GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SURINAME

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

# Terminal Evaluation

## Capacity Building in and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management in Suriname

**PIMS 3417 – Atlas Project ID 00070524 under the UNDP SURINAME (SUR10) Business unit and formerly 00049999 under the UNDP Trinidad (TTO10) Business unit**
**2/12/2013**

The report should define the evaluation criteria and performance standards used and the rationale for selecting them. The general criterion applied for evaluations of UNDP supported GEF financed projects is relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. As noted in the GEF Guidelines for Terminal Evaluations: "The evaluation of relevancy, effectiveness and efficiency will be as objective as possible and will include sufficient and convincing empirical evidence. Ideally the project monitoring system should deliver quantifiable information that can lead to a robust assessment of project's effectiveness and efficiency." (UNDP/GEF TE Guide 2012, p. 10)

# i. Opening page:

## Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project:

Capacity Building in and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management in Suriname

## UNDP and GEF project ID#s:

PIMS 3417 – Atlas Project ID 00070524 under the UNDP SURINAME (SUR10) Business unit and formerly 00049999 under the UNDP Trinidad (TTO10) Business unit.

## Evaluation time frame and date of evaluation report

Terminal Evaluation elaborated during the months of October and November 2012 with evaluation mission 21-30 October in Paramaribo, Suriname

## Region and countries included in the project:

Suriname

## GEF Operational Program/Strategic Program:

Operational Program 15 and Strategic Priority 1 relating to Targeted Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management through capacity building, mainstreaming of SLM into national development planning, and mid-range financing of SLM

## Implementing Partner and project partners

Implemented by UNDP and Executed by the Government of the Republic of Suriname

## Evaluation team members

Allyson Tinney Rivera and Maureen Playfair

## Acknowledgements

The Evaluation team wishes to thank UNDP-Suriname and ATM for their support and guidance throughout this evaluation, as well as the staff of the different ministries and NGOs that shared their time, insights and experience as participants in the different group and individual interviews.

## ii.    Executive Summary

### Project Summary Table

| Project Title: | Mainstreaming and Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Suriname | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| GEF Project ID: | | | *at endorsement (Million US$)* | *at completion (Million US$)* |
| UNDP Project ID: | ATLAS 70524 PIMS 3417 | GEF financing: | 475,000 + 25,000 = 500,000* | 376,887 + 19,205 =396,092 |
| Country: | Suriname | IA/EA own: | NA | |
| Region: | LAC | Government: | 947,763 in Cash/ kind | 947,763 |
| Focal Area: | Land Degradation | Other: | NA cash/in kind | |
| Operational Program: | OP 15 | Total co-financing: | 947,763 | 947,763 |
| Implementing partner: | Ministry of Ministry of Labour, Technological Development and Environment | Total Project Cost: | *1,447,763* | *1,343,855* |
| Other Partners involved: | | ProDoc Signature (date project began): | | 18 Feb 2008 |
| | | (Operational) Closing Date: | Proposed: June 2012 | Actual: February 2013 |

*N.B. The PDF A/PPG is considered part of the MSP. The PPG report states a total of $19,205 was spent by the end of the PPG, while the 2012 PIR states the expected final disbursed amount for the MSP will be $376,887.

### Brief Project Description

As described in the MSP Project Document, the MSP **project goal** is *"to maintain and improve ecosystem stability, integrity, functions and ecosystem services that contribute to global benefits and support sustainable livelihoods in Suriname."* The **project objective** is *"to reduce land degradation trends by creating an enabling environment for responses to land degradation through capacity development and mainstreaming of sustainable land management amongst key stakeholders."*

This initiative is part of the LDC/SIDS Global Portfolio Project to assist qualifying nations to meet the objectives of the Operational Program 15 and Strategic Priority 1 related to Targeted Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management through capacity building, mainstreaming of SLM into national development planning, and mid-range financing of SLM.   Within this context, Suriname will:

a)   Strengthen its systematic, institutional, and human resource capacity to implement SLM;
b)   Mainstream policies to support SLM into national development plans;
c)   Mobilize resources for the financing of SLM; and
d)   Adaptive management through participatory processes and dissemination of lessons learned.

