

Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Seychelles

Terminal Evaluation



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Name of the UNDP/GEF project: Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Seychelles

UNDP and GEF project IDs: 00048158 and PIMS No 3390 / GEFID number PMIS 3360

Evaluation time frame and date of evaluation report: 11 November 2012 – 29 November 2012

Region and countries included in the project: Africa / Seychelles

GEF Operational Program/Strategic Program: “Operational Program 15 and Strategic Priority 1 relating to Targeted Capacity Building for sustainable land management”. Please revise accordingly.

Executing Agency and project partners: Ministry of Environment and Energy, also Ministry of Land Use and Housing / Ministry of Natural Resources and Industry / Seychelles National Park Authority / Seychelles Agricultural Agency

Evaluation team: Anne C. Woodfine (Dr)

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The consultant wishes to express her appreciation to the Ex SLM Project Manager, other Project Co-ordination Unit and UNDP Country Office staff, project partners and stakeholders for their co-operation and willingness to openly provide information which has enabled me to evaluate the project.

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Executive Summary

The project “Building Capacity and Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management in Seychelles” has been successful in raising awareness of SLM (sustainable land management) across key sectors in Seychelles, increasing capacity in a range of relevant skills and catalysing reviews / updating of laws and policies to mainstream SLM *inter alia* in agriculture, forestry, national parks. Preparation of a National Action Plan for SLM and an Integrated Financing Strategy by the project should further ensure mainstreaming and assure funding. Project activities supporting development of a new soils testing laboratory, developing an SLM module for training student farmers and an in-service course for farmers, involving staff of the University of Seychelles, also developing capacity in TRASS to offer services to land owners to restore burned land / involve community groups, means that the project will bring long term benefits.

Project Summary Table

| Project Title | Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Seychelles | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--|------------------------------|--|
| GEF Project ID: | PMIS 3360 | | <i>at endorsement (US\$)</i> | <i>at completion (US\$)</i> |
| UNDP Project ID: | 00048158 (PIMS 3390) | GEF financing: | 500,000 | 500,000 |
| Country | Seychelles | IA/EA own: | | |
| Region | Africa | Government | 1,150,000 | 2,094,293 |
| Focal Area | Land Degradation | Other | 512,000 | 547,715 |
| Operational Program: | Sustainable Land Management (SLM) | Total co-financing: | 1,662,000 | 2,642,008 |
| Executing Agency | Ministry of Environment and Energy/ Land Use and Habitat | Total Project Cost: | 2,162,000 | 3,117,008 |
| Other Partners involved: | Ministry of Land Use and Habitat / Ministry of Natural Resources and Industry / Seychelles National Park Authority / Seychelles Agricultural Agency / Plant | ProDoc Signature (date project began): | | 21/06/07 |
| | | (Operational) Closing Date: | | Proposed: 30/06/11 Actual:31/07/12 |

Project Description

The granitic islands of the Seychelles are composed of a core of ancient granitic rock which forms the steep uplands, with narrow surrounding coastal plains formed by beach sand. Both types of soils are physically and chemically poor. Over 80% of Seychelles land area is under some form of forest or vegetation cover, though less so on the more urbanized main islands. Land degradation has mainly occurred because of forest fires, clearing of forest for development purposes (agriculture, including plantations; housing; tourist facilities; infrastructure), effects of invasive alien species, unsustainable agriculture, construction practices and landslides / rock falls.

Prevention and control of forest fires is taking place, but needed a comprehensive all-encompassing strategy, including models for rehabilitation of degraded areas. Unsustainable harvesting of forest products was on the increase and made worse because of the lack of forest management models. Invasive alien creepers that are smothering the forest were a relatively new phenomenon of which little was known and no control measures are established. Soil conservation in agriculture was not effectively addressed because of non-conducive lease agreements of state agricultural land, non-effective extension service and the lack of adequate soil testing facilities. Risks of landslides were not well

incorporated in land use planning and construction practices. Seychelles had no National Action Plan or Investment Plan for sustainable land management.

The project aimed to increase capacity in prevention and control of forest fires, rehabilitation of degraded areas, control of invasive alien species creepers, development of forest management plans, restoration of degraded agricultural soils and minimizing risks of land movements. It was also designed to mainstream sustainable land management into relevant policy and regulatory frameworks, to support the development of a National Action Plan and Medium Term Investment Plan (MTIP - re-named Integrated Financial Strategy (IFS) during the project).

The objective of the project was to build capacities for sustainable land management (SLM) in appropriate government and civil society institutions/user groups in Seychelles and to ensure SLM was mainstreamed into government planning and strategy development.

The Project “Building Capacity and Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management in Seychelles” was a Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded Project through the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The Project has been implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Energy. The Project has been supervised by the UNDP Programme Coordination Unit (PCU) and received technical guidance from the Chief Technical Advisor (Johan Robinson - until 2011) and Regional Technical Advisor (Veronica Muthui).

Evaluation Rating Table

| Evaluation Ratings: | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|---|---------------|
| 1. Monitoring and Evaluation | <i>rating</i> | 2. IA & EA Execution | <i>rating</i> |
| M&E design at entry | S | Quality of UNDP Implementation | S |
| M&E Plan Implementation | S | Quality of Execution - Executing Agency | S |
| Overall quality of M&E | S | Overall quality of Implementation / Execution | S |
| 3. Assessment of Outcomes | <i>rating</i> | 4. Sustainability | <i>rating</i> |
| Relevance | R | Financial resources: | L |
| Effectiveness | MS | Socio-political: | L |
| Efficiency | HS | Institutional framework and governance: | L |
| Overall Project Outcome Rating | MS | Environmental : | L |
| | | Overall likelihood of sustainability | ML |

[HS = highly satisfactory, S = satisfactory, MS = moderately satisfactory, L = likely]

[see full details on ratings in Annex 7]

Summary of Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Based on a careful view of the available information, stakeholder interviews, other consultations, field visits and analysis of output – input correlations, the conclusion is that overall, the project has been a success.

In particular, significant achievements have been reached on:

- * Up-dating and improving the enabling legal and policy environment for SLM;

- * Preparation and approval of a National Action Plan (NAP);
- * Drafting of an Integrated Financing Strategy (IFS);
- * Capacity building for extension staff, farmers and land owners in SLM;
- * Training of trainers in fire fighting;
- * Advancement in developing a dedicated soil testing laboratory in Seychelles;
- * Preparation of 15 district-level land use plans;
- * SLM now mainstreamed in the activities and policies of key GoS organisations, notably SNPA (Seychelles National Park Authority) and SAA (Seychelles Agriculture Agency).

However, the project suffered from:

- * Human resource issues;
- * Problems securing the funds for Component 3 from the Global Mechanism (GM), with the direct affect of delaying the start of work on Component 4, resulting in certain of the Outputs not being completed;
- * Lack of an established baseline or final monitoring for some targets;
- * Lack of an up-to-date forest inventory;
- * Issues regarding the focus of the land use planning activities;
- * Persistent poor levels of understanding of SLM.

A number of issues delayed project implementation and **lessons** must be **learned**, for example in ensuring that administrative delays can be avoided, or at least more rapidly overcome. The most damaging to the project was the delay in securing the funding for Component 3 from the Global Mechanism – which prevented completion of Component 4.

There were also human resources issues from which lessons can be learned for the design of future projects in Seychelles and other SIDS (Small Island Developing States). The project design involved a large number of field / technical studies and did not seem to consider the availability and / or expertise available among national consultants. UNDP also faced problems recruiting and retaining an appropriately skilled project manager, again due to the limited pool of suitably skilled personnel in Seychelles.

As part of the project, a questionnaire survey was designed and implemented to collate information about the knowledge and use of SLM among farmers. This was poorly designed and there were some serious short-comings in the survey methodology, which had the then Project Manager (PM) been knowledgeable in SLM this could have been identified and resolved before it was used. This was a missed opportunity – ideally a well-designed questionnaire survey could have been implemented at baseline to guide activities towards the project Outcomes, then again at project closure to quantify the impacts of the project’s training and awareness raising.

It is **recommended** that GoS adopt the various reviews / updates of laws and policies undertaken within the project in the near future and prioritise better mainstreaming of SLM throughout key GoS agencies. This particularly depends on continuing awareness raising at all levels on the win-win-win benefits of SLM and its synergies, particularly with climate change and biodiversity protection. SAA extension staff will have a key role in future in ensuring that farmers implement SLM, including helping them understand the benefits of short-term investment to increase crop yields and reduce input costs in the medium to longer-term. GoS are more committed to increasing national food production now than they were pre 2008 – this should help support scaling-up of support for SLM. The extension service and future projects could usefully include more “learning by doing” / action research / farmer field school approaches, which are found widely successful elsewhere to catalyse wide up-take of SLM technologies.

SAA should continue to support the soils laboratory in Grand' Anse, as it is not likely to be able to recoup sufficient funds to cover its costs in the short-term. Furthermore, the manual produced by the project on SLM for farmers (Nancy, 2012) should be translated into Creole to widen the number of farmers who can benefit from it.

The project has trained SNPA trainers in fire fighting. It is furthermore recommended that these staff is enabled to impart their knowledge widely to reduce the problems of forest fires which plague the granitic islands. DRDM staff also needs such training.

It is also recommended that MLUH should use the land use maps prepared by the project to protect biodiversity and adopt landscape approaches in wider land management, rather than using the maps as tools in land administration / development planning.

Although the project is now closed, there remains disagreement among those interviewed in the TE as to who is / was the counterpart for the Land Use Planning Consultant who worked to develop district land use plans continuously (funded by this GEF SLM project and also the ongoing BD project) since November 2009. This is surprising, as it seems *sin qua non*¹ that local staff should have been trained to continue the land use mapping / planning role – which used some 10% of the project funds. It is important that this is not repeated in future projects in Seychelles – or beyond.

Reports produced by the project (see Annex 5) should either be up-loaded to the PCU website as they stand and their availability there publicised – or summaries should be prepared. Furthermore, clear links should then be made between the PCU website and GoS sites to widen awareness of SLM

Revisions of the LogFrame during project implementation (Feb. 2010 & July 2012) show that the list of assumptions and risks have been reduced – which is surprising, as by that stage in project implementation issues of human resources and wider economic issues were affecting project implementation. The various versions of the LogFrame also failed to mention externalities (i.e. national and global economic / political issues, the effects of climate change etc.) which in the event particularly affected the project. LogFrames can be very useful tools in project management, but to be effective, must be kept up-to-date.

¹ Used to denote something that is an essential part of the whole.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | | | |
|---------|--|---------|---|
| APR | Annual Project Report | NC | Nature Conservation (Division of MENR) |
| AWP | Annual Work Plan | NCSA | National Capacity Self Assessment (for Global Environment Management Project) |
| BD | Biological Diversity (Biodiversity) | NEPAD | New Economic Partnership for African Development |
| CAADP | Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme | NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| CEO | Chief Executive Officer | NPTS | Nature Protection Trust Seychelles |
| CO | Country Office (UNDP) | PA | Protected Areas |
| DNR | Department of Natural Resources | PCA | Plant Conservation Action Group |
| DOE | Department of Environment | PES | payments for ecosystem services |
| EMPS II | Environment Management Plan of Seychelles 2000-2010 | PIR | Project Implementation Review |
| EPA | Environmental Protection Act (1994) | PCU | Programme Coordination Unit |
| EU | European Union | PMAT | Portfolio Monitoring and Assessment Tool |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization | PS | Principal Secretary (of ministerial Department) |
| FFEM | Fond Français de l'Environnement Mondial | PSC | Project Steering Committee |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product | SAHTC | Seychelles Agriculture and Horticulture Training Centre |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility | RDM | World Bank's Risk and Disaster Management Project |
| GIF | Green Island Foundation | RS | Seychelles rupee |
| GIS | Geographic Information System | SAA | Seychelles Agriculture Agency |
| GM | Global Mechanism (under UNCCD) | SBS | Seychelles Bureau of Standards |
| GOS | Government of Seychelles | SeyFA | Seychelles Farmers' Association |
| IBRD | International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) | SIDS | Small Island Developing States |
| IA | Invasive Alien Species | SIF | Seychelles Island Foundation |
| ICS | Island Conservation Society | SLM | sustainable land management |
| IFS | integrated financing strategy | SNPA | Seychelles National Park Authority |
| IT | information technology | SOM | soil organic matter |
| LDC | Least Developed Country | SR | Seychelles Rupee |
| MEE | Ministry of Environment and Energy | SSDS | Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy |
| MFA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs | T&CPA | Town and Country Planning Act |
| MNRI | Ministry of Natural Resources and Industry | TE | Terminal Evaluation |
| MLUH | Ministry of Land Use and Housing | UNCCD | United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding | UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| MSP | Medium Sized Project | UNDP CO | UNDP Country Office |
| MTE | Mid-Term Evaluation | | |
| MTIP | Medium-Term Investment Plan | | |
| MTNDS | Medium-Term Nat. Dev. Strategy | | |
| NBSAP | National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan | | |

1. Introduction

A. Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was to:

- * Assess overall performance against the project objectives as set out in the Project Document and other related documents
- * Assess project relevance to national priorities, as well as UNDP and GEF strategic objectives
- * Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the project
- * Critically analyze the implementation and management arrangements of the project, including financial management.
- * Assess the sustainability of the project interventions and consider project impacts
- * Document lessons and best practices concerning project design, implementation and management which may be of relevance to other projects in the country and elsewhere in the world.

As a terminal evaluation (TE), this contributes to *“managing for results, and serves to reinforce the accountability of project managers, COs, PTAs, etc.”* (UNDP, 2012). In November, 2010, the GEF Council approved a revised Policy on Monitoring and Evaluation. The M&E Policy states that through monitoring and evaluation the GEF aims to *“promote accountability for achievement of GEF objectives through the assessment of results, effectiveness, processes, and performance of the partners involved in GEF activities.”* It further states that *“GEF results will be monitored and evaluated for their contribution to global environmental benefits.”* The policy enunciates that the GEF partners, in addition to conducting various other evaluations, also evaluate projects *“at the end of the intervention (terminal evaluation).”*

This was an ex-post evaluation; carried-out 3.5 months after the project had concluded.

