

Catchment and Landscape Management Project

CLMP

Eritrea

IFAD-GEF Project ID 3362

Terminal Evaluation

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Final Report

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AED	Agriculture Extension Department
AWPB	Animal Work Programme and Budget
BD	Biodiversity
CA	Conservation Agriculture
CC	Climate Change
EA	Executing Agency
CLMP	Catchment and Landscape Management Project
ESIF	Eritrean Sustainable Investment Framework
ESIS	Eritrean Knowledge Base and Information System
EU	European Union
EX-ACT	The EX-Ante Carbon Balance Tool
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FReMP	Fisheries Resources Management Programme
GEB	Global Environmental Benefit
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GOE	Government of Eritrea
IA	Implementing Agency
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
KDP	Kebabi Development Plan
<i>Kebabi</i>	Lowest level administrative unit
LD	Land Degradation
LDEHSF	Land Degradation and Ecosystem Health Surveillance Framework
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOLWE	Ministry of Lands, Water and Environment
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NAP	National Agricultural Project
NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute
NBSAB	National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan
NEMP	National Environmental Management Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPCO	National Project Coordinating Office
NSC	National Steering Committee
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PCC	Project Coordinating Committee
PCO	Project Coordination Office
PCR	Programme Completion Report
PCRRDP	Post-Crisis Rural Recovery and Development Programme
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SWC	Soil and Water Conservation
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TST	Technical Support Team
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USD	United States Dollar
WHH	Women-Headed Households
<i>Zoba</i>	Region
ZTC	Zoba Technical Committee

I) PROJECT IDENTIFICATION TABLE

GEF Project ID	3362
Country:	Eritrea
Project Title:	Catchments and Land Management Project (CLMP)
Project duration:	6 Years
Effective:	January 2010
Commencement:	July 2010
Completion:	December 2016
Closure:	July 2017
GEF Implementing Agency:	IFAD
Project Executing Agency:	Ministry of Agriculture, Eritrea
GEF Strategic Objective:	LD-FA2
GEF Strategic Programmes:	(i) Supporting sustainable agriculture and rangeland management; (ii) Supporting sustainable forest management in production landscapes; and (iii) Investing in innovative approaches in SLM (Land Degradation)
IFAD Priority:	Strategic Objective 3 of the 2016-2025 Strategic Framework : 'Strengthen the environmental sustainability and climate resilience of poor rural people's economic activities'
Budget (as per IFAD's ToR summary)	
GEF trust fund:	USD 4,350,000 (41.0%)
IFAD grant:	USD 145,000 (1.4%)
Co-Financing by GoE and Beneficiaries:	USD 6,110,000 (57.6%)

II) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Land degradation has been a growing threat in Eritrea for many years. The main drivers are the combination of increasing human population, soil nutrient mining within farms, growing livestock numbers on communally grazed rangelands, and deforestation. To that list can be added impacts of climate change. Land degradation drives a cycle of rural poverty: households lacking food, money and energy. In the selected project area, the situation is particularly severe as this zone borders Ethiopia and suffered extra devastation as a result of the hostilities during the war of independence, and the more recent border conflicts. Though poorly studied, monitoring in one river basin found an average sediment yield of 1,350t/km²/yr, with associated losses of water and crop yield declines.

In response to this cycle of land degradation and poverty the Government of Eritrea, IFAD and GEF designed the 'Catchment and Land Management Project' (CLMP), to run alongside and then take over from the 'Post-Crisis Rural Recovery and Development Programme' (PCRRDP) in Zoba Debub and Zoba Gash Barka (see Box 1 for CLMP's Components and Outcomes). Using a GEF PPF, the GoE together with IFAD and GEF began design of CLMP with an inception mission in 2008. The full project document was submitted later that year, and Eritrea was awarded a GEF grant, supported by an IFAD loan, for a project with the objectives of halting land degradation in the two Zobas (Regions) through the promotion of participatory SLM approaches supported by appropriate practices, while at the national level supporting the GoE in the formulation of policy and an institutional framework that would lead to sustained upscaling of successful SLM approaches and technologies. CLMP became effective in January 2010 and commenced activities in July of that year.

An independent **Mid-Term Review** was carried out in 2014 and overall it rated CLMP as '**moderately satisfactory**' (4). Individual aspects were rated between 'satisfactory' (Country Ownership, IFAD Supervision, and Complementarity with IFAD's strategy) and 'unsatisfactory' (M&E) with 'moderately satisfactory' awarded to Achievements of Outputs and Activities. A summary of that MTR with its lessons and recommendations is presented in Annex 3. The **Terminal Evaluation** (TE), reported here, was carried out by an independent consultant, William Critchley, during March and April 2017. Twenty two days were spent reviewing documents, carrying out interviews (phone and email) and preparing this document in two drafts for comment (31 March and 21 April) and this finalised version. This report follows the format required in the ToR (see Annex 1) and focuses on the criteria designed to assess the project's achievements, under the required 12 headings, and then it homes in on lessons and recommendations. **Overall the project is rate by this TE as 'satisfactory' (5).**

While constrained by lack of hard, empirical evidence, personal interaction and field visits, the TE has established that CLMP is a project that has considerable strengths, though some weaknesses too. The twin pillars of strength are the outcomes of the two main components of the project, namely (i) setting in place a robust institutional infrastructure to take SLM forward in Eritrea, and (ii) demonstrating the effective implementation of SLM measures through an innovative participatory planning approach at decentralised, local level combined with an impressive level of achievements on the ground – in many cases well surpassing targets. Weaknesses include inadequate monitoring and evaluation, only partial capture of GoE and community co-finance, a poor record of adaptive research, inadequate attention to land tenure issues and relative silence on potential climate change impacts. Nevertheless CLMP is on a steady trajectory towards achieving its impacts through its outcomes. The project has made a difference. Above all, CLMP has fulfilled a very important role in picking up an environmental mandate emanating from the PCRRDP, and institutionalising the ways and means of taking this forward in a decentralised form, guided by a dedicated team at national level. On the ground there is strong (though as yet numerically unsubstantiated) evidence that vegetative rehabilitation and production are improving. The stage has been set for the Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) planning approach combined with several of the technologies to be rolled out nationally.