The GEF alternative will contribute to:

a)   Increased national awareness of SLM;

b) A National Land-use management system;
c) The completion of the Suriname National Action Plan (through co-financing);
d) Improved institutional harmonization and cooperation in the implementation of SLM, and
e) A mid-term financial plan to finance SNAP actions.

In addition to baseline actions, GEF support for the amount of $500,000 was requested to complement $947,763 in co-financing. The total value of the GEF increment is $1,447,763.

## Evaluation Rating Table

| CRITERIA | RATING |
|---|---|
| **Relevance (Project Design)** | **R** |
| Relevance with respect to UNDP cooperation and GEF global objectives in Suriname | R |
| Relevance with respect to Suriname's public policies framework | R |
| **Efficiency (Project Implementation)** | **U** |
| Monitoring and evaluation: design at entry and implementation | U |
| UNDP and Implementing Partner implementation / execution, coordination, and operational issues | U |
| **Effectiveness (Project Results)** | **U** |
| Overall results (attainment of objectives) | U |
| Effectiveness & Efficiency | U |
| **Sustainability** | **U** |

## Context and purpose of the evaluation

In accordance with UNDP and GEF policies and procedures, all Full and Medium-sized projects must undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE) upon completion of implementation. Specifically, the purpose of this TE is to analyze the relevance of the project in the context of Suriname, its effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, as well as the lessons that can be learned from the successes and failures experienced throughout the project's lifetime.

## Summary of conclusions, recommendations and lessons

### Main conclusions

#### *Project Design and Formulation*

The ProDoc's Situation Analysis describes the process of LD in Suriname, its root causes, and barriers to overcoming those root causes. The overall objective, which aims "*to reduce LD trends by creating an enabling environment for responses to LD through capacity development and mainstreaming of SLM amongst key stakeholders*", is an appropriate response to the problem of LD in Suriname. The project is considered relevant not only with regards to supporting Suriname in meeting its obligations to the UNCCD, but also falls in line with priorities identified in Suriname's UNDAF, UNDP-Suriname's Country Programme Document, and within the MLTDE Environment Directorate's Thematic Areas.

While the project was considered relevant, ultimately, the ProDoc's design as an effective guide during the project's implementation was compromised due to two reasons:

1. The ProDoc was written and approved more than 2 years before implementation actually began, so the institutional context had changed;
2. The ProDoc was incomplete with regards to the roles and responsibilities of the different actors that were to comprise the PMU, as well as possible risks that could affect the PMU and implementation as a whole.

The ProDoc was written in 2006, citing specific institutions engaged in planning and land use management, many of which were ultimately expected to play a role in the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Technical Advisory Group (TAG). After the project was signed in 2008, internal changes in UNDP and MLTDE hindered the availability of sufficient human capacity to properly initiate implementation. Furthermore, with the change in government in 2010, Suriname began experiencing an institutional transformation, and many of the institutions that were expected to play a role in the project have been undergoing a slow but meaningful transition, including the dismantling of the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation (ProDoc signatory and execution partner), change in Minister in MLTDE, potential move of the Environmental Directorate of MLTDE to a different ministry, as well as the complete disarmament of all ad-hoc commissions, including the LD commission established specifically to guide the project. Consequently, neither the Implementation Arrangements nor the Stakeholder Involvement Plan was applicable.

This is further compounded by the ProDoc's incompleteness. The section on Adaptive Management is limited to collection and dissemination of lessons learnt, rather than providing real and useful guidance in Adaptive Management mechanisms. Furthermore, the ProDoc explicitly states that its key assumption is of continuity of government support and full agreement among key institutions to ensure long-term success, but the ProDoc failed to identify risks and the requisite associated management responses. Thus, when the change in government occurred, and the institutional changes began (especially the change in the Ministry of MLTDE and dismantling of the LD Commission) the ProDoc was unable to provide adequate guidance and alternatives, impacting its execution and ability to deliver its objectives.

