Terminal Evaluation Report

SWAZILAND
GEF Project ID 3390

Sustainable Land Management Project (LUSLM)[1]

July 2015

[1] While LUSIP-GEF is the original abbreviation of the project, in the last year it has become known as LUSLM (the 'Lower Usuthu Sustainable Land Management Project') and the project logo uses 'LUSLM' on vehicles and publications).

Table of Contents

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACAT	Africa Cooperative Action Trust
BD	Biodiversity
CA	Conservation Agriculture
CC	Climate Change
CDP	Chiefdom Development Plan
EA	Executing Agency
GEB	Global Environmental Benefit
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GoS	Government of Swaziland
IA	Implementing Agency
ICIPE	International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
LD	Land Degradation
LPTF	Land Policy Task Force
LUSIP	Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project
LUSIP-GEF (= LUSLM)[2]	Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project-Global Environmental Fund Project
LUSLM (=LUSIP-GEF)	Lower Usuthu Sustainable Land Management Project
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MEPD	Ministry of Economic Planning and Development
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy
MRDYA	Ministry of Regional Development & Youth Affairs
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
MTEA	Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs
NPM	National Project Manager
NSC	National Steering Committee
NPM	National Project Manager
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
RCES ESA	Regional Climate and Environment Specialist, East & Southern Africa
RDA	Rural Development Area
REASWA	Renewable Energy Association of Swaziland
SEA	Swaziland Environment Authority
SEAP	Swaziland Environmental Action Plan
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SMLP	Smallholder Market-Led Production project
SNTC	Swaziland National Trust Commission
SWADE	Swaziland Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise
TADB	Tinkhundla Administration and Development Bill
TT	Technical Task Team
UNCBD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNISWA	University of Swaziland
USD	United States Dollars

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I) PROJECT IDENTIFICATION TABLE

GEF Project ID	**3390**
Country: Project Title:	**LUSIP-GEF Sustainable Land Management Project**
Project duration:	4 Years
Commencement:	July 2010 (effectively July 2011)
Completion	June 2014 (revised to March 2015)
GEF Implementing Agency:	IFAD
Project Executing Agency:	Ministry of Agriculture, Swaziland Water and Agricultural Development Enterprises (SWADE)
GEF Strategic Objective:	LD-SP1, BD-SP7, CC-SP4
GEF Strategic Programmes:	Land Degradation, Biodiversity, and Climate Change.
IFAD Priority:	Strategic Objective 5 of the 2011-2015 Strategic Framework : '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'
Budget **Cost to the GEF trust fund:** **Co-Financing:**	 USD 1,972,830 USD 8,670,800

II) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Land degradation has been recognized as a threat in Swaziland for at least a century: the problem continues despite development efforts dating back to the 1950s. The main drivers are the combination of increasing human population, soil nutrient mining within farms, growing livestock populations 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 response to this cycle of land degradation and poverty the Government of Swaziland developed a proposal to introduce sustainable land management (SLM) practices in pilot sites around the country. Lessons with the implementation of SLM initiatives from these sites were intended to be packaged and 'rolled out' in the lower region and to other parts of Swaziland: this is likely to be achieved through a new IFAD loan (SMLP) and a new GEF project currently under design.

Swaziland was awarded a GEF grant, supported by an IFAD loan, for a project with the objectives of:

- promoting development and mainstreaming of a harmonised, cross-sectoral approach to SLM at the national level;
- reducing land degradation, biodiversity loss and mitigating climate change in the Lower Usuthu River Basin area, through the application of sustainable land management practices which will contribute to adaptation to climate change; and
- improving the livelihood opportunities, resilience and food security of rural communities.

The project, 'Lower Usuthu Sustainable Land Management Project' was initially abbreviated to LUSIP-GEF, but its common acronym has become 'LUSLM' with a logo displayed on vehicles and documents etc. Project implementation started in July 2011 - one year after the signing of the grant agreement. Effectively the project had only been in active operation for just over one year at the time of its Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE). Despite the delay and the short implementation period, the MTE adjudged that a number of significant achievements had been made, and momentum was very likely to be picked up during the project's life. The MTE rated LUSLM as 'moderately satisfactory'.

The Terminal Evaluation (TE), reported here, was carried out by an independent consultant, Dr William Critchley, during January 2015. Two weeks in the field were spent alongside IFAD's Regional Climate and Environment specialist, during which a highly intensive, and very well organised, programme of interviews (over 20) and field visits (over 10 sites) was carried out. The TE ended with a presentation of preliminary findings to a well-attended plenary meeting of project stakeholders (PSC members; project staff; partners, etc). This report follows the format required in the ToR and focuses on the criteria designed to assess the project's achievements, under the required 12 headings, and then it homes in on key lessons and recommendations.

While sometimes constrained by lack of hard, empirical evidence, the evaluation found that LUSLM is a project that has many strengths, though weaknesses too. The latter include inadequate monitoring and evaluation, and some over-expensive initiatives. Nevertheless LUSLM is on a steady trajectory towards achieving its outcomes. The project has made a difference. Above all, LUSLM has helped develop Chiefdom Development Plans and drafted a national Land Act: these initiatives will potentially have a profound impact on SLM in Swaziland. On the ground, LUSLM has fulfilled a very important role in piloting many successful SLM technologies, through cultivating partnerships with development agencies and harmonising messages. Several of the

technologies are ready to be rolled out nationally. These include home gardens ('permaculture') combined with fruit orchards, rooftop rainwater harvesting tanks, indigenous poultry rearing, beekeeping and hay-making. There has been a strong programme of training with women in the majority of trainees. Less successful to-date has been the energy saving stove initiative. Conservation agriculture shows early promise. An intriguing and imaginative idea has been to join forces with UNISWA's school of journalism and mass communication. Through this latter mechanism, and active campaigns, LUSLM has captured the public's imagination and has set standards that can now be emulated more widely across the nation.

Summary of Overall Project Achievements and Ratings

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Rating
A. Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results (overall) Sub criteria (below)		4
Effectiveness	The project has sown the seed for a number of very effective interventions.	4
Relevance	LUSLM addresses land degradation, food security and vulnerability to climate change.	6
Efficiency	Most of the interventions are potentially low cost, though the initial pilots (e.g. the Chiefdom Development Plans) are too expensive currently to roll out widely.	3
B. Sustainability (overall rating) Sub criteria (below)		**5**
Financial resources	Resources have been mobilised from IFAD, GoS, 'stakeholder' partners and community in-kind.	5
Socio-political	CDPs underpinned by their participatory preparation process will ensure socio political sustainability.	5
Institutional framework	The use of Chiefdoms as planning entities ensures strong support from the government.	5
Environmental	LUSLM addresses critical issues of land degradation, energy, biodiversity and climate change.	5
C. Catalytic Role and Replication	The GEF funding has played a catalytic role in mobilizing other resources.	**5**
D. Stakeholder Participation/ Public Awareness	LUSF has enlisted the effective participation of a broad range of development partners ('stakeholders') and engaged the people and their leaders, including chiefs.	**5**
E. Country Ownership/ Drivenness	There is no doubt that this is a Swazi-driven project and is espoused by all partners with pride.	**5**
F. Achievement of Outputs and Activities	Most targets met: some exceeded. Energy saving technology is an exception with poor achievements.	**5**
G. Preparation and Readiness	After a slow start up – effectively one year lost - the project has compensated and picked up momentum.	**4**

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Rating
H. Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management	Project management acted innovatively in arranging for staff secondment from LUSIP to LUSLM.	**4**
I. Monitoring and Evaluation (overall) Sub criteria (below)	Project M&E has been weak – but LUSLM is not an exception in this regard.	**4**
M&E Design	Little evidence of a strong M&E system: *ad hoc*	4
M&E Plan Implementation	Paucity of data testifies to weak plan implementation.	3
Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities	LUSLM has not been short of funds for M&E, but has not used them efficiently enough.	4
J. Financial Planning/ Control	Managed by SWADE but timeliness not very good.	**4**
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	A strong match with IFAD's priorities.	**5**
M. Overall Project Achievement	There has been strong activity through partnerships over the last two years. Notable achievements include the Chiefdom Development Plan process, training, beekeeping and home gardens. Some initiatives have not yet had time to be fully assessed (e.g. CA); and there have been weaknesses including M&E.	**5**

Overall, the project is adjudged to have made strong progress towards achieving its objectives and has picked up significantly from the MTE, and thus is rated overall as 'Satisfactory' (5).