Conclusions and Ratings

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Conclusions	Rating
A. Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results (overall)		4
<i>Effectiveness</i>	CLMP has established a national mechanism to promote & guide SLM as well as demonstrating implementation approach and technologies in two Zobas.	5
<i>Relevance</i>	CLMP addresses land degradation policy and practice at national and local levels where it is urgently needed.	6
<i>Efficiency</i>	Some SLM interventions are low cost; others not: and impact of all as yet unproven. Cost of establishing national and Zoba platforms not cheap.	4
B. Sustainability (overall)		5
<i>Financial resources</i>	Considerable resources have been mobilised from GoE, with strong community in-kind contributions.	5
<i>Socio-political</i>	The Zoba-focussed/ community-based methodology fits well with Eritrea's policy of decentralisation.	5
<i>Institutional framework</i>	CLMP uses in-line agencies, and has formulating dedicated committees all of which adds to long term prospects of sustainability	5
<i>Environmental</i>	CLMP addresses critical issues of land degradation, energy, and biodiversity.	5
C. Catalytic Role and Replication	GEF funding has played a catalytic role in mobilizing other resources.	5
D. Stakeholder Participation/ Public Awareness	CLMP has raised awareness within the two Zobas and, at national level, thro' the charismatic 'Greening Day' and by two manuals: more however can still be done.	4
E. Country Ownership/ Driveness	There is evidence that this is an Eritrean-led project and since the MTR there is more drive.	5
F. Achievement of Outputs and Activities	Most targets met: many exceeded all expectations. Renewable energy & adaptive research only weak points	5
G. Preparation and Readiness	MTR scored as moderately unsatisfactory - but since then CLMP has picked up momentum.	4
H. Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management	Project management has been sound and AWPBs demonstrate responsiveness & adaptive management.	5
I. Monitoring and Evaluation (overall)	Project M&E has continued to be weak, and the EIA exercise disappointing: impact & GEBs poorly analysed	3
<i>M&E Design</i>	Little evidence of an effective M&E system.	3
<i>M&E Plan Implementation</i>	Paucity of data testifies to weak plan implementation.	3
<i>Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities</i>	CLMP has not been short of funds for M&E – including for the EIA, but has not used them efficiently enough.	3
J. Financial Planning/ Control	Money very effectively disbursed and well managed though inadequate calculation of co-financing.	5
K. IFAD Supervision and Backstopping	IFAD's supervision has been very much appreciated, both in terms of encouragement and technical input.	5
L. Complementarity with IFAD Strategies and Policies	Undoubtedly a strong match with IFAD's priorities. The EIA confirms this (though in rather qualitative terms).	6
M. Overall Project Achievement	Since the MTR, CLMP has picked up momentum with community-based planning and implementation. The ESIF and ESIS are up and running. The national Greening Day has become institutionalized, supported by the NSLM platform. Weakness include M&E and little adaptive research.	5

Overall, the project has made strong progress towards achieving its objectives and has picked up significantly from the MTR ('Moderately Satisfactory': rating 4), and is rated as 'Satisfactory' (5).

Lessons

1. CLMP has shown that national decentralisation can be profitably woven into project design.
2. The GoE's policy has been used to underpin the innovative community-based planning processes. Projects that 'go with the flow' stand a much better chance of success.
3. Project 'layering' can be very effective. PCRRDP was successfully followed by CLMP and the NAP (though the two are poorly linked), and these feed into FReMP and future programmes.
4. CLMP has benefitted from a succession of similar projects in SSA designed and guided by IFAD. IFAD has a comparative advantage over other agencies and should capitalize upon that.
5. The innovative local participatory planning approach should be seen as a major success. While 'hardware' (technical) achievements might capture the eye, 'software' is even more important.
6. M&E has proved to be a problem. Systems must be simpler and guidance given to better capture co-finance, assess impact, but also to underpin future investments with evidence.
7. Adaptive research is a frequent feature of CLMP-type project design, yet rarely succeeds. The bridge between researchers and practitioners is easy to design but difficult to build.
8. After initial problems with concepts and implementation, CLMP rightly identified capacity as a limiting factor. Capacity levels need to be carefully assessed in the design of ambitious projects.
9. Energy saving is an important contributor to reduced deforestation, and more efficient stoves have proved, very popular. Neither solar energy nor biogas have been emphasized enough.
10. Many activities will carry on after CLMP has come to an end – guided by the exit strategy. Thus no terminal evaluation can capture all of a project's eventual achievements and legacy.

Recommendations

1. Lessons from CLMP must be used to help drive forward and guide the development of SLM in Eritrea's rural areas, and fed into the NAP as well as new initiatives such as FReMP.
2. The experience within the two Zobas can and should be upscaled now and rolled out, progressively, to the rest of the country – though in a flexible and responsive way.
3. Community-based land use planning has worked in many countries in SSA and has been proven in Eritrea under CLMP. It is recommended that this is the way forward.
4. More thought should be given in future design of simple and meaningful M&E tools that are employed right from the start of a project and go hand-in-hand with implementation: tracking co-financing and exploring voluntary uptake need special focus.
5. It is strongly recommended that support is continued by IFAD to assist in establishing and maintaining monitoring of soil/ vegetation carbon fluxes, and hence land degradation.
6. Capacity building has proved an essential prerequisite to achieve the improvement that CLMP has experienced. 'This human capital' should be maintained as far as possible in the system.
7. Land tenure issues need to be addressed better: SLM is contingent on security of tenure.
8. The piloting of negotiations and agreements between CLMP/ MoA and other ministries involved in dam construction regarding environmental protection should be continued.
9. There should also be serious consideration given to designing a specific follow-up project, with a 'Ridge to Reef' nature that cuts a cross section from the current Zobas down to the coast.
10. It is key that the Project Completion Report includes a strong and targeted 'Exit Strategy'

III) INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. Land degradation has been recognized as a growing threat in Eritrea for many years. The agricultural resource base has been subject over the generations to over-exploitation, reducing its potential to sustain the present and future generations. The main drivers of degradation are the combination of increasing human population, soil nutrient mining within farms, growing livestock numbers on communally grazed rangelands and deforestation to satisfy the energy demand. To that list can be added impacts of climate change. Land degradation drives a cycle of rural poverty: households lacking food, money and energy. In the selected project area, the situation is particularly severe as this zone borders Ethiopia and suffered devastation as a result of the hostilities during the war of independence and the more recent border conflicts. Though poorly studied, according to the Project Appraisal Document, monitoring in one river basin (by Euroconsult in 1998) found an average sediment yield of 1,350 t/km² /yr, naturally with associated losses of water and concomitant crop yield declines.
2. In response to this cycle of land degradation and poverty the Government of Eritrea, IFAD and the GEF designed the 'Catchment and Land Management Project' (CLMP), to run alongside and then take over from the 'Post-Crisis Rural Recovery and Development Programme' (PCRRDP) in Zoba Debub and Zoba Gash Barka. Using a GEF PPF grant, the GoE together with IFAD and GEF began design of CLMP with an inception mission in 2008. The full project document was submitted later that year, and Eritrea was awarded a GEF grant, to be supported by a modest IFAD loan, for a project with the objectives of halting land degradation in the two Zobas through the promotion of participatory SLM approaches supported by appropriate practices, while at the national level supporting the GoE in the formulation of policy and an institutional framework that would lead to sustained upscaling of successful SLM approaches and technologies. The project became effective in January 2010 and commenced activities in July of that year.
3. CLMP's goal as stated in the project document was 'to address the interlinked problems of poverty, food insecurity, land degradation and biodiversity loss through the development and promotion of innovative sustainable land management technologies and land use planning approaches with the aim of restoring, sustaining and enhancing the productive and protective functions of Eritrea's ecosystem resources'.
4. The project's objectives (abbreviated) were to:
 - *Alleviate poverty and food security amongst Eritrea's rural households through the promotion of a community-based land use planning approach that will enable rural resource poor communities to reverse declining land degradation [development objective]*
 - *Overcome the causes and negative impacts of land degradation on the structure and functional integrity of Eritrea's ecosystem resources through addressing the national, Zoba Sub-Zoba and community-level bottlenecks to scaling up SLM improve the livelihood opportunities, resilience and food security of rural communities [environmental objective].*
5. The project was to conform closely to GEF's Operational Strategy with the objectives and eligible activities under the Land Degradation Focal Area (LDFA) strategy. The project

promotes Strategic Objective 2 of the LDFA, 'To upscale sustainable land management investments that generate mutual benefits for the global environment and local livelihoods', and the expected outcomes will include benefits for the communities from applying and disseminating SLM practices, and the systematic application, at national scale, of sustainable, community-based farming and forest management systems. The proposal fits into Strategic Program 1, 'Supporting sustainable agriculture and rangeland management', working in areas of intense competition for land resources that are prone to severe soil erosion and loss of soil fertility.

