

GEF EO Terminal Evaluation Review Form

1. PROJECT DATA				
		Review date:		
GEF ID:	656		at endorsement (Million US\$)	at completion (Million US\$)
Project Name:	Marine Ecosystem management	GEF financing:	0.9	0.8618
Country:	Samoa	IA/EA own:	-	
		Government:		
		Other*:	1.5364	1.8701
		Total Cofinancing		
Operational Program:	2	Total Project Cost:	2.4364	2.7701
IA	WB	<u>Dates</u>		
Partners involved:	The World Conservation Union (IUCN)	Work Program date		?
		CEO Endorsement		02/22/1999
		Effectiveness/ Prodoc Signature (i.e. date project began)		07/10/1999
		Closing Date	Proposed: 03/31/2004	Actual: 03/31/2004
Prepared by: Lee Risby	Reviewed by: David Todd	Duration between effectiveness date and original closing: 4 years 8 months	Duration between effectiveness date and actual closing: 4 years and 8 months	Difference between original and actual closing: 0
Author of TE: Iosefatu Reti & Hillary Sullivan (IUCN)		TE completion date: 04/2004	TE submission date to GEF EO: 9/21/2005	Difference between TE completion and submission date: 1 year and 5 months

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

2. SUMMARY OF PROJECT RATINGS

GEF EO Ratings for project impacts (if applicable), outcomes, project monitoring and evaluation, and quality of the terminal evaluation: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU), not applicable (N/A) and unable to assess (U/A). GEF EO Ratings for the project sustainability: Highly likely (HL), likely (L), moderately likely (ML), moderately unlikely (MU), unlikely (U), highly unlikely (HU), not applicable (N/A), and unable to assess (U/A). Please refer to document "Ratings for the achievement of objectives, sustainability of outcomes and impacts, quality of terminal evaluation reports and project M&E systems" for further definitions of the ratings.

	Last PIR	IA Terminal Evaluation	Other IA evaluations if applicable (e.g. IEG)	GEF EO
2.1 Project outcomes		S	N/A	MS
2.2 Project sustainability	N/A	L	N/A	ML
2.3 Monitoring and evaluation		S	N/A	MS
2.4 Quality of the evaluation report	N/A	N/A	N/A	MS

Should this terminal evaluation report be considered a good practice? No, for an MSP ICR, it is concise and well written and ratings are given. However, the ICR is too optimistic with regard to ratings for project sustainability and M&E.

Is there a follow up issue mentioned in the TE such as corruption, reallocation of GEF funds, etc.? No, nothing of significance

3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES, EXPECTED AND ACTUAL OUTCOMES

3.1 Project Objectives

- **What are the Global Environmental Objectives?**

The **goal** of the project was to provide for the protection and sustainable use of threatened coastal marine biodiversity in Samoa.

The **objective** of the project was to empower local communities in the Aleipata and Safata Districts to effectively protect and manage coastal marine biological diversity and help them achieve sustainable use of marine resources.

Any changes during implementation? None reported

- **What are the Development Objectives?**

Same as above

Any changes during implementation? No

3.2 Outcomes and Impacts

- **What were the major project outcomes and impacts as described in the TE?**

The ICR states:

The project has contributed significantly to its overall goal by the successful design, establishment and partial implementation of Samoa's first two district-based marine protected areas (MPAs) at Aleipata and Safata. These MPAs are:

- Large (Aleipata: 24 square miles and Safata: 19.6 square miles);
- District based (i.e. multi-village, Aleipata 11 villages and Safata 9 villages);
- Community-based; and
- Multi-use, incorporating both general use zones and no-take zones.

In each MPA a solid foundation of local decision-making, management planning, monitoring and review, capacity building and partnerships with Government and the private sector has been established. Overall the project has been successful, the MPAs have been established, the commitment and support of the local communities are strong, MPA management activities continue to be carried out, and the project's integration into the ongoing activities of the Samoan Government is continuing. The evaluation team has interviewed many stakeholders in both the community and the Government about their observations in relation to these indicators. Overall, they have reported improvements in key environmental indicators such as an increase in the size and numbers of fish available, increases in the numbers of turtles sighted and that the health of the mangrove forest is in good condition.