Lessons

1. While Swaziland has a very long history of SLM/ NRM interventions, many of which have disappointed, LUSLM has demonstrated that the correct interventions at the right time can have impact, and 'strike a chord'.

2. Forming a collation of development partners ('stakeholders') and harmonizing messages avoids the problems of territoriality between agencies and conflicting advice.

3. Awareness-raising through branding – both of the project (with a logo), and specific products (for value addition) is a powerful tool.

4. Innovation and imagination should always be allowed space in a project: the involvement of the university's School of Journalism and Mass Communication has proved invaluable in awareness raising, and training students in the 'media marketability' of agricultural development.

5. Monitoring and evaluation have proved again to be a problem area: however coaching and guidance from the implementing agency can be very helpful – setting in place procedures and looking for 'unexpected impacts' and 'multiple co-benefits' as well as tracking predetermined indicators.

6. Projects such as LUSLM can easily become so involved in their development agenda that they lose track of the higher objectives of supporting agencies, especially the GEF – thus give inadequate attention to global environmental benefits.

7. Policy development for national law modification can only be taken to a certain level by a development project: from that point (e.g. drafting a Land Act) it can only act by persuasion – backed by policy-demonstration from the field.

8. Study tours, whether domestic or international can be extraordinarily powerful as demonstrated by the Chiefs' trip to Tanzania. They should always be built into these types of projects. Where possible they should be reciprocal 'cross-visits'.

9. Upscaling is not just limited by willpower or effort – but often by capacity too. Knowledge products such as those produced under LUSLM are very valuable.

10. Even after decades of development work, there continue to be some perpetual problems: one tangible example is construction design of gabion weirs (or other check dams) in gullies. There is plenty of documentation and hands-on experience available – it must be made available.

11. While new (and more realistic) quantitative targets were apparently agreed as a result of the MTE these were not specified in the revised log frame attached to the MTE report: such important revisions must always be clearly set out and formalized.

12. It is evident that many activities will carry on under LUSLM using counterpart funding for several months after the end of GEF funding, thus in this situation a terminal evaluation cannot capture all of a project's eventual achievements.

Recommendations

1. Though the current exercise is termed a 'Terminal Evaluation' it can equally be looked upon as a learning exercise at a specific stage during a process.

Lessons and recommendations from this exercise should be used to help drive forward and guide the development of SLM in Swaziland's rainfed rural areas – and fed into the design of new initiatives including IFAD-GoS's Smallholder Market-Led Project and follow-up GEF initiatives.

2. A cluster of proven technologies has been shown to work under LUSLM – promulgated by the project team and partners.

A package of SLM-based, income earning technologies is now ready to be spread more widely throughout Swaziland. This can be based around home gardens ('permaculture') including fruit trees, beekeeping, indigenous chickens, roof tanks for water harvesting, hay making and nutrition gardens – with associated integrated fertility management. Multiple co-benefits will be realized.

3. Much impact cannot be captured through conventional M&E methods: though these are essential for project tracking.

Be aware of, and look out for, unexpected impact as a spin-off from development initiatives. For example the engagement of children in record keeping, encouraging their interest.

4. Technical SLM guidelines are important – and their distribution to recipients is crucial.

Make sure that guidelines capture essential ways and means of ensuring 'best practice' nationally. There exist guidelines throughout Africa that can help in content and format.

5. Conservation agriculture (CA) undoubtedly has potential in Swaziland, but it can only succeed by trials and testing and by monitoring impact.

Conservation agriculture should be promoted in Swaziland, but great care taken not to confuse farmers with simultaneous campaigns for conventional ploughing. The end result should be a clear definition of CA options based on data from the field and farmer testimonies.

6. Energy saving technology has not yet made any significant impact under LUSLM.

Efforts must be continued to work with energy saving stoves and biogas initiatives under follow-up project – not dropped as having 'failed'.

7. Chiefdom Development Plans have been a highlight of the project.

Ensure that the CDP process is continued – but make sure (a) costs are reduced (b) NRM committees are part and parcel of the plans and areas to be treated are demarcated (c) 'before and after' posters are produced as well as glossy booklets outlining the plans.

8. The study tour to Tanzania has proved a great stimulus to the CDP process.

Follow-up the study tour with plans for future visits – both internationally and internally: strive to invite the hosts to Swaziland for further fruitful exchange.

9. Global environmental benefits are the main objective of the GEF but have been given little attention as yet under LUSLM.

Continue (through whatever project or process) to monitor GEBs – especially soil/ vegetation carbon fluxes to confirm the value of current and future GEF investments

10. SLM under LUSLM has been relatively broad – but there are other technologies also.

Explore measures such as water harvesting from roads, live hedges, vegetative methods of donga rehabilitation and enrichment planting with legumes of contour grass strips and hay fields.

III. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. Land degradation has been recognized as a threat and documented in Southern Africa, including Swaziland, for at least a century: the problem continues despite development efforts. The main drivers are the combination of increasing human population, soil nutrient mining within farmlands, growing livestock populations on communally grazed rangelands (Swaziland has one of the largest bovine : human ratios in sub-Saharan Africa), and deforestation. To that list can be added the more recently acknowledged impacts of climate change. In turn, land degradation drives a cycle of rural poverty – households lacking food, money and energy. In the 1950s, over 100,000 km of contour grass strips were laid out in Swaziland, protecting almost the entire cultivated area. The 1960-64 Development Plan, however, noted that grass stripping was not enough in itself to halt erosion. Soil conservation receive a boost in 1970 with the start of the Rural Area Development Programme, which abandoned grass strips in favour of narrow-based terraces. However many of these structures were not well maintained[3]. Other initiatives included the establishment of Grazing Land Management Demonstrations in the 1990s[4] – but these have apparently foundered due to their inherent inequality of benefits.

2. More than 70 percent of Swaziland's population depend upon subsistence agriculture for their survival. Swazi national land is communally utilised, with the majority under the jurisdiction of the Chiefdoms under the Tinkhundla system of governance, but this provides little incentive for farmers to invest in sustainable land management. Many livestock areas are therefore overgrazed, and forest areas under threat, resulting in widespread soil erosion and land degradation. Rural households remain trapped in poverty and are becoming increasingly vulnerable with the increasing impacts of climate change.

3. The Government of Swaziland (GoS) has been addressing problems of rural poverty through the introduction of new farming practices, including irrigation development aimed at enhancing food security and address poverty among rural farmers. The Komati Downstream Development Programme (KDDP) in the north of the country and the Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Programme (LUSIP) in the south are cases in point.

4. These development programmes however resulted in unintended negative impacts in the surrounding areas by increasing pressures on grazing lands due to the fact that farmers who benefitted from irrigation development simply moved their livestock into neighbouring grazing lands. Furthermore losses of woodlands to irrigation development also resulted in sourcing of fuel wood and construction timber from further afield. Widespread environmental degradation in the areas surrounding irrigation schemes has thus been a detrimental side-effect of these developments.