*Project Implementation*

The ProDoc provides a general overview of the roles and responsibilities of the different parties, including an overly-simplified summary of responsibilities by Outcome and Output. In accordance with the agreement between UNDP and the Government of Suriname, this project was implemented by UNDP under the National Execution (NEX) modality, with MLTDE designated as the Executing Agency for project activities. The project was to receive high level guidance from the PSC, composed of the Permanent Secretaries of relevant Ministries and the UNDP Resident Representative. The TAG was to provide technical support to the project. While the PSC's focus would be on policy and management issues, the TAG was to focus on technical aspects of SLM and quality of outputs. Furthermore, a Project Management Unit (PMU) was to play a key role in project execution, located at MLTDE and headed by a Project Manager (PM). The PMU was to oversee the selection process for all local contracts and consultants, including preparation of Terms of Reference (TOR), call for bids and organization of the selection process. The ProDoc states that "in accordance with NEX modality, the awarding of all contracts and recruitment of all consultants was to be administered by UNDP" (ProDoc, p. 40). However, per the understanding of NEX/NIM in Suriname, both the Executing (EA) and Implementing Agency (IA) expected contracts were to be administered by the EA (MLTDE) and UNDP was only to provide support for carrying out specific procurement (i.e. international consultants) when requested by the EA.

The PMU was also to maintain regular contact with the Global Portfolio Project via M&E activities and reports (QPR, PIR, MTE) as well as sub-regional workshops designed to provide periodic updates on the project.

The MSP ProDoc was formally approved with the Delegation of Authority letter in October 2007 and ProDoc signature by the government in February 2008. However, the establishment of the PMU through the identification of a Project Manager took more than 2 years from ProDoc approval, due to several factors:

1. There was a lack of support and supervision provided by UNDP. When the project was formulated and first approved, UNDP-Trinidad & Tobago was responsible for Suriname until a fully independent national office was established in 2009, coinciding with the retirement of the National E&E Programme Officer at UNDP-Suriname and subsequent hiring of a replacement that same year. Furthermore, the UNDP/GEF Regional Technical Advisor (RTA) at the Regional Service Center (RSC) in Panama left in 2010 and the RSC did not fill the position until 2011.
2. Meanwhile, within MLTDE, senior officers were not available during 2009-10, so less-experienced junior officers in the Environment Section of MLTDE were left in charge to execute this project. This was compounded by the fact that the institutional status of the Environment Section was weak within the ministry, further limiting access to senior level government officials for backstopping and assistance.
3. This was further impacted by the fact that there is limited individual capacity in Suriname regarding environmental management, specifically for sustainable land management, so consultancies were delayed due to lack of adequately-skilled local candidates.

Environmental, Services and Support (ESS) consultancy was initially hired as the Project Manager (PM) to support the management of the project in July 2010. However, the contract was discontinued in July 2011 and the Project Manager responsibilities were passed on to the Environment Directorate within the MLTDE.

As mentioned above, the project was also to be supported by a PSC composed of Permanent Secretaries and/or designated representatives of various relevant Ministries and Institutes (ProDoc, p. 40), as well as by a Technical Advisory Group (TAG). When implementation initiated, an adjustment was made to this scheme and the LD Commission created by the government was foreseen to take on the role of the PSC, while the TAG was never established. This was shifted again when the new government came into power and the LD Commission was disbanded along with all other ad-hoc commissions, leaving UNDP and MLTDE to take on the role of PSC.

Despite the project not initiating implementation until 2010, it was due to close in 2012, as stated in the ProDoc and confirmed by UNDP headquarters in 2010. Given the short implementation period of the project, the participation of stakeholders (public sector, semi government institutes, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other key partners) was considered crucial. However, internal factors within the government, staffing and procurement difficulties, lack of adequate consultants, delays and unsatisfactory results have plagued the project, and ultimately the stakeholder involvement envisioned in the ProDoc never materialized.

Some of the obstacles encountered include a limited availability of suitable technical experts to support delivery of project outputs; elections in May 2010 and subsequent changes in the institutions involved (or expected to be involved) in the project (including the dismantling of the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, which signed the ProDoc on behalf of the GoS and was expected to support MLTDE in project execution); and Government funds for co-financing were not made available on time due to lengthy budget negotiation processes related to new procedures instilled by the new government. Consequently, the project has struggled to complete its outputs, thereby putting at risk its ability to meet its objective.

The problems in implementation are reflected in low financial delivery rates. The total expenditure registered in ATLAS as the GEF contribution to the SLM project is $113,156.17, approximately 24% of the approved $475,000 for the MSP. As to the in-cash co-financing contribution made by MLTDE, the 2012 PIR reported $7,500. However, a more recent review has revealed the following in-cash cofinancing contributions:

$67,035 (2009) + $34,689 (2010) + $215,370 (transferred to UNDP per an agreement signed by UNDP and GoS, in February 2012) + $ 7500 (payments for consultants) = $324,594 total, or 81% of the agreed $400,000 committed in the ProDoc.