It is more meaningful to rate the Achievements of Objectives under two headings: the foundation work in the establishment of the MPAs and the subsequent objective achievement, which has suffered from a lack of time and funds.

The project has made considerable progress towards achieving its stated objective of "empowering the local communities of the Aleipata and Safata Districts to effectively protect and manage coastal biological diversity and to sustainably use their marine resources".

In as far as 'empowering the local communities' is concerned the following key achievements are noted:

- Perhaps the greatest achievement of the project has been the establishment of the MPAs and the development of management plans with strong local ownership and a good level of Government endorsement. The district committees continue to collaborate well, sharing experience and information between the two MPAs via joint meetings held at least once every six months; through the Project Coordinating Committee (PCC) meetings; and through the District Officers. The ability of the project to successfully demonstrate that a multi-village governance approach to protecting coastal and marine biodiversity in Samoa can be successful is a milestone that has not been achieved by any national project initiative in the past. These multi-village Committees are a new concept for Samoa and they are feeling their way in relation to their mode of operation and power.

- ❑ A major achievement of the project was to effectively empower the District Officers through building skills and providing mentoring. This was the key foundation that resulted in the District Committees playing such an effective role in the management structure of the MPAs. These two District Officers will be a major asset to the continuation of marine conservation in Samoa.
- ❑ The support of the village communities continues to be strong despite the fact that the project has not fully met some community expectations, especially in terms of alternative income generation (AIG), infrastructure development and job creation. The commitment of local resources by the two Districts to implement urgent actions within the project areas at times when the project was clearly in financial difficulty is a clear manifestation of this commitment and support to the MPAs.
- ❑ The completion of the Management Plans for the two MPAs with substantial input by the two communities was a significant step forward in the march towards sustainability for the projects. It is therefore disappointing that, despite the advice given to the Supervision Mission in April 2003 that the plans would be put to Cabinet within two weeks, the plans have still not received Cabinet endorsement and that by-laws to allow full implementation of the management plan provisions have not yet been approved. However, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) and Fisheries are making every effort to ensure that these matters are rectified as soon as possible.
- ❑ District Committees have demarcated 'no-take' zones, adopted community monitoring, and designed a system of regulations, fees and entry charges for the effective management of the MPAs. These actions are testimony to the newly acquired knowledge and management skills of local communities made possible through their participation in the project.
- ❑ The establishment of the Aleipata and Safata MPA Incorporated Society is a clear indication of the communities' intention to continue to work together in the management of their MPAs. The Society, once fully operational should be an important founding block for the future sustainability of the MPAs.

Whilst the participatory process at the District level was exemplary, the management plans have not yet been submitted to Cabinet, or the by-laws under the Fisheries Act enacted, despite having been identified as a top priority since the mid-term review three years ago. This was partially caused by an over ambitious design and funding restrictions, which limited the project team's ability to respond to many unanticipated but important tasks. The enactment of the by-laws is perhaps the most critical component of the implementation of the project. Without these in place the MPA rules cannot be enforced for outsiders to the village or the District. In addition to the enactment of the by-laws, the villages tasked to carry out surveillance must be trained in law enforcement and evidence-gathering techniques to ensure prosecutions under the by-laws can be successfully pursued.

The evaluation team noted that some progress was made on these issues in the last half of 2004. The MPA Management Plans have been updated and these and the MPA rules have been submitted to the Fisheries Department for the development of the by-laws. These recent developments are positive and demonstrate that the project has not lost momentum during the transition stage. However the evaluation team felt that this was such a critical step in the achievement of the objective that this aspect of the project could not be rated as fully satisfactory until the by-laws are enacted.

The project team was able to implement the following set of major achievements that have significantly contributed to the success of the project.

- ❑ Management planning training package suitable to Samoan circumstances.
- ❑ Management plans with strong local ownership.
- ❑ Baseline biodiversity survey techniques incorporating participation from local stakeholders and the use of traditional knowledge as well as scientific tools and information incorporated into comprehensive manuals.
- ❑ Community based monitoring systems for key MPA habitats (mangrove, coral, reef/lagoon) and associated training and data management and analysis manuals.
- ❑ Permanent transect monitoring systems for key MPA environmental indicators that are complementary to community-based monitoring tools.