B. Scope and Methodology

The evaluation covered the entire period of the UNDP/ GEF Sustainable Land Management (SLM) project – from the date of ProDoc approval (21 June 2007) until it was closed on 31 July 2012. However, start-up was delayed due to problems in recruiting a Project Manager (PM), thus the project only effectively started when the PM was recruited. The following shows key dates around the start-up:

- ProDoc approval (21 June '07)
- 1st Steering Committee Meeting held (18th March '08)
- Recruitment of the Project Manager (20th March '08)
- Inception Workshop conducted (1st & 2nd April '08)
- Establishment of the UNDP-GEF Programme Coordination Unit (PCU) (5th May '08)
- Draft Inception Report completed (28th May '08)
- 2nd Steering Committee Meeting held (4th June '08)
- 1st Project Implementation Report (PIR) submitted (10th June '08)
- Draft Inception Report submitted (28th May '08)
- Inception Report Finalized (this report: 25th June '08)

The information required to complete this evaluation was collected using the following approaches:

- * discussions with the most recent Ex Project Manager, also involved PCU and UNDP Country Office (CO) staff;

- * analysis of available documents (project documents / workplans / reports {*inter alia* PIRs, the MTE and consultancy studies} and other relevant publications, where available²);
- * structured stakeholder interviews (using the list of topics to be evaluated, as detailed in the TE ToRs – a formal questionnaire was not used as differing groups of stakeholders contributed different elements to the full picture of the project);
- * field visits for on-site observation of impacts on-the-ground;
- * group interviews and other participatory techniques;
- * key informant group interviews, particularly to assess the extent of stakeholders participation with the project was carried out.

Use of multiple sources enabled the information gathered to be triangulated from different sources, to help to verify the accuracy of the information upon which to build findings, draw unbiased conclusions, make recommendations and draw lessons from the project.

The evaluation also necessarily had to be attentive to the significant socio-economic, economic and environmental changes which have occurred in Seychelles and world-wide since the beginning of project implementation, as these are major external factors which have unavoidably impinged on the project.

C. *Structure of the evaluation report*

The evaluation report follows the structure as set-out in the Terminal Evaluation (TE) terms of Reference (ToRs) and follows the guidance of UNDP (2012)³. It comprises three main sections (with appropriate sub-sections):

2. Project description and development context
3. Findings
4. Conclusions, Lessons and Recommendations

The annexes provided cover the ToRs, evaluation mission programme, lists of people consulted, a list of documents reviewed, the outline of questions discussed in interviews, the audit trail of comments and how these were addressed, also a copy of the signed Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form.

2. Project description and development context

A. *Project start and duration*

The ProDoc was approved in June 2007 and the project was closed on 30 July 2012 – a period of over 5 years. However, delays occurred at the beginning to find and recruit a Project Manager, thus the project start was effectively the date of her recruitment, 20th March 2008. The project was due to be completed by 30 June 2011, but received a one year extension due to the delayed start, then a further 1 month extension was granted very late in the project, to enable final project activities to be completed. The total project period was thus just over 4 years and 4 months.

² Various documents could not be located at PCU, possibly as since the project was closed in July there have been staff changes in the PCU.

³ UNDP (2012) Project-Level Evaluation: Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported GEF-Financed Projects. . Evaluation Office, UNDP. Available from: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/UNDP-GEF-TE-Guide.pdf> [Accessed 06/11/12]

B. Problems that the project sought to address

The Seychelles consists of over 115 islands of which some 40 are granitic and the rest coral with a total human population of 87,300⁴. The four main inhabited islands are granitic and are, in order of size, Mahe, Praslin, Silhouette and La Digue. Mahé is the largest and most populated island⁵, and also the most important in terms of terrestrial biodiversity. The total land area of the Seychelles islands is 455.3 km², located within 4° and 9° south of the equator. It is estimated that the combined coastline of all islands is approximately 491 km (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: Map of Seychelles Archipelago

The granitic islands of the Seychelles are composed of a core of granitic rock which forms the steep uplands where the laterite soils are highly leached, with narrow surrounding coastal plains (locally known as “plateaux”) are formed by coral sand – where soils are highly porous and infertile. Both soil types are physically, chemically and biologically poor, with low levels of soil organic matter (SOM). Over 80% of Seychelles land area is under some form of forest (pristine, secondary and plantation) or other vegetation cover, though less so on the more urbanized main islands. Land degradation has mainly occurred because of forest fires, clearing of forest for development purposes (agriculture, including plantations; housing; tourist developments; infrastructure), effects of invasive alien species

(creepers), unsustainable agriculture and construction practices, also landslides or rock falls. On the coralline islands, the SLM issues are different, but also very

important (*inter alia* porous sandy soils derived from coral which are low in SOM, guano mining and often under monocultures).

“Seychelles is one of the major biodiversity ‘hot spots’ in the world and its most important asset is its rare environmental beauty” (UNDP Country Programme 2007-2010).

Prevention and control of forest fires is taking place, but needed a comprehensive all-encompassing strategy, including models for rehabilitation of degraded areas. Unsustainable harvesting of forest products was on the increase and made worse because of the lack of forest management models. The invasive alien species (IAS) creepers, which in places are smothering the forest, are reported to be a relatively new phenomenon of which little was known and no control measures have been established. SLM / soil conservation in agriculture was not effectively addressed attributed to various factors including the non-conducive lease agreements of state agricultural land, low levels of farmer awareness of SLM, widespread belief that SLM is very costly, non-effective extension work and lack of adequate soil testing facilities. Risks of landslides were not well incorporated in land use planning and construction practices. Seychelles had no National Action Plan or Investment Plan for sustainable land management.

Thus, the main threats to land were identified in the ProDoc as:

- * Forest fires, invasive alien species (creepers) and the unsustainable harvesting of forests;

⁴ Seychelles National Bureau of Statistics, 2010.

⁵ 85 - 90% of the total resident Seychelles population is on Mahé.

- * Degradation of agricultural land, including; physical erosion, failure of farmers to replenish organic matter and nutrients post-harvest; pollution (*inter alia* mis-application of inorganic fertilisers, waste from intensive animal rearing units, saline incursions along coastal strips);
- * Physical developments (*inter alia* residential areas, tourism projects, infrastructure and other developments) which cause degradation of pristine forests, secondary forests, agricultural areas, wetlands and coastal areas;
- * Climate change, which the ProDoc noted as threatening coastal areas, but since that date has increasingly been recognised as also affecting forests, agricultural land and wider ecosystem functioning.

The Goal of the Project was: “Sustainable land management is practiced and mainstreamed into national development in Seychelles”.

C. Immediate and development objectives of the project

The Project Objective was: “Capacity enhanced in Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and SLM principles applied in national policies, plans, processes and practices”.

The Outcomes and Outputs of the Project were the following:

Outcome 1: *Individual and institutional capacity for SLM enhanced* – to be achieved through 7 outputs:

- 1.1. Capacities for forest fire prevention, detection and suppression are strengthened;
- 1.2. Cost-effective techniques for the rehabilitation of burned/deforested land are tested and developed;
- 1.3: Cost-effective techniques/capacities for controlling deforestation by IAS creepers are developed;
- 1.4: Sustainable production forest management systems are developed;
- 1.5: Improved capacities for soil conservation in agriculture are developed;
- 1.6: Capacity for minimizing risks of landslides is developed.
- 1.7 Capacity on Environmental Economics in SLM developed

Outcome 2: *SLM mainstreamed into economic and sectoral development* – to be achieved through 3 outputs:

- 2.1: Sustainable land management principles integrated in relevant national policies and strategies;
- 2.2: Legal and regulatory framework concerning SLM reviewed, updated and harmonized;
- 2.3: Stakeholders are aware of and apply SLM practices.

Outcome 3: *National Action Plan (NAP) completed and monitored* – to be achieved through 3 outputs:

- 3.1: NAP prepared according to UNCCD guidelines;
- 3.2: NAP disseminated.
- 3.3. NAP monitored

Outcome 4: *Medium Term Investment Plan being financed and implemented* – to be achieved through 3 outputs:

- 4.1. Medium Term Investment Plan for SLM developed;
- 4.2. Financing for Medium Term Investment Plan ensured;
- 4.3. Medium Term Investment Plan implemented and monitored.

Outcome 5: *Adaptive Management and Learning in place* – to be achieved through 3 outputs:

- 5.1. Effective project management in place

- 5.2. Monitoring and Evaluation work plan implemented
- 5.3. Lessons learned collected, prepared and disseminated

D. Baseline Indicators established

Annex I of the ProDoc provided a comprehensive analysis of the Threats, Root Causes, Barriers, Solutions and Baseline for the project.

The project's June 2008 Inception Workshop reviewed the ProDoc (2006) LogFrame and made some changes to the indicators and baseline details.

It was particularly noted that the baseline of agricultural area (ha) under improved soil conservation practices should be "confirmed at start of project implementation" – as the original total was set as 0 ha. It was similarly indicated in both the ProDoc and Feb 2010 LogFrame (reviewed in the MTE) that the baselines of trained professionals in: forest fires; invasive alien creepers; and soil conservation; were all zero. The baseline of agricultural land under improved soil conservation practices was re-set at the Inception Workshop to 200ha (although at MTE, no-one knew how this was determined) and the target was set at 350ha.

The other baseline indicators were all agreed by those at the Inception Workshop, notably stating that various plans were outdated and listed that the following "made no specific mention of SLM":

- * Forest management policies;
- * Environmental Management Plan for Seychelles II (EMPS II) 2000 – 2010;
- * National Strategy for Plant Conservation;
- * National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (NBSAP) (1997).

Also:

- * existing soil testing laboratory offer minimal services and had limited funds;
- * no guidelines existed on re-forestation;
- * Fire Contingency Plan (1997) in place;
- * 1 outdated National Forest Management Plan/sector study (1993);
- * no soil conservation guidelines / manuals;
- * no SLM Toolkits being used in Seychelles;
- * "Agricultural extension service in place without proper soil conservation recommendations, following top-down extension approach"
- * "UNCCD Committee exists, but meets irregularly"⁶;
- * "EMPS⁷ Steering Committee does not specifically address SLM";
- * "National Disaster Secretariat is doing landslide risk assessment; landslide risk zoning not included in Land Use Planning, or in the Disaster Risk maps";
- * No NAP /no NAP monitoring;
- * No investment plan relevant to SLM exists / no financing committed / no MTIP monitoring.

The baseline and targets regarding land use planning and inclusion of SLM (also biodiversity) differed between the ProDoc, Inception Report and Feb 2010 versions of the LogFrame, these are respectively:

ProDoc (2006): At least 3 administrative Districts have land use plans that include zoning that takes account of landslide risk;

⁶ The evaluator understands that this is incorrect – and only a Focal Point exists. However, the role of FP has been held by at least 5 people during the project

⁷ EMPS replaced post 2010 (MTE) by Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy (SSDS)

Inception Report (2008): Map available in GIS format, land risk zoning included in District Land Use Plans and Disaster Risk Maps;

Feb 2010 LogFrame: At least 3 administrative Districts have land use plans that include zoning that takes account of landslide risk (as in ProDoc).

Sites affected by forest fires, alien invasive creepers and landslides were all “to undergo effective and sustainable rehabilitation trials” as Activities (1.2.3, 1.3.2 and 1.6.4) in the project – at 2,2 and 1 sites respectively – but the total land areas involved are not mentioned.

E. Main stakeholders

The key partners in the project are the Ministry of Environment and Energy Transport (Environment Department including the Division of Risk and Disaster Management and the Seychelles National Park Authority), the Ministry of Natural Resources and Industry (Department of Natural Resources and the Seychelles Agricultural Agency, including the Extension Service, also the Seychelles Agriculture and Horticulture Training Centre) the Ministry of Land Use and Housing (MLUH) (Land and Survey Division) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (GEF political focal point). These Ministries and Departments differ in name from those in the Project Document, as there have been three major institutional changes in the civil service since the preparation of the Project Document, one in late 2008, in June 2010 and again in 2012. There has been considerable re-structuring and economic reforms of the public sector of the Government of Seychelles, resulting in a reduction in staff numbers in most Ministries – for this project most notably in the Forestry sector (reportedly depleted of fire fighting expertise), also staff reductions and changes in agriculture with the creation of the Seychelles Agriculture Agency (by Act of Parliament on 6 January 2009) to manage the agricultural sector.

The Ministry of Education and the University of the Seychelles were also involved in the project.

Other key stakeholders were the many environmental NGOs which exist in Seychelles (*inter alia* GIF, SIF, TRASS, PCAG), farmers on Mahé and Praslin and the Seychelles Farmers Association (SeyFA).

F. Expected Results

The **national benefits** of the project included increased capacity in prevention and control of forest fires, rehabilitate degraded areas, control invasive alien species (IAS) creepers, development of forest management plans, promotion of SLM in agriculture and minimisation of the risks of land movements (landslides and rock falls). It also aimed to mainstream SLM in relevant policy and regulatory frameworks and to assist in developing a National Action Plan and an Integrated Financing Strategy (formerly known as a Medium Term Investment Plan) for SLM. The ProDoc identified that the national benefits of the project would include more sustainable forest and agriculture production, while at the same time safeguarding against land degradation. This was seen to be particularly pertinent as it was considered that SLM had not been effectively implemented in Seychelles, whilst land degradation was an apparent and growing threat.

The anticipated **global benefits** were improved ecosystems integrity, functions and services. The project was also to assist in improved adaptation to climate change, in particular sea level rise – with direct and indirect benefits for the terrestrial and marine biodiversity of Seychelles, which is of global importance.

The project was designed to contribute to meeting the objectives of the UNDP Country Programme, as SLM has close synergies to biodiversity protection, climate change adaptation and climate change mitigation. Thus, the SLM project had many synergies with the other on-going GEF projects (Biosecurity,

Biodiversity Mainstreaming and the Capacity Development for Improved National and International Environmental Management in Seychelles).

This Portfolio SLM Project was specifically designed for SIDS and being a SIDS with its typical economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities, the experiences in Seychelles were in addition expected to assist in the design of projects for other SIDS.