5. It was in response to this situation that the Government of Swaziland approached the Global Environment Facility for funding of sustainable land management in the areas surrounding the LUSIP project in the south of the country. The decision to use IFAD as the Implementing Agency was motivated by the fact that the organization was already working in the area on irrigation development and the investments made under this

[3] IFAD, 1992. Soil and Water Conservation in Sub-Saharan Africa. Towards sustainable production by the rural poor. Report prepared by the Centre for Development Cooperation Services, Free University Amsterdam

[4] Critchley, W., 1995. Grazing Land Management Demonstrations, Swaziland. Chapter 9 in CDCS-VU Universiteit Amsterdam *Successful natural resource management in southern Africa.* Gamsberg Macmillan, Windhoek.

project would therefore constitute co-financing. Attaching the SLM project to the LUSIP project also made programmatic sense at the time as replication of experiences and results from the project was expected to become easier.

6. The Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation–Global Environment Facility, Sustainable Land Management (LUSIP-GEF SLM) Project (now branded the Lower Usuthu Sustainable Land Management Project, LUSLM) was developed to address and reduce land degradation and biodiversity loss while mitigating climate change through the application of sustainable land management practices located around Siphofaneni, Sithobela, Mtfongwaneni and Lubulini constituencies, which surround the main LUSIP project area in Southern Swaziland.

7. The project goal is:
    - *to reduce land degradation and biodiversity loss in the Lower Usuthu River Basin area through the application of sustainable land management practices.*

8. The project objectives are to:
    - *promote development and mainstreaming of a harmonised, cross-sectoral approach to SLM at the national level;*
    - *reduce land degradation, biodiversity loss and mitigate climate change in the Lower Usuthu River Basin area through the application of sustainable land management practices which will contribute to adaptation to climate change;* and
    - *improve the livelihood opportunities, resilience and food security of rural communities.*

9. The project was designed in 2008, and GEF approval was secured on 4 June 2009 with grant funding of USD 1,972,830 and co-financing of USD 8,670,800 for a total of USD 10,643,630. The Grant Agreement was signed in March 2010 and operations under the project commenced in July 2011 following the recruitment of the National Project Manager.

10. The project conforms closely to GEF's Operational Strategy with the objectives and eligible activities aligned to three Focal Areas (FA) Strategies: Land Degradation, Climate Change and Biodiversity. With respect to Land Degradation, 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.

11. The project is aligned to Strategic Objective 8 of the Climate Change Focal Area: "To support pilot and demonstration projects for adaptation to climate change", through enhancing the resilience, and increasing the capacity, of local communities within the project area to cope with the adverse impacts of climate change on the land resource, and promoting sustainable energy production from biomass. The project is consistent with the GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy as it directly supports Strategic Objective 2: "To mainstream biodiversity conservation in production landscapes/seascapes and sectors", and the implementation of the Strategic Programme 7, "Prevention, control and management of invasive alien species", in the project area. Finally, the project was

also a constituent part of the Strategic Investment Program for Sustainable Land Management in Sub-Saharan Africa (SIP), contributing to its long-term Programme Goal and Intermediate Results.

12. The Implementing Agency (IA) for this project is IFAD and the Executing Agency (EA) is Swaziland's Ministry of Agriculture. The Swaziland Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise (SWADE) administers the project on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture. A national project management office headed by a full-time National Project Manager is responsible for day-to-day project administration and implementation. The national project management office is based in SWADE's LUSIP offices at Siphofaneni, from where on-the-ground activities are implemented. The NPM is supervised by the National Programme Coordinator who is a permanent staff member at the Ministry of Agriculture.

13. The NPC and NPM operate under the guidance of a Technical Committee and National Steering Committee. It was expected that through this approach, sustainable land management would be more effectively streamlined into government operations. The NSC is constituted of representatives of MOA, SEA, SNTC, MNRE and also SWADE. GoS has also mobilised government, non-governmental and private sector entities to execute specific elements of the project. These include Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC), NGOs (namely World Vision, REASWA, ProBEC, and Africa Cooperative Action Trust, ACAT)) which participate in the implementation of various project elements.

14. The Technical Committee and National Steering Committee are accountable to the GoS Ministries collaborating on the project, and also the GEF Focal Point, who in turn is accountable to IFAD and ultimately the GEF for implementation of the project.

LUSLM Components and Outcomes

Component 1 – Sustainable Land Management Approach Promoted at National Level

This component focuses on promoting development and mainstreaming of a harmonized, cross-sectoral approach to SLM at the national level, to overcome national level barriers and improve the legal and policy framework for SLM.

Outcomes

1.1 Legal and operational framework for SLM improved;

1.2. Use of land resources planned sustainably

Component 2 – Sustainable Use of Land Resources

Under this component, local communities will be assisted to better plan and manage their land resources, based on the unit of Chiefdoms. This component focuses on raising SLM awareness, skills and ecological literacy of local people. There will be capacity-building for local level staff in the project area including extension officers, NGOs and the private sector. On the ground activities to be undertaken under this component will use participatory approaches, demonstration plots and farmer visits.

Outcomes

2.1 Land use plans implemented;

2.2 Degraded land restored and sustainably managed;

2.3 Vulnerability to climate change decreased;

2.4 Biodiversity loss reduced

Component 3 – Alternative Livelihoods

This component complements the larger LUSIP project by supporting communities with the application of SLM and conservation measures to generate additional sources of income to alleviate poverty and reduce pressure on natural resources.

Outcome

3.1 Alternative sources of livelihood that are compatible with sustainable use of land resources promoted

Component 4 – Project Management

This component is to facilitate operationalization and efficient functioning of LUSLM project management structures, with a focus on documentation of lessons learnt facilitated through an effective and efficient knowledge management system.

IV. SCOPE, OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

Scope

15. 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.

16. This report[5] is a record of the process, and findings of the Terminal Evaluation of the LUSLM project, conducted by an independent evaluator[6] during January 2015. The evaluator was accompanied by an IFAD staff member[7], who is closely familiar with the project, as is the official requirement. It follows a Mid-Term Evaluation conducted between October and December 2012: the summary of that MTE is presented in Annex 5.

17. The evaluator visited Mbabane and Manzini, where he met the Principle Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, the Director of Agriculture, the CEO of SWADE, the chair of the Technical Committee, the GEF Focal Point, and representatives of other project implementing partners. A total of 16 interviews were held in two and a half days.

18. After these meetings, two days of field visits were accomplished, and 11 sites visited. A further day was dedicated to a meeting with the project team at the Siphofaneni office. Finally a half-day feedback meeting was held in Manzini, attended by 45 invitees – numbering almost everyone who had been interviewed, including the project team. A full itinerary and list of meetings and field visits is attached at Annex 2.

19. It must be noted that the efficiency of organization by the LUSLM team was excellent – and the number of stakeholders met and field sites visited in such a short time was remarkable. The representation at the feedback meeting confirmed the strong impression that this is a project that is taken very seriously indeed.

Objectives

20. The objectives of this Terminal Evaluation are (as laid out in the ToR: see Annex 1):

    a) To examine the extent and magnitude of any project achievements, outputs, and impacts in relation to the overall project goal;
    b) To assess project performance and the implementation of planned project activities and planned outputs against actual results;
    c) To synthesize lessons learned that may help in the design and implementation of future IFAD GEF initiatives in similar socio-economic and environmental context;
    d) To document and demonstrate the applicability and sustainability of SLM practices and approach tested and promoted in the framework of the project;
    e) To evaluate the linkages and complementarity achieved between the GEF components and the parent LUSIP loan project.

