutants, public awareness, and preservation of transboundary living resources. The Project was also relevant to OP #2 - Biodiversity in coastal and marine ecosystems; specifically to aspects of eco-system management including: targeted research, information sharing, training, extension institutional-strengthening, and demonstrations.

According to the TE, the Project was expected to and has contributed to three of the internal, specific targets adopted in 2003 under the GEF International Waters Focal Area Strategic Priorities IW-1 (mobilization of resources under TDA/SAPs or equivalent processes) and IW-2 (expanding global coverage of foundational capacity building). It remained relevant to several outcomes defined under objectives 2 and 3 of the GEF 5 International Waters Strategy. The Project Document also notes that the Project was consistent with the (then) Draft GEF International Waters Focal Area-Strategic Priorities in Support of WSSD Outcomes for FY 2003-2006.

The environmental goals of the project were consistent with the Abidjan Convention for Co-operation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region adopted in March 1981. The Abidjan Convention and its Protocol on Cooperation in Combating Pollution in Cases of Emergency constitute the legal components of the West and Central African (WACAF) Action Plan. The Convention expresses the decision of the WACAF Region to deal individually and jointly with common marine and coastal environmental problems. The Convention also provides an important framework through which national policy makers and resource managers can implement national control measures in the protection and development of the marine and coastal environment of the WACAF Region.

4.2 Effectiveness

Rating: **Moderately Unsatisfactory**

The overall rating on effectiveness is **moderately unsatisfactory**. The Project has achieved significant results, including satisfactorily achieving many of its outputs but it had limited progress in terms of institutional arrangements. Further, delivery and outcomes in the areas of fisheries and living resources, biodiversity and habitats, and water quality fell short of those anticipated in the project document. There was no impact recorded from its demonstration project component.

The GCLME project was highly complex and ambitious with five components, 37 outputs and over 100 activities spanning 16 countries, supported by a GEF budget of over US\$ 20 million. As noted in the TE, the GCLME Project was foundational in nature, with most of its emphasis being placed on Strategic Action Programme (SAP) and National Action Plan (NAP) development, and on creation of an institutional framework (Components 1 and 5). Components 2, 3 and 4 were to support the SAP process and the transboundary diagnostic analysis (TDA) and to address issues identified in the preliminary TDA and SAP towards achievement of the three preliminary environmental quality objectives (EQOs) that were later adopted as part of the final SAP. These three components were intended to initiate SAP implementation and had envisaged substantive outcomes in the areas of fisheries and living marine resources; biodiversity, degraded habitats and coastal erosion and pollution and water quality.

The Project's main objective was to create an ecosystem-wide assessment and management framework for sustainable use of living and non-living resources in the GCLME. The TE carried out a ROTI analysis rating the Project as DC (corresponding to a moderately unsatisfactory) with the *overall likelihood of impact achievement* rated as moderately unlikely. While noting that the ROTI may not be well matched to SAP design projects, the TE also noted that the MU rating does present "... a rather negative picture of the extent to which the GCLME project has laid the foundation for future delivery of significant environmental impacts...." It also notes that the rating assigned "...reflects that the project has fallen short in view of its ambitious design – which included early implementation actions – including as a result of failure to follow through on activities at national level that fell beyond the immediate control of the core project management..." Based on the analysis presented in ROTI, it seems that not all of the Project outcomes have been fully delivered and some of the results from component 2,3, and 4 were disappointing. For instance, the national demonstration projects have been successful in terms of *planning* stress reduction measures, but these have not yet been *implemented at any significant scale*.

The TE describes three overarching indicators (themes) of effectiveness established at objective and purpose level. These were:

- (1) "Participating countries endorse an ecosystem-based approach to assessment and management of the living and other resources of the GCLME by year 1" – rated **satisfactory** by the TE due to:
 - a. Completion and publishing of the TDA in 2006. The TDA is a comprehensive document but the TE also notes that two substantive sections appear to have been copied from the BCLME TDA. Nevertheless the TDA did provide an adequate basis for moving on to SAP and NAP development, with the latter enabling information gaps to be addressed;