6. Degradation cuts across many different sectoral concerns, thus the project was designed to address several of the other GEF Strategic Priorities, notably: (i) BD-2: mainstreaming biodiversity in productive landscapes and sectors; (ii) BD-4: building capacity on access and benefit-sharing; (iii) CC-7: to reduce GHG emissions from land use, land change and forestry; and SFM-2: to promote sustainable management and use of forest resources. The project was also a constituent part of the Strategic Investment Programme for Sustainable Land Management in Sub-Saharan Africa (SIP) contributing to its long-term goal and intermediate objectives.
7. The Implementing Agency (IA) for the project is IFAD and the Executing Agency (EA) is Eritrea's Ministry of Agriculture (MoA).
8. CLMP was executed under arrangements set up for the Post-Crisis Rural Recovery and Development Programme (PCRRDP) which fitted into the decentralised administrative structure of the GoE and involved activities at the national, Zoba and Kebebi levels. A National Programme Coordination Office (NPCO) directly assisted the MoA in execution of PCRRDP. With the closure of the PCRRDP in 2014, the administration of the CLMP was taken over by the IFAD supported National Agricultural Project (NAP) which became effective in 2013 and works alongside CLMP – though in other Zobas also.
9. In short, the principle executing agencies are the NPCO, the office of the National SLM Coordinator, the Zoba Administration, the Zoba Divisions of Agriculture, Land, Water and Environment, and Community-Based Organisations within the participating Kebebis.

Box 1. CLMP Components

Component 1 – Promotion of SLM Approach at National, Regional and Zoba levels

- 1.1 Establishing a national Eritrean SLM platform
- 1.2 Establishing SLM platforms at Zoba level
- 1.3 Establishing an Eritrean SLM Investment Framework (ESIF)
- 1.4 Developing an Eritrean SLM Knowledge Base and Information System (ESIS)

Component 2 – Development of Effective and Innovative SLM Approaches

- 2.1 Community-Based Natural Resource Assessment and Land Use Planning
- 2.2 Addressing Food Security, Poverty and Land Degradation through Community-Based Investments in Sustainable Land Management
- 2.3 Participatory Impact Monitoring and Evaluation
- 2.4 Institutional Capacity Building for Community-Based Land Use Planning
- 2.5 Testing and Demonstrating Alternative Renewable Energy
- 2.6 Adaptive Farmer –Centred Participatory SLM-related Research

Component 3 – Project Management

- 3.1 Series of Reports documenting:
 - (i) progress with implementation
 - (ii) local and global environmental impact
 - (iii) quantity/ economic value of ecosystem services
 - (iv) findings/ conclusions/ recommendations from supervision and MTR

IV) SCOPE, OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

Scope

10. The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy of 2006 requires that all projects funded above a USD one million threshold should be subjected to independent Mid-Term and Terminal Evaluations. This requirement is in addition to on-going monitoring and evaluation processes that are implemented during project implementation.
11. This report¹ is a record of the process, and findings of the Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the CLMP project, conducted by an independent evaluator² during March 2017. The evaluator was unable, due to logistical reasons, to visit Eritrea and the fieldwork locations, and thus the assignment was converted into a desk review of documents accompanied by interviews. The report paves the way for potential sharpening of the TE based on field work at a later date. It follows a Mid-Term Review of May 2014. A summary of that MTR is presented in Annex 3.
12. The evaluator was unable to meet personnel face to face during the current exercise, but key informants by email and phone (and prior meetings in Eritrea) were the CLMP Project Coordinator, Michael Berhane, and the two key IFAD supervisory personnel, Eric Rwabidadi and Stephen Twomlow – as well as Lucy Ariano of IFAD who supplied the consultant with the relevant documentation. His sincere thanks are extended to them all.
13. It must be noted that, despite the various problems surrounding the organization of the evaluation, support from IFAD and information from the CLMP team in Eritrea was most helpful. It became quite clear that this is a project that has been taken very seriously, and there is pride in its achievements and legacy – at national, local as well as agency levels.

Objectives

14. The objectives of this Terminal Evaluation are (see Annex 1):
 - To examine the extent and magnitude of project achievements, outputs, and impacts in relation to those set at design;
 - To assess project performance and the implementation of planned activities and outputs against actual results;
 - To synthesize lessons learned that may help in the design and implementation of future IFAD-GEF initiatives in similar socio-economic and environmental contexts;
 - To document and demonstrate the applicability and sustainability of SLM practices and approaches tested and promoted in the framework of the project; and
 - To evaluate the linkages and complementarity achieved between the GEF supported components and the National Agricultural Project (NAP) and the new Fisheries Resource Management Project (FRMP).

¹ The report follows the sections and headings stipulated in the ToR 'as per GEF/IFAD guidelines for TEs' see Annex1

² William Critchley, Independent Consultant/ Evaluator

Methods

15. The evaluation was conducted using key principles that seek to establish project performance through assessing what the project has achieved against what would have happened if the project had not been implemented. Rather than simply assessing performance against targets, the consultant looked closely at the targets themselves: were they realistic? Was over-performance a result of too modest a target (or underperformance a result of too ambitious a target)? As much as possible, the evaluation was based on evidence collected both from the documentation and (limited) interviews with stakeholders. Where empirical evidence was lacking, the evaluator used his own knowledge of sub-Saharan Africa, and East Africa in particular, to reach conclusions as to the value of the project.
16. The Draft Terminal Evaluation thus mainly comprised a desk review of project documents:
 - a. Project documents, outputs, monitoring reports (such as progress and financial reports to IFAD and GEF annual Project Implementation Review reports) and relevant correspondence (see Annex 2 for list);
 - b. The Mid-Term Evaluation Report of mid 2014 (see Annex 3 for a summary);
 - c. An 'Accumulative Achievement' table produced by the CLMP Project Manager specifically for this TE (see Annex 4 where it is reproduced in full);
 - d. Other project-related material, including handbooks;
 - e. IFAD monitoring and evaluation policy documents.
17. Naturally a draft evaluation of this nature cannot be comprehensive without a field visit, and associated groundtruthing, both in terms of site visits and discussions with project personnel, beneficiaries and other stakeholders. Thus this current document must only be taken as a review-based evaluation which could be to be sharpened and refined on the basis of fieldwork. Many aspects of an evaluation cannot be adequately clarified through studying reports alone – and the ToRs of this assignment were originally designed to support a mission-based evaluation. Verification and triangulation at the location would have afforded the possibility to substantiate impressions and to assess, first hand, the state and quality of interventions.