- Design of post project MPA financial and operational mechanism including trust fund design and establishment of NGO (the MPA incorporated Society).
- Marine science/MPA based educational curriculum for use at the local and national level
- MPA staff capacity built significantly in each of these areas.

There is no doubt that the hard work of the whole team under difficult circumstances together with the willingness of the residents of the Districts to participate have been the single most important factors in the success of the project.

The view of MNRE that the overly autonomous nature of the project mitigated against good integration between the project and Government agencies is noted. The evaluation team also notes the view of IUCN that cooperation between the project and Government and other stakeholders was encouraged from the beginning of the project.

A major concern for the project is the delay in the release of funds that were identified last year for the implementation of the provisions of the MPA management plans.

4. GEF EO ASSESSMENT

4.1 Outcomes Overall = 13 / 4 = 4.33

A Relevance

Rating: S

- **In retrospect, were the project's outcomes consistent with the focal areas/operational program strategies? Explain**

The projects outcomes are consistent with biodiversity SP1 / OP2, in terms of establishing marine PAs and involving communities / gaining some Government support for conservation, although this has not been completely successful – and requires more work to integrate the project activities into government ministries / budgets

B Effectiveness

Rating: MS

- **Are the project outcomes as described in the TE commensurable with the expected outcomes (as described in the project document) and the problems the project was intended to address (i.e. original or modified project objectives)?**

The project achieved most of its main goals / objectives of establishing MPAs on Samoa and involving local communities in conservation – the MPAs contain both no-take and sustainable use zones. However, the MPA management plans had not been legally approved at the end of the project, and the by-laws fisheries act had also not yet been approved by cabinet. The enactment of the fisheries laws are the most important as without these the MPAs cannot be protected from outsiders from non-MPA villages or the District. In addition villagers have yet to be trained in enforcement activities so that by-laws can be enacted. Most of the funding for implementation of the MPA through alternative income generating activities and tourism were not completed –thus although MPAs have been accepted and plans produced the local communities lacked funding to implement. This has caused some disappointment among communities.

C Efficiency (cost-effectiveness)

Rating: MS

- **Include an assessment of outcomes and impacts in relation to inputs, costs, and implementation times based on the following questions: Was the project cost – effective? How does the cost-time Vs. outcomes compare to other similar projects? Was the project implementation delayed due to any bureaucratic, administrative or political problems and did that affect cost-effectiveness?**

The project investment was marginally satisfactory with regard to cost-effectiveness. In general, the project was not fully integrated into government Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) and did not (could not) fully overcome overlapping / conflicting government mandates between MNRE, Department of Fisheries and Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry (who did not participate in the project steering committee). Furthermore, trust funds to support MPAs have not been fully established to provide ex-post support to community conservation and alternative livelihoods. The ICR rightly notes that the project timeframe was unrealistic and too short to delivery significant changes I social behavior and natural resource management – these are essentially issues of capacity development.

Impacts

- **Has the project achieved impacts or is it likely that outcomes will lead to the**

expected impacts? The ecological impacts of the project are unable to assess accurately because of a lack of quantitative measurement and impact of Cyclone Heta which disrupted the MPAs in Safata and Aleipata. Furthermore, it is too early to assess the impacts of the community-based / district involvement in management MPAs

4.2 Likelihood of sustainability. Using the following sustainability criteria, include an assessment of risks to sustainability of project outcomes and impacts based on the information presented in the TE.