- b. Development and endorsement of the SAP by the 16 GCLME countries. Reaching such an agreement can be considered a major feat for an LME spanning 16 countries, several of which have been affected by war, unrest or political upheavals in the past decade. Yet, the TE also notes that, like the TDA, the SAP has drawn significantly on the BCLME text. The SAP has little detail on how it would be operationalized. The portfolio of *Country Investment Project Profiles for the Implementation* of the GCLME SAP was developed but during the First Partners' Conference in 2011, only a handful of donor organizations were represented and there were no specific commitments to fund either SAP implementation or priority projects;
 - c. Finalization of the NAPs for land based activities for all 16 GCLME countries; and
 - d. Critical mass of scientists, technicians, and managers with knowledge about ecosystem-based approach has not been reached; though significant capacity has been built.
- (2) "Adoption by countries of a legal and institutional framework for joint governance of the shared ecosystem by year 4" – rated **moderately unsatisfactory** by the TE. Some of the results include:
- a. The Interim Guinea Current Commission (IGCC) established in 2006 following the decision at the first Ministerial meeting as set out in the 'Abuja Declaration'. The RCU fulfilled the role of the IGCC Secretariat during the Project;
 - b. The decision to create the Guinea Current Commission (GCC) through a protocol to the Abidjan Convention. While the decision of the Ministers paves the way for further development and establishment of the GCC it falls short of establishment of a full-fledged Commission and according to the TE its financial sustainability is a concern;
 - c. At the 9th Conference of the Parties to the Abidjan Convention in 2011, the 2007 Draft Protocol to the Abidjan Convention Concerning Cooperation in The Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBSA) in the West and Central African Region was to have been adopted. This is still pending. A draft regional ballast water convention document has been prepared;
 - d. There is little evidence of national policy changes in key sectors such as fisheries, pollution and habitat management, although outcomes at the national level were anticipated related to sustainable fisheries, aquaculture and mariculture, invasive species, biodiversity, and oil and gas. Some progress was reported related to fisheries in Ghana. Guinea Bissau reported that it had acceded to two IMO Conventions as a result of the Project. However progress in this area has not been systematically tracked. The main output at national level was the establishment of the Inter-ministerial Committees (IMCs) that functioned within the context of this project. But, institutional change at the national level has been limited since the IMCs are operating on an informal basis.
- (3) "Demonstration projects to reduce the declining state of the ecosystem and achieve the recovery of depleted fish-stocks, restore degraded habitats and reduce coastal pollution completed and functional by year 5" – rated **moderately unsatisfactory** by the TE. Six national demonstration projects were completed and results disseminated. But, these have not led to stress reduction at any significant scale. Some of the achievements and shortcomings include:
- a. Detailed studies carried out on some species, mainly through the FAO EAF - Nansen survey cruises (for fisheries and benthos) and Ships of Opportunity for zooplankton.

Relatively little work was done in the area of mariculture: some of the country NAPs comment on the value of coastal aquaculture and mariculture, but there was no regional determination of the sustainable capacity of ecosystem and maximum practical limits for its future development;

- b. Three management plans for fisheries were drawn up and adopted by the countries. But, neither country was implementing the plans at the time of TE. Some countries have included elements of these management plans in their national policy frameworks;
- c. The GCLME/UNILAG Regional Centre for Environmental Information Management and Decision Support System did not live up to expectation. By the end of 2011, the project did not have an operational EIS or a central repository of data. Many of the outputs/products from the EIMS-RAC were obtainable from other sources such as Google Earth or were national rather than regional in scope. With the migration of the webpage to IW-LEARN, francophone content has been lost; and
- d. The TE rated all of the other demonstration projects either unsatisfactory or moderately unsatisfactory, reflecting significant shortcomings of this component.

As noted in the TE, the application of the GEF IW Tracking Tool offers another perspective on effectiveness. The Project has achieved: (a) high ratings on completion of the TDA and endorsement of SAP; (b) mixed ratings for institutional arrangements, as the IGCC was established but was rated poorly due to the absence of voluntary contributions for its functioning and the GCC will take another few years to be completed. Further IMCs are functioning only on an informal basis. Moreover, the national demonstration projects have failed to deliver stress reduction at any significant scale with most remaining at the stage of studies or plans. The TE added an SP-1 (SAP implementation project) indicator on enactment of national or local reforms in view of the anticipated outcomes related to legal reforms under Components 2, 3 and 4 of the project. While legal reviews were undertaken as part of the NAP process, few legal reforms have been enacted (e.g., in Ghana) and the rating given was a zero.

However, it must also be noted that the outcomes of this foundational project were designed from the outset to feed into a continuing process with allocation of roles and responsibilities addressed in the SAP. Some of the important results of the project, taken together, represent important foundational steps towards the project development goal, to create an ecosystem-wide assessment and management framework for sustainable use of living and non-living resources in the GCLME.

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| 4.3 Efficiency | Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory |
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The overall rating on efficiency is **moderately unsatisfactory**, in accord with the TE’s rating, reflecting as noted in the TE “significant shortcomings in terms of fiscal responsibility in the early years of the project, the consequences of the project irregularities, including related loss of time and momentum, and the subsequent strong recovery efforts.”

The TE notes that there were strong efforts made by UNIDO and the RCU to complete the project in a timely manner. Yet, the project has been extended on four occasions, with a total extension period of

three years. There was an increase in expenditure on core staff positions associated with the extension, but the TE notes that this has been offset by under-expenditure on technical advisors who were to be recruited as part of the RCU. Many activities have significantly overrun the timing indicated in the project work plan and logframe. In some cases this has disrupted sequencing of activities, e.g., the national monitoring data did not feed into the TDA process as anticipated. Similarly, there was insufficient time to complete national policy changes. Moreover, the TE notes that there have been reported knock-on effects on other projects such as FAO’s EAF Nansen project.