21. The Terminal Evaluation was conducted using a mix of methods including the following:

    a) A desk review of project documents both before the visit to Swaziland and during (though it must be noted that very few were sent before the evaluation, and neither a list nor a full set were available on arrival in Swaziland) including:

[5] The report follows the sections and headings stipulated in the ToR: see Annex1
[6] William Critchley, Independent consultant/ Evaluator
[7] Stephen Twomlow, Regional Climate and Environment Specialist – East and Southern Africa

(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 3 for list);
(b) The Mid-Term Evaluation Report (of late 2012);
(c) Notes from the Steering Group meetings;
(d) Other project-related material produced by the project staff or partners, including handbooks, guidelines, a power point presentation of achievements and a LUSLM video;
(e) IFAD monitoring and evaluation policy documents;
(f) Swazi national rural development plans and policy pronouncements.

b) As noted in the foregoing, interviews were held with stakeholders at all levels, with PSC members, project management, other key representatives of the Executing Agencies and various member of the technical support agencies. The field visits afforded the possibility to verify achievements on the ground, and interview beneficiaries of / participants in the project.

c) One particular, and extremely useful extra source of information was IFAD's Regional Climate and Environmental Specialist (RCE), who accompanied the consultant throughout. This allowed intensive interaction and technical discussion, as well as enabling the evaluator to benefits from the extra questions posed by the RCE[8].

Methods

22. 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 (and vice-versa). As much as possible, the evaluation was based on evidence collected both from the field and through interviews with stakeholders. Where empirical evidence was lacking, the evaluator used his own knowledge of sub-Saharan Africa, and Southern Africa in particular, to reach conclusions as to the value of the project.

23. Of great value was the feedback workshop held towards the end of the second week (mentioned in the forgoing) when the consultant provided his preliminary findings to the stakeholders through a power point presentation (Annex 4): this had the effect of confirming the majority of points presented, but also opening up discussion and adding extra information.

[8] This helped compensate for the lack of other evaluation members – despite the ToR appearing to suggest a Financial Specialist would be on the team.

V. PROJECT PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT

A. Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results

Effectiveness

24. The project has sown the seed for a number of very effective interventions affecting SLM and livelihoods generally: there is strong likeliness of impact and outcome achievement. The outcomes expressed in components 1, 2 and 3 (see box under para 14) cannot be simply measured, nor are they likely to be demonstrably and widely achieved within the project's brief lifespan – that would be unrealistic - but the project has begun a process that is evidently moving strongly towards achievements at the outcome level. For example several of the successful SLM technologies are ready to be rolled out nationally – helping achieve better land management and simultaneously providing new livelihood opportunities. These include home gardens ('permaculture')[9] combined with fruit orchards, rooftop rainwater harvesting tanks, indigenous poultry rearing, beekeeping and hay-making. Less successful to date has been the energy-saving stove initiative. Conservation agriculture shows early promise. Potentially, however, the Land Bill and the Chiefdom Development Plans can have an extremely significant impact – in terms of establishing an 'enabling environment' for SLM - not merely in the project area, but nationally.

Relevance

25. The introduction (paras 9 and 10) has already set the scene for the project's relevance to the GEF and the SIP. LUSLM fits under IFAD' mandate – this is covered in section L (para 54 and Table 3). It is clear through its design and implementation activities that the project addresses land degradation, food security and vulnerability to climate change which are all critical issues in the project area and Swaziland as a whole. Locally, it has enabled those dependent on rainfed ('dryland') farming in climate-vulnerable areas, to realise (in both senses of the word) their potential, and not to assume that neighbouring irrigated sugar cane is the only route to prosperity. LUSLM seems to have 'struck a chord' of relevance with the Swazi people – at least as far as it can be determined from the testimonies of all interviewed. It is both timely and useful.

Efficiency

26. Overall the majority of targets[10] have been achieved within budget; though it has to be said targets generally are modest – with the exception of the 140,000 ha to be brought under SLM representing 40 percent of the Chiefdoms area[11]. Most of the interventions are potentially low-cost and profitable, and thus adoptable. Unsurprisingly most have been kick-started by initial subsidies – for example conservation agriculture trials: that, however can be justified as long as subsidies are short-term in future projects/ programmes. However the pilot Chiefdom Development Plans are too expensive currently to roll out widely, and there is a danger that a precedent has been set that cannot be replicated. The recently built poly-tunnel project that is intended to be an intensive vegetable production enterprise for top-end market produce is an aberration in terms of the project's objectives: it favours a small group, it delivers no discernible SLM

[9] While the project terms these gardens 'permaculture' the evaluator prefers the more accurate term home garden: while many permaculture principles are evident in the home gardens, the strict three-dimensional architectural design of permaculture is missing

[10] See Annex 8 for a comprehensive list of achievements against targets and section F for a discussion of these

[11] A target that was halved at the MTE

or global environmental benefits, and it is not replicable without a large capital investment. When challenged about this, LUSLM management admitted they had not thought it through properly, and had 'learned a lesson': there was a genuine misunderstanding about the role of co-funding from GoS.

B. Sustainability

27. The question as to whether project intervention results are sustainable over the long term is considered under the following aspects: Financial Sustainability Socio-political Sustainability, Institutional and Environmental Sustainability.

Financial Sustainability

28. Resources have been mobilised from IFAD, GoS, 'stakeholder' partners and community in-kind (see Table 1). There are good upscaling prospects through the proposed IFAD-funded Smallholder Market-Led Project where business models, including indigenous chickens, beekeeping and fruit production developed under the LUSLM can be stimulated and expanded. Branding – of honey and poultry – has helped sell products and create a market[12]. It is also envisaged that 'spin-off' enterprises such as the groups that make beehives, and those who build water tanks will continue to thrive. Most importantly a basis has been set for confidence in investing within SLM and its derivatives. The IFAD Supervision Report of March 2014 believes that the CDP process will gradually help in the move away from dependency to a "culture of entrepreneurship".

Socio-political Sustainability

29. Chiefdom Development Plans, underpinned by their participatory preparation processes through the Chiefdom Development Committees will help to ensure socio-political sustainability – through building upon the traditional system of governance. There is strong evidence that chiefs have bought-in to the process and one chief interviewed said he felt 'more accountable' to his people as a result of the process. A potential threat is that the project itself cannot in itself ensure significant change in land tenure or land use systems.

Institutional Sustainability

30. LUSLM has helped to entrench institutional stability by working through SWADE and the Ministry of Agriculture. These are institutions that will continue, and are not ephemeral project structures. Key also has been the formation of a formidable coalition of well-established NGOs, and within that consortium, harmonizing advice. While this has not yet worked perfectly (some extension messages on conservation agriculture for example remain inconsistent), it helps break down the barriers of territoriality and competition between agencies. Following on from the above point on institutional sustainability, the use of Chiefdoms as planning entities ensures strong support from the government and the Ministry of Tinkhundla. Throughout the project period there has been good support for – and engagement of – women: this will help strengthen institutions at all levels.

Environmental Sustainability

31. The project addresses land degradation, energy, biodiversity and climate change which are critical environmental issues in Swaziland. A wide palette of technical approaches has been set out – intensive home gardens/ 'permaculture', hay-making (where enrichment planting of legumes could improve the fertility balance), orchards, indigenous poultry production and conservation agriculture: all are elements of sustained environmental

[12] However it is not advised to incorporate the name of the donor or project agency within the brand – as there may be legal implications.

improvement. While the *donga* (gully) rehabilitation initiative is commendable in its intent, history dictates that such rehabilitation must be achieved cost-effectively, and be implemented with technical skill, or erosion may even worsen: currently the engineering specifications of the gabion weirs is not yet acceptable (despite dedicated efforts). The overall LUSLM approach is also embedded in government machinery and the communities. An impressive training programme has built up human capital: it is further noted that there are a considerable number of land users who have been trained in environmental issues (1400 men and 3000 women). With respect to the CDPs, it is disappointing that only three NRM committees have been established as yet (out of a target of 11): these should act as the core bodies for NRM planning of the areas as well as advising on/ ensuring/ guarding environmental sustainability in the chiefdomships.