An additional $63,395 is scheduled to be transferred before the project closes.

With regards to in-kind co-financing, MLTDE contributed $55,000 by housing the PMU within the Ministry.

*Project Results*

The project attained partial results toward its objectives. Specifically, through Outcome 1, it was successful in engaging 14[1] representatives from 8 Ministries and 3 Institutes in an intensive GIS and LUP training workshop. It is fortifying these skills further through the acquisition of equipment and additional coaching to the identified stakeholder organizations.

The project did not complete basic outputs that were crucial to project implementation, thereby impacting progress toward its objectives. The delivery of key products was low and as a result, the expected outcomes have not been fully reached. In particular, the formulation of a communication strategy as well as a coordination structure for SLM were two crucial outputs upon which the rest of the project was dependent, so their non-existence hindered the project's ability to advance toward meaningful change and mainstreaming of SLM. However due to the existing circumstances these objectives were to be revisited and it has been decided to consider other ways, then described in project document, to still attain such project outcomes beyond GEF Funding.

While the project was unable to elaborate and execute a formal awareness campaign, increased awareness on the issue of SLM has inevitably been passed on to the few persons participating in the project: the consultants that were hired, the students engaged in conducting the surveys for the awareness assessment, the people that were interviewed during the awareness assessment, as well as the beneficiaries of training and/or equipment. Furthermore, the project lent to the development of capacity within ATM with regards

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[1] 17 participants were invited but only 14 completed the training: 1 did not participate, 1 cancelled part-way through, and 1 was excused for sick leave.

to project management.  Consequently, this lays out a stronger foundation from which to continue with the current initiative as well as engage in others in the future.

## Lessons and Recommendations

Despite the major issues encountered during implementation, the SLM project managed to yield some basic contributions to SLM-related capacity that need to be sustained.  For example, the project trained 14 representatives from 8 Ministries and 3 Institutes in an intensive GIS and LUP training workshop, and is fortifying these skills further through the acquisition of equipment, thus creating capacity to carry-out future SLM activities. With the recent transfer of government co-financing to UNDP, there is a demonstrated commitment to continue to follow through with the objectives of the project beyond closure of the GEF funds.   It is therefore important to take into account the following lessons and recommendations, of which some have already begun to benefit the project.

a) Ensure project design includes potential risks and actions, especially those associated with a change in government.

b) Provide a detailed description of roles and responsibilities of all personnel (PMU, PSC, TAG) and stakeholders involved in the project.

c) Ensure strong and consistent institutional support and backstopping, particularly from UNDP and the higher ranks of MLTDE. This is vital throughout project implementation but is especially important at project inception when capacity is limited or weak.

d) The project would benefit greatly from a formal project management structure, with a PSC and TAG as well as an external senior-level PM or CTA who possesses both technical knowledge and implementation savvy.

e) Consider an adjustment to the Project Management contracts from a purely outputs-based modality to a combined outputs-effort based modality.

f) When contracting bids for consultancies are not attracting suitable National candidates, open the bid to Regional/international candidates, preferably with working knowledge of the Dutch language.

g) Consider timely termination of contracts when consultants are incapable of adapting their methods to the needs of the project, or default on deliverables.  While this might incur delays, in the end it will be more productive and beneficial to the project by ensuring usable and relevant inputs.

h) Encourage "out of the box" thinking when initial activities cannot be implemented as originally planned, and document them for Lessons Learned and Replication.

i) The creation of a SLM Coordination Structure is vital to mainstreaming – engage relevant stakeholders in informal information sessions to brainstorm possible composition of such a structure.

j) The elaboration and implementation of a Communication strategy is of utmost importance – while a full strategy is under elaboration, the project should also look for short-term publicity opportunities so as to build on momentum created during training and evaluation activities.

k) A detailed workplan and timeframe must be developed and periodically updated for moving forward on the remaining activities, as well as the commitment and discipline to comply with these.

l) Contracting procedures might need to be revised to expedite procedures to ensure proper timing in accordance with the workplan.

m) Compliance with an established M&E strategy is not only a requirement for UNDP and GEF, but also an effective opportunity to identify areas that are experiencing difficulty and require "out of the box" thinking and adaptive management.

n) Organizational communication must occur on a consistent and transparent basis within and across MLTDE and UNDP, as well as with stakeholders.

o) While the provision of computers and other equipment is a positive contribution to stakeholders' work, UNDP/MLTDE must ensure they are fully converted to the intended SLM-related use once the coaching and data-sharing mechanisms are in place and functioning.

p) Given that the project did not complete its originally planned outcomes, the sustainability of the partial results obtained depends directly on the continuity of the actions by the Environment Directorate in cooperation with UNDP.