Limited information is available on progress of the project in its early years. But, as noted before, this Project was suspended due to the irregularities in project execution, which resulted in financial losses. UNDP expenditure to 31 December 2011 was US\$ 11,419,385 or 98% of the GEF Grant. UNEP expenditure to 31 October 2011 was US\$ 8,625,842 or 95% of the GEF grant. UNIDO reported that it had reimbursed US\$ 528,500 in response to the UNIDO IOS investigation, equivalent to 95% of the management fee on UNDP funding. This amount was credited to the UNDP budget since the grant to UNDP covered management (RCU) costs and did not affect the overall project cost. Although the management of the Project significantly improved since 2009, the effect of the project suspension in 2007 and 2008 and ensuing hiatus due to suspension of funding had both direct and indirect effects on timeliness. In terms of direct effects, project activities ceased and then operated at a reduced level for approximately one year, during which time project expenditure was reduced to a minimum. Indirect effects included a loss in institutional memory and a loss of project momentum.

The cost effectiveness of the GCLME project has been enhanced by its building on the earlier GOG-LME project that covered six of the GCLME countries and by the participatory PDF phase. The GCLME project drew heavily on Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem (BCLME) outputs during both design and earlier stages of implementation, including in development of the TDA, the SAP, and the SAP agreement. The TE notes that “ while taking inspiration from the approach and structure of BCLME outputs was clearly helpful, evaluators are concerned about the indiscriminate reuse of some of the BCLME outputs, which belies the originality of the reported consultative process.”

The TE notes that the “...decision to establish a single project management structure for what was effectively two full-sized projects provided a source of cost saving through economies of scale, but placed a considerable burden on the RCU and especially the Project Manager and finance and administration staff in UNIDO who needed to work with UNDP and UNEP’s parallel reporting systems...”

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| 4.4 Sustainability | Rating: Moderately Unlikely |
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The overall rating for sustainability is ‘**moderately unlikely**’, which differs from the TE’s ‘moderately likely’ rating. The rating here takes into account the overall evidence presented throughout the TE as well the applicable parts of the ROTI analysis.

Socio-Political– Moderately Likely – the TE notes that this Project has been resilient, accomplishing some substantial outcomes in a difficult socio-political environment (e.g., the participating countries

undergoing political crisis or recovering from conflict). This bodes well for the future of the GCLME initiative, according to the TE. The endorsement of the SAP as well as progress towards the establishment of the GCC illustrate the strong overall support for the GCLME initiative. Additionally, GCLME issues are also relevant at national level. At the same time, shortfalls in co-finance as well as the largely reactive function of the IMCs point to limited project ownership at national level.

Financial Resources – Moderately Unlikely - The SAP provides a platform for further investment in the GCLME as it represents both a technical consensus on priority investment areas and a politically endorsed strategy for the future management of the LME. Continued funding at various levels will be critical to achieving SAP and NAP implementation. Yet, the materialization of this funding is uncertain, especially if the potential donor funding does not emerge. The case of the 2011 *Partners Conference of Implementation of the GCLME SAP and NAPs* is illustrative here on the risks involved with international funding. The conference brought together 80 stakeholder representatives. Yet, no firm offers of financial support were made with participants drawing attention to the difficult global economic situation.

Further, there was strong partner engagement towards development of a SAP implementation project for further GEF funding. Fifteen of the 16 GCLME countries had endorsed the draft 'Project Identification Form' by May 2012 and over US\$ 500 million in co-finance had been identified. But, the TE does not state the likelihood of this proposal being approved. Moreover, the TE notes that "...there is a strong risk that the process will stall without such catalytic funding...."

Although the Project created the IGCC and the decision was taken to establish the permanent GCC, future funding for the IGCC or GCC functioning is a concern. In 2012 the Ministers recommended that the IGCC Secretariat should be maintained with support of any unutilized (project) funds from the UN Agencies after the closure of the GCLME project. The proposal for future funding of the GCC is based on a gradual phase-in of country contributions, with the costs of the GCC expected to be met in the short term through project funding for SAP implementation (the materialization of which, as noted, is not clear). The TE notes further concerns regarding financing: i) most countries failed to mobilize pledged co-finance for the GCLME project; ii) there are shortfalls in payments of dues for the Abidjan Convention that further underscore difficulties in mobilizing funds for regional bodies, and iii) there is a possible competition for funding with other regional management bodies.

Lastly, RACs were proposed to be SAP implementation mechanisms, but they are unlikely to be able to support GCLME activities without dedicated financial resources, since staff and facilities are allocated to projects and initiatives that provide for cost recovery.

Institutional Framework and Governance –Moderately Unlikely - Regionally, the functioning of the IGCC and the proposed GCC is a concern, due to the lack of pledged funding. At the national level the project has encouraged inter-sectoral coordination through creation of IMCs, but these have not been formalized. Although RACs were proposed as the SAP implementation mechanisms concerns were expressed regarding the use of RACs and laboratory as regional service providers in view of cost and logistical issues (e.g., associated with storing and transport of samples, or language difference).