3. Findings

| Criterion | Evaluator's Summary Comments | Evaluator's Rating |
|--|---|---------------------|
| A. Attainment of project objectives and results (overall rating) Sub criteria (below) | | satisfactory |
| A. 1. Effectiveness | Most Outputs and Outcomes achieved – those not, subject to extenuating circumstances | satisfactory |
| A. 2. Relevance | Project became even more relevant over the project period | relevant |
| A. 3. Efficiency | Majority of activities made good use of available resources | highly satisfactory |
| B. Sustainability of Project outcomes (overall rating) Sub criteria (below) | | moderately likely |
| B. 1. Financial | IFS in place and win-win benefits of SLM much better understood in Seychelles | likely |
| B. 2. Socio Political | NAP now in SSDS and MTNDS | likely |
| B. 3. Institutional framework and governance | Discussions on-going but NAP likely to be administered in SSDS | likely |
| B. 4. Ecological | SNPA and SAA already mainstreaming SLM | likely |
| C. Achievement of outputs and activities | | satisfactory |
| D. Monitoring and Evaluation (overall rating) | | satisfactory |
| D. 1. M&E Design | Well planned | satisfactory |
| D. 2. M&E Plan Implementation (use for adaptive management) | On-going monitoring good, main problem was that the area benefiting from SLM was never actually qualified | satisfactory |
| D. 3. Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities | Mostly highly satisfactory, but delays securing funds form GM reduces overall | satisfactory |

| Criterion | Evaluator's Summary Comments | Evaluator's Rating |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| | assessment rating | |
| E. Catalytic Role | SLM now mainstreamed in laws and policies; wide range of training / training of trainers accomplished; land use plans now prepared for most rural areas of granitic islands – local staff must be trained to use these | highly satisfactory |
| F. Preparation and readiness | Project start delayed one year due to problems recruiting a manager | moderately satisfactory |
| G. Country ownership | Highly involved and committee stakeholders, including the Steering Committee | highly satisfactory |
| H. Stakeholders involvement | Good - within the limited possibilities of the project design | highly satisfactory |
| I. Financial planning | Issue over funding of Component 3 and subsequent delay in start of Component 4 a major limiting factor | moderately satisfactory |
| J. Implementation approach | Initial problems due to frequent changes in PM, but final 2 years overcame most delays / issues | highly satisfactory |
| K. UNDP/GEF Supervision and backstopping | Issue over funding from the Global Mechanism for Component 3 led to subsequent delay in start of Component 4. | satisfactory |

3.1 Project Design / Formulation

A. Analysis of LFA (Project logic /strategy; Indicators)

Reviewing the project after closure, it is clear that the logic used in its design was internally sound. The strategies developed to achieve the Outcomes are similar to many projects in the land degradation focal area which were being developed at that time and indeed continue to be developed, including individual and institutional capacity building, creation of an enabling policy and legal environment, mainstreaming, also development / approval of a NAP and investment strategy. The Activities and Outputs have proved in most respects to be effective towards achieving the project goal, given the low level of awareness of SLM in Seychelles at the start of the project.

The project's objectives and components were clear, practicable and feasible, though ambitious, within its time frame. The project is classified as a "medium-sized" project, but on closer examination it is complex, including 59 Activities in Outcomes 1-4 in the Project Document, many of which required

either a consultancy study – or provision of specialist training. Seychelles is a very small, remote, island state and project encountered problems as the number of people with technical training and experience in SLM-related issues is quite small and generally most of these people are already engaged in full time employment. There was a lack of appropriately experienced human capacity available to undertake short-term consultancy work required, particularly in the first half of the project and the budget was not sufficient to support the use international consultants for these many activities.

Notably, the project has funded a survey of the understanding and current use of SLM with farmers, extension officers and policy makers (Activity 1.5.1). This was poorly designed and there were some serious short-comings in the survey methodology, which had the then PM been knowledgeable in SLM this could have been identified and resolved before it was used. The questionnaire survey was intended to collate information about the knowledge and use of SLM among farmers, in the extension service and awareness of policy makers. In this one-off survey, a random sample of farmers (variously reported as either 25 or 47 in number), a number of extension officers (number not known) and also of policy makers (again an unknown number) had to complete specifically designed questionnaires (farmers and policy makers interviews, extension staff sent documents to complete) in April / May 2010. Unfortunately, the questionnaires were not as well focussed as would have been ideal and assumed a level of knowledge of SLM “principles” (this should have been defined as practices or technologies) which may not be present. The questions also referred to more general agricultural / agronomy / harvesting / post-harvest issues. The draft report on the questionnaire does not clarify numbers of respondents –and states (regrettably) “Almost all farmers who were interviewed showed no real enthusiasm or necessity to approach or seek for advice from the Extension Service” – which could be misconstrued – as, for example, if farmers are not aware of the win-win benefits of the wide range of SLM technologies (not only composting), they will not appreciate how extensionists can help them. Many conclusions did not relate to SLM. This was a missed opportunity – ideally a well-designed questionnaire survey could have been implemented at baseline to guide activities towards the project Outcomes, then again at project closure to quantify the impacts of the project’s training and awareness raising.

A further example of the challenges the PM and SC faced in implementing Activities due to the calibre of available local SLM expertise mentioned in the 2011 PIR as : “The final draft of the ‘Integrate SLM principles into potential restructuring of agricultural extension service by GoS’ has not reached a suitable conclusion to a level acceptable by the SC members.” Concluding that “We are searching for an appropriate person to review and amend the document to achieve the objective of the consultancy.”

It was determined during project design that the executing institution(s) had the capacity to implement the project and could provide appropriate counterparts. However, the global and national economic crises in 2008 forced the Government of Seychelles (GoS) (see Annex 8 for further details) into considerable re-structuring and economic reforms of the public sector, resulting in a reduction in staff numbers in many Ministries – for this project most notably in the Forestry sector (reportedly depleted of fire fighting expertise),SNPA (where the 300 staff were reduced to 50), also staff reductions and changes in agriculture with the creation of the Seychelles Agriculture Agency (by Act of Parliament on 6 January 2009) to manage the agricultural sector. By April 2009, a total of 2,500 staff had left the public service, representing 15 percent of the April 2008 public sector workforce. This has had considerable impact on the project, with the remaining senior staff was then responsible for more on-going projects and programmes, in addition to their core responsibilities.

Government counterparts are mentioned 3 times in the ProDoc, to be involved in the Inception Phase, commenting on the Inception Report and being involved in the project Monitoring and Evaluation, resources. There was no counterpart to the Project Manager, but the core group of GoS and other NGO

members of the Steering Committee were highly involved and committed to the project throughout. Also notably key members of the SAA and other department staff were highly involved and showed great commitment. Although the project is now closed, there remains disagreement among those interviewed in the TE as to who is / was the counterpart for the Land Use Planning Consultant who worked to develop district land use plans continuously (funded by this GEF SLM project and also the on-going BD project) since November 2009. This is surprising, as it seems *sin qua non*⁸ that local staff should have been trained to continue the land use mapping / planning role – which used some 10% of the project funds.

Regrettably, the numbers of people trained (for example farmers attending the SLM workshops or SNPA/DRDM staff trained in fire fighting) was neither included as a project target – nor reported in the PIRs.

The project design was very detailed as to the required up-dates and reviews in legislation and policies required to create an enabling environment for SLM. However, the timing of the approval by Cabinet or others of such changes is clearly beyond the remit of the project.

B. Assumptions and Risks

The project assumptions and risks were generally well articulated in the ProDoc (see Table 1) and were typical of those found in most land degradation focal area projects. However the project developers did not include any reference to the availability of staff and / or national consultants – which would seem to have been an omission given local issues in Seychelles (see full details in 3.1 A & G). Fortunately, arrangements for the support of project management and help with continuity in the first half of the project were in place in the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) from project start-up.

Table 1: Comparison of Risks and Assumptions from ProDoc (2006) and 2010 Revision of LogFrame

| Project Component | ProDoc (2006) Risks and Assumptions | Logframe (2010) Assumptions | LogFrame (2010) Risks |
|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| Objective of the project: Capacity enhanced in Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and SLM principles applied in national policies, plans, processes and practices | Continued political support for mainstreaming SLM; National Development and Sectoral Plans will continue to be updated and developed. | National Development and Sectoral Plans will continue to be updated and developed | No risks logged |
| Outcome 1: Individual and institutional capacity for SLM enhanced | Continued interest in collaboration by international research institutions Sufficient interested, receptive individuals available for training Continued availability of training opportunities through bilateral and | Continued interest in collaboration by international research institutions Sufficient interested, receptive individuals available for training Institutions receptive to change | No risks logged |

⁸ Used to denote something that is an essential part of the whole.

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | <p>multilateral cooperation</p> <p>Institutions receptive to change</p> <p>Institutions are able to retain the trained manpower</p> <p>Capable technicians available to develop and maintain knowledge and information management systems</p> <p>Stakeholders willing to share information</p> | <p>Institutions are able to retain the trained manpower</p> <p>Stakeholders willing to share information</p> | |
| Outcome 2: SLM mainstreamed into economic and sectoral development | <p>National decision makers see the interest / need and importance of SLM for National and Sectoral development</p> <p>Government willing to revise land lease arrangements to include better incentives for introducing SLM practices</p> | <p>National decision makers see the interest / need and importance of SLM for National and Sectoral development</p> <p>Government willing to revise land lease arrangements to include better incentives for introducing SLM practices</p> | No risks logged |
| Outcome 3: National Action Plan (NAP) completed | Capacity to draft NAP available | No assumptions logged | Funding may not be received in time to carry out activity |
| Outcome 4: Medium Term investment Plan being financed and implemented | Donors and other potential investors interested in investing in Seychelles SLM | Donors and other potential investors interested in investing in programs / activities supportive of SLM | Funding may not be received in time to carry out activity |
| Outcome 5: Adaptive Management and Learning in place | Adaptive management culture and capacity available | No assumptions logged | No risks logged |

The stated assumptions and risks (including those in the ProDoc and 2010 revision of the LogFrame) where logical and robust, and have helped to determine activities and planned outputs. Particularly, the project manager / PCU / UNDP CO were perceptive in early 2010 to realise that issues over securing the promised funding for Outcome 3 (development of a National Action Plan) from the Global Mechanism was a problem and risked the successful attainment of both Outcomes 3 and 4, thus sought an alternative financial arrangement – which allowed work on the NAP to be undertaken in the first half of 2011. However, as work on Outcome 4 could not begin until the NAP was completed, the delay meant that project was unable to not complete certain of the Activities under Outcome 4 [Activity 4.1.3 (MTIP⁹)

⁹ Re-named the IFS

adopted by government and stakeholders) and all activities under Outputs 4.2 (Financing for Medium Term Investment Plan ensured) and Output 4.3 (MTIP implemented and monitored)].

Revisions of the LogFrame during project implementation (Feb. 2010 & July 2012) shows that the list of assumptions and risks have been reduced – which is surprising, as by that stage in project implementation issues of human resources and wider economic issues were affecting project implementation.

The various versions of the LogFrame failed to mention externalities (i.e. national and global economic / political issues, the effects of climate change etc.) which in the event particularly affected the project.

Economic / Political Issues

In common with other island states, the size of the Seychelles economy is small (US\$833 million gross domestic product (GDP) in 2008) and highly vulnerable to global shocks due to its isolation and small size. The country faces constraints including, lack of economic diversification, vulnerability to external shocks, distance from markets, risks of environmental degradation and weather-related disasters. Tourism is the predominant sector, accounting for 22 percent of GDP, 30 percent of employment and 70 percent of foreign exchange earnings.

An array of global and national economic challenges have presented greater challenges to the project's progress towards achieving its outcomes during the project's short life-span than could have been anticipated when the project started (see Annex 8). Major changes in development conditions affecting Seychelles occurred during the period between the development of the project (2006), project start-up, the MTE and this evaluation. The changes include the effects of the world food crisis and resulting massive rise in food prices in 2008, also the global and resulting national economic crisis of 2008-2009.

The impacts specifically relating to SLM have been considerable, notably; the major change in the exchange rate has altered the profitability of farming enterprises (farmers interviewed during the MTE recounted total losses of markets for example for small pineapples, massive competition with imports – and huge increases in input costs). The project's contribution to agricultural development in Seychelles is now of much greater relevance to the Seychellois than at the time the Project Document was prepared (2006) - a time when at some levels agriculture was not considered to be highly important (The Seychelles Strategy 2017 (2007) stated merely that agriculture should “not hinder development”). The growing appreciation of the importance of agriculture is articulated in the Seychelles Agricultural Development Strategy 2007-2011. In response particularly to the food crisis, the GoS developed a National Food Security Strategy 2008-2011 – which highlights the need to increase national food production. This should catalyse increased medium- to long-term interest in SLM, as the benefits become more widely understood.

Continued problems due to piracy in the Indian Ocean affect importation of food (and other goods), also tourism. Ironically this could benefit SLM – as it creates greater need for the Seychellois to focus on national agriculture and food production

Since the start of the project, Seychelles has faced a debt crisis and the exchange liberalisation needed to resolve that led to the depreciation of the rupee by about 60 percent against the U.S. dollar (*inter alia* leading to downsizing of the civil service). The global economic recession further adversely affected tourism revenues from late 2008. Although tourism arrivals began to recover in the second half of 2009, there was an estimated 15 percent fall in tourism revenues for 2009, as a whole. However, “Tourism continued to be the main driver of economic growth in 2012/13. As a result, GDP growth is projected to

decline further in 2012 to 4%, as the financial crisis in Europe, which accounts for about 70% of tourists, continues.”¹⁰

Increasing Weather Variability and Climate Change

In the main text of the ProDoc, climate change was noted as a threat to coastal areas (i.e. flooding and salt water intrusion). The coastal zones of the granitic islands and the low-lying coralline or sand cays are most vulnerable to beach erosion and impacts of global climate change and the ensuing sea level rise – with farmers interviewed in the TE noting problems of salt intrusion into their soils and also affecting irrigation water. Seychelles has also suffered from coral bleaching, which may further affect coastal areas in the long term as reefs are vital elements of coastal protection from increased storms.