V) PROJECT PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT: FINDINGS

A. Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results

Effectiveness

18. According to the 2014 MTR, 'CLMP is well on track' to achieving most planned activities on time. Two years later the IFAD-GAF supervision mission of 2016 rated implementation as 'highly successful' and the accomplishments presented by the CLMP coordinator (see Annex 4) catalogue a series of achievements that generally demonstrate targets fulfilled, and often exceeded. Thus the outputs under Component 1 (institutional infrastructure: establishment of platforms, committees and both the ESIS and ESIF) have been achieved, and operational - through it is impossible for the desk-based TE to fully assess how effectively they perform. The project has helped established the national framework to design and govern effective interventions affecting SLM and livelihoods generally: there are strong indications of impact and outcome achievement. A downside is the reported lack of synergy between CLMP and the NAP. For example the NAP's AWPB of 2015 is almost entirely silent on CLMP (whose acronym does not even warrant a mention in the extensive A&A list).

Relevance

19. The relevance of CLMP is not seriously in doubt. This was confirmed in the MTR, and IFAD itself is certain: the 2016 Supervision Mission report 'reconfirms the relevance of CLMP'. The introduction has already set the scene for the project's relevance to the GEF where GEBs should certainly be generated (and strongly so, where targets are being exceeded), and CLMP fits under IFAD's mandate – this is covered in section L (Table 3). It is clear through its design and implementation activities that the project addresses land degradation, food security and – though surprisingly not well articulated in the documentation - vulnerability to climate change. These are all critical issues in the project area and Eritrea as a whole. Picking up environmental issues from the post-crisis rehabilitation project PCRRDP, blending into the NAP where it finds synergies and forming part of the foundation for FReMP it is both timely and useful.

Efficiency

20. The MTR took issue with 'efficiency' awarding it a rating of 'moderately unsatisfactory'. This was mainly due to four factors: (i) the lack of integration with PCRRDP; (ii) limited capacity of staff; (iii) weak reporting and M&E; and (iv) extensive (i.e. prolonged/ complex) procurement procedures. Of these it appears that only the third (reporting and M&E) has remained a constraint. It is difficult to assess the efficiency of the various platforms and committees set up under Component 1 without discussions with various stakeholders and the chance to triangulate information. Under Component 2, as already noted above, the majority of targets have been achieved or exceeded within budget; though it has to be said that while some targets were modest, the amount of co-finance forthcoming from GoE and the high level of community involvement has help propel the rate of implementation and stimulate the development of new increased targets as reflected in successive AWPBs. Some of the interventions are low cost and relatively simple to implement: once again the rangeland enclosures fit this category. Large areas can be blocked off from open grazing and transformed into 'cut and carry' systems which combine both improved profitability, vegetative regeneration and (in the longer run) ecosystem restoration. However two areas of concern regarding efficiency can be identified. The first is the recommendation of the MTR that the quality of the SLM interventions needed to be improved,

and there are links here to the limited capacity of the staff involved. The second is the admission by CLMP that no ‘packages of innovative SLM practices [were] verified by adaptive research trials’ (see Annex 4). Nevertheless capacity has certainly been improved since the MTR, as witnessed by the large number of training courses for extension staff and land users (again: see Annex 4) and the two technical manuals produced by CLMP.

B. Sustainability

21. The question as to whether project intervention results can be sustained over the long term is considered under the following aspects: Financial, Institutional and Environmental Sustainability.

Financial Sustainability

22. Resources have been mobilised from the GEF, GoE and community in-kind (see Table 1). However there is a conundrum in that neither GoE nor community (‘beneficiary’) contributions are recorded as matching planned levels – yet achievements are much higher than targets (see Annex 6 for discussion of this point). Though it never easy to establish a reliable figure for co-financing at the design stage, the temptation is to be over-optimistic. However in this case there appears to have been more local counterpart funding (GoE expenditures and in-kind contributions from GoE and communities) than was considered likely – or indeed than was accounted for under the M&E system. While it can only be considered anecdotal until verified in the field, it is said that some communities have employed guards to protect the enclosures against grazing at their own cost. This is very positive if true. Most importantly, overall, CLMP has clearly set a basis for confidence in investing within SLM, the environment and their immediate (and long-term) goods and services.

Institutional sustainability

23. CLMP has helped to entrench institutional stability by working through the government structure, and most notably the Ministry of Agriculture. These are institutions that will continue, and are not ephemeral project constructs. It is of significance that the MoA has incorporated participatory land use planning in its new 5-year strategic plan (2017-2021). The innovative project design specifically supports both national and decentralized Zoba level structures and platforms. Thus there is empowerment at all levels – down to the communities within the Zobas (at Kebabi level).

24. The establishment and functioning of the Eritrean SLM Investment Framework (ESIF) and the Eritrean Knowledge Base and Information System (ESIS) are also steps in sustaining the initiative institutionally and leaving a positive legacy. It is especially pleasing to note that the ESIS has the responsibility to collect information on project initiative in Eritrea to prevent the all-too-common malady of ‘institutional amnesia’ that occurs in Sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere: in other words the problem of simply forgetting what has happened before in terms of development initiatives.

Environmental Sustainability

25. The project addresses land degradation, energy, biodiversity and, though poorly articulated in the documentation, climate change. The first word of the project’s title ‘Catchment³’ gives a clue to the importance afforded to protection of water resources. All are critical environmental issues in Eritrea. A wide palette of techniques has been employed, from rangeland enclosures to tree planting, to conservation agriculture and energy saving stoves. Commendably a number of

³ Often mistakenly written as ‘Catchments’ (plural) in project documentation

these were introduced during the course of the project duration, demonstrating both a flexible, responsive approach, and IFAD's guiding hand. All constitute elements of sustained environmental improvement, though their impact – and thus a positive feedback loop, is not yet fully understood, despite the EIA exercise, nor indeed fully established as ecosystem services in particular can take a long time to emerge and become noticeable. Nevertheless improved yields (e.g. of milk because of cut and carry systems of feeding dairy cows; of cereals through terracing and better soil and water retention; of water in reservoirs through controlled runoff) should be stimuli to continue. One potential threat could be lack of land security under the prevailing *dessa* system, where fields is rotated after seven years of cultivation – thus acting as a disincentive to investment in the land. It is not clear that CLMP has addressed this challenge adequately.

C. Catalytic Role and Replication

26. The GEF funding has played a catalytic role in mobilizing other resources: as already noted, while *documented* co-financing has not matched planned levels from government and communities (see Table 1) the very high levels of achievements suggests that inputs have not been fully recorded or calculated in financial terms. That indeed is the view of IFAD (see section J) at least with respect to GoE inputs. There are also prospects of direct follow-up though IFAD's FRMP project which focusses on fisheries both at sea and inland. It is especially inland, where aquaculture will be promoted in/ alongside reservoirs that the systems will need to be underpinned by catchment management for their long-term viability. This will require the use of CLMP's experience and trained personnel and investment in catchment conservation is written into the project document.