In terms of legal frameworks, the project has contributed to revision of the Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Pollution in Cases of Emergency in the Western and Central African Region (Emergency Protocol) to the Abidjan Convention that was adopted in April 2011 and to drafting of the Protocol on Land-based Sources and Activities (LBSA), dated March 2007. The LBSA protocol was further approved at a meeting of the Abidjan Convention Focal Points and signed in June 2012 by the first six plenipotentiaries. However, there was very little project follow up when it came to national policy revisions and changes. Most of the project-proposed modifications have not as yet been ratified by the various national authorities for the laws to come in force. Consultants who conducted legal reviews in these areas were not aware of any processes to take forward their findings. Two crucial assumptions for achievement of outcomes related to SAP implementation were mobilization of anticipated co-finance and empowerment of national implementation structures, both of which were factors that have negatively affected project performance and have the potential to future negatively affect sustainability.

Environmental Sustainability – Moderately Likely - The level of interest and attention from national governments related to coastal systems has increased given other developments in the sub-region including initiatives on climate change adaptation and mitigation and the increase in national wealth from offshore oil exploitation in several GCLME countries, which bodes well for environmental sustainability of the project results. The project's approach of a harmonized regional response remains valid in the context of improving or declining environmental conditions.

However, the TE notes several important issues that may threaten the future flow of project benefits: (a) the existing lack of knowledge on critical thresholds and tipping points in environmental systems in the GCLME area; more research on the functioning of systems needs to be carried out; (b) there needs to be long term monitoring of the key environmental indicators and populations of sentinel species; (c) climate change impacts and country response to these impacts could also affect (both positively and negatively) project outcomes; (d) increased risk of oil spillage due to significant oil finds in the Eastern Atlantic; (e) the growth of coastal cities, the lack of proper planning for domestic sanitation and the lack of sanitary landfills will result in more nutrients entering the ocean with the consequent eutrophication and increased incidence of harmful algal blooms; and (f) the growth of the coastal states' economies will result in an increase in shipping and the associated problems of invasive alien species in ballast water.

5. Processes and factors affecting attainment of project outcomes

5.1 Co-financing. To what extent was the reported co-financing essential to the achievement of GEF objectives? If there was a difference in the level of expected co-financing and actual co-financing, then what were the reasons for it? Did the extent of materialization of co-financing affect project's outcomes and/or sustainability? If so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

The TE notes the differences in the anticipated co-financing between the UNDP and UNEP Project Documents and stipulates that the UNDP proposal has been taken as a baseline for the TE. The UNDP project document anticipated total co-financing of US\$ 33,971,442 comprising US\$ 30,356,442 from the GCLME countries, US\$ 330,000 from the IAs and the EA, US\$ 2,085,000 from the government of Norway, US\$ 600,000 from NOAA and US\$600,000 from the private sector.

There has been very little reporting to the RCU on co-financing. The data that was collected includes substantial funding (categorized as 'associated funding') by third parties to projects that are broadly related to the GCLME's development objective, but which do not contribute directly to the outputs and activities set out in the project document and were not generated as a result of the project. The total amount of co-financing reported, including this 'associated' funding, is US\$ 39.5 million, which exceeds the expected total by about 16 %. However, if associated funding is excluded, the total reported co-finance comes to just US\$ 10.0 million, or 29 % of the amount pledged with much of the deficit accounted for by the GCLME countries. The shortfall reflects both a failure to mobilize pledged funds and the limited reporting of cash and in kind support by project partners (e.g., important, but unreported contributions from IMO and FAO).

Counterpart funding has proved difficult to mobilize in the GCLME countries. Reasons evoked included lack of visibility of the project at national and ministerial level; time passed since the Project Brief was approved in 2003; lack of direct funding from the project to leverage co-finance; difficulties in mobilizing co-finance at the start and close of a the project due to budget cycles; shortfalls in resources; and, inability to capture in kind contributions of other national institutions.

The TE notes that two countries, Cameroon and Gabon, together with UNEP mobilized co-finance that exceeded the amounts pledged, and this difference of US\$ 2 million can be considered as leveraged resources. Part of this is accounted for by funding to the RAC in Gabon, while leveraged resources from UNEP include substantial cash and in kind support through the GPA, Abidjan Convention secretariat and Division of Environmental Law and Conventions. Co-financing from the Government of Norway did not materialize, but the Government of Norway has provided equivalent or greater support through the FAO EAF - Nansen GEF project.