However, in addition to longer-term climate changes, Seychelles is already experiencing wider impacts of increasing weather variability and frequency of extreme events, with drought periods becoming longer and the frequency of extreme weather, including torrential rain, increasing – affecting forests, agricultural land and wider ecosystem functioning. Several periods of extreme weather conditions (1997, 2002 and 2004) caused major widespread landslides and flooding. Also, extreme dry periods have caused (or exacerbated) forest fires and water shortages, which usually happens during the south east monsoon, from June – September. These are having serious effects on farming, for example prompting farmers to make greater use of irrigation – although water shortages are also becoming more common. The problems caused by creepers which smother trees, shrubs and any other vegetation in the area, depriving them of the necessary sunlight and resources they need to survive are likely to become more prevalent with changing weather patterns – and climate change.

The project should perhaps have included these in later risk assessments and more pro-actively publicised the recently increasing recognition that many SLM technologies also contribute to climate change adaptation, particularly technologies which increase soil organic carbon levels (as results from increased use of *inter alia* compost, green manures, agroforestry, conservation agriculture, sustainable forestry), thereby improving the physical, chemical and biological functioning (ecosystem services) of soils and vegetation. Also that improved awareness of the dangers of fire and improved fire fighting capacity via the project could mitigate the increasing risk and frequency of forest fires and efforts under this project to remove creepers could help reverse the trend for them to be more problematic in forests.

C. Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design

The design of the project is very similar to many in the land degradation (LD) focal area, notably including component on: individual and institutional capacity building for SLM; and mainstreaming SLM into economic and social development.

However, the context in Seychelles is very different from that in most of the Africa region, where the majority of the population is small-scale / subsistence farmers. Furthermore, the land degradation issues are quite distinct in Seychelles, namely: forest fires, landslides and the effects of the spread of invasive alien species. As a consequence, the project activities differ, whereas LD projects in countries in continental Africa focus on working with farmers to encourage for example reduced tillage and conservation agriculture through farmer field school approaches, this was not a focus in this project. In retrospect, given the changed priority of agriculture and food security which evolved in Seychelles over the project period, the project should perhaps have endeavored to place more emphasis on this.

¹⁰ <http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/en/countries/east-africa/seychelles/>

D. Planned stakeholder participation

Due to the design of the project, there were only limited opportunities for stakeholder / beneficiary participation in the project (management / decision-making / activities). The project has principally involved members of the Steering Committee, national consultants, NGOs, trainees on the fire training courses, participants on landslide / agriculture / environmental economics workshops. Members of local communities were invited to and attended public meetings to review district land use plans.

Certainly stakeholder participation will continue to build post-project as the benefits of the project's capacity building actions roll-out. For example, extension staff should already now be conveying the information on the win-win-win benefits of SLM technologies to the farmers they are responsible for and local people are already receiving training in firefighting from SNPA trained trainers.

E. Replication approach

This was a capacity building project, and therefore appropriately the design included field research and production of a number of vital scientific / technical studies, also "training of trainers" (see Annex 5). The TE concludes that the project would have benefited from inclusion of more direct work with farmers to encourage adoption of SLM technologies, for example using farmer field school approaches.

F. UNDP comparative advantage

UNDP holds comparative advantage in Seychelles to lead environmental projects, not least due to the existence of the UNDP-supported Programme Coordination Unit (PCU) under the Ministry of Environment and Energy, which is physically located in an office adjacent to the main UNDP office and the GEF Small Grants Programme office in Victoria on Mahé. It was established in May 2008 to "ensure a more effective monitoring of the GEF-funded portfolio of projects in Seychelles"¹¹.

The TE found that the PCU is working effectively to meet the objectives it was set, namely:

"to coordinate, oversee, monitor & support the implementation of national environmental projects with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The main aim of the PCU is to help achieve environmental sustainability & environment protection whilst still achieving economic growth. The PCU currently falls under the umbrella of the Ministry responsible for Environment. In the relatively short period of its existence it has built up a good network of local consultants, raise public awareness about the work of the Unit and its portfolio of projects and to-date facilitated the implementation of six projects. It presently has a full Seychellois management team and I am quite happy to note that the PCU team has the full support of and a strong working relationship with the various Government ministries / agencies, the private sector, especially those in tourism and fisheries sectors, and the Environment Non-Governmental organisations."¹²

Notably, the PCU was been set-up and works to promote environment protection and critically to optimise "the use of financial resources put at the disposal of the Government of Seychelles to deliver on its sustainable development national agenda and international commitments."

¹¹ <http://www.pcusey.sc/>

¹² quotes by Mr Didier Dogley - GEF Focal Point for Seychelles, on PCU website

G. Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector

The subject area of the project has close synergies (indeed overlaps, e.g. on IAS creepers) with numerous simultaneous and recent projects / programmes in the environment sector and benefited from being managed from the PCU, within which other synergistic GEF funded projects (Biosecurity, Biodiversity Mainstreaming and CB2) were managed. These were well supported by the UNDP-GEF Seychelles Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and the Programme Co-ordinator – although both of the staff members holding these roles have left since the MTE. [Although the CTA left in 2011, he has not yet been replaced.]

The win-win-win benefits and the synergies between LD, BD and CC could still have been more forcefully emphasised during project implementation – notably as agriculture is facing challenges due to increasing weather variability, the win-win-win aspects of SLM which are being promoted elsewhere as climate smart agriculture (CSA)¹³, for example conservation agriculture, could have become more prominent during the project's implementation. Similarly, forest management could focus on watersheds and landscape level approaches (see 4 C)

H. Management arrangements

Project management was based in the GoS / UNDP / GEF Programme Coordination Unit (PCU).

One of the issues of greatest concerns regarding the continuity and successful implementation of the project, which was noted in the MTE, were the frequent changes in project and wider UNDP personnel (there had been three Project Managers and one Temporary Project Manager – also three different Programme Coordinators by the MTE). This frequent change in personnel has clearly resulted in the loss of some “project memory”. These changes were not conducive to the smooth operation of the project, as new PMs inevitably took some time to become familiar and assume the required leadership role of this “medium-sized” but quite complex project. Fortunately, the PM who was appointed shortly before the MTE remained in post until project closure. She should be given much of the credit for having successfully ensured that most of the project Activities, Outputs and Outcomes were achieved. Almost without exception, the stakeholders interviewed for the TE made particular mention of this, including the statement that she “turned the project around after two years of no direction”. Also, the Programme Co-ordinator in post at the MTE remained in that post until after project closure – and should also be given credit for the project's eventual success.

The Project Steering Committee provided sound guidance during the project's implementation and met regularly. The PSC was throughout Chaired by Mr D. Dogely, the GEF Focal Point and now Special Advisor to the Minister of Environment and Energy (since March 2012) – providing the vital consistency and leadership. However, due *inter alia* to changes in the civil service and NGOs, there has been a continual change in membership of the PSC over the project period. This is unavoidable, but generally as members were replaced, they fully brief their successor to ensure continuity.

During the MTE, one NGO partner reported that they felt they had not been kept up-to-date with project activities, despite being on the Steering Committee (SC). However, in the TE, no such feelings were expressed. The last PM effectively ensured that, for example, copies of all the reports produced by the project are circulated (by email) to PSC members. Ideally such information should have also been placed on the PCU website and more widely publicised.

¹³ <http://www.fao.org/climatechange/climatesmart/en/>

3.2 Project Implementation

A. Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)

A key element of adaptation which the Steering Committee (SC) undertook was to delay start of activities under Outcome 4, until Outcome 3 was completed – this was enforced due to delays in funding by the GM rather than by choice.

The project did not work to restore landslide areas, as outlined in the ProDoc as it was concluded that there would be serious health and safety issues – funds were diverted to clear IAS creepers from an extra trial site as an alternative.

Activities on sustainable forest management were adapted by the SC / PM, as the recruited ICs advised it was not appropriate to develop guidelines for best management of forests when the existing forest inventory was out-of-date.

B. Partnership arrangements (with relevant stakeholders involved in the country/region)

The project team appears to have developed good partnership relationships with the staff of various involved GoS Ministries and Departments, also a number of key NGOs.

Within the scope of this medium-sized project, the opportunities for stronger substantive partnerships with beneficiaries were limited. It is disappointing that partnerships were not developed between those for example developing approaches to control IAS creepers and local communities – however it should be noted that the communities which exist on Seychelles are more akin to those in developed countries than developing countries. Key informants told the TE that the districts in Seychelles are highly political and rely on Government to take the lead. NGOs would be the most relevant groupings with which to develop partnerships. Consequently it is pertinent to review the partnerships the project developed with NGOs.

Several NGOs were involved at various times in the project, including sitting on the Steering Committee (SC), members undertaking project consultancies – and the NGOs themselves undertaking studies. These include the Green Island Foundation (GIF), Seychelles Farmers Association (SeyFA) and the Terrestrial Restoration Action Society of Seychelles (TRASS) and Plant Conservation Action Group (PCAG). TRASS members have been particularly important in working in partnership with the project – and are continuing the work with communities, particularly on Praslin. However, due to the small size of these NGOs, their wide geographical mandates and also changes in staff, the TE found that the current staff of one involved NGO had not been aware of their predecessors' activities and involvement in the project – and how the project was benefiting their members.

C. Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management

Considering the project's adaptive management, this evaluation (as for the MTE) concludes that the project staff has used the required monitoring tools (Annual Performance Reports, Quarterly Progress Reports, Quarterly Operational Workplans and up-dating of the Overall Workplan and Budget), although some of these documents could not be traced for TE (see Annex 5).

However, a National MSP Annual Project Review Form was completed as an Annex (III) in the Project Document, which states that the form should be completed annually by each project team by 1st July – but none seem to have been completed since.

The LD Focal Area had no GEF Tracking tool during GEF 3 and GEF 4. The Land Degradation Focal Area - Portfolio Monitoring and Assessment Tool (PMAT) Guidelines were introduced in March 2011 and

although the MTE suggested that the project SC should consider adopting the tool for future on-the ground activities, this does not appear to have been done.

The Mid-Term Evaluation was clearly used subsequently to focus and prioritise activities – as it was mentioned in subsequent PIRs.

The MTE noted concern about the delay in starting preparation of the NAP (Outcome 3) and its effect on Outcome 4. The SC clearly took note of this and found an alternative way for the GM to support the NAP – enabling this to be completed and approved within the time-scale of the project.

D. Project Finance

Table 2 shows the planned spending from the ProDoc, while Tables 3 and 4 show the actual expenditure at project close.

Table 2: Project Outcome Budget (in US\$) (source ProDoc)

| Outcome | GEF | Co-finance | | Total |
|---|----------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| | | GoS Co-finance | Other co-finance | |
| 1: Individual and institutional capacity for SLM enhanced | 335,000 | 943,000 | 502,000 (UNDP, FAO, NGOs) | 1,780,000 |
| 2: SLM mainstreamed into economic and sectoral development | 77,500 | 80,000 | 0 | 157,500 |
| 3: National Action Plan completed | 0 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 20,000 |
| 4: Medium Term investment Plan being financed and implemented | 15,000 | 30,000 | 0 | 45,000 |
| 5: Adaptive Management and Learning in place | 47,500 | 80,000 | | 127,500 |
| TOTAL MSP | 475,000 | 1,143,000 | 512,000 | 2,130,000 |
| TOTAL GRANT (including PDF-A) | 500,000 | 7,000 | 0 | 2,162,000 |

Table 3: Annual Total Project Expenditure of GEF Resources

| Year | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | Total |
|-------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|----------------|
| Total Expenditure (\$) | 17,602 | 4,025 | 27,233 | 61,982 | 97,064 | 177,445 | 107,782 | 493,134 |

Table 4: Total Project Expenditure by Outcome

| Item | Amount (\$) |
|--|-------------|
| Validation of LFM, TRCM & PPP | 169,896 |
| MSP Brief Completed | 4,022 |
| Outcome 1 | 173,102 |
| Outcome 2 | 43,553 |
| Outcome 3 | 10,000 |

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Outcome 4 | 12,446 |
| Outcome 5 | 87,383 |

At the time of the MTE, the project has only disbursed some 33% of the total GEF grant. The rate of spending increased post MTE as more work took place on the ground, materials (awareness raising, SLM for farmers etc.) are produced for publication and international consultants worked on the NAP and the IFS. By the time of the TE, the GEF grant had been spent (see Tables 3 and 4). No irregularities have been noted in the financial management of the project and funds appear generally to be carefully managed.

A major problem which the project faced was in accessing funds from the Global Mechanism (GM). The GM “had been offering DOE help on the drafting of the SLM NAP for seven years prior to the project”, but despite their good will, Seychelles was not able to fulfill its requirement under the UNCCD Convention by having a National SLM NAP - a “set-back for SLM in the Seychelles”. Under the GEF funded project, the GM was to fund Outcome 3 – including an international consultancy (Output 3.1) to prepare the NAP. In the event, securing the Global Mechanism contribution to the project proved difficult for “legal and administrative reasons”, “despite the good will of all partners” (quotes from PIRs). Eventually in 2011, as it was clear UNDP could not receive funds directly from the GM, the Department of Environment and Global Mechanism entered into an agreement thereby bypassing the legal difficulties UNDP had in entering into an agreement with GM. In terms of co-financing the project has been successful in leveraging over and above the amount foreseen at the time of project endorsement. That is mainly due to the period of implementation which was during the macro-economic reform programme that resulted in creation of new institutions as well as streamlining of existing ones, impact of the volatile currency fluctuation during the initial years.

The project team note in the PIR that “despite the difficulties, it is good to have opened up the project to more partners; which provide for different insights and experience and give more international exposure to the Project” – however, this came at great costs to the project – as these financial problems delayed the start of work on Outcome 4 – and the eventual failure to achieve some of the Outputs, most notably adoption of the IFS and its successful future funding.

During the first half of the project, it was noted that there was some lack of clarity in the wording of contracts for national consultants as to which Outcome / Activity the work was contributing to. This could in part be due to the changes in project manager, perhaps poor recording and loss of project memory. The MTE advised that care should be taken in wording, as review of the contracts issued could be misconstrued to mean that some consultants have had repeat contracts for the same work – yet the evaluator then was assured these are separate parts of an Activity. This was achieved in the second half of the project.