27. The Eritrean SLM Investment Framework (ESIF) which was produced and approved by government and development partners ESIF is now up and running. The whole intent of the ESIF is to facilitate further investment in SLM and to replicate the positive interventions of CLMP.

28. There is also a keen interest from the GoE to follow up with an application for a grant from GEF's 7th replenishment, the LDCF or even the Green Climate Fund. This is further evidence of the catalytic role of the GEF funding, namely spurring an interest in expanding both temporal and spatial horizons of activity.

29. However the role of M&E and impact assessment must be considered here. The Environmental Impact Assessment commissioned by CLMP states (correctly): 'The lack of data, particularly on...food security and critical global environmental benefits...is restricting the project's ability to influence policy and decision makers'. Project proposals need to be supported by firm evidence of potential impact, and this is one of the problems with CLMP.

D. Stakeholder Participation/ Public Awareness

30. CLMP has apparently enlisted the effective participation of a range of development partners at all levels, as well as engaging the rural people and their leaders. In terms of participation of local communities the EIA states that: 'Participation of beneficiaries (men, women and youth) in the planning and implementation of programme interventions has remained high. Programme beneficiaries have adequately participated in identification of interventions, contribution in kind for conservation works, reforestation of enclosures, and construction of check dams through village SLM committees'.

31. It has already been noted under 'sustainability' (above) that, reputedly, communities are paying in some situations for guards to protect enclosures from incursions by cattle. It has equally been said that there is some voluntary expansion of activities by people who have been

impressed by what they have seen their neighbours doing. If so, these can both been seen as indicators of true stakeholder participations. But this need further verification.

32. Though poorly documented, even in the specifically commissioned EIA, there has apparently been good support for, and engagement of, women and women headed households. The PIR of 2016 however reports that there is 30% representation by women 'at various levels of decision making'. Apart from the moral equity issue, this will help strengthen institutions and assist in ensuring sustainability.

33. By designing CLMP as, simultaneously, a national and a local intervention, communities at the community or Kebabi level involved in CLMP have been drawn into the various activities, rather than just decision makers, policy makers and scientists. By inviting local households into the innovative approach of planning their own land use they have been empowered and enlightened: a fundamental change from previous top-down planning. A connection has been established and a sense of joint responsibility for the landscape engendered.

34. Two booklets have been produced, namely ('Land Reclamation Technical Manual' in English and 'Watershed Study Manual' in Tigrayan) and are. Furthermore have there been leaflets prepared, articles in newspapers and radio programmes. All are ingredients of a very valuable public awareness campaign – while carrying simple environmental messages.

35. At the national level, public awareness has been stimulated by the initiation of a 'National Greening Day' (NGD) which is an expression of enthusiasm and pride. It has, apparently, captured the public imagination. The NGD is coordinated and advised by the National Technical SLM Committee. This is an example of imaginative thinking and an inspired idea – if indeed it continues as an annual event. Eritrea needs recognition by her public that the environment is everyone's responsibility

E. Country Ownership/ Drivenness

36. There is no need to repeat the words of the MTR here, which demonstrated that CLMP fitted well with the relevant national economic, environmental and climate change strategy papers and action plans. In that respect CLMP fits well within the overall national strategic framework. The National SLM Platform is, reportedly, strong and functional.

37. It is furthermore important to recognise that insecurity, brought about by border hostilities, had exacerbated problems of land degradation. CLMP has tackled this problem head-on and not only helped to lead the way in restoring the environment, but in restoring pride and confidence in the zone also.

38. Where the MTR declared that it was 'probably too early to evaluate the contribution of CLMP.....to provide guiding principles and a strategic (national] planning framework', by the end of the project it is timely and appropriate to do so. CLMP certainly appears to have been embraced as an authoritative Eritrean-driven project, having established its own identity after emerging from the PCRRDP. Clearly there is pride in the achievements and targets being met and in various cases exceeded. Already noted has been the fact that all of the planned committees and platforms have been established and are functioning with regular meetings. There is interest at all levels, and a real sense that the basic model under CLMP - of transferring decision making and implementation responsibility to the Zobas and communities within at the Kebabi levels – is helping to strengthen Eritrea's decentralisation process.

F. Achievement of Outputs and Activities

39. The MTR stated that the project was 'on track' to achieve most of its quantitative outputs (including both the national level platform-related committees, those at *Zoba* level, and SLM interventions). Now, at the end of CLMP's term, according to the project's own data, and corroborated by IFAD in various reports, all of the Component 1 targets have been met, at least in their most basic form: that is platforms and committees established at national level, and the Eritrean Sustainable Investment Framework (ESIF) and Eritrean Knowledge Base and Information System (ESIS) set up too. Furthermore, regular meetings have been held. Under Component 2 there is a slight shortfall in Kebabi level community based land use plans (but still 85% achievement).

40. At the field level the MTR of 2014 noted 'a certain imbalance' towards cooking stoves, and enclosures at the expense of (*inter alia*) the restoration of riverine habitats. However it is positive to report that, at the end of the project period, the question of imbalance is basically irrelevant because cooking stoves (nearly 8,500) and enclosures (nearly 90,000 ha) have left targets well behind, and furthermore riverine enclosures (over 6,000 ha) have far exceeded expectations. There are a host of other significant accomplishments, including a particularly impressive training schedule for land users and extension workers: quality, however, cannot be assessed by this TE. These accomplishments are detailed in Annex 4.

41. However, perhaps the most fundamental achievement, and one that can potentially have huge implications for the future of SLM in Eritrea is that (under Component 2) there are not just significant overachievements in terms of catchment conservation – but these can be explained by the action of the beneficiaries themselves. It is recorded in the IFAD SM (2016) that in Zoba Debub, the local labour contribution will be double that of design targets: more than 1.2 million person days in 6 years. That is lauded by IFAD as being 'highly successful'. Without being able to independently verify these figures, this evaluator would certainly accept that the achievements have been exceptional: 'exceptional' in the sense that they are very large but also an *exception* to the experiences of so many similar project in SSA.

42. In terms of spatial SLM achievement, the most spectacular is the amount of land that has been enclosed for revegetation: in the case of permanent enclosures the target has been exceeded by a factor of ten (72,000 ha compared with the target of 7,000 ha: see Annex 4). Throughout, CLMP has been geared to successfully achieving targets both at national, institutional, level, and at Zoba and community levels – where institutional targets have been accompanied by what is the project's most tangible and visible attainment: the establishment of SLM measures on-the ground.

43. While some may assume that original project design was culpable of underestimating the potential for implementation, this would be to downplay the dedicated way that CLMP has been effectively engaged in terms of community mobilisation. It would also be to ignore the utility of the yearly Supervision Mission and the Annual Work Plan and Budget, which are tools that can help reassess what is possible to achieve and revise what can be planned. This constitutes 'responsive project management'. Add-on achievements - such as the agreement with sister ministries regarding environmental protection in dam construction – make good examples.