5.2 Project extensions and/or delays. If there were delays in project implementation and completion, then what were the reasons for it? Did the delay affect the project's outcomes and/or sustainability? If so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

Initially, the Project was to be implemented over five years. It was extended four times, to June 2012 leading to an operational phase of seven and a half years. Some of the reasons for the extensions include: (1) project suspension between 2007 and 2008 as a result of irregularities leading to loss of time, loss of institutional memory and loss of momentum, in part associated with the uncertainty and loss of confidence amongst the GCLME countries as to whether and in what form the project would continue; and (2) difficulties and delays in preparing, planning and scheduling the 2012 Ministerial and associated experts meeting. As project host and Chair to the IGCC, the Government of Ghana used the third Ministerial Conference to express its dissatisfaction with the role played by the UN agencies, particularly UNEP, in opening up the debate on the institutional options for establishment of the GCC and blamed this for the delay in project completion. However it became clear during the 2012 Experts' and Ministerial meetings that the majority of countries supported a different option to that presented to them in June 2010.

An additional consequence of various Project extensions has been the increase in expenditure on core staff positions. But, the TE notes that this has been offset by under-expenditure on technical

advisors who were to be recruited as part of the RCU. Further, many activities have significantly overrun the timing indicated in the project work plan. In some cases this has disrupted sequencing of activities (e.g., national monitoring data failed to feed into the TDA process). Similarly, the relatively poor follow up in terms of national policy can be partly explained by the late start of related studies that were originally intended to feed into the TDA process, meaning there was insufficient time in the remaining life of the project to complete national policy changes.

5.3 Country ownership. Assess the extent to which country ownership has affected project outcomes and sustainability? Describe the ways in which it affected outcomes and sustainability, highlighting the causal links:

The TE notes that there was strong regional policy support for the Project and SAP, but limited project ownership nationally, which may be a reflection of the regional nature of many project activities. Regionally, Ministers from all 16 countries signing the Abuja Declaration of 22 September 2006 and the Osu Declaration of 2 July 2010 related to the establishment of the GCC. Similarly all 16 countries have endorsed the SAP.

However, despite strong regional political support for the Project and creation of the GCC, the TE identified country ownership as a weakness, due to: (1) lack of empowerment of national structures, which were not given a strong mandate or budget to nationally pursue project activities; (2) visibility of the Project in countries, especially where there was no demonstration project or a RAC; (3) inability of directors to mobilise political support around planning processes in the absence of tangible outcomes; (4) failure to fully engage directors and assistants in activities taking place at national level or in regional activities, such as workshops; and (5) loss of momentum and uncertainty during the project suspension regarding the Project's continuance.

In terms of institutional support, each country appointed National Directors in the relevant Ministry who has taken part in PSC meetings. The focal institutions established and convened meetings of the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMCs) bringing together specialists from different Ministries and, in some cases, civil society representatives. However, these have: met infrequently; experienced difficulty in maintaining consistent representation; have largely functioned in a reactive manner; and there was little systematic engagement outside host institutions. As a result they have not played the mainstreaming role that would be required for an implementation project and opportunities to build linkages with other initiatives have been missed. Further, there was limited policy development with notable exceptions such as Guinea Bissau that used the project to advance accession to the Abidjan and IMO Conventions. There was no systematic follow up on policy-related GCLME activities at national level despite anticipated outcomes in this area. Finally, counterpart funding has proved difficult to mobilize in the GCLME countries.

6. Assessment of project's Monitoring and Evaluation system

Ratings are assessed on a six point scale: Highly Satisfactory=no shortcomings in this M&E component; Satisfactory=minor shortcomings in this M&E component; Moderately Satisfactory=moderate shortcomings in this M&E component; Moderately

Unsatisfactory=significant shortcomings in this M&E component; Unsatisfactory=major shortcomings in this M&E component; Highly Unsatisfactory=there were no project M&E systems.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

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| 6.1 M&E Design at entry | Rating: Moderately Satisfactory |
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The Project's M&E design at entry is rated 'moderately satisfactory'. The Project had an M&E plan, a logframe and a budget for M&E, but the TE noted shortcomings both in the logframe and the budget.

According to the TE, the original Project logframe included objectively verifiable indicators (OVIs) and means of verification at output level but many OVIs "...essentially described delivery of an activity." As such, many of these were reflecting management activities rather than outcomes. OVIs were relevant and measurable with about half of them being time-bound. The TE notes that individually each output can be regarded as attainable based on the original project concept. However the sheer breadth of activities and outputs made this an ambitious program of work even after the November 2008 revision.

A revised project logframe was prepared in 2008. Changes including splitting of one output into two parts and removal of one internally focused output (5.8). The activities and outcomes were also modified, and open-ended outcomes (such as 'pollution reduced') were better specified. The OVIs were significantly revised and expanded, but remained at output (process) rather than outcome level. A more detailed M&E plan was also developed that included detailed description of reporting requirements and responsibility and suggested that indicators for M&E will be developed at subsequent workshops. The TE also notes that the project indicators and outcomes foresaw a significant level of mainstreaming at the national level, but that the arrangements for project delivery at national level were not well developed. Anticipated reporting included a stocktaking report, half yearly reports, annual project reports, PIRs, quarterly expenditure reports, annual work plans, and a project TE (for which UNEP was the lead).