E. Monitoring and evaluation: design at entry and implementation

The project’s monitoring and evaluation plans were clear from the ProDoc and generally adhered to thus overall **satisfactorily** implemented, namely:

- * The Inception workshop included a review of the logframe (indicators, means of verification, assumptions), imparting additional detail as needed;
- * Day to day monitoring was carried out by the Project Manager, based on the project's Annual Work Plan to ensure that the project Activities were on track and to take corrective actions if necessary

- * Those quarterly reports available record progress in Activities
- * Those quarterly workplans available show that planning took into account monitoring of progress towards Outputs and Outcomes.
- * The annual PIRs summarise achievements each year and the final PIR (to 31 July 2012)
- * Various implementing partner prepared “specific thematic reports” based on the activities they performed for the project (see Annex 5).
- * A key project publication has been the manual for farmers on SLM (Nancy, 2012). Also, the Compilation of Information on landslide risk (UNDP, 2011). Unfortunately, other project reports have not yet been crystallized for the dissemination of the results and achievements of the Project (e.g. “scientific or informational texts” or “journal articles”).

However, the TE has not been able to find evidence of the “measurement of impact indicators related to global benefits will occur according to the schedules defined in the Inception Workshop and tentatively outlined in the indicative Impact Measurement Template (e.g. measurement of carbon benefits from improved efficiency of ovens or through surveys for capacity building efforts).

Similarly, the TE has not been able to find evidence of the terminal tripartite review (TTR) being held in the last month of project operations, or of MENR preparing the Terminal Report and submitting it to UNDP-CO and GEF's Regional Coordinating Unit. However, the TE was due (according to the ProDoc) to be completed three months prior to the TTR – this seems to be an issue related to the delays in preparation of the NAP and consequently the IFS, which were beyond the control of the project team.

The project did not make any measurements of the baseline on the area of farm land under SLM at the project start, or at closure, which limits the overall assessment of the project’s success in encouraging farmers to implement the technologies reviewed under Activity 1.5.4 and explained in the project manual (Nancy, 2012). This seems to have been due to cost and the lack of up-to-date aerial photo or satellite imagery.

An important ProDoc target was that at least 3 administrative districts should have land user plans that include zoning that takes account of landslide risk – and as part of a capacity building project it would have been presumed that this would include training of local staff to continue work to cover all the districts, although this was not clearly specified. The international consultant (IC) recruited for this task (funded by the SLM project – and also the GEF biodiversity project) began work in Nov 2009 and is still working within the Ministry of Land Use and Housing on this (Output 1.6.1 and 1.6.2). This consultant reported during the TE (Nov 2012) to have completed 15 districts – and hopes to have completed land use plans for all 25 districts by the end of his latest contract extension (March 2013). On one hand this is a success, however, the TE could find no reference in PIRs or other documents to extend the ProDoc target of 3 districts. Also incorporation of landslide risk¹⁴ seems to have been of low importance, to what seems to have become a land administration task. Even the MTE noted that “work appears to be focusing on wide range of land administration / urban planning issues, not as TORs state focussing on contributing to SLM and BD projects”. The MTE advised that the activities of the land use planning (LUP) International Consultant (IC) “should be managed by a “matrix” including the SLM and BD PMs (also the PCU), rather than at present where he appears to work only under the direction of the MLUH PS”. Clearly land use plans for the districts is beneficial, especially at this time when there are such pressures

¹⁴ At the MTE, the landslide maps for use in the land use planning had not even been produced and this was not achieved until May 2011 (UNDP, 2011).

for development in Seychelles (notably from the IMF) – but the full cost of their production¹⁵ seems not to have been an appropriate use of GEF LD and BD funds.

The project has been subjected to two independent external evaluations, the Mid-Term (MTE) and this current Terminal Evaluation (TE) to determine progress being made towards the achievement of outcomes (and for the MTE, to identify course correction).

F. UNDP and Executing Agency implementation / execution coordination, and operational issues

Overall, UNDP and Executing Agency implementation / execution is evaluated to have been **satisfactory**.

It is clear that during the first half of the project, there was less focus on results than following the eventual recruitment of an appropriately qualified and experienced PM and the MTE, perhaps due to changes in PMs and PCs in the period 2008-2010.

The project has faced a range of problems in working with staff from the civil service (downsizing of the DoE and changes in the various departments have impacted on the project) and availability of appropriately skilled national consultants, including the lengthy process to get the civil servants to obtain leave without pay (summarised in Annex 9).

In terms of work planning, particularly the last PM clearly made appropriate use of the logical framework as a management tool, particularly in amalgamating Activities into coherent groups for which a national or if necessary an international consultant could be recruited to speed implementation to achieve the project Outcomes. The February 2010 and July 2012 LogFrames meet UNDP-GEF requirements in terms of format and content, although they lack a full description of the risks of the project (see discussion of the matter in 3.1 B).

Over the final half of the project (post MTE), *routinely updated work plans* were used by the PM and wider programme management. As few earlier plans could be located and the project team has changed, it is impossible to assess whether these were used to best effect at the early stages of project implementation.

The project made some *use of information technology (IT) via the PCU website*, but could have made better use of IT to support implementation, participation and monitoring for example as follows:

- PCU needs to set up a proper electronic filing system for the archiving of project workplans (quarterly and APRs), versions of the Overall Workplan and Budget, minutes of Steering Committee meetings etc. (with drafts and finally agreed versions well organized). This is important for the audit as well to be able to retrieve the documents.
- Increase the amount of information available on the internet – including improving the PCU website www.pcusey.sc to provide partners, the Steering Committee, potential beneficiaries, potential consultants and interested others with a more comprehensive overview of the project, including information on progress (e.g. photographs from the demonstration sites on Praslin, which are not easily accessible) - also access to documents / information about forthcoming events (workshops / training etc.).

UNDP, particularly through the PCU have provided appropriate support to the Implementing Partners and project team, including assisting in the hand-over between project managers – and supporting the IPs during the period of staff cuts.

¹⁵ If this is indeed the case – as the TE was regrettably unable to verify this, despite concerted efforts

UNDP also provided good technical support to the Executing Agency and project team, particularly when the Chief Technical Advisor was in post (to 2011), also from The UNDP CO in Mauritius and Regional Office in South Africa.

The PUC and SC eventually (in late 2010, after the MTE) addressed and found a way to resolve the major project issue relating securing the offered funding of Outcome 3 – and also Outcome 4 from the Global Mechanism.

UNDP, the SC and others addressed the delayed start of the project – eventually ensuring the extension of the project to enable as many of the Activities as possible to be completed and helped ensure a more successful achievement of the planned Outcomes. However delayed funding for Outcome 3 had serious implications as Outcome 4 has not been fully achieved due to lack of time.

Despite the reported initial low level of awareness of SLM – or how the project would benefit the country, by the TE many respondents' comments clearly demonstrate that the project gained a high level of ownership as those involved realised the win-win-win benefits of SLM to address underlying LD issues in Seychelles. However, some respondents continued to emphasize that for example if the project wished extension staff to continue to encourage SLM among farmers, they would need additional funding – which suggests that, at least in some quarters, regrettably SLM has not been totally mainstreamed or respondents still did not appreciate the win-win win benefits.

A further concern about GoS ownership is exemplified by the fact that over the duration of the project (just over 4 years) the Seychelles have had at 6 different individuals holding the role of UNCCD Focal Points.

Staff of the Executing Agency assesses that it is important to ensure that a follow-up SLM project should begin in the near future to truly establish SLM and the UNCCD in Seychelles.

3.3 Project Results

A. Overall results (attainment of objectives)

Overall the project has been **satisfactory** in achieving most of its objectives.

Notably, as this was a capacity building project, the following courses / workshops were held:

Training trainers in SNPA / the forestry sector in forest fire fighting.

Training trainers in DRDM in firefighting.

A Landslide Awareness and Slope Management workshop took place in June 2012, in partnership with DRDM. The workshop attracted over 50 participants including district administrators.

Training of Seychelles Agriculture Agency extension staff in locally-relevant / accepted SLM technologies, also soil sampling techniques (related to the soils lab which is about to be opened in Grand' Anse).

Training famers in SLM and soil sampling techniques – included courses on Mahé and also on Praslin (the latter was exceptionally well attended, reportedly by *ca* 60 of the island's 115 farmers).

In addition:

Development of a course module for use in the Seychelles Agriculture and Horticulture Training College (SAHTC) to raise awareness of SLM (it was not in the previous programme) – and the win-win benefits.

The member of staff of the Ministry of Education who drafted the new curriculum is now enthusiastic to “green” the wider SAHTC curriculum – focusing on knowledge, skills and attitudes. Short courses for farmers were also mooted. These seem vital as, contrary to the situation stated in the NAP (UNDP, 2011a), farming is not considered an attractive career in Seychelles, with a number of notably exceptions (highly skilled, commercial horticulturalists / farmers) farming seems to be the choice of last resort for school leavers. According to one informant during the TE, “students at SAHTC are not interested in anything”. The new SLM module and a greening of the curriculum may contribute to changing this and attract higher calibre students.

Studies carried-out for the project, notably on rehabilitation of burnt forest land on Praslin by TRASS will bring long-term benefits, as it has nurtured skills among members of TRASS, who will in future offer a service to land owners to step-in shortly after a fire to rehabilitate their land. As a consequence of the expertise build in the project, TRASS members are now working with local communities and school children on Praslin to raise awareness of the issues of fire (which in Seychelles are light by people), which will clearly bring long-term benefits. TRASS members are developing a tree nursery on Praslin to supply native species for their post-fire rehabilitation actions.

UNCCD day was celebrated on Praslin Island on the 17th June 2012 with the discovery trip, named ‘Dawn Safari’, organized by the TRASS NGO, which aims to continue to rehabilitate (replant) degraded lands, with funding from the Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP) managed by UNDP under the TRASS project named ‘Replanting and enhancing community participation in rehabilitation of degraded forest lands: a demonstration project at Pt Chevalier, Praslin, Seychelles’ in short ‘Living with the Land/Viv avec Later’. Due to the success of the first ‘Dawn Safari’ and due to popular demand for another trip, a second excursion was organized on July 8 2012 with a dozen participants. On that occasion, TRASS captured the images on film which will form part of a documentary on TRASS’ activities on Praslin, which was aired on SBC on the Tree Planting Day in September 2012.

Staff of the University of Seychelles attended various project workshops, which should lead to inclusion of SLM-related materials in forthcoming courses. Also, the CEO of Seychelles National Park Authority (SNPA), who was a key member of the project’s Steering Committee, lectures at the university at has provided information to other staff on tropical land use and ecosystems, including SLM

Into the future, there are opportunities for e.g. groups of farmers to form small NGOs and develop projects for consideration for funding under the UNDP Small Grants Programme, within which up to \$50,000 can be available. The National Programme Coordinator (NPC) is promoting this – but to-date no applications have been received under the Land Degradation focal area (FA) – the most popular FA remains Biodiversity. This may be because still farmers do not recognise the land degradation problem – or thus far continue to reply on addition of costly¹⁶ inorganic fertilisers (on Praslin, they are said to apply NPK fertilisers on soils every 2 weeks) to maintain yields. Further, farmers tend to work independently in Seychelles and are more competitive with their neighbours that working in the sort of collaboration required for a small grant. It is to be hoped that over the medium to longer-term the project’s activities raising awareness of environmental economics combined with the training of extension staff should contribute to potential beneficiaries accessing these additional funds.

It is the feeling of the evaluator that the project publications could be made more widely available, both in print form, but also in digital form on the various Government websites, also on the project’s website (part of the PCU website) – and this fact publicised as widely as possible. It is a view held by extension staff that the SLM manual produced for farmers (in English) should also be produced in Creole.

¹⁶ Both in economic and environmental terms

B. Relevance, Effectiveness, & Efficiency

The project achieved its planned results effectively and efficiently, and of vital importance, these results are if anything of more relevance to the environment of Seychelles now than they were in 2006 when the project was designed – or in 2008 when it started. It can thus be evaluated overall as **relevant**.

C. Country ownership

Project concept had its origin within the national sectoral and development plans, notably the Environment Management Plan of Seychelles (EMPS) I and II. The Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy (SSDS) has been developed recently and supersedes EMPS. Notably, many aspects of the NAP and SLM are included in SSDS, clearly demonstrating that GoS recognises this as important in the future development of the islands. The Medium-Term National Development Strategy (NTNDS) which is currently in preparation by Foreign Affairs will include the SLM NAP and IFS.

Furthermore:

- * a new Physical Planning Bill and the 6 accompanying Regulations incorporating SLM have been discussed and reviewed in a 2 day stakeholder validation workshop. The legal consultants are finalizing the 7th Regulation which is the Building Regulations. Thereafter all documents will be submitted to the AG's Office for final review before being sent to Cabinet of Ministers for endorsement;
- * The Environment Protection Act is currently under review;
- * The State Land Act has been reviewed and validated on the 12th of July. The final draft has been sent to the AGs office;
- * The Lighting of Fire Act has also been reviewed and has been sent for final approval of the Minister for Environment before being submitted to the AGs office;
- * a Forest Fire Strategy has been drafted by SNPA.

Relevant senior country representatives (e.g., governmental official, civil society, etc.) were actively involved in project identification, planning and/or implementation, including in the project's inter-sectoral Steering Committee.

The GoS has, as far as could be expected in very difficult economic climate, maintained financial commitment to the project.

Despite the low level of priority given to agriculture in Seychelles at the project inception and major institutional changes which have affected agriculture in the GoS during the course of the project, including the creation of the Seychelles Agriculture Agency (SAA), as food security has become more important, it seems that the GoS have become more committed to assisting farmers over the course of the project – notably in a major investment towards the building of a soil testing laboratory to support farmers to raise their crop yields, it is to be hoped now with reduced use of inorganic fertilisers.

Furthermore, as an outcome of reviews catalysed by the project, the Government is approving the policies, modifying regulatory frameworks and enacting legislation in line with the project's objectives to mainstream SLM.

D. Mainstreaming

The evaluation can confirm that the project objectives conform to agreed priorities in the UNDP country programme document (CPD) and country programme action plan (CPAP).

As an outcome of reviews catalysed by the project, the Government is approving the policies, modifying regulatory frameworks and enacting legislation in line with the project's objectives to mainstream SLM.