A Financial resources	Rating: ML
<p>The ICR rates sustainability as overall sustainability 'likely'. However, there are doubts over the transfer and subsequent long term funding of project activities to government (MNRE). For example, the follow issues have been flagged by the ICR which are not adequately reflected in the rating (1) Districts of Safata and Aleipata have raised concerns over their ability to continue monitoring of MPAs after the project funding ends. (2) Development of longer term financing mechanisms are in their infancy, with continuing uncertainty surrounding external and government support to the Safata and Aleipata MPAs. (3) The project paid 'sitting fees' to district committees for food during the meetings, now that these resources are not available there are concerns meeting attendance will drop. The government does not have the resources to pay community sitting fees. The project in this regard has set an unsustainable precedent. (4) The District officers are now being paid through SPREP and ICRAN and not through government (only for the next 12 months), hence this raises further questions regarding long-term financing for management of MPAs.</p>	
B Socio political	Rating:ML
<p>The project did not have the funding to develop adequate local economic incentives for conservation. Alternative livelihoods were not developed. However, communities (fishermen) are seeing benefits from zoning of no-take zones and have reported improved fish catches (qualitative observations). However, community involvement and ownership of the project has been high during implementation and commitment of the two districts remains strong despite emerging difficulties (concerning funding) during the final months of the project. This political commitment has been demonstrated through both districts pledging \$SAT10,000 each to the Trust Fund established to provide support for ongoing management.</p>	
C Institutional framework and governance	Rating:ML
<p>There are several issues which are putting at risk the gains made in establishing an local institutional governance framework for Safata and Aleipata. Firstly, despite the establishment of management plans, the government has yet to official endorse them; and already the Aleipata District Government has approved a reclamation project that has breached the provisions of the management plan; and by-laws for enforcement of zones and fishing regulations have not been approved. In essence, all most of the projects work in terms of devolving control fro the MPAs to the districts and communities remains to be formalized. Although, the ICR notes that there is a good chance these issues will be resolved in the future.</p>	
D Environmental	Rating:ML
<p>The main environmental risks as stated by the ICR are inappropriate development. The ICR states:</p> <p>August-September 2003 incident in the district of Aleipata had raised serious concerns regarding sustainability. A reclamation project has been carried out which poses a major threat to the Aleipata MPA from a substantial increase in suspended sediment that is likely to adversely impact on the coral for some years. The reclamation violated Sections 119 and 120 of the <i>Lands, Surveys and Environment Act 1989</i> because it started without a permit, although the Minister later approved a permit. The resulting decisions by the Aleipata District Committee were regrettable and called into question their commitment to the MPA at that time. It is noted that the District Committee made this decision and the project team was not empowered to prevent it. Two new proposals for reclamation were put to the Aleipata committee in recent months but were summarily turned down. This latter decision helped reaffirm confidence in the ability of the Committee to look after the interest of the MPA under pressure and there is hope that any future proposal of this kind will be dealt with in similar manner. Another development, the wharf and channel construction for a ferry service to American Samoa has been also proposed for Aleipata. This could threaten the future viability of the MPA and therefore a full and independent EIA is recommended should the project proceed.</p> <p>A further concern for the Aleipata MPA is the status of the offshore islands. The project has highlighted the need for offshore island restoration and conservation as Samoa's only viable sanctuary for threatened species such as the turtles nesting sites, threatened endemic birds and seabird nesting colonies. These islands are within the outer boundaries of Aleipata MPA and all traditional island claimants and the District have agreed to their incorporation into the MPA. There has been some concern by the local community that the Government may compulsorily acquire these islands. It is felt that such an action on the part of the Government would undermine the support of the local residents for the MPA. Although there has not been any recent development relating to these concerns, it is noted that government has the power under law to deregulate any protected area. In this context, the future status of the Aleipata MPA including its offshore</p>	

islands is no different from any other protected area in Samoa.

The islands were also hit by Cyclon Heta in 2004 which damaged some of the coral reefs of the MPAs, and also invasive species such as crown of thorns star fish remain a risk. Furthermore, illegal fishing by outsiders also is a risk as current by-laws needed to protect the MPAs have not been enacted and thus, technically the MPAs cannot be protected by the communities / districts.