The funding allocated for M&E was US\$ 300 000, some 1.5% of the GEF funding. The detailed GEF budgets included allocations for M&E consultants, tripartite reviews, a mid-term evaluation and for M&E of demonstration projects. Allocations were made for environmental monitoring or assessment activities undertaken as part of the wider project, though the TE notes that small grants for monitoring at national level were insufficient.

The Project Brief stated that the project would identify Process Indicators, Stress Reduction Indicators and Environmental Status Indicators relevant to the SAP/EQOs and that these would be used to monitor the project and SAP implementation starting in year two.

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| 6.2 M&E Implementation | Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory |
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The rating on M&E implementation is **moderately unsatisfactory**, in agreement with the TE. Based on the information provided in the TE, even though there was sound management of individual tasks, there

was no overall monitoring system that reflects progress at output or outcome level. As a result, it has been difficult for the TE to piece together a full and accurate account of project progress using available documentation. Further, the expenditure data related to M&E is fragmented, but it is clear that major activities such as the PSC meetings have gone ahead.

Project reporting has included reporting to both IAs. Reports to the IAs have been complemented by occasional detailed reports prepared for meetings of the PSC and more recently by detailed presentations to the PSC. The TE notes that "...the reporting to UNDP has been rather superficial and consequently ratings appear unduly positive." The TE also notes that half-yearly reports to UNEP were "... rather perfunctory with minimal narrative text and analysis..." and were "... of substantially lower quality and usefulness than those reports seen in other UNEP implemented projects." Reports were not always timely, were sometimes submitted in batches, and the record is incomplete. The UNEP PIRs report on some deliverables in the early years of the project that could not be substantiated despite the detailed project archive maintained by the RCU having been made available for the evaluation. It is also noted in the TE that the quality of PIRs has improved during the Project.

Since 2009, day-to-day tracking of project progress has been based on the project work plans and associated budgets have been presented for approval to the PSC meetings. Reporting at national level has been variable and there has not been any systematic tracking of outcomes at the national level.

The TE found no evidence that the planned stress reduction and environmental impact indicators were developed. The TE also notes that these indicators would have been extremely costly to measure, and would have been beset by issues of timing (with changes expected only after completion of the project) and attribution. In this regard the project's focus on development of indicators and collation and strengthening of baseline information for the SAP was arguably more appropriate. Project activities that have augmented the baseline include the completion of nine national water quality reports, the FAO EAF - Nansen surveys, TDA development, preparation of NAPs, preparation of 10 national and one regional state of marine environment reports, as well as compilation and digitalisation of thematic data by the EIMS centre. These have improved awareness and accessibility of data, but data in the region remains patchy. The TE notes that it is beyond the scope of a single project to fully address data gaps.

A mid-term evaluation was undertaken from 22 March 2007 to July 2008. Although a management response was presented, it has only been partially implemented. Difficult circumstances under which the evaluation was undertaken (including no access to senior management) compromised the usefulness of the report. Terminal evaluation was carried out and presents a comprehensive and balanced assessment of the project.

7. Assessment of project implementation and execution

Quality of Implementation includes the quality of project design, as well as the quality of supervision and assistance provided by implementing agency(s) to execution agencies throughout project implementation. Quality of Execution covers the effectiveness of the executing agency(s) in performing its roles and responsibilities. In both instances, the focus is upon factors that are largely

within the control of the respective implementing and executing agency(s). A six point rating scale is used (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory), or Unable to Assess.

Please justify ratings in the space below each box.

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| 7.1 Quality of Project Implementation | Rating: Moderately Satisfactory |
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The rating for UNDP and UNEP implementation is **moderately satisfactory**, as the two IAs provided good overall support during the Project, but some shortcomings existed in reporting, handover and responsiveness, according to the TE.

The Project was jointly implemented by UNDP and UNEP, with UNDP as the lead IA. According to the TE, UNDP and UNEP have participated actively in the PSC meetings. Both IAs took an appropriate interest in the process and results of the IOS investigation and follow up and UNEP was closely involved in supporting the re-launch of the project with the Task Manager participating in detailed planning meetings with UNIDO and the RCU in late 2008. UNEP leveraged significant additional resources for the Project, including through the support of the GPA, Abidjan Convention and Division of Environmental Law and Conventions that were important for the Project's technical and institutional outcomes. UNEP has made clear efforts to distinguish its project supervision role from its wider institutional role as Secretariat to the Abidjan Convention.

The sheer scale and scope of the project was extremely ambitious, which has proved challenging in terms of implementation, scheduling and articulation of different activities, and M&E. As per the TE, both UNEP and UNDP supervisors have struggled to find the time necessary to comprehensively supervise this Project, due to their heavy workloads. This has led to some delays during critical consultations related to the Project conclusion and to parallel development of the PIF for a SAP implementation project. The TE also notes issues with the project design, such as overlaps in some outputs, particularly under Component 4, and the fact that national structures have not been sufficiently empowered or enabled to take a proactive role in the Project due to shortfalls in terms of clarity and feasibility of project deliverables as well as insufficient attention to definition of delivery mechanisms for project implementation at the national level, both of which significantly affected quality at entry of the Project.