Gender issues were not overtly taken into account in project design and implementation. Seychelles is a matriarchal society, thus the gender perspective is very different in this middle-income country than in most of continental Africa. [“Women and men in Seychelles enjoy full economic, political and civil rights. Seychelles is among the top countries in the Southern Africa Development Community region to have met targets for female representation at all decision-making levels. There is 35% female representation in parliament, 15% at the ministerial level and 45% at chief executive and middle-management levels. However, the low capacity of institutions with responsibility for gender mainstreaming continues to hamper efforts to achieve gender parity” (UNDP Country Programme 2007-2010).] Notably, men and women can own / lease land and have equal access to credit. However, during the MTE, clear differences in the importance of including gender considerations in the project were given by men and women informants. The main beneficiary group of the project so-far (interviewed in the questionnaire survey) is farmers (numbering about 540 in Seychelles), who are predominantly men – but comprising ca 10% women. In addition to this total, the project should also take into account the growing number of households involved in small-scale “backyard” production for subsistence and also for sale - and the fact that ca 50% of households in Seychelles are female-headed. The 2002 census showed that 6,900 households (33%) were then involved in small-scale production – and this proportion is expected to increase significantly in the results of the 2010 census. In addition to targeting famers, it will be important to reach these both men- and women-headed households engaging in backyard production with SLM messages. As most of the project activities following the MTE did not involve local communities, this could not be acted-upon.

Table 5 shows the number of people who directly worked on the project or were on the Steering Committee and the gender balance.

Table 5: Gender Balance of GEF SLM Project

| Category | No. |
|---|-----|
| Total number of full-time project staff that are women | 1 |
| Total number of full-time project staff that are men | 0 |
| Total number of Project Board members that are women | 5 |
| Total number of project Board members that are men | 9 |
| Number jobs created by the project that are held by women | 1 |
| Number jobs created by the project that are held by men | 0 |

E. Sustainability

At this stage it remains difficult to define the full range of positive effects of the project on local populations (e.g. income generation/ job creation, improved natural resource management arrangements with local groups, improvement in policy frameworks for resource allocation and distribution, regeneration of natural resources) for long term sustainability. However, improved awareness of the dangers of forest fires for example will greatly benefit the integrity and functioning of the ecosystems of the granitic islands, as all uncontrolled forest fires are light by people (either intentionally, or as burning of waste goes out of control). The increased capacity of trainers in SNPA in training on forest fire fighting will support this and gradually should reduce the extent of forest damaged each year. Consequently, the project’s actions in this area can be assessed as highly likely.

The work developing an outline sustainable forest management plan provides a basis – which now requires to be supported by an up-to-date inventory of forest resources in Seychelles – and should eventually lead to sustainable harvesting for timber and non-timber resources from Seychelles forests.

F. *Catalytic Role & Impact*

The project has clearly demonstrated:

- * production of a public good (e.g. restoration of burned land, control of IAS, restoration of degraded agricultural land using SLM technologies)
- * demonstration (re-planting of trees on Praslin; preparation of district-level land use plans)
- * scaling-up (training of trainers in SNPA in firefighting, training extension staff in SLM, developing an SLM module and catalysing the greening of the curriculum at SAHTC).

Notably:

- * Knowledge has been successfully transferred through preparation of the SLM manual for farmers and a manual on IAS creepers;
- * Numerous and diverse SLM training courses (e.g. for farmers);
- * Training of trainer courses have been held to develop capacity (among SNPAS fire fighters, DRDM and others on landslides, extension staff on SLM).

Although use of project-trained individuals / NGOs / institutions to replicate the project has not yet taken place, this can be expected as an Indian Ocean Commission SLM project is being planned. Furthermore, project staff attended the October 2011 UNCCD COP 10 in Korea, raising the profile of SLM actions in Seychelles in the wider SLM community.

In the longer term, the changes in the enabling environment for SLM in Seychelles (changes in the Planning Act and many regulations, The Environment Protection Act is currently under review; The State Land Act has been reviewed and validated, the final draft has been sent to the AGs office; The Lighting of Fire Act has also been reviewed and has been sent for final approval of the Minister for Environment before being submitted to the AGs office; a Forest Fire Strategy has been drafted by SNPA) will through time lead to improvements in ecological status and ecosystem functioning of the granitic islands of Seychelles. The training of extension staff and some farmers will lead to restoration of degraded agricultural lands, although the project has not been able to verify the extent of these reductions. It is to be anticipated that the existence of the many district-level land use maps prepared under the project will not only contribute to protecting highly important biodiversity in the forests and wetlands, but help encourage greater concern to landscape-level approaches, integrating improved management of agricultural areas within the wider Seychelles ecosystems. The Seychelles Agricultural Agency staff has a critical catalytic role to play in this in future, advising farmers in SLM.

Due to the lack of availability of verifiable data¹⁷ on improvements in the ecological status across the landscapes, as the focus has been on testing approaches, demonstrations and capacity building, this TE has not been able to quantify these impacts or their permanence. However, discussing the project with many involved (including farmers) has provided sufficient evidence of commitment to conclude that the impacts of the project are highly likely to be of long-lasting nature.

4. **Conclusions, Lessons and Recommendations**

A. *Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project*

¹⁷ this project pre-dated the PMAT, the GEF focal area tracking tools

It would be advisable for future GEF funded and other projects in Seychelles and other small / remote countries to carefully **consider the expertise available among national consultants during the design phase**, to ensure they do not require expertise which is unlikely to be available during project implementation – or to ensure that there are clear arrangements to enable for example civil servants to undertake such work in parallel to their existing work.

Also considering human resource issues for future projects, it is vital to **recruit and endeavor to retain an appropriately skilled project manager**.

Where a ProDoc includes baselines and targets on the extent of SLMs, it is important to specifically include details of the methodology to be used to **verify the baseline, monitor progress – and verify at project closure. Alternatively, another indicator should be chosen**, for example in Seychelles, where ground survey would be costly / impractical, aerial survey unavailable and satellite imagery too small a scale / costly, for example **implementing a farmer survey on their understanding and use of SLM at project start-up then again at closure**.

B. Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project

Many of the **reports produced on the project should either be up-loaded to the PCU website as they stand and their availability there publicised – or summaries should be prepared** in a user-friendly format for wider dissemination. **Links should then be made between the PCU website and GoS sites**.

Based on advice from extension staff during the TE, it is advised that **the manual produced by the project on SLM for farmers (Nancy, 2012) should be translated into Creole** to make it more accessible to a wider group of farmers – and more widely circulated beyond Mahé.

Before the LUP IC leaves in March 2013, it is imperative that local staff must be fully trained and able to continue the work of land use planning to include SLM and biodiversity – particularly taking into account landslide risk.

C. Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

Greater attention should be placed on **continuing to raising public awareness** (including of farmers, young people and children in schools) of the win-win-win benefits of SLM, particularly in helping to address not only the suite of quite distinctive land degradation issues facing the granite islands of Seychelles but also help adapt to the impacts of increasing weather variability, frequency of extreme events – and medium- to long-term climate change – to increase resilience and ideally also adaptive capacity. SLM principles could then be extended to cover the increasingly important home gardens of Seychelles – for example in the on-going “every home a garden” campaign.

The **extension service or a future project should include more “learning by doing” / action research / farmer field school approaches** to encourage farmers to try-out SLM technologies, / or development of demonstration areas on selected farms, ideally extending beyond the limited range on the project manual – perhaps referring to advice available widely on the www (e.g. www.wocat.net). In the TE reported wishing to see more SLM “on-the-ground”.

Continued support will be required for the soils laboratory in Grand’ Anse, for which the project has bought laboratory equipment (also supplied field testing equipment for use by extension staff), as the building and fitting-out of the lab has not yet been completed – and it will require long term support from GoS, SAA, GEF and UNDP to bring the vital win-win-win benefits to farmers. It is planned that the soil testing service will be available to small-scale farmers at a low / minimal cost – but the opportunity

exists for the lab to also undertake work for larger land owners and hotels, which should be used to generate a profit to support its core work for small-scale farmers.

The project included various activities to catalyse sustainable forest management, including development of a new forest management plan (Activities 1.4.1 - .4). The original ToRs for the study followed the LogFrame. The last Seychelles forest management plans (INDUFOR, 1993), combined with a forest sector study were developed in 1993. An update and detailed management plan for the Mourné Seychellois National Park followed in 1998 (FOURMY, 1999). These documents highlight many facts, situations and problems that are still relevant today. However, the information was found to be out of date and do not take into consideration the biophysical and socio-economic conditions for forest management that have undergone major changes. When work began on the assignment, the international consultants advised the PM and SC that a detailed and operative management plan could not be developed (Wenzel & Grulke, 2012)¹⁸

As a result of the consultation workshop and initial discussions, the first of the two main objectives of the consultancy were therefore modified:

1. To develop detailed concepts and roadmaps for sustainable forest management plans for Morne Seychellois National Park, Praslin National Park and for the sustainable forest area on the Main Islands (Mahé, Praslin, La Digue).
2. To collate international best practices on sustainable harvesting of forest products relevant to Seychelles and prepare guidelines for sustainable harvest schemes in production and natural forests.

The strategy produced by Wenzel and Grulke (2012) advises the following basic recommendations for operational management planning and monitoring:

- * Conduct a nationwide forest resource inventory in 2012/13 and assure the institutional sustainability by capacity building during the inventory process.
- * Write an operational management plan based on inventory and strata definition
- * Defining a long-term production forest area on state-owned land, big enough to keep one or several mobile sawmills occupied all year (2,000 to 3,000 ha).
- * Political decision on sustainable use areas within a national Park (diverging IUCN criteria).
- * Implement a small and smart forest information system (Forest GIS) to facilitate planning and monitoring.

These should be prioritized and could benefit from synergies if well linked to Component 1 of the climate change project currently being proposed under the Adaptation Fund (landscape approach relating to wetlands, watersheds, forests, IAS creepers, local stewardship of watersheds).

Efforts should be continued to ensure:

approval of the Land Use Plans and IFS;

implementation of the NAP.

D. Best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success

The project team (PM and SC) who led the project from mid-2010 should be acknowledged as implementing best practice in endeavoring to get a project which had early-stage problems back on-track, notably by resolving the issues with the GM which delayed work on Component 3 and consequently also Component 4.

¹⁸ Strategy for sustainable forest management and guidelines for best forestry practice

One example of best practice within the project was the workshop for farmers on SLM and soil sampling held on Praslin – which, due to the vociferous efforts of the island’s two highly motivated extension officers, attracted over 50% of the island’s farmers. A field visit during the TE showed that approaches demonstrated were already being put into practice.

Both SNPA and SAA already have mainstreamed SLM and taken on aspects of it within their mandates.

Delay in accessing funds from the GM delayed the start of Component 3 and prevented completion of aspects of Component 4. It seems quite hard to believe that such an administrative problem prevented successful completion of project National Action Plan as no provision had been made under the SLM budget for it given the Global Mechanism had confirmed the funding. It took almost 3 year to get the funds from the Global Mechanism which implied the NAP was delayed and the IFS was also delayed.

The GM-funded consultant for the IFS was not able to deliver according to the TORs. This created a delay in the IFS elaboration as her final delivery did not reach the minimum standard expected, especially for a document which will be distributed to potential donors. This was resolved in collaboration with the GM team. A local consultant in charge of the sub-regional strategy would review and improve the IFS draft submitted by the original consultant with the help of the PM and guidance from GM to produce a quality document. The extra cost was reportedly borne by the GM.

Although many benefits will accrue from the work of the long-term international consultant’s work in developing land use plans for the districts of the granitic islands, regrettably the widely expressed views during the TE were that these are development plans, which are being used by the IC and others in the MLUH solely for land administration (e.g. assessing planning proposals, *inter alia* locations of petrol stations, roads, hotels) rather than as the SLM and BD ProDocs intended, to promote SLM and protect biodiversity (e.g. planning SLM at landscape level in agricultural areas, or stopping encroachment into forests / wetlands). The IC seemed to work directly to the MLUH PS, rather than being managed by the SLM and BD project managers.

5. Annexes

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

This Mid-term Evaluation will be coordinated by the UNDP Seychelles Office, the Project Coordination Unit with the support of the Regional Coordination Unit. The Mid-Term Evaluation will determine progress being made towards the achievement of outcomes and will identify course correction if needed. It will focus on the effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of project implementation; will highlight issues requiring decisions and actions; and will present initial lessons learned about project design, implementation and management. Findings of this review will be incorporated as recommendations for enhanced implementation during the final half of the project's term.

The Mid-term Evaluation serves to document lessons learnt and plays a critical role in supporting accountability. Its main objectives are:

- To monitor and, particularly, evaluate results and impacts
- To promote accountability for resources use
- To document, provide feedback on and disseminate lessons learned
- To provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvements

In brief the purpose of the evaluation is to assess the progress that has been achieved in the first half of the implementing phase of the project, according to UNDP/GEF guidelines and to draw lesson so far so that we could improve on the process.

Duties and Responsibilities

The following aspects will need to be addressed by the Consultant:

Progress towards Results

- Changes in development conditions. Assess the progress towards the following, with a focus on the perception of change amongst stakeholders:

- cost effective and timely delivery of GEF resources to the target countries
- enhancement of individual and institutional capacities for SLM
- systemic capacity building and mainstreaming of SLM principles into development planning

- Measurement of change: Progress towards results should be based on a comparison of indicators before, during and after (so far) the project intervention. Progress can also be assessed by comparing conditions in the project area prior to the start of the project design process.

- Project strategy: How and why outcomes and strategies contribute to the achievement of the expected results:

- Examine their relevance and whether they provide the most effective route towards results.
- Will the outcomes really meet the project objective and is the strategy currently followed the best approach for achieving the project objective? Consider alternatives.
- Assess adequacy of the log frame and indicators in responding to the GEF strategic priorities and achieving project objective

- Sustainability: Based on project progress so far, the current prospects for longer-term impacts and using a combination of quantitative and qualitative feedback on project results to date, assess the extent to which the benefits of the project will continue, within or outside the project domain, after it has come to an end. Relevant factors include for example the prospects for: development of a sustainability strategy, establishment of/access to financial and economic instruments and mechanisms, mainstreaming project objectives into the economy or community production activities, adequate follow-up support at the (sub-) regional level, etc. Provide tangible measures that can be undertaken to improve prospects of sustainability.