# iii.    Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| CELOS | Centre for Agricultural Research in Suriname |
| CO | Country Office (UNDP) |
| EA | Executing Agency |
| FFM | Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| GIS | Geographical Information System |
| GLIS | Geographical Land Information System |
| GoS | Government of Suriname |
| GSI | Guiana Shield Initiative |
| HQ | Headquarters (UNDP) |
| IA | Implementing Agency |
| LDC | Least Developed Country |
| MADP | Multi Annual Development Plan |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goal |
| MALF | Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries |
| MLTDE | Ministry of Labour, Technological Development and Environment |
| MPPLFM | Ministry of Physical Planning, Land and Forest Management |
| MF | Ministry of Finance |
| MRD | Ministry of Regional Development |
| MPW | Ministry of Public Works |
| MPDC | Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation |
| MNR | Ministry of Natural Resources |
| MSP | Medium Size Project |
| NCSA | National Capacity Self-Assessment |
| NDP | National Development Plan |
| NEAP | National Environment Action Plan |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NIERS | National Institute for Environmental Research Suriname |
| NIMOS | National Institute for Environment and Development in Suriname |
| NSC | National Steering Committee |
| NPO | National Planning Office |
| PDF | Project Development Facility |
| PIR | Project Implementation Review |
| PM | Project Manager |
| PMU | Project Management Unit |
| PSC | Project Steering Committee |
| RSC | Regional Service Centre (UNDP) |
| SCF | Suriname Conservation Foundation |
| SGP | Small Grants Program |
| SIDS | Small Island Developing States |
| SLM | Sustainable Land Management |
| SNAP | Suriname National Action Program |
| TAG | Technical Advisory Group |
| TOR | Terms of Reference |
| UNCCD | United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification |
| UNCBD | United Nations Convention on Biodiversity |
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNFCCC | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |
| WWF | World Wildlife Fund |

# 1. Introduction

## Purpose of the evaluation

In accordance with UNDP-GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized country projects supported by UNDP with GEF and other financing should undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion. The scope, methodology, content, timing and team composition for the Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the *Mainstreaming and Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Suriname* Project (PIMS 3417) was set out in detail in the TOR provided in Annex 1.

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

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

## Scope & Methodology of the evaluation

The evaluation has been framed around five major criteria, as defined and explained in the *UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects*: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact. Project performance has been measured based on the Project Logical Framework (see Annex 6), which provides clear performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification.

The evaluation provides evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. A participatory and consultative approach, including a field mission, was followed to ensure close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the project team, UNDP, consultants, and key stakeholders. Unfortunately, the GEF Operational Focal Point was unavailable during the field mission. A list of individuals and organizations that contributed to the TE through Individual and Group Interviews is available in Annex 3, as well as a list of questions that were used to guide the interviews.

The evaluator reviewed all relevant sources of information provided by UNDP and the project team, such as the project document (ProDoc), project reports (including Annual APR/PIRs, QPRs, project budget revisions, AOPs), meeting minutes, national strategic and legal documents, and any other material considered useful for this evidence-based assessment. A list of documents provided for review is included in Annex 5.

The Evaluation also assesses the key financial aspects of the project, including the extent of co-financing, planned and realized. To accomplish this, project cost and funding data was acquired, including annual expenditures. Variances between planned and actual expenditures are assessed and explained.

## Structure of the evaluation

This report provides a detailed analysis of the five evaluation criteria with regards to this SLM project. To accomplish this, Section 2 provides a description of the Project as well as the context in which the project was formulated. It contains basic project data regarding project start and duration, a description of the problems to be addressed by the project, the immediate and development objectives of the project, main stakeholders, and the expected results.