Further, issues related to project progress reporting occurred during the Project. UNDP and UNEP could not agree on the PIR ratings, and as a result, in 2008, UNEP introduced a requirement for separate PIRs. The issues with the PIR quality are outlined in the M&E implementation section of this TER. Moreover, there were issues between UNEP and UNIDO where relations became strained, particularly around Output 5.7 that UNEP suspended for several months in 2011 (see the following section for details).

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| 7.2 Quality of Project Execution | Rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory |
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The rating for project execution is ‘moderately unsatisfactory’, primarily due to the problems that occurred during the 2007-2008 period and the impact that these have had on project implementation both before and after 2009. It must also be noted that UNIDO effectively addressed these problems and that there was a strong turn around in management since problems were identified in 2007.

The TE rates the overall financial planning and management as moderately unsatisfactory, due to the irregularities experienced prior to suspension of the project. Financial management in first years of the GCLME project was blighted by “...consistent irregularities, relating to local procurement transactions, inappropriate use of project financial resources for personal gain, and lack of disclosure of familial relationships during recruitment”. Project was suspended on 14 December 2007 as part of UNIDO’s IOS investigation. In 2008, the UNIDO’s Project Manager was dismissed and the Project Director resigned. One of the impacts of this is that limited information is available on project management prior to 2008, since management was heavily centralized on the Project Manager and Project Director. When they departed the Project’s institutional memory was lost. UNIDO reimbursed US\$ 528,500 (corresponded to the net direct loss identified in the IOS report) to the Project, equivalent to 95% of its management fee on the UNDP budget. Since the Project restarted in January 2009, there was proper application of financial, contracting and procurement standards. Yet, the TE also notes that there were weaknesses in financial reporting throughout the Project, especially related to accurately reporting co-financing.

Another impact of the early project regularities was a reduced budget for the rest of the planned outputs. By the time the project re-launched in 2009, roughly 70 % of the project budget had been used but several fundamental activities including development of the NAPs and implementation of the national demonstration projects were outstanding. The repeated project extensions have also resulted in an increase in core staffing costs. The Project had to take a new approach to the demonstration projects and RACs, as well as other changes to the logframe and budgets. The TE also notes that another effect, both direct and indirect, of budget constraints was a shortfall in RCU’s staffing levels. This understaffing resulted in associated shortfalls in delivery on various project components. While engagement of technical partners provided important expertise in these areas, it is likely that additional technical support in these areas would have ensured greater continuity and follow-through at national level, and overcome the rather fragmented delivery in some parts of the project.

Issues regarding the Regional Activity Centres (RACs) were noted. The TE stated that although the legal status of MOUs is highly questionable, these have been considered valid during the project and the project invested substantially in some of the RACs. However, the Project also lacked the resources to fully finance and supervise the RACs to the level anticipated and only the productivity center was able to fulfill its mandate of providing a proactive region-wide service to the GCLME countries.

On the positive side, UNIDO managed to work well at the interface of its own and UNDP and UNEP’s parallel reporting and administration systems. The TE also notes that the level of support provided by UNIDO headquarters, particularly since 2007, has been substantial and far greater than is normally

expected. Both the RCU and the Project Steering Committee (PSC) were established. PSC met nine times. The PSC participants have been kept apprised of project progress, and since 2009 have been provided with thorough briefings on the project work plan, expenditure and budget by project management. The PSC played a role in preparation of decisions for the Abuja, Osu and Abidjan Ministerial Meetings. In general the liaison between the RCU and National Directors and Assistants has worked well – although not in all instances. The Inter-Ministerial Committees (IMC) have functioned well in terms of building cross-sectoral awareness of project issues but have not played the mainstreaming role that would be expected for an implementation project.

The IAs and EA have maintained a collaborative relationship during most of the Project, including in working effectively together to re-orientate the project after the suspension. However the relationship between the RCU and UNEP became strained in mid- 2010 due to differences in opinion concerning activities and implementation of Output 5.7 (*Development of a Regional Coordination Mechanism*) that was supervised by UNEP. UNEP expressed strong concerns about the preparation, conduct and fidelity of reporting of the second Ministerial meeting and argued that there needed to be an analysis of different options related to creation of the GCC. UNEP suspended its funding for related activities in this area in January 2011 and has put on record that it does not consider the Osu Declaration and meeting report to be an accurate account of agreements reached at the second Ministerial Meeting.

Further, the sheer number of ongoing contracts and activities has engendered a strongly task-driven approach to the project where each deliverable has tended to be treated in isolation, sometimes at the expense of a more integrated or strategic perspective. As a result there has been some loss of sequencing of activities and there has been limited follow-through of individual tasks and opportunities to add value to activities and very limited follow through of activities at national level.