- Gender perspective: Extent to which the project accounts for gender differences when developing and applying project interventions. How are gender considerations mainstreamed into project interventions? Suggest measures to strengthen the project's gender approach.

Project's Adaptive Management Framework

(a) Monitoring Systems

- Assess if the monitoring tools currently being used generate adequate information for project evaluation:

- Do they provide the necessary relevant information?
- Do they involve key partners?
- Are they efficient?
- Are additional tools required?

- Assess the adequacy/relevance of baseline data. If reconstruction is required this should follow a participatory process.

- Ensure that the monitoring system, including performance indicators, at least meets GEF minimum requirements.

- Apply the GEF Tracking Tool (all elements) and provide a description of comparison with initial application of the tool. If the Tracking Tool has not been previously applied, provide a comparison against the estimated baseline.

(b) Risk Management

- Validate whether the risks identified in the project document and PIRs are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate. If not, explain why. Describe any additional risks identified and suggest risk ratings and possible risk management strategies to be adopted

- Assess the project's risk identification and management systems:

- Is the UNDP-GEF Risk Management System appropriately applied?
- How can the UNDP-GEF Risk Management System be used to strengthen project management?

(c) Work Planning

- Assess the use of the logical framework as a management tool during implementation and suggest any changes required

- Ensure the logical framework meets UNDP-GEF requirements in terms of format and content
- What impact will the possible retro-fitting of impact indicators have on project management?
 - Assess the use of routinely updated work plans.
 - Assess the use of electronic information technologies to support implementation, participation and monitoring, as well as other project activities
 - Are work planning processes result-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning.
 - Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions. Any irregularities must be noted.

(d) Reporting

- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management

- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

Underlying Factors

- Assess the underlying factors beyond the project's immediate control that influence outcomes and results.

Consider the appropriateness and effectiveness of the project's management strategies for these factors.

- Re-test the assumptions made by the project management and identify new assumptions that should be made

- Assess the effect of any incorrect assumptions made by the project

UNDP Contribution

- Assess the role of UNDP against the requirements set out in the UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results. Consider:

- Field visits
- Project Executive Committee
- Global Advisory Committee (TOR, follow-up and analysis)
- PIR preparation and follow-up
- GEF guidance

- Consider the new UNDP requirements outlined in the UNDP User Guide, especially the Project Assurance role, and ensure they are incorporated into the project's adaptive management framework.

- Assess the contribution to the project from UNDP "soft" assistance (i.e. policy advice & dialogue, advocacy, and coordination). Suggest measures to strengthen UNDP's soft assistance to the project management.

Partnership Strategy

- Assess how partners are involved in the project's adaptive management framework:

- Involving partners and stakeholders in the selection of indicators and other measures of performance
- Using already existing data and statistics
- Analysing progress towards results and determining project strategies.

- Identify opportunities for stronger substantive partnerships between UNDP and other counterparts, with particular reference to:

- Contracts and/or MoUs with relevant regional institutions
- The development of partnerships with any other organizations
 - Assess how stakeholders participate in project management and decision-making. Include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the approach adopted by the project and suggestions for improvement if necessary.
 - Consider the dissemination of project information to partners and stakeholders and if necessary suggest more appropriate mechanisms

Annex 2: Terminal Evaluation Itinerary

| Date | am / pm | Activity |
|-----------------|---------|--|
| 06 Nov | | Preparatory reading |
| 09 Nov | | Continue preparatory reading and consider key elements for questionnaires |
| 11 Nov | pm | Leave UK |
| 12 Nov | am | Arrive Seychelles |
| 12 Nov | | Meetings in Victoria |
| 13 Nov | | Meetings in Victoria |
| 14 Nov | | Meetings and field visits in Grande Anse, Anse Boileau, Anse Royale and Victoria |
| 15 Nov | | Meetings in Victoria then field visits to project sites and with stakeholders (SAA Extension Officers and TRASS Chairman) on Praslin |
| 16 Nov | am | Meetings in Victoria |
| 16 Nov | pm | Wrap-up discussion with Ex Project Manager , de-briefing at Ministry of Environment and Energy (attended by ACW, PB, Roland Alcindor of UNDP and Mr Wills Agricole, PS) to review initial findings and request additional information. |
| 17 Nov | am / pm | Leave Seychelles / arrive UK |
| By 29 Nov | | First draft of Project Terminal Evaluation Report submitted to CO. |
| 29 Nov – 13 Dec | | UNDP review draft TE Report, to highlight errors and omissions of facts, and to ensure that the evaluation report covers all aspects set out in the ToR. |
| By 13 Dec | | UNDP corrections / feedback / comments on Terminal Evaluation Report provided to consultant |
| By 20 Dec | | Project Terminal Evaluation Report submitted to CO. |

Annex 3: List of people interviewed

UNDP-GEF staff who had project responsibilities;

Mrs Patricia Baquero - Ex Project Manager

UNDP Staff;

Mr Roland Alcindor

Mrs Preethi Nala – UNDP

Miss Veronique Bonnelame - National Co-ordinator, GEF Small Grants Programme

Executing Agencies + Members of the Project Steering Committee;

Mr Denis Matatiken – CEO, Seychelles National Park Authority

Mr Jason Jacqueline - Seychelles National Park Authority

Mr Flavien Joubert – DG, Ministry of Environment and Energy

Mr Alain De Comarmond DG, Dept. of Environment, Ministry of Environment and Energy
+ UNCCD Focal Point

Markus Ultsch-Unrath - Green Island Foundation (GIF)

Mr Antoine-Marie Moustache – Special Advisor, Ministry of Natural Resources

Mr Allan Kilindo – DG, Land and Survey Division, Ministry of Land Use and Housing

Mrs Begum Nageon – Ministry of Environment and Energy (EU Projects Co-ordinator)

Mlle Rebecca Loustau-Lalanne, First Secretary, Division of international Relations,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr Wills Agricole – PS, Ministry of Environment and Energy

Project stakeholders and project beneficiaries;

Mr Victorin Laboudallon - Chairman, Terrestrial Restoration Action Society of Seychelles
(TRASS)

Relevant staff in participating government departments.

Mr Paul Labaleine – DG, Division of Risk & Disaster Management, Dept. of Environment,
Ministry of Environment and Energy

Miss Divina Sabino – Division of Risk & Disaster Management, Dept. of Environment,
Ministry of Environment and Energy

Miss Dominique - Fire Department

Mr Albert Rose - Fire Department

Mr Rehis Bethew – Fire Department

Mr Barry Norrice - Senior Laboratory Technician, Seychelles Agriculture Agency

Mr Patrick Lablache – Consultant to Ministry of Land Use and Housing

Mr Mark Nasiken – CEO, Seychelles Agriculture Agency

Mr Gerald Monthly - Seychelles Agriculture Agency

Miss Linetta Estico – Extension Section, Seychelles Agriculture Agency

Mr Wills Dogley - Extension Section, Seychelles Agriculture Agency

Mrs Margretta Rosalia – Extension Officer (Praslin), Seychelles Agriculture Agency

Mr Jim Lesperance - Extension Officer (Praslin), Seychelles Agriculture Agency

Mr Jean Alcindor – Ministry of Education

Others

Mr Hervé Barois – IFS National Consultant
 Mr Jean-Paul Geoffrey – large-scale (in Seychelles context) commercial farmer
 Mr Daniel Rosette – Seychelles Farming Association
 Mrs Jennifer Lesperance - Seychelles Farming Association
 Mr Florian Rock – Land Use Planning Co-ordinator (UNDP-GEF Consultant – SLM and BD projects)

Two meetings were arranged during the consultant’s mission in Seychelles with Mr Didier Dogley, National Project Director / GEF Focal Point, but for unavoidable reasons he was unable to attend either. The TE IC contacted him by email requesting his feedback on the questions in Annex 6, but after an acknowledgement of receipt, regrettably received no response.

Annex 4: Summary of field visits

14/11/12 – old and new SAA soils laboratories at Grand’ Anse
 14/11/12 – research testing station, Anse Boileau
 14/11/12 – large commercial farm (horticulture) – Anse Royals
 15/11/12 – farm adjacent to SAA centre, Praslin – to see examples of use of traditional mulching
 15/11/12 – land owned by Mr Richelieu Verlaque inland of Anse Lasjo – TRASS pilot site

Annex 5: List of documents reviewed

Full Project Document (prepared 2006 - 2007) including original LogFrame
 Project Inception Report (2008)
 Overall Workplan and Budget
 Jan 2010 up-date
 Up-dated Project Logical Framework
 February 2010
 July 2012
 Annual Performance Reports (PIRs)
 July 2008 – June 2009
 July 2009 – June 2010
 July 2010 – June 2011
 July 2011 – July 2012 (Final)

Quarterly Operational Workplans and Progress Reports:

| Period | Q’ly Operational Workplans | Q’ly Progress Reports |
|-------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| April – June 2008 | | |
| July – Sept 2008 | | |
| Oct – Dec 2008 | √ | |
| Jan – March 2009 | | |
| April – June 2009 | | |
| July – Sept 2009 | √ | √ |

| | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Oct – Dec 2009 | √ | √ |
| Jan – March 2010 | √ | √ |
| April – June 2010 | √ | √ |
| July – Sept 2010 | √ | |
| Oct – Dec 2010 | | √ |
| Jan – March 2011 | | √ |
| April – June 2011 | | √ |
| July – Sept 2011 | | |
| Oct – Dec 2011 | | |
| Jan – March 2012 | | |
| April – July 2012 | | |

Project Risk Assessment (Sept 2010)

Other Consultancy TORs, Workplans and Reports

- Contracts and TORs for most short-term consultancies under the project
- Land Use Planning international consultant’s monthly report (August 2010)

Publications

Carolus, I. (2009) Review of Institutional Capacity for Forest Fire Fighting (August 2009) – 37pp. GEF-UNDP SLM Project, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles. (Activity 1.1.2)

Cosgrove, W. (2010) Strengthening and Reorientation of the Agricultural Extension Services to Improve Management and Integrate Sustainable Land Management Principles – UNDP – GEF Consultants’ Progress Report (Activity 1.5.1 and 1.5.2)

Fourmy,(1999) Plan de gestion et d’aménagement du parc national du Morne Seychellois. Gouvernement des Seychelles, Ministère de l’Environnement et des Transports; 91p. +annexes.

Indufor, O. (1993) Seychelles forest management plan/sector study. Ministry of Environment, Economic Planning and External Relations, Victoria, Mahé, Seychelles. 148p .

MoE&NR / UNDP (2005) National Capacity Self-Assessment for Global Environment Management Projects – Report on: Strategic Overview of Obligations under the Convention to Combat Desertification

Moustace, A.M., Nancy, K. and Bonne, M. (2010) Review of Best Practices in Soil Conservation and Soil Fertility Management for Farmers in Seychelles (June 2010), 61pp. GEF-UNDP SLM Project, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles. (Activity 1.5.2)

Nancy, K. and Bonne, M. (2010) Guidelines for Best Practices in Soil Conservation and Fertility Management for Farmers in Seychelles (undated) 24pp. GEF- UNDP SLM Project, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles. (Activity 1.5.3)

Nancy, K. (2012) Manual for Best Practices in Soil Conservation and Soil Fertility Management for Farmers in Seychelles. Research and Development Section, Seychelles Agricultural Agency, Victoria, Mahé, Seychelles. (Activity 1.5.5)

Senterre, B. (2009a) Cost-effective techniques for the rehabilitation of burned and degraded lands in the Seychelles. Consultancy Report, Plant Conservation Action Group, Ministry of Environment-UNDP-GEF project, 91 pp. (Activity 1.2.3)

Senterre, B. (2009b) Forest fire risk assessment on Seychelles main granitic islands. Consultancy report, Ministry of Environment-UNDP-GEF project, Mahé, Seychelles, 61 pp. (Activity 1.1.1)

Senterre, B. (2009c) Invasion risk from climbing and creeping plant species in Seychelles. Consultancy report, Ministry of Environment-UNDP-GEF project, Mahé, Seychelles, 86 pp. (Activity 1.3.1)

Senterre B., Lesperance M., Bunce S., Henriette E., Jean-Baptiste M., & Laboudallon V. (2012) Implementation of post fire rehabilitation trials on the island of Praslin, Seychelles. Consultancy report, Terrestrial Restoration Action Society of Seychelles (TRASS), Ministry of Environment-UNDP-GEF project, 75 pp. (Activity 1.2.4)

UNDP(2007) UNDP Country Programme (2007 – 2010), UNDP, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles

UNDP (2010a) Draft report on questionnaire survey of use / knowledge of SLM (farmers / extensionists and policy makers) (Sept)

UNDP (2010b) Project Mid-Term Evaluation Report, GEF- UNDP SLM Project, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles. (Activity 5.2.)