Section 3 provides the main findings of the evaluation, which are divided into: Project Design & Formulation, Project Implementation and Project Results.

The first part (Project Design) includes an analysis of the LogFrame. It reviews the assumptions and risks (or lack thereof), as well as lessons from other projects, planned stakeholder participation, mechanisms for replication, the comparative advantage of UNDP as IA, as well as linkages between the project and other interventions within the SLM sector. It ends with an analysis of the management arrangements prescribed in the ProDoc.

The second part (Project Implementation) discusses the application of adaptive management during implementation (i.e. changes to outputs), how partnership arrangements were implemented, the use of M&E activities for adaptive management, and project finance. It further addresses M&E in terms of implementation of the prescribed M&E plan, as well as coordination and operational issues experienced by UNDP and MLTDE.

The third part (Project Results) looks at the attainment of objectives in the overall results, and the specific difficulties encountered in trying to achieve these. It also considers country ownership, the elements of mainstreaming that were achieved, as well as the sustainability and impact of the project.

The report closes with Section 4, which discusses the main conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned from the project. It delves into corrective actions for the issues described in the three previous parts of Section 3, as well as actions to follow up or reinforce the initial benefits yielded from the GEF portion of the project during the upcoming MLTDE/UNDP phase.

## 2.     Project description and development context

### Project start and duration

The project was formulated during 2006 and received final approval with the Delegation of Authority letter in October 2007 and ProDoc signature in February 2008.  However, the Inception Workshop did not occur until April 2010, which marks the actual start of project implementation in the eyes of the national institutions.  Per the approved ProDoc, the project was to have a duration of 4 years.  Technically, given ProDoc signature in February 2008, this meant closure was to be expected early 2012.  HQ confirmed this deadline in 2010, when the project was barely initiating activities with its Inception Workshop in April 2010.  Consequently, given the late start-up, in effect, the project has really only been under implementation for two years.

### Problems that the project seeks to address

The MSP **project goal** is *"to maintain and improve ecosystem stability, integrity, functions and ecosystem services that contribute to global benefits and support sustainable livelihoods in Suriname."*

GEF funding was deemed essential to catalyze actions needed to integrate sustainable land management into the national planning framework and to provide the improved capacities to respond to the persistent capacity, mainstreaming, and financial barriers that otherwise limit the development of the sustainable land management efforts:

1)  *Insufficient harmonization of policies*: The responsibility for land management is fragmented, distributed across multiple ministries and institutes with overlapping and at times divergent mandates and policies. There are no effective coordination mechanisms for dissemination of information sharing, benefits, lessons learned. There are no articulated action strategies for other key stakeholder groups, such as NGOs, producer associations, etc.

2)  *Capacity*: The institutional capacity among the principal national agencies, local agencies and extension services is limited for integrated land-use planning, particularly the landscape approach to SLM, and they do not have the tools to adequately diagnose their situation. Few persons have the requisite skills and understanding of UNCCD obligations and issues at the national level, and there is no systematic analysis of the capacities needed by Suriname's institutions in order to successfully implement the UNCCD or combat LD.

3)  *Inadequate resources and financing to support SLM and SNAP objectives*: There is no specific allocation for SLM in the national budget, nor are environmental economic analyses of land-use options used as a tool in development planning, so environmental issues place second in comparison to economic growth in order of importance.  The lack of a harmonized approach and inadequate cooperation and pooling of resources leads to the ineffective allocation of resources.

### Immediate and development objectives of the project

The **project objective** is "*to reduce land degradation trends by creating an enabling environment for responses to land degradation through capacity development and mainstreaming of sustainable land management amongst key stakeholders.*"  The project objective is to create broad based political and participatory support amongst key stakeholders for and mainstreaming of sustainable land management

into national development strategies and policies, such as plans and legal and budgetary processes, and realize multi-level capacity building, from government to local bodies.

To accomplish this, the project has 4 outcomes:

1) System, Institutional and Individual capacities to implement SLM at the national level increased.

2) SLM principles and SNAP-framework integrated into national development plans and sector strategies.

3) Resource mobilization to support SLM effected.

4) Effective project management through learning, evaluation and adaptive management.