C. Catalytic Role and Replication

32. The evaluator agrees with the basic assessment of the MTE and could not phrase it better. Thus it is quoted here: "GEF support under the LUSLM project focuses on promoting sustainable land management through the reduction of land degradation and introducing to the involved community groups alternative livelihood options that contribute to the reduction of biodiversity loss. The lessons produced at the project sites are then collected and collated for replication in other parts of the country. The GEF is therefore supporting the creation of new knowledge and lessons for use in similar circumstances elsewhere. The LUSLM project includes learning and demonstration as vehicles for engendering change in the way communities relate to their environment thereby promoting innovation at the local level".

33. The GEF funding has played a catalytic role in mobilizing other resources: co-financing has been forthcoming from government and communities (see Table 1). There are prospects of follow-up though an IFAD loan (the Smallholder Market-Led Production project, SMLP) to help spread small business activities and their related impacts more widely. SMLP according to the IFAD Supervision Report of March 2014 "will be built on the lessons and impacts achieved by the project".

34. There is also a keen interest from the GoS to follow up with an application for a grant from GEF's 6th replenishment. The same IFAD Supervision Report refers to a meeting with the GEF Focal Point where it was proposed to develop a multi-focal area project (Land Degradation, Biodiversity and Climate Change) for GEF funding. This has (at time of writing) now become a reality with approval for a GEF IAP project to be designed later in 2015.

35. One again, attention should be drawn to the coalition of stakeholder partners which has helped spread LUSLM initiatives within the project area – and is replicating them further afield.

36. What must not be overlooked is the fact that Chiefdom Development Plans now offer a 'receptacle' for investment of development funds. A series of costed plans for SLM/ NRM development within the Chiefdom means that the GoS and development agencies *de facto* have a series of 'project proposals' ready to be funded and implemented.

D. Stakeholder Participation/ Public Awareness

37. LUSLM has enlisted the effective participation of a broad range of development partners ('stakeholders') as already highlighted in this evaluation, as well as engaging the people and their leaders, including chiefs. While not overtly highlighted, it is clear from the data and the various case studies presented, that there is a very good mix of women and men, the young and the old: this is an inclusive programme.

38. Public awareness has been stimulated by an imaginative and effective collaboration with UNISWA's school of Journalism and Mass Communication. Placing interns at the project headquarters has spawned many press stories. UNISWA has designed a new course unit that specifically focusses agricultural and environmental communication: it awaits validation by the university. This is surely one of the most innovative features of LUSLM, and deserves emulating in other countries.

39. As well as a multitude of leaflets and brochures, there is also strong and regular radio presence, especially through the NGO, ACAT (Africa Cooperation Action Trust). There has also been exposure on television. Supported by awareness-raising workshops, it is estimated that half the population of the country (600,000 people) have been reached. That is an extraordinary achievement.

40. The press coverage given to the developments of Chiefdom Development Plans has been very impressive. This has created national impact, as it can potentially have an influence on land and land use planning over the whole country.

41. The Chiefs' tour to Tanzania has been an especially well-publicised event – and has proved strategically important in the development of the CDP process. This study tour was underpinned by enlisting the support of Their Majesties, the King and Queen Mother.

E. Country Ownership/ Drivenness

42. There is no doubt that this is a Swazi-driven project and is espoused by all partners with pride. There is interest at all levels and a sense that the CDP process has been embraced and will act as a catalyst for other developments – as well as a basic model that can be spread through the Ministry of Tindkundla, nationwide.

43. The LUSLM project was initiated by Swaziland government officials who had having witnessed serious environmental degradation in the country, and noted not only many failed projects over the years, but also the sparks of success that have lit up a general gloomy history of interventions. Their involvement in the design of the LUSLM project, building on these success, was vital to success. And the ownership of the process is clearly claimed by GoS officials, project staff, chiefs and people alike. There is clearly a sense of national pride in the achievements and possibilities for the future.

44. This evaluator has seldom witnessed such a sense of ownership when interviewing officials – and the turnout at the presentation of preliminary findings was testimony to how important this initiative is to the nation: LUSLM has gained country-wide renown.

F. Achievement of Outputs and Activities

45. The MTE suggested there was "A very strong foundation for the achievement of outputs and activities". This has largely been borne out, with some targets exceeded. Others targets have not yet been met. However, targets may have been unrealistic (too high or too low), and the situation may have changed, thus the target : achievement ratio cannot always be accepted at face value.

46. However, perhaps the most fundamental achievement (though the least tangible at present) is the drafting of a national Land Act, using a cross-sectoral Land Policy Task Force (LPTF). This can have massive implications for the future of SLM in Swaziland if it becomes law.

47. The project provided the evaluator with an overview of achievements – though only during (and immediately after) his mission: see Annex 8. It is noted that the quantitative benefits are very likely to rise in the months after the GEF financing period as activities will continue using co-financing.

48. Overachievement is evident in the number of households "accepting conservation agriculture principles" (though that is hard to prove); in the number of households with water harvesting systems (a very positive accomplishment) and most spectacularly in the number of households undertaking indigenous poultry production: ten times the target.

49. Targets have (more or less) been met with respect to Chiefdom Development Plans developed (8 out of 10); households with home gardens/ 'permaculture'[13]; orchards established; cement roof tanks constructed; and beekeeping enterprises set up (see Annex 7 for a brief description of several of these initiatives that combined can help build up a 'climate resilient household).

50. Underachievement is evident in some case. Drip irrigation technology pilots is one. More importantly energy saving technology is another – though biogas plants are apparently on the point of delivery.

51. The original project overall targets of 40 percent of the total area of the Chiefdoms (120,000 ha) "to be brought under SLM" and the progressive increase in carbon sequestered (on 48,000 ha) have apparently been revised downwards on the basis of an amended logframe in the MTE. However, these agreed new targets (both the project and IFAD testify that they were officially changed – and details were submitted to the consultant at the final drafting stage[14]) were not specified in the final MTE. Nevertheless they are certainly more realistic than the original targets.

52. Thus the revised total area of the Chiefdoms "to be brought under SLM" is set at 68,000 ha[15]. Of the 68,000 ha some 47,000 ha have been at least planned for management. The target for progressive increase in carbon sequestered was reduced from 48,000 ha to 20% of the 'croplands, rangelands and forests' in each of the 11 chiefdoms (though the area is not specified)[16].

[13] While the project terms these gardens 'permaculture' the evaluator prefers the more accurate term home garden: while many permaculture principles are evident in the home gardens, the strict three-dimensional architectural design of permaculture is missing

[14] See Annex 9

[15] See Annex 8

[16] See Annex 9

53. It would be fair to say that the timeline for these (revised) targets could not reasonably be expected within project life. A proxy is to say that the CDPs that have been developed have set the stage for these targets to be achieved in the future five years or so.

54. With specific reference to the carbon sequestered in June 2013, The University of Swaziland (UNISWA) began sampling for organic matter and carbon in four Chiefdoms, taking over 150 samples under various interventions: agroforestry, land rehabilitation, conservation agriculture, water harvesting, and permaculture. The intention is to resample to quantify changes in 2016 or 2017: outside the current project span.