UNDP (2011a) Seychelles National Action Plan for Sustainable Land Management. 99pp. GEF-UNDP SLM Project, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles (Activity 3.1.1 and 3.1.2)

UNDP (2011b) Compilation of Information in View of developing a geological Risk Map of Mahe, Praslin and La Digue. GEF-UNDP SLM Project CD, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles (Activity 1.6.1)

UNDP (2012a) Seychelles Integrated Financing Strategy for Sustainable Land Management. 124pp. GEF-UNDP SLM Project, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles (Activity 4.1.2)

UNDP (2012b) Project-Level Evaluation: Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported GEF-Financed Projects. Evaluation Office, UNDP. Available from: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/UNDP-GEF-TE-Guide.pdf> [Accessed 06/11/12]

Wenzel, M & Grulke, M. (2012) Strategy for sustainable forest management and guidelines for best forestry practice. The Department of Environment in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Environment and Transport (MHAET), Government of Seychelles / UNDP – GEF. (revised Output 1.4)

The publications produced specifically under the project were:

Carolus, I. (2009) Review of Institutional Capacity for Forest Fire Fighting (August 2009) – 37pp. GEF-UNDP SLM Project, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles. (Activity 1.1.2)

Cosgrow, W. (2010) Strengthening and Reorientation of the Agricultural Extension Services to Improve Management and Integrate Sustainable Land Management Principles – UNDP – GEF Consultants' Workplan (Activity 1.5.1 and 1.5.2)

Moustace, A.M., Nancy, K. and Bonne, M. (2010) Review of Best Practices in Soil Conservation and Soil Fertility Management for Farmers in Seychelles (June 2010), 61pp. GEF-UNDP SLM Project, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles. (Activity 1.5.2)

Nancy, K. and Bonne, M. (2010) Guidelines for Best Practices in Soil Conservation and Fertility Management for Farmers in Seychelles (undated) 24pp. GEF- UNDP SLM Project, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles. (Activity 1.5.3)

Nancy, K. (2012) Manual for Best Practices in Soil Conservation and Soil Fertility Management for Farmers in Seychelles. Research and Development Section, Seychelles Agricultural Agency, Victoria, Mahé, Seychelles. (Activity 1.5.5)

Senterre, B. (2009a) Cost-effective techniques for the rehabilitation of burned and degraded lands in the Seychelles. Consultancy Report, Plant Conservation Action Group, Ministry of Environment-UNDP-GEF project, 91 pp. (Activity 1.2.3)

Senterre, B. (2009b) Forest fire risk assessment on Seychelles main granitic islands. Consultancy report, Ministry of Environment-UNDP-GEF project, Mahé, Seychelles, 61 pp. (Activity 1.1.1)

Senterre, B. (2009c) Invasion risk from climbing and creeping plant species in Seychelles. Consultancy report, Ministry of Environment-UNDP-GEF project, Mahé, Seychelles, 86 pp. (Activity 1.3.1)

Senterre B., Lesperance M., Bunce S., Henriette E., Jean-Baptiste M., & Laboudallon V. (2012) Implementation of post fire rehabilitation trials on the island of Praslin, Seychelles. Consultancy report, Terrestrial Restoration Action Society of Seychelles (TRASS), Ministry of Environment-UNDP-GEF project, 75 pp. (Activity 1.2.4)

UNDP (2011b) Compilation of Information in view of developing a geological Risk Map of Mahe, Praslin and La Digue. GEF-UNDP SLM Project CD, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles (Activity 1.6.1)

Wenzel, M & Grulke, M. (2012) Strategy for sustainable forest management and guidelines for best forestry practice. The Department of Environment in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Environment and Transport (MHAET), Government of Seychelles / UNDP – GEF. (Output 1.4)

Annex 6: Questionnaire used to guide structured interviews

The following set of outline questions was prepared based on the ToRs and used in part / whole in structured interviews as appropriate / relevant.

1. Project relevance and consistency with country priorities and the GEF Land Degradation Focal Area specifically:

- A. GEF-4 Strategic Objective 1 & 2, to develop an enabling environment that will place Sustainable Land Management in the mainstream of development policy and practices at the regional, national, and local levels;
- B. to scale-up SLM investments that generate mutual benefits for the global environment and local livelihoods.

2. Ownership of the project:

- A. at the national and local levels;
- B. stakeholder participation at national and local levels;
- C. partnerships developed through the project.

3. Effectiveness:

- A. effectiveness in realizing project immediate objectives, planned outcomes and outputs;
- B. the effects of the project on target groups and institutions;
- C. the extent to which these have contributed towards strengthening the institutional, organizational and technical capability of the government in achieving its long-term sustainable development objectives (including environmental management goals).

4. Sustainability of:

- A. project achievements and impacts, including financial and institutional sustainability;
- B. an assessment of planned replication and exit strategies.

5. Management arrangements

- A. Management arrangements, including supervision, guidance, back-stopping, human resources;
- B. the Implementing Agency's (UNDP) supervision and backstopping;

- C. the quality and timeliness of inputs, activities, responsiveness of project management to changes in the project environment and other M&E feedback.
- 6. Financial planning and sustainability, including the timely delivery and use of committed co-financing.
- 7. Efficiency or cost-effectiveness in the ways in which project outputs and outcomes were achieved.
- 8. Adaptive management, including:
 - A. effective use of logframe, UNDP risk management system, annual Project Implementation Reviews, and other parts of the M&E system, tools and mechanisms as appropriate;
 - B. evaluate whether project design allowed for flexibility in responding to changes in the project environment.
 - C. review the recommendations of the MTR and assess how the MTR had helped adaptive management of the project.
- 9. Risk management, including the UNDP risk management system within ATLAS, which is also incorporated in the annual PIR. The evaluators are requested to determine how effectively the risk management system is being used as an adaptive management tool. Risks may be of a financial, socio-political, institutional, operational, environmental (or other) type.
- 10. Cross-cutting issues:
 - * Governance: How has the project facilitated the participation of the local communities in natural resource management and decision making processes;
 - * Promotion of gender equity: Has the project considered gender sensitivity or equal participation of man and women and boys and girls in decision making processes;
 - * Capacity development of participants and target beneficiaries;
 - * Communications and use of technology.

Annex 7: Guidelines for Ratings for Project Implementation

A7.1: Progress toward achieving project objectives

Rating of Project Progress towards Meeting Objective: Taking into account the cumulative level of progress compared to the target level across all of the objective indicators, please rate the progress of the project towards meeting its objective, according to the following scale.

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Highly Satisfactory (HS) | Project is expected to achieve or exceed all its major global environmental objectives, and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The project can be presented as “good practice”. |
| Satisfactory (S) | Project is expected to achieve most of its major global environmental objectives, and yield satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings. |
| Marginally Satisfactory (MS) | Project is expected to achieve most of its major relevant objectives but with either |

A7.2: Progress in project implementation

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Highly Satisfactory (HS) | Implementation of all components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised implementation plan for the project. The project can be presented as “good practice”. |
| Satisfactory (S) | Implementation of most components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan except for only a few that are subject to remedial |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| | action. |
| Marginally Satisfactory (MS) | Implementation of some components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan with some components requiring remedial action. |
| Marginally Unsatisfactory (MU) | Implementation of some components is not in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan with most components requiring remedial action. |
| Unsatisfactory (U) | Implementation of most components is not in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan. |
| Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) | Implementation of none of the components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan. |

Please note: Relevance and effectiveness will be considered as critical criteria. The overall rating of the project for achievement of objectives and results **may not be higher** than the lowest rating on either of these two criteria. Thus, to have an overall satisfactory rating for outcomes a project must have at least satisfactory ratings on both relevance and effectiveness

Annex 8: Economic, Political and Social Factors in Seychelles

*Introduction*¹⁹

The Republic of Seychelles is a remote, small island-state with middle income country characteristics and an estimated population of 86,335 (2008). Per capita income — around US\$10,290 (2008) — is among the highest of the Middle Income Countries (MICs). As with other island states, the size of the economy is small (US\$833 million gross domestic product (GDP) in 2008) and is predominantly service-based and highly vulnerable to global shocks and climate change due to its isolation and small size. Seychelles comprises 115 tropical islands spread over 1.374 million km² in the western Indian Ocean, covering 455.3 km² in land area. Habitation is limited to 10 of the islands and around 90 percent of the population of Seychelles live in the largest island, Mahé (60 percent urbanized), where the capital, Victoria, and the main fishing port are located. The limited land space, capital, and human resources restrict Seychelles' ability to benefit from economies of scale in production and economic diversification. Seychelles relies on imports for almost all raw materials, products, and specialized services. Fisheries and its processing are important activities, both for industrial and artisanal ends.

Economy

Seychelles faces constraints typical of a small island state; including, lack of economic diversification, vulnerability to external shocks, distance from markets, and risks of environmental degradation and weather-related disasters. Seychelles has extensive marine space and accessible coastlines. Tourism is the predominant sector, accounting for 22 percent of GDP, 30 percent of employment and 70 percent of foreign exchange earnings. The fish canning industry, especially tuna processing, contributes 15 percent to GDP, 97 percent of goods exports and employs 17 percent of the workforce.

Real GDP is estimated to have declined by 7.5 percent in 2009. Macroeconomic imbalances and an unsustainable debt burden, coupled with the external shocks from global commodity prices, led to rapidly depleted stocks of foreign exchange and to missed external debt payments in the middle of 2008. As a result credit ratings agencies downgraded Seychelles, such as Standard and Poor's which downgraded Seychelles to "SD" (Selective Default). This was the catalyst for the reform program and the

¹⁹ Source www.worldbank.org – extract from "Seychelles Country Brief"

foreign exchange liberalization. The global economic recession further adversely affected tourism revenues in the fourth quarter of 2008, and beginning of 2009. Although tourism arrivals began to recover in the second half of 2009, there was an estimated 15 percent fall in tourism revenues for 2009, as a whole, and an overall reduction in GDP growth to -7.5 percent.

Fundamental exchange liberalization was at the heart of the macroeconomic stabilization at the end of 2008. In early November 2008, the government abolished all exchange rate restrictions and adopted a managed market-based float exchange rate regime. Following the float, the rupee depreciated by about 60 percent against the U.S. dollar and has since stabilized at around 14.1 rupees to the US dollar. The liberalization of the exchange regime marked the beginning of an economic reform program.

Prudent monetary policies have contributed to restoring macroeconomic stability and setting the stage for recovery. As a result, month-on-month inflation in 2009 has remained near zero ranging from 1 percent in January to -1.1 percent in October 2009. Short-term interest rates on government securities declined sharply from about 30 percent to below five percent between January and October 2009. Moreover, the external current account deficit narrowed during the first three quarters of 2009, reflecting lower imports, better than expected service income and higher grants. The decrease in world food and oil prices in 2009, together with a slowdown in tourism has reduced import demand. Gross reserves were estimated at US\$153 million by end-2009.

There was a strong fiscal adjustment in 2009, which focused on improving the efficiency of the government and reducing universal subsidies to public enterprises. The government eliminated indirect universal product subsidies and replaced them with a targeted social safety net. It further abolished the fishermen’s fuel subsidy coupons, eliminated electricity rebates for households, raised public bus fares at operating cost recovery levels, and removed the liquefied petroleum gas subsidy by state oil company. All these measures, among others, have led to the reduction of the total government expenditures by 1.5 percent. The government also embarked on downsizing of the civil service. By April 2009, 2,500 staff had left the public service, representing 15 percent of the April 2008 public sector workforce (through early retirement, voluntary departure and a new hiring freeze). This measure is expected to reduce the wage bill from 10.2 percent of GDP to 7.5 percent of GDP from 2007 to 2009.

Annex 9: Challenges and Difficulties in Project Start-Up and Implementation and Lessons-Learnt

| Challenges | Constraints | Mitigation Measures | Lessons Learnt | Required Assistance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Administrative | | | | |
| Lengthy approval process between administrative bodies when hiring consultants and approving contracts, which has greatly slowed the initiation of numerous project activities. | Administrative approval for contracts and consulting work is highly complicated in the Seychelles, with the current process requiring involvement / approval of 7 different government agencies ²⁰ . In addition, the Government initiated a major restructuring in late 2008, which has | Procedures have been defined and streamlined in an ‘Aide Memoire’ between UNDP and the Department of Environment. A Chief Technical Adviser post have been added to the unit it should give more time to the Programme Coordinator who is a | It is vital from the beginning to streamline any processes and procedures where necessary so as to avoid any delays in the implementation of the project. | UNDP Country Office (Mauritius) and other donors should play a role in pushing government to reduce administrative complexities |

²⁰ According to the project’s APR 2010

| Challenges | Constraints | Mitigation Measures | Lessons Learnt | Required Assistance |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| | resulted in many new rules and requirements, many of which continue to be adjusted. | Seychellois with a good network in government bodies to try to streamline administrative processes. | | |
| Delay in contracts completion | | A penalty of \$100 per week or \$25 per day overdue has been added to the contracts. | This must be enforced. | |
| Technical | | | | |
| Lack of human capacity available to undertake consultancy work. | Seychelles is a very small Island State, which means that the number of persons with technical training and experience in SLM-related issues is quite small, and most of these persons are already engaged in full time employment | Potential candidates are encouraged to submit their application in partnership with others. This relieves the workload and timing required to complete the consultancy. In addition, rather than just advertising consulting work, the project has also tried to develop partnerships with relevant agencies, and has sought out qualified candidates. | In addition to sourcing out potential candidates through advertising, projects in small countries must actively seek out qualified applicants | Effective cooperation from relevant ministries, departments and organizations to provide as much information as possible on the availability of partnerships and/or qualified candidates. EMPS, which is a forum for stakeholder review and oversight of all environment programmes, should be strengthened as often 50% of members do not attend meetings where such matters could be discussed. |
| Other | | | | |
| Lack of government agencies (DOE, SAA, SNPA, etc) financial and HR capacities to act as viable partners in project implementation | Leads to dependency on consultants. Government agencies in the Seychelles are struggling to deliver on their main duties so they are not keen on adding any. | To try to encourage more complementarities and partnership between SLM Project and government agencies | | UNDP Country Office (Mauritius) and other implementing agencies should play a role in pushing government to give more support to GEF Projects. The PCU has already started to meet with all its stakeholders on a one to one basis, especially |

| Challenges | Constraints | Mitigation Measures | Lessons Learnt | Required Assistance |
|---------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|--|
| | | | | now with new management at the PCU, to explain the PCU role and how all can work together better for implementation of the various projects. |
| UNDP staff turnover | Loss of continuity and project memory. | Improved record keeping and hand-over period. | Make efforts to retain staff. | GOS support. |

(Source: adapted from APR, 2010)

Annex 10: Audit trail

(indicating explicitly how received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the revised terminal evaluation report)

#Draft report submitted 29 Nov 2013

No comments received – final version submitted 17 January 2013

Annex 11: Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

| Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form | |
|---|---|
| Agreement to abide by: the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System | |
| Name of Consultant: | <u>ANNE C. WOODFINE</u> |
| Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): | <u>-</u> |
| I confirm that I have reviewed and will abide by the 2008 UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. | |
| Signed at (place) on | <u>EDENBRIDGE, KENT, UK.</u> |
| Signature: | <u>Anne C. Woodfine</u> <u>26/10/12</u> |