44. Underachievement is evident in some cases. Two outputs/ outcomes under Component 2 have not delivered satisfactorily. Firstly, energy saving technology, where two solar pumps out of 10 planned have been installed and only seven biogas plants out of the planned 20. Nevertheless these shortages are compensated largely by the particular successful spread of

energy-saving stoves (through reportedly there is some question about whether CLMP is directly responsible for the totals quoted, as apparently several development agencies and initiatives support the distribution of such stoves). Secondly, adaptive research to verify an innovation package of SLM has not come off the ground. This means that the majority of CLMP's technological interventions have been standard and, in terms of on-farm SLM, rather structure-oriented rather than vegetative or agronomic: the introduction of conservation agriculture is an exception and shows early promise.

G. Preparation and Readiness

45. The MTR observed that: 'The project's objectives and components are clear and practicable, but ambitious considering the time frame set and the capacity of the executing institution and counterparts' and after other various observations came up with an assessment of 'moderately unsatisfactory'. Furthermore it was noted that initially much of the training funds were unspent and the training irrelevant or poorly appreciated.

46. After the inevitable slow start-up and an over-run at the end of the project period (every similar SLM-type project in this evaluator's experience, almost without exception, suffers from these) CLMP compensated and picked up momentum: personnel and facilities were made available, more relevant training carried out, a series of coordination and planning meetings held, and with coaching and support from IFAD, CLMP has made the impressive progress noted by this TE.

47. Thus it is to the credit of the project management team that staff morale (which apparently was low initially) and project implementation have both improved enormously since that time. This is attested to by the rapid pick-up in activity and achievements recorded.

H. Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management

48. It is again informative to refer back to the MTR's rating ('moderately satisfactory') and comments: 'The original implementational mechanisms were closely followed, although the complexity of the structure envisaged, with several platforms, steering committees and technical advisory bodies interacting in a vertical and horizontal fashion, delayed the take-off of some activities'. Yet once again these proved to be problems that were effectively overcome as the project period progressed.

49. Although there was experience with PCRRDP and management systems in place which should have been an advantage to the new project, CLMP introduced a decentralized concept, and that was an initial constraint as links had to be set up between national, Zoba and community levels.

50. As already mentioned in other specific contexts (see section F in particular), CLMP has strongly benefited from the emergence of the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) as a tool for making adjustments to the project's priorities, targets and expenditure. In this way it has been an essential mechanism in assisting the process of flexibility, responsiveness and adaptive management.

I. Monitoring and Evaluation

51. Project monitoring and evaluation has been a weak link throughout the project's life – but this is admitted by the project, and CLMP is not an exception in this regard as many (possibly most) projects fail to keep track of achievements or impact. Nevertheless CLMP has been especially weak, and this has been remarked upon in the MTR, in various IFAD reports and led to the commissioning of an independent Environmental Impact Assessment just before the project's close. This should all be seen in the light of the PAD's emphatic assertion that: 'the project will have major environmental benefits' and '....the project [will reach] a much higher number of beneficiaries [than those who benefit directly]'.

52. The cause of the poor M&E is traceable to an ineffective system set in place, but also the heavy burden of satisfying demands covering physical implementation, establishment and functioning of various committees and platforms, community input, uptake, vegetation fluxes, yields of crops and livestock, and impacts on the wellbeing of households of various categories. There is a tendency that, in projects that have implementation and tangible achievements high on the agenda, they tend to pursue these, while underemphasizing monitoring, evaluation and impact. However on a positive note this is certainly better than vice-versa – where an obsession with M&E impedes the process of implementation itself.

53. Thus projects such as CLMP can easily become so involved in their development agenda that they especially lose track of the 'higher' objectives of supporting agencies, especially the GEF – and give inadequate attention to global environmental benefits (GEBs). With respect to the GEBs that are expected to ensue from a GEF-financed programme, the only evidence of calculating such benefits was the carbon assessment study (using FAO's EX-ACT model) that was carried out by an IFAD consultant. At least that study calculated positive gains from CLMP interventions: an average positive balance of 11.5 t/ha carbon dioxide equivalents over 20 years. The best project impact, significantly, was calculated to be from enclosures where increased biomass stands led to an estimated 60 t/ha (carbon dioxide equivalents over 20 years).

54. The IFAD Supervision Mission report of June 2016 reports that the shortcomings with regard to M&E as raised by previous missions and the MTR 'have not been addressed' and 'the project team continue to encounter serious challenges in the tracking, packing and disseminating [of] implementation results and progress'.

55. There is a strong emphasis in the project's reporting on physical targets in terms of SLM measures – and much less on households and improvements in their wellbeing. Nevertheless the project team must be complimented in putting together an overview of achievements presented here in Annex 4. It will be recollected that the original project document planned direct assistance to 16,000 households. In fact the AWPB of 2016 does suggest that 45,500 households will directly benefit, and 'special attention' has been given to 16,800 female headed households (presumably a sub-set of the 45,500). Taken at face value this represents a significant achievement, though it is not clear how the data has been collated.

56. One specific problem noted in the data provided in the overview of achievements is the difficulty in identifying (a) what benefits are additive (i.e. can be added together, such as hectares of land enclosed) and (b) those which are superimposed on others (i.e. cannot be added together in terms of area as they are improvements to land which has already been classified as protected/ treated). Thus even when data is presented it is sometimes hard to decipher and interpret. It would probably not be a difficult exercise to clarify this with face to face meetings and the relevant documentation to-hand.

57. As highlighted above a dedicated ex-post 'Environmental Impact Assessment' exercise was commissioned towards the end of the project to attempt to pull together some impact data

about the environment and more (see Annex 7 for the Executive Summary thereof – and its summarized ToR). Its task was not easy, and unsurprisingly failed to produce robust, quantitative results, despite review comments (including by this consultant) which led to the production of a second, but little improved, version. The report was especially weak on farm yields, benefits accruing to households, and quantitative and spatially defined land degradation improvements (thus GEBs). The report was, as is evident from the forgoing comments on the project’s M&E shortcomings, constrained by the lack of data and had to rely on semi-structured interviews with sample villages as a proxy for on-the-ground measurements.

J. Financial Planning and Control

58. This evaluation can do no better than reiterate the findings of the 2016 Supervision Mission (para 36) (having no independent means of verifying these) where it was reported that:

‘These aspects of the project are mainstreamed within the financial management structures of the Ministry of Agriculture and the respective Zoba Administrations in the project area and within the same arrangements of NAP. Accounting data is generated in the dedicated Lacy accounting software at Zobas and is consolidated at the NPCO, who are responsible for all projects financed by IFAD in the MOA. The mission noted adequate effectiveness of the systems and internal controls. There is adequate segregation of duties; bank accounts are regularly reconciled and reconciliations are checked; and supporting documentation properly filed. The beneficiary contribution has been adequately captured and recorded. However there is the failure of fully capturing the GoE contribution’.

This comment about the inability to capture the GoE contribution once again highlights a weakness in M&E; but the comment that the beneficiary contribution “has been adequately captured” is not substantiated by CLMP figures as presented in Table 1 (see Annex 6 also). Nevertheless, the on-the-ground achievements suggest indeed that communities and the GoE have invested much more time and resources than expected (see Table 1).