55. While the data compiled by the project attests to the achievements that LUSLM has recorded, during the course of the TE it became clear there are further unarticulated accomplishments that need to put on record. Thus, after discussions with the project team the following (at least) can be added to the above list:

i) Extra land restoration achievements not planned under project
   - 50 ha gullied land rehabilitated/ under restoration
   - 198 ha rangeland under SLM

ii) Extra home garden/ permaculture achievements
   - evidence of spontaneous uptake by neighbouring households(unquantified)
   - training given to 132 peri-urban communities in Manzini and Mbabane
   - teachers trained in introducing permaculture into school curriculum at national level
   - increased agrobiodiversity within the system

iii) Rooftop water harvesting tanks
   - groups of artisans (men and women) formed spontaneously to satisfy growing demand for tanks

iv) Beekeeping
   - spinoffs include 30 youth and children becoming involved and promoting beekeeping in schools as well as keeping records for illiterate parents
   - beehive construction businesses set up
   - protection of local biodiversity for its nectar
   - potentially (anecdotally at least) improved yields through better pollination

G. Preparation and Readiness

45. The objectives and components of the project document are clear – though as noted certain numerical targets were changed at the time of the MTE but not clearly documented by that evaluator (as already noted).

46. After a slow start up – effectively one year lost - the project has compensated and picked up momentum. Personnel and facilities were made available. Nevertheless, despite an extension of almost a year the slow start has undoubtedly had a negative impact.

47. According to the MTE, there were complications in arrangements for management and staffing of LUSLM:

48. (*Open quote MTE*) "The responsibilities and reporting lines of the Project Management Team were [also] clearly laid out in the project document. Being responsible for day to day administration and management of the project placed the NPM in the position to be able to adapt to management situations as they arose. Right at the beginning of the

project, it was clear that the proposal to have Ministries second personnel to work with the NPM to implement specific project components was going to introduce confusion in the project due to lack of accountability and people being pulled away from the project to attend their day-to-day work"…..

49. ….."The National Project Manager responded to this by changing this arrangement and instead requesting the appointment of full time component managers who would report to her. While this request was granted and staff were recruited to work on the project, administrative hitches have been experienced which have adversely impacted on staff morale and threaten to affect project implementation" (*Close quote MTE*).

50. It is to the credit of the project magement team – and the National Project Manager and IFAD supporting staff in particular – that staff morale and project implementation have both improved enormously since that time. This is attested to by the rapid pick-up in activity and achievements recorded. Had the terminal evaluator not been aware of this history, it would not have been easily apparent from his interviews and observations in the field.

H. Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management

51. Following on from the previous point, project management acted innovatively in arranging for secondment of staff from LUSIP to LUSLM. This set the stage for the particular implementation approach adopted by LUSLM and its management style: differentiating itself from LUSIP, while making use of LUSIP's knowledge base and experience. From the start LUSLM has adopted a participatory approach to managing the project, while at the same time using awareness-raising and judicious use of incentives as tools in the process.

52. As already mentioned in other specific contexts, LUSLM must also take credit for forming strong bonds with partner agencies ('stakeholders'). This has accelerated implementation and will also also helped to ensure long-term sustainability of harmonised (non-conflicting) messages. Thus LUSLM has formed what this evaluator terms an effective 'coalition' of partners.

I. Monitoring and Evaluation

53. Project monitoring and evaluation has been weak – but this is admitted by the project, and LUSLM is not an exception. Many (IFAD-) GEF LDFA projects have poor performance in this regard. Little data was available before the consultant's arrival: a summary of achievements was only put together during the mission, and a number of the data needed to be clarified as they were not clear. The IFAD RCE was of great help in this regard. An impact analysis was still pending at the time of draft reporting.

54. While the IFAD Supervision report of March 2014 reports that "a comprehensive field programme to introduce and capture both the biophysical and social impacts of conservation agriculture to more than 500 households" and there was an agreement in that report that monitoring and analyses of demonstration should be on-going, there was little evidence of that programme to be seen during the TR. Though admittedly the CA

programme has been effectively only just begun, no comparative data on yields (or other parameters) was available.

55. With respect to the Global Environmental Benefits that are expected to ensue from a GEF-financed programme, the only evidence of tracking such benefits is the (soil) carbon assessment study that was carried out with the involvement of Colorado State University from May 2013 to August 2014 to set a baseline. Clearly this baseline can only be used as a reference point for assessment in a number of years' time, as there will be no discernable impact on soil carbon from the SLM treatments before a number of years have elapsed. That is understandable – but will need to be followed up in the future.

56. No data was seen from attempts to track biodiversity (apart from a Biodiversity Tracking Tool summary put together for the MTE) changes; though undoubtedly these will be evident, at least in the home gardens/ permaculture plots, and in the rehabilitated areas.

J. Financial Planning and Control

57. Project Finances are administered by SWADE: the organization having been delegated the responsibility to manage the GEF project finances, and also administrative procedures including recruitment of staff and general procurement by the Ministry of Agriculture.

58. The MTE mentioned (begin quote) "lack of attention from SWADE, due in part to late project start up and problems with staff recruitment and procurement of critical assets like vehicles project implement depends on staff using their own vehicles or just not attending to work that needs to be done"… "Financial disbursement has suffered due to these delays with the project having spent only 8% of their total budget after one year since mobilization. This is very low burn [sic] rate which might influence decisions; especially in government" (end of quote).

59. However the terminal evaluation found improvement, and evidence of monies disbursed and spent in time. This reflects the observations by the IFAD Supervision mission (March 2014) where it was noted that financial management had improved since the previous mission, but gave a list of caveats and areas for specific improvement.

60. However, the data supplied by the SWADE accounts department to the TE mission indicated that IFAD expenditure (including the GEF grant and IFAD loan) had reached 94% as at 31 December 2014 and there was a promise to update data to include the commitments up to the end of March 2015: these data were supplied and are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Financial Report for March 2015 (source: SWADE)

Component	Budget (USD)	Amount Spent (USD)	%
1. SLM Approach Promoted at National Level	1,525,608.00	936,421.47	61
2. Land Resources Planned and Managed Sustainably	8,911,950.00	9,614,723.79	108
3. Alternative Livelihoods Promoted	1,313,000.00	1,038,937.51	79
4. Project Management	5,957,559.44	6,328,331.08	106
TOTAL	17,708,117.44	17,918,413.85	101

45. Table 2 provides details of co-financing and leveraged support: the information has been provided by the SWADE accounts department and is as follows:

Table 2 Co-financing and leveraged resources (source: SWADE)

Co-financing (Type/ Source)	IA own Financing (USD m)		Government (USD m)		Beneficiary Contribution (USD m)		Total (USD m)		Total Disbursement (USD m)	
	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual
Grants	1,973	1,964	2,321	1,520	183	282	4,477	3,766	4,477	3,766
Loans/Concessional	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Equity investments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
In-kind	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	**1,973**	**1,964**	**2,321**	**1,520**	**183**	**282**	**4,477**	**3,766**	**4,477**	**3,766**

46. Unfortunately no financial specialist was made available to accompany the evaluator. However a very useful and informative meeting was organized with IFAD financial personnel in Nairobi (while the evaluator was on a separate mission). Thus, while it was not possible to look into financial affairs in depth, a clearer picture emerged. The evaluator was informed that (at least) the most recent set of expenditure figures from the project for the GEF component (23 Feb 2015) were not yet fully supported by relevant documentation and this was now very urgent.

47. Again at 24 March 2015, IFAD's figures showed USD 175,780 not yet supported by documentation. However this apparently has been rectified as the evaluator received no final figures or comments from IFAD, and thus assumes that all is in order – as per the data supplied by SWADE for the end of the project term (Table 3).