Lastly, issues arose around the RCU's dual role as the Project's regional coordination unit and as Secretariat to the IGCC (which it became following the First Ministerial Meeting, as per the Project Document). According to the TE, this arrangement, although anticipated, created some ambiguity in terms of project governance and accountability, and brought about a situation where as a project financed body, the Interim Secretariat has not been fully able to meet the expectations placed on it by Ministers. For instance, the TE notes that this has led to a situation where the RCU, as IGCC, has sometimes refused to accept the advice or instructions of the IAs and EA on the grounds that it has taken its mandate from the Ministerial declaration. At the same time, assignment of RCU staff to the Interim Secretariat fuelled a perception of conflict of interest in that the RCU, as the IGCC secretariat, was viewed by some stakeholders as having a stake in and preference related to the outcomes of the process to create the GCC that it facilitated. The TE states that "...this preference was apparent in the series of meetings organized in May 2012 where the IGCC Secretariat – as convener of the meetings – failed to play an impartial role. The conduct of the meetings was described by one independent observer as 'irregular and disrespectful'."

8. Lessons and recommendations

8.1 Briefly describe the key lessons, good practices, or approaches mentioned in the terminal evaluation report that could have application for other GEF projects.

RCU Staffing: Sufficient resources should be allocated to ensure stable strategic and regional level technical support for planning, pilot implementation activities and development of national policy in specific thematic areas, alongside the more general support for foundational activities.

Dual role of the Regional Coordination Unit /Interim Guinea Current Commission Secretariat: from the outset, ensure a clear independence between a GEF project and the institutional mechanism, while ensuring that the RCU, EA and IA(s) continue to provide an appropriate supporting role.

Mobilization of Co-finance: there is a need: (a) to maintain a dialogue with GEF focal points and future partners regarding programming of co-finance; and (b) to systematically track contributions so that any issues can be identified at an early stage.

Communications Related to Project Suspension: If a future GEF projects experiences suspension or other discontinuities in activities, regular communication should be maintained with project stakeholders, even if it is not possible to provide definite information regarding the prospects for project continuation.

8.2 Briefly describe the recommendations given in the terminal evaluation.

Project Closure and Interim IGCC Secretariat: The TE supported the recommendation made at the third Ministerial meeting to allow any un-liquidated obligations to be used to support a skeleton staff at the IGCC Secretariat to finalize outstanding technical tasks from the GCLME project and contribute to further project development.

Empowering National Level Implementation: the design team for the future SAP implementation project ought to consult with countries on how best to establish effective long-term national coordination mechanisms building on existing examples and models, and allocate resources and technical support at national and regional level to empower these bodies to influence policy, practice and investment.

Regional Activity Centers: The design team for the SAP implementation project should undertake a further appraisal of scientific and technical information and services needed to effectively implement the SAP and consult with countries on their preferred options.

9. Quality of the Terminal Evaluation Report

A six point rating scale is used for each sub-criteria and overall rating of the terminal evaluation report (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory)

| Criteria | GEF EO comments | Rating |
|---|--|-----------------|
| To what extent does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives? | The report presents a balanced and comprehensive assessment of the project's outcomes and impacts. It provides a detailed description of milestones achieved and a commentary addressing factors such as quantity, quality, usefulness and timeliness of these as well as an individual rating for each activity and output. The TE's ROTl analysis adds significant value to the overall conclusions. | HS |
| To what extent is the report internally consistent, the evidence presented complete and convincing, and ratings well substantiated? | The presented analysis is of a high quality and objective. In general, the TE is internally consistent. There were some minor inconsistencies noted but these do not affect the overall very good presentation of evidence. | HS |
| To what extent does the report properly assess project sustainability and/or project exit strategy? | All four dimensions of sustainability are addressed. But, the ratings given (three ML and one L) in this section do not seem to be substantiated by the arguments presented in the report. Based on the evidence provided in the entire report, including the ROTl, it appears that a more appropriate rating for sustainability should be MU. | MS |
| To what extent are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive? | Both lessons learnt and recommendations are appropriate and based on the evidence presented in the report. | HS |
| Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used? | <p>A comprehensive account of co-financing is provided. The TE presents a good overview of project finance (GEF and co-financing) and of budget allocations by component. Both anticipated and actual financing are clearly outlined. Sufficient information is presented in the report about any financing shortfalls and the reasons behind them.</p> <p>An account of project expenditure for each component is provided including its comparison to the budgeted ones. There are minor discrepancies/errors between Table 4 and Table 9.4 in the IA/EA and EU ACP Fish Project Budget Lines.</p> | S |
| Assess the quality of the report's evaluation of project M&E systems: | The section on M&E design covers in sufficient detail the project's logframe, quality of indicators used and the adequacy of the M&E budget. The TE also adequately addresses the M&E implementation in a dedicated section. | HS |
| Overall TE Rating | | HS (5.7) |

10. Note any additional sources of information used in the preparation of the terminal evaluation report (excluding PIRs, TEs, and PADs).