59. The same Supervision Mission comments that Grant disbursement as at 31 May 2016 has been rated ‘highly satisfactory’. It was agreed that the NPCO would revise the 2016 AWPB with an inclusion of result oriented activities aimed maximizing the utilization of the remaining funds’. Later figures quoted in the ToR for the TE state that at January 2017, USD 4.13 had been disbursed (95.1% of the total GEF monies) and thus USD 213,132 remained to be spent by the closing date – but this amount would be reduced by USD 178,249.76 ‘representing the WA 30 under IFAD processing’.

60. Table 1 provides details of updated (April 2017) co-financing and leveraged support: the information was provided by CLMP, then after clarifications requested, reconfirmed.

Table 1: Co-financing and leveraged resources (source: CLMP, April 2017)

Co-financing (Type/ Source)	GEF Financing (USD m)		Government (USD m)		Beneficiary Contribution (USD m)		IFAD (USD m)		Total (USD m)	
	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual
Grants	4.350	4.317	2.122	0.835			0.145	0	6.617	5.152
Loans/Concessions										
Credits										
Equity investments										
In-kind					3.994	3.004			3.994	3.004
Other										
Totals	4.350	4.317	2.122	0.835	3.994	3.004	0.145	0	10.611	8.156

K. IFAD Supervision and Backstopping

61. IFAD is the designated Implementing Agency of the GEF funded CLMP project. This status comes with responsibilities to ensure effective project management and execution by the project management team and the GoE. IFAD makes sure that the GEF component is recognized, and monitored. All plans and reports developed by the PMU are submitted to IFAD for approval. IFAD also mounts Project Implementation audits on a quarterly basis and carries out annual supervision missions with appropriate members of staff and external consultants as required. The mission result in Supervision Reports/ Aide Memoires, which record agreements on steps to take, as well as commenting on the progress of the project.

62. The consultant has been given a set of IFAD's supervision mission reports (one was not located: 2014) and can testify to the quality of support provided. In this evaluation there have been several cross references to the 2016 Supervision Mission Report – and this is in many ways a testimony to its particular usefulness. Not only does this report acts as an *aide memoire* of what has been agreed and what is expected over the next period (in this case crucial in triggering and guiding both a revised AWPB, and setting out the ToR for the rather hastily designed EIA) but it also provides an agreed, frank, provisional assessment of CLMP's performance to date. This consultant found the standard of reporting and the assessments convincing: both as objective and credible as could be hoped: an excellent foundation for the current evaluation exercise.

63. In general IFAD's supervision – and its overall effectiveness as an implementing agency - has been very much valued by CLMP and the GoE, both in terms of encouragement, inspiration and direct technical input. Simultaneously it is clear that IFAD has (generally) a high opinion of CLMP achievements. IFAD can take credit for helping this project achieve its considerable impact – and for assisting it to pave the way forward for SLM in Eritrea. It was even apparent during the course of the evaluation that communication was still on-going between IFAD and CLMP regarding land degradation assessment methodology: at this stage many Implementing Agencies would have been tempted to focus on wrapping up proceedings.

64. Thus the relationship between IFAD and CLMP – and the legacy of this – is strong. That is important as it is evident that IFAD has a deliberate policy of 'layering' project upon project to build up a coherent long-term development trajectory within Eritrea: it is understood by this consultant that IFAD has cultivated an especially close relationship with Eritrea where other agencies have not managed the same. Thus there are excellent prospects for future collaboration, especially under FReMP – and the relatively poor interaction between CLMP and the NAP can only improve under FReMP. There is also the possibility of a larger longer term programme that could seek finance through the LDCF, GEF 7 or even the Green Climate Fund.

L. Complementarity with IFAD Strategies and Priorities

65. There is a strong match between CLMP, with its land degradation/ SLM and livelihoods focus, its GEF support, and IFAD. There is a shared emphasis on investing in the rural poor (with a strong focus on women and the marginalized), and on environmental rehabilitation, agricultural productivity and climate change adaptation/ mitigation, while supporting decentralization and keeping a keen eye on upscaling: see Table 2.

Table 2 Synergies between IFAD Strategic Objectives of 2011-15, as well as IFAD’s Strategic Objective 3 of 2016-2025⁴ and CLMP’s Activities

IFAD’s Strategic Objectives 3 (2016 -25)	CLMP Objectives and Activities
<i>Strengthen the environmental sustainability and climate resilience of poor people’s economic activities</i>	This is the central theme of CLMP: basically describing the environmental and development objectives succinctly. While the term ‘climate resilience’ is relatively absent from CLMP documentation (probably because design took place before the term came into vogue) its basic attributes are certainly embedded in CLMP
IFAD’s Strategic Objectives (2011 -15)	
<i>A natural resource and economic asset base for poor rural women and men that is more resilient to climate change, environmental degradation and market transformation</i>	The focus on land degradation reversal and its transformation by SLM into a productive base for rural households is the core of CLMP
<i>Access for poor rural women and men to services to reduce poverty, improve nutrition, raise incomes and build resilience in a changing environment.</i>	This is perhaps less of a main drive under CLMP, though the decentralisation policy of the GoE (supported by CLMP) aims to achieve this
<i>Poor rural women and men and their organisations able to manage profitable, sustainable and resilient farm and non-farm enterprises or take advantage of decent work opportunities.</i>	Yes; this certainly describes one major thrust of CLMP: namely strengthening local rural organisations for multiple purposes – though initially and primarily for land use planning
<i>Poor rural women and men and their organisations able to influence policies and institutions that affect their livelihoods</i>	This blends into the former objective and can be seen most clearly under CLMP in terms of influencing how their productive base is developed and utilised for improved livelihoods
<i>Enabling institutional and policy environments to support agricultural production and the full range of related non-farm activities</i>	CLMP’s Component 1 is dedicated to transforming policy at national level with respect to supporting agricultural production through revitalising the resource base.

⁴ While the ToR asked only for SO3 of 2016-2025, IFAD’s SOs of 2011-2015 are also analysed as they were the guiding SOs during the main part of CLMP’s duration – their relevance is clear in the table above.