48. One of the specific terms of reference of the Terminal Evaluation is to provide a "breakdown of final actual costs and co-financing in consultation with the IFAD Fund Management Officer of the project". Table 3 thus presents the expenditure by category as per 31 March 2015: as can be seen, the SWADE overview indicates a 100% disbursement of GEF funds.

Table 3 Status of GEF funds and expenditure per category at 31 March 2015

(source: SWADE)

Category	Original Allocation USD '000	Disbursed USD '000	Withdrawal Application Pending Disbursement	Total Utilised USD '000	Balance USD '000	Percentage Disbursement
International Consultants	8	8	-	8	-	100
National Consultants	506	307	64	372	135	73
Training	806	807	40	847	(40)	105
Technical Assistance	348	350	19	369	(21)	106
Vehicles and Materials	55	54	-	54	1	98
Programme Unit Staff	215	188	4	192	23	89
Operation and Maintenance	35	123	-	123	(88)	352
Advances	-	-	-	-	-	0
Total	**1,973**	**1,837**	**127**	**1,964**	**9**	**100**

K. IFAD Supervision and Backstopping

49. IFAD is the designated Implementing Agency for the LUSLM project. This status comes with responsibilities to ensure effective project management and implementation by the project management team and the GoS. IFAD also makes sure that the GEF component is recognized, and monitored. All plans and reports developed by the PMU are submitted to IFAD for approval.

50. IFAD also mounts Project Implementation audits on a quarterly basis and carries out 6-monthly supervision missions with appropriate members of staff and external consultants as required. The mission result in Supervision Reports, which record agreements on steps to take, as well as commenting on the progress of the project. There have been several cross references to the March 2014 Supervision Report in this TE – and in many ways that testifies to its usefulness. It acts as an aide memoire of what has been agreed and what is expected over the next period.

51. However, one potentially important mission planned (or which *should* have been planned) for late 2014 was not carried out – and as a result opportunities for guidance missed at this crucial period of the project. This was not just a missed opportunity in regards to supervision generally, but perhaps could have forestalled the construction of the poly-tunnel greenhouse project (see para 26). It would also have been of great help in assisting the LUSLM staff to put together monitoring and evaluator data in time for the TE, and to have helped to bring them up to speed with financial matters.

52. It was further evident during the TE that the IFAD staff member was not simply accompanying the evaluator, but (to his credit) simultaneously carrying out a supervisory role that was being much appreciated by the LUSLM staff. [Note: this did in no way compromise the TE – rather it afforded valuable insights into how this relationship worked].

53. In general IFAD's supervision has been very much valued by LUSLM and the GoS, both in terms of encouragement, inspiration and direct technical input. IFAD can take credit for helping this project achieve its considerable impact – and for assisting it to pave the way forward for SLM in Swaziland.

L. Complementarity with IFAD Strategies and Priorities

54. There is a strong match between LUSLM, with its Swaziland, rainfed farming/ livelihoods focus, its GEF heritage, and IFAD. There is a shared emphasis on investing in the rural poor (with a strong focus on women and the marginalized), and on agricultural productivity – while highlighting the roles of climate change adaptation, value chains, partnerships and upscaling: see Table 3.

Table 3 Synergies between IFAD Strategic Objectives and LUSLM's Activities

IFAD's Strategic Objectives (2011 -15)	LUSLM Objectives and Activities
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.	Promotion of a range of SLM activities including climate-smart farming (e.g. conservation agriculture) with food and cash crops, better managed livestock and energy saving technologies
Access for poor rural women and men to services to reduce poverty, improve nutrition, raise incomes and build resilience in a changing environment.	Encouraging and supporting home gardens (permaculture) which are productive and nutritious as well as being resilient through diversity and techniques such as agroforestry, mulching and manuring
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.	Stimulating and upscaling enterprises such as beekeeping, indigenous poultry, fruit orchards and hay making – though a coalition of development partners
Poor rural women and men and their organisations able to influence policies and institutions that affect their livelihoods	The Chiefdom Development Plan process: people represented on the Chiefdom Development Committees and the NRM committees of the CDP
Enabling institutional and policy environments to support agricultural production and the full range of related non-farm activities	The Chiefdom Development Plan process and drafting of a Land Act that will (potentially) transform the way land can be managed.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RATINGS

55. The MTE found that "the LUSLM Project has laid a strong foundation for achieving results". This has largely proved to be the case, and there has been strong activity through partnerships over the last two years. Furthermore the IFAD Supervision report of March 2014 concludes that "since the mid-term review [i.e. MTE] in 2012, LUSLM has made highly satisfactory progress". There is little doubt – based on the empirical evidence presented in the time available, and also the testimonies of interviewees at all levels - that LUSLM has managed to achieve much that can be directly attributed to the project's interventions.

56. Several notable achievements include the drafting of the Land Act, the Chiefdom Development Plan process, training, beekeeping, indigenous poultry and home gardens. The involvement of university journalism students in awareness-raising is a notable and imaginative innovation. Some initiatives have not yet had time to be fully piloted or assessed (CA for example); and there have been weaknesses especially monitoring and evaluation. However there has been – according to all parties interviewed, and the documentation studied (including the latest IFAD supervision report: see above) as well as visual evidence from the field and testimony from participants – strong and committed progress since the MTE. There is a pride in what LUSLM has achieved, and various initiatives are ready to be upscaled and rolled out.

57. This terminal evaluation's findings and issues, by criterion, are summarized in Table 4 below. The overall rating, averaging the 12 constituent criteria assessed, warrants an overall 5 grade.

Table 4: Overall Ratings Table

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Evaluator's Rating
A. Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results (overall rating) Sub criteria (below)		4
Effectiveness	The project has sown the seed for a number of very effective interventions: potentially the Land Bill and the Chiefdom Development Plans can have significant impact. Several SLM technologies have already had impact on land and livelihoods (home gardens; beekeeping etc)	4
Relevance	LUSLM addresses land degradation, food security and vulnerability to climate change which are all critical issues in the project area and Swaziland as a whole.	6
Efficiency	Most of the interventions are potentially low cost, though the initial pilots (eg the Chiefdom Development Plans, and the land reclamation projects) are too expensive currently to roll out widely. Overall the majority of targets have been achieved within budget. The poly-tunnel project brings this rating down as it is much too expensive to replicate.	3
B. Sustainability (overall rating) Sub criteria (below)		**5**
Financial resources	Resources have been mobilised from IFAD, GoS, 'stakeholder' partners and community in-kind. There are good upscaling prospects thro' the proposed IFAD Smallholder Market-Led Project	5
Socio-political	CDPs underpinned by their participatory preparation process will ensure socio political sustainability. Strong evidence that chiefs have bought-in to the process. A potential threat is that the project might fail to change land tenure systems.	5
Institutional framework	The use of Chiefdoms as planning entities ensures strong support from	5

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Evaluator's Rating
	the government and the Ministry of Tinkhundla. Also important is the channeling of implementation through SWADE and MoA as well as well-established NGOs.	
Environmental	The project addresses land degradation, energy, biodiversity and climate change which are critical environmental issues in Swaziland. The approach is also embedded in government machinery and the communities. An impressive training programme has built up human-environmental capital.	5
C. Catalytic Role and Replication	The GEF funding has played a catalytic role in mobilizing other resources. There are prospects of follow-up though an IFAD loan (the SMLP) to help spread activities and impacts more widely.	**5**
D. Stakeholder Participation/ Public Awareness	LUSF has enlisted the effective participation of a broad range of development partners ('stakeholders') and engaged the people and their leaders, including chiefs. Public awareness has been stimulated by an imaginative and effective collaboration with UNISWA's school of Journalism. Placing interns has spawned many press stories. There is also strong radio presence, esp. through ACAT.	**5**
E. Country Ownership/ Drivenness	There is no doubt that this is a Swazi-driven project and is espoused by all partners with pride. There is interest at all levels and a sense that the CDP process has been embraced and will act as a catalyst for other developments.	**5**
F. Achievement of Outputs and Activities	The MTE suggested that there was 'A very strong foundation for the achievement of outputs and activities'. This has largely be borne out, with some targets exceeded. Energy saving technology is the one exception with poor uptake/ achievements.	**5**
G. Preparation and Readiness	After a slow start up – effectively one year lost - the project has	**4**