## Main stakeholders

Stakeholder groups comprised of the government, private sector and civil society participated in the design of the project through consultations and workshops. The outcome of these consultations resulted in an overview of land degradation impacts as well as corrective measures at the national level, as described in the ProDoc's Situation Analysis. The project design included the information from these interventions for project formulation. Based on their contribution to national development, the stakeholders that were identified to be involved in the project implementation are:

a) the government (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Ministry of Labour, Technological Development and Environment, Ministry of Physical Planning, Land and Forest Management, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Regional Development, Ministry of Public Works, Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, and Ministry of Natural Resources);

b) government institutes (Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control, Geographical Land Information System, National Institute for Environmental Research Suriname) who will have the full responsibility to ensure SLM at the national, regional and international level; and

c) NGOs which are already implementing projects contributing to sustainable land management.

Additional collaborators in the project activities included the donors, CBOs and the private sector. NGOs were envisioned to be both beneficiaries and collaborators through the dissemination of lessons learnt, recipients of training and awareness building, as well as information exchange. Meanwhile, the Private Sector was expected to collaborate through technical inputs on investment plans for SLM as well as be a recipient of targeted skills training and awareness building activities. Research institutions (ie. CELOS, University) were also expected to participate by collecting data on land degradation for monitoring and the exchange of information with relevant government institutions to safeguard the prevention of land degradation.

In the implementation phase of the project, stakeholders were expected to help monitor and evaluate each phase of the project through participation in project activities such as training and awareness programs (Outcome 1) and through participatory evaluations and dissemination of lessons learned (Output 4.1). Their feedback on developments at the regional and especially the community level would also facilitate any adaptations needed in the project and would help decide further steps to be taken to reach the objectives of the project.

In 2004, a National Steering Committee (NSC) to implement the MDGs was inaugurated to monitor the elaboration of Suriname's MDG reports, and assist the development of a system for long term national monitoring and MDG reporting. The ProDoc recognized this as a potential opportunity for mainstreaming SLM principles and for facilitating feedback to the PMU on the development of the project.

## Expected Results

The project document is clearly written with regards to the objectives and expected outcomes and outputs. The Expected Outcomes/Output(s)/Targets / Indicators are:

*Outcome 1: System, Institutional and Individual capacities to implement SLM at the national level increased* **(GEF U.S. $200,000, Co-financing U.S $747,763).**

Output 1.1 Increase in GIS and land-use planning skills in 8 ministries, 3 key institutes, private companies and NGOs.

Output 1.2 An integrated land information data bank established and functioning.

Output 1.3 Awareness of land degradation, SLM issues and impacts, and on ecosystem concerns increased among public and private sector actors.

*Outcome 2: SLM principles and SNAP framework integrated into national development plans and sector strategies* **(GEF U.S. $156,000, Co-financing U.S. $50,000).**

Output 2.1 Structure for coordinating mainstreaming of Land Degradation policy established.

Output 2.2 Establish legislation and groundwork for a coordinating unit within the Sub-Directorate Environment at MLTDE to develop and coordinate all matters on SLM.

Output 2.3 SNAP framework enhanced through additional workshops and consultations.

Output 2.4 SNAP is integrated into the Environmental Sector Plan.

*Outcome 3: Resources in support of SLM* **mobilized (GEF U.S$ 20,000 USD, Co-financing U.S. $30,000).**

Output 3.1 Strategic funding needs for further targeted capacity development and on-the-ground investments developed.

Output 3.2. Medium Term Investment Plan developed.

*Outcome 4: Effective project management through learning, evaluation, and adaptive management* **(GEF U.S. $99,000\*, Co-financing U.S. $120,000).** *\*Includes M&E Budget*

Output 4.1: Adaptive management through monitoring and evaluation determines the next phase of regional and community development.

Output 4.2: Project execution through adaptive management.

Achieving the project objective would generate national benefits by more effective management and streamlined communication of SLM concerns across multiple stakeholders, projected investments in support of a mid-term plan, and through better developed and equipped human capital to address land degradation issues.

The MSP would contribute to a more complete approach to sustainable management and development of Suriname's natural resources. Its implementation would enhance coordination and streamline a number of processes related to SLM that would also influence the major economic and productive sectors, such as forestry, mining, and agriculture. The mainstreaming activities would improve the allocation of key resources and synergies to better engage existing and future human capital, and create cost effectiveness through the reduction of overlapping and duplicated activities. The institutional frameworks would also