Conclusions and Ratings

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Conclusions	Rating
A. Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results (overall)		4
<i>Effectiveness</i>	CLMP has established a national mechanism to promote & guide SLM as well as demonstrating implementation approach and technologies in two Zobas.	5
<i>Relevance</i>	CLMP addresses land degradation policy and practice at national and local levels where it is urgently needed.	6
<i>Efficiency</i>	Some SLM interventions are low cost; others not: and impact of all as yet unproven. Cost of establishing national and Zoba platforms not cheap.	4
B. Sustainability (overall)		5
<i>Financial resources</i>	Considerable resources have been mobilised from GoE, with strong community in-kind contributions.	5
<i>Socio-political</i>	The Zoba-focussed/ community-based methodology fits well with Eritrea's policy of decentralisation.	5
<i>Institutional framework</i>	CLMP uses in-line agencies, and has formulating dedicated committees all of which adds to long term prospects of sustainability	5
<i>Environmental</i>	CLMP addresses critical issues of land degradation, energy, and biodiversity.	5
C. Catalytic Role and Replication	GEF funding has played a catalytic role in mobilizing other resources.	5
D. Stakeholder Participation/ Public Awareness	CLMP has raised awareness within the two Zobas and, at national level, thro' the charismatic 'Greening Day' and by two manuals: more however can still be done.	4
E. Country Ownership/ Driveness	There is evidence that this is an Eritrean-led project and since the MTR there is more drive.	5
F. Achievement of Outputs and Activities	Most targets met: many exceeded all expectations. Renewable energy & adaptive research only weak points	5
G. Preparation and Readiness	MTR scored as moderately unsatisfactory - but since then CLMP has picked up momentum.	4
H. Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management	Project management has been sound and AWPBs demonstrate responsiveness & adaptive management.	5
I. Monitoring and Evaluation (overall)	Project M&E has continued to be weak, and the EIA exercise disappointing: impact & GEBs poorly analysed	3
<i>M&E Design</i>	Little evidence of an effective M&E system.	3
<i>M&E Plan Implementation</i>	Paucity of data testifies to weak plan implementation.	3
<i>Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities</i>	CLMP has not been short of funds for M&E – including for the EIA, but has not used them efficiently enough.	3
J. Financial Planning/ Control	Money very effectively disbursed and well managed though inadequate calculation of co-financing.	5
K. IFAD Supervision and Backstopping	IFAD's supervision has been very much appreciated, both in terms of encouragement and technical input.	5
L. Complementarity with IFAD Strategies and Policies	Undoubtedly a strong match with IFAD's priorities. The EIA confirms this (though in rather qualitative terms).	6
M. Overall Project Achievement	Since the MTR, CLMP has picked up momentum with community-based planning and implementation. The ESIF and ESIS are up and running. The national Greening Day has become institutionalized, supported by the NSLM platform. Weakness include M&E and little adaptive research.	5

Overall, the project has made strong progress towards achieving its objectives and has picked up significantly from the MTR ('Moderately Satisfactory': rating 4), and is rated as 'Satisfactory' (5).

VII) Lessons

1. CLMP has demonstrated that the correct interventions at the right levels – both national platforms and Zoba (regional) and Kebabi (local) - at the right time can have impact, both in terms of policy and implementation, and set the stage for continuation through being institutionalized under the national strategy. Where there is a decentralisation strategy it can be profitably woven into a project's design.
2. The GoE's decentralization policy has been strategically used as a key in underpinning the innovative community-based planning process of CLMP, and has led to local empowerment. Linked to that local empowerment is national pride as expressed in the National Greening Day. Projects that 'go with the flow' stand a much better chance of success.
3. Project 'layering' can be very effective and is a strong argument to support building one project upon another. PCRRDP was successfully followed by CLMP and the NAP (though the two are poorly linked), and these feed into FReMP and set the foundation for future programmes.
4. CLMP has benefitted strongly from a succession of similar projects in SSA designed and guided by IFAD: it is now 25 years since IFAD set out its mark with the seminal publication 'Soil and Water Conservation in Sub-Saharan Africa'⁵. IFAD has a comparative advantage over other major agencies in this respect and should capitalize upon that.
5. When assessing the positive performance on the ground, at Zoba and Kebabi levels, it is the innovative and pioneering participatory planning as much as (or more than) the technology that should be seen as a major success. This is a form of local awareness raising and empowerment. While 'hardware' (SLM on-the-ground) achievements might capture the eye, 'software' may be even more important.
6. Monitoring and evaluation have proved to be a problem, as in many rural development projects. This is despite a flag waved at the MTR, and even after a dedicated, but poorly executed, 'Environmental Impact Assessment' exercise was commissioned. Neither GEBs nor household benefits were picked up adequately. M&E and impact design must be simpler and better guidance given to assess impact, but also to underpin future investments with evidence.
7. Adaptive research is a frequent feature of CLMP-type project design, yet rarely succeeds. The bridge between researchers and practitioners is easy to design but difficult to build.
8. After initial problems with concepts and implementation, CLMP rightly identified capacity as a limiting factor. Training, exchange visits and production of knowledge products such as those produced under CLMP, 'Land Reclamation Technical Manual' in English and 'Watershed Study Manual' in Tigrayan) are all very valuable. Capacity levels need to be carefully assessed in the design of ambitious projects.
9. Energy saving is an important contributor to reduced deforestation, and more efficient stoves have proved, apparently, very popular with large numbers distributed. While this is very positive, it is a pity that neither solar energy nor biogas have been emphasized enough. Renewable energy is a vital part of environmental rehabilitation and livelihood improvement.
10. It is evident that many activities will carry on after CLMP has come to an end – guided by an appropriate exit strategy. Thus no terminal evaluation can capture all of a project's eventual achievements and legacy. The RoTI analysis (Annex 6) can help to demonstrate what impact is likely to occur given various drivers and constraints, but remains a theoretical model of limited value.

⁵ IFAD, 1992. Soil and Water conservation in Sub-Saharan Africa: towards sustainable production by the rural poor

VIII) Recommendations

1. Lessons from CLMP (see foregoing section) must be used to help drive forward and guide the development of SLM in Eritrea's rural areas – and fed into ongoing processes including the NAP as well as new initiatives such as FReMP.
2. The experience within the two Zobas can and should be upscaled now and rolled out, progressively, to the rest of the country – though in a flexible and responsive way as there are different baseline situations as well as agroecological conditions in other parts of the nation. It could be informed by Recommendation 1 (above) and an essential element would be cross-visit and community-to-community learning.
3. Community-based land use planning has worked in many countries in SSA and has been proven in Eritrea under CLMP. It is recommended that this is the way forward in efforts to reduce land degradation – especially where common grazing is an important form of land use.
4. More thought should be given in future design to simple and meaningful M&E tools that are employed right from the start of a project and go hand-in-hand with implementation. Two key areas that must be improved in future projects are capturing co-finance contributions and assessing spread and uptake.
5. A cluster of proven, though conventional, technologies has been shown to work under CLMP, such as enclosures of rangeland and energy saving stoves which should lead to rapid and sustained revegetation. It is strongly recommended that support is afforded by IFAD (as is now happening) to assist Eritrea to establish and maintain monitoring of soil/ vegetation carbon fluxes, and hence land degradation, through a mechanism such as the Land Degradation Ecosystem Health and Surveillance Framework.
6. Capacity building has proved an essential prerequisite to achieve the improvement that CLMP has experienced since the MTR. 'This human capital' should be maintained as much as possible in the system.
7. Land tenure issues need to be addressed better as sustainability of improved land management is contingent on security. This is a challenge for the GoE to address, but should be supported by any future land management project – working with UNDP's pilot programme.
8. The piloting of negotiations and agreements between CLMP/ MoA and other ministries involved in dam construction regarding environmental protection should be continued, and even expanded into civil engineering works where road construction, especially, can be sources of land degradation.
9. There should also be serious consideration given to designing a specific follow-up project, with a 'Ridge to Reef' nature that cuts a cross section from the current Zobas down to the coast.
10. It is key now that the Project Completion Report includes a strong, clear and targeted 'Exit Strategy' which can be used to help guide the adoption of CLMP's lessons into on-going GoE work and follow-on projects including the NAP and FReMP.