Provide only ratings for the sustainability of outcomes based on the information in the TE: **Overall 12 / 4 = 3**

A	Financial resources	Rating: ML
B	Socio political	Rating: ML
C	Institutional framework and governance	Rating: ML
D	Environmental	Rating: ML

4.3 Catalytic role

1. Production of a public good - The project locally shown some of the benefits of MPA within a community / district managed approach. This has presently involved about 20 villages and has the potential of being replicated more widely within Samoa
2. Demonstration - Demonstration depends on the Government endorsing the MPA plans and the legal approach to enforcement through the fisheries by-laws. The Government importantly needs to commit money to allow district officers to undertake duties in conservation management
3. Replication – Not applicable
4. Scaling up – Not applicable

4.4 Assessment of the project's monitoring and evaluation system based on the information in the TE: Overall 8/3 = 2.6

A. In retrospection, was the M&E plan at entry practicable and sufficient? (Sufficient and practical indicators were identified, timely baseline, targets were created, effective use of data collection, analysis systems including studies and reports, and practical organization and logistics in terms of what, who, when for the M&E activities)	Rating: MS
<p>The ICR rates the M&E as satisfactory. However, this does not appear to be justified based on evidence provided – For example, the M&E for biodiversity was started at the beginning of the project and included baseline biodiversity surveys.</p> <p>GEF EO observation: These do not appear to have been followed up at the project end.</p> <p>The ICR further states - The environmental indicators established by the project could not be measured as not enough time had elapsed to give a meaningful result.</p> <p>GEF EO observation: This calls into question the selection of indicators by the project</p> <p>The ICR provides sufficient information on the projects capacity building and community outcomes against indicators.</p>	
B. Did the project M&E system operate throughout the project? How was M&E information used during the project? Did it allow for tracking of progress towards projects objectives? Did the project provide proper training for parties responsible for M&E activities to ensure data will continue to be collected and used after project closure?	Rating: MS
<p>The ICR indicates that the M&E system at least for socio-institutional aspects functioned throughout the project and allowed tracking at the output / outcome level to be maintained. It is doubtful that this will continue as there is no funding to maintain the M&E system. Although the Fisheries division of the MNRE have indicated an interest in training communities to monitor in both districts.</p>	
C. Was M&E sufficiently budgeted and was it properly funded during implementation?	Rating: U/A
<p>There is no clear information on budgeting for M&E</p>	

Can the project M&E system be considered a good practice? No, because the M&E system did not follow up biological baseline and the system is of doubtful sustainability.

4.5 Lessons

Project lessons as described in the TE

What lessons mentioned in the TE that can be considered a good practice or approaches to avoid and could have application for other GEF projects?

- 1 (a) *Project Duration.* Five years is too short a time for a GEF Medium-Sized project that requires major increases in understanding of ecology, sociology and economics as well as the development of significant changes in social behavior and natural resource management.
- (b) In this Samoan project, it was necessary to spend a very long time developing capacity and the necessary information for the local communities to craft the MPA management plans, which are the foundations on which the whole project rests.
- 2 (a) *Fiduciary Requirements.* Audit, supervision and reporting requirements for projects ranked as medium-sized should be defined explicitly in the project design and budget documents. Such projects should have contingency funding of at least 15 percent and the Project Brief should not be part of the formal Grant Agreement, to allow flexibility and reduce the administrative burden of achieving necessary changes under the existing requirements.
- 3 (a) *Bottom-Up vs. Top-Down Approaches.* Community based projects should be both bottom-up and top-down. Strictly top-down projects have failed all over the world, because of absence of community support. Although there are examples where this approach has been extremely successful strictly bottom-up projects fail because local communities are unable to prevent illegal activities by people from outside the local community.
- (b) The Samoa MPA Project has amply demonstrated the validity of this lesson. The commitment of the local communities is exceptional, and they competently control the activities of locals, but without the pending enactment of by-laws they are unable to adequately control outsiders in the MPAs.
- 4 (a) *Multi-Agency Coordination.* In order to ensure effective coordination and cooperation between relevant Government agencies, each project should have a small Steering Committee representing those Government agencies with significant areas of expertise and general responsibilities relevant to the project. Project resources, including personnel, should be allocated across those sectoral agencies deemed vital for participation e.g. Environment, Tourism and Fisheries. If this is not done the project will be seen as a single agency project and other agencies will not see it as a priority and may not have the capacity or resources to participate. It is very important that all the stakeholders are identified at the beginning of the project and that their roles and responsibilities should be identified and agreed.
- (b) In the Samoan case, there was provision for coordination through the Project Coordinating Committee. However its effectiveness was greatly reduced by Government agencies other than the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment not allocating, or not being provided by the project with resources necessary for them to carry out the tasks for which they were best suited. This observation applies to the Division of Fisheries, the Tourism Authority and the Department of Education. In particular, it is hoped that this collaboration will occur with the Division of Fisheries as the need for enforcement of by-laws in the two MPAs increases.
- 5 (a) *Volunteerism.* Volunteerism should be encouraged in community-based projects and compensation should not be paid for services that will ultimately be the responsibility of the community. Delegation of responsibility to community leaders as soon as practicable in a project will lead to a sense of ownership and commitment.
- (b) In Samoa, there was pressure on the project team to pay for activities such as meetings attended by community members. The team worked very hard to prevent the inevitable dependence that such payments would have created. The development of expertise and a sense of ownership and commitment in the district communities was outstanding. Community-based monitoring, complemented by expert-based monitoring, provided a sound basis for