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Evaluator's Rating
	compensated and picked up momentum. Personnel and facilities were made available. Nevertheless the slow start has undoubtedly had a negative impact.	
H. Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management	The project management acted innovatively in arranging for secondment of staff from LUSIP to LUSLM. LUSLM must also take credit for forming strong bonds with partner agencies. This accelerated implementation and also helps to ensure long-term sustainability of agreed (non-conflicting) messages	**4**
I. Monitoring and Evaluation (overall rating) **Sub criteria (below)**	Project M&E has not been strong – but LUSLM is not an exception in this regard. Little data was available before the consultant's arrival: a summary of achievements was only put together during the mission. The Biodiversity tracking tool remains to be updated.	**4**
M&E Design	Little evidence of a coherent M&E system but *ad hoc* data collection functional	4
M&E Plan Implementation	The paucity of data testifies to weak implementation of the plan.	3
Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities	LUSLM not short of funds for M&E, but not used them efficiently enough.	4
J. Financial Planning and Control	Managed by SWADE on behalf of the project. The MTE mentioned 'lack of attention from SWADE': terminal evaluation found some improvement and most monies spent – but slow and incomplete reporting.	**4**
K. IFAD Supervision and Backstopping	IFAD's supervision has been very much appreciated, by LUSLM staff and at national level, both in terms of encouragement and technical input. One potentially important mission planned for late 2014 was not carried out – and an opportunity for guidance missed.	**5**
L. Complementarity with IFAD Strategies and Policies	A strong match with IFAD's emphasis on investing in the rural poor, agriculture – including elements of climate change adaptation, value chains and partnerships.	**5**

Criterion	Evaluator's Summary Comments	Evaluator's Rating
M. Overall Project Achievement	The MTE found that 'the LUSLM Project has laid a strong foundation for achieving results'. This has largely proved to be the case, and there has been strong activity through partnerships over the last two years. Several notable achievements include the Chiefdom Development Plan process, training, beekeeping and home gardens. Some initiatives have not yet had time to be fully assessed (CA for example); and there have been weaknesses including M&E. The overall achievement thus qualifies for an overall 5 grade.	5

GEF Performance Description: 6= Highly Satisfactory; 5= Satisfactory; 4= Moderately Satisfactory; 3= Moderately Unsatisfactory; 2 = Unsatisfactory; 1= Highly Unsatisfactory

VII. LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

1. While Swaziland has a very long history of SLM/ NRM interventions, many of which have disappointed, LUSLM has demonstrated that the correct interventions at the right time can have impact, and 'strike a chord'.

2. Forming a collation of development partners ('stakeholders') and harmonizing messages avoids the problems of territoriality between agencies and conflicting advice.

3. Awareness-raising through branding – both of the project (with a logo), and specific products (for value addition) is a powerful tool.

4. Innovation and imagination should always be allowed space in a project: the involvement of the university's School of Journalism and Mass Communication has proved invaluable in awareness raising, and training students in the 'media marketability' of agricultural development.

5. Monitoring and evaluation have proved again to be a problem area: however coaching and guidance from the implementing agency can be very helpful – setting in place procedures and looking for 'unexpected impacts' and 'multiple co-benefits' as well as tracking predetermined indicators.

6. Projects such as LUSLM can easily become so involved in their development agenda that they lose track of the higher objectives of supporting agencies, especially the GEF – thus give inadequate attention to global environmental benefits.

7. Policy development for national law modification can only be taken to a certain level by a development project: from that point (eg drafting a Land Act) it can only act by persuasion – backed by policy-demonstration from the field.

8. Study tours, whether domestic or international can be extraordinarily powerful as demonstrated by the Chiefs' trip to Tanzania. They should always be built into these types of projects. Where possible they should be reciprocal 'cross-visits'.

9. Upscaling is not just limited by willpower or effort – but often by capacity too. Knowledge products such as those produced under LUSLM are very valuable.

10. Even after decades of development work, there continue to be some perpetual problems: one tangible example is construction design of gabion weirs (or other check dams) in gullies. There is plenty of documentation and hands-on experience available – it must be made available.

11. While new (and more realistic) quantitative targets were apparently agreed as a result of the MTE these were not specified in the revised logframe attached to the MTE report: such important revisions must always be clearly set out and formalized.

12. It is evident that many activities will carry on under LUSLM using counterpart funding for several months after the end of GEF funding, thus in this situation a terminal evaluation cannot capture all of a project's eventual achievements.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Though the current exercise is termed a 'Terminal Evaluation' it can equally be looked upon as a learning exercise at a specific stage during a process.

Lessons and recommendations from this exercise should be used to help drive forward and guide the development of SLM in Swaziland's rainfed rural areas – and fed into the design of new initiatives including IFAD-GoS's Smallholder Market-Led Project and follow-up GEF initiatives.

2. A cluster of proven technologies has been shown to work under LUSLM – promulgated by the project team and partners.

A package of SLM-based, income earning technologies is now ready to be spread more widely throughout Swaziland. This can be based around home gardens ('permaculture') including fruit trees, beekeeping, indigenous chickens, roof tanks for water harvesting, hay making and nutrition gardens – with associated integrated fertility management. Multiple co-benefits will be realized.

3. Much impact cannot be captured through conventional M&E methods: though these are essential for project tracking.

Be aware of, and look out for, unexpected impact as a spin-off from development initiatives. For example the engagement of children in record keeping, encouraging their interest.

4. Technical SLM guidelines are important – and their distribution to recipients is crucial.

Make sure that guidelines capture essential ways and means of ensuring 'best practice' nationally. There exist guidelines throughout Africa that can help in content and format.

5. Conservation agriculture (CA) undoubtedly has potential in Swaziland, but it can only succeed by trials and testing and by monitoring impact.

Conservation agriculture should be promoted in Swaziland, but great care taken not to confuse farmers with simultaneous campaigns for conventional ploughing. The end result should be a clear definition of CA options based on data from the field and farmer testimonies.

6. Energy saving technology has not yet made any significant impact under LUSLM.

Efforts must be continued to work with energy saving stoves and biogas initiatives under follow-up project – not dropped as having 'failed'.

7. Chiefdom Development Plans have been a highlight of the project.

Ensure that the CDP process is continued – but make sure (a) costs are reduced (b) NRM committees are part and parcel of the plans and areas to be treated are demarcated (c) 'before and after' posters are produced as well as glossy booklets outlining the plans.

8. The study tour to Tanzania has proved a great stimulus to the CDP process.

Follow-up the study tour with plans for future visits – both internationally and internally: strive to invite the hosts to Swaziland for further fruitful exchange.

9. Global environmental benefits are the main objective of the GEF but have been given little attention as yet under LUSLM.

Continue (through whatever project or process) to monitor GEBs – especially soil/ vegetation carbon fluxes to confirm the value of current and future GEF investments.

10. SLM under LUSLM has been relatively broad – but there are other technologies also.

Explore measures such as water harvesting from roads, live hedges, vegetative methods of donga rehabilitation and enrichment planting with legumes of contour grass strips and hay fields.