	natural resource management decisions.
6 (a)	<i>Local Governance.</i> Local governance bodies that bring together and represent several small communities for a specific purpose, such as establishing a large MPA, can significantly increase the ability of those communities to influence high level government and to obtain development assistance, beyond the specific purpose for which those bodies were created.
(b)	In Samoa, the establishment of the two District Committees helped empower the 20 communities of Aleipata and Safata, not only in managing their MPAs, but also in obtaining broader development assistance from both government and the private sector.
7 (a)	<i>Community Governance Decision-Making.</i> The strength of community governance bodies is tested by their resolve in addressing difficult development decisions. It is recommended that in projects like large MPAs, community governance bodies be entrusted with such decisions as soon as practicable, to gain experience, maturity and confidence in addressing increasingly complex development challenges.
(b)	In Samoa, the District Committees were tested and strengthened through the resolution of contentious issues- such as sand mining and scuba fishing bans, and the resolution of conflicts with tourist operators at Safata. These resolutions by the Committees helped influence and strengthen national level policies. In contrast, vacillating regarding a reclamation project at Aleipata weakened the Committee, may create a dangerous precedent and may reduce the effectiveness of the MPA and its sustainability.

4.6 Quality of the evaluation report Provide a number rating 1-6 to each criteria based on: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, and Highly Unsatisfactory = 1. Please refer to the "Criteria for the assessment of the quality of terminal evaluation reports" in the document "Ratings for the achievement of objectives, sustainability of outcomes and impacts, quality of terminal evaluation reports and project M&E systems" for further definitions of the ratings.

4.6.1 Comments on the summary of project ratings and terminal evaluation findings

In some cases the GEF Evaluation Office may have independent information collected for example, through a field visit or independent evaluators working for the Office. If additional relevant independent information has been collected that affect the ratings of this project, included in this section. This can include information that may affect the assessment and ratings of sustainability, outcomes, project M&E systems, etc.

Not applicable

4.6.2 Quality of terminal evaluation report: Overall = 3.4	Ratings
A. Does the report contain an assessment of relevant outcomes and impacts of the project and the achievement of the objectives?	4
B. Is the report internally consistent, is the evidence complete/convincing and are the IA ratings substantiated?	3
C. Does the report properly assess project sustainability and /or a project exit strategy?	3
D. Are the lessons learned supported by the evidence presented and are they comprehensive?	4
E. Does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?	3
F. Does the report present an assessment of project M&E systems?	4

4.7 Is a technical assessment of the project impacts described in the TE recommended? Please place an "X" in the appropriate box and explain below.

Yes:

No: X

Explain: Technical impacts could be assessed if the project / country is selected for GEF EO

country portfolio evaluation or for capacity development evaluation.

4.8 Sources of information for the preparation of the TE review in addition to the TE (if any)

Not applicable

Reviewer's Comments:

I support the TER assessment of this project and TE. The TE does not adequately reflect the reservations reported in its text in its final ratings, with an overly positive assessment of outcomes and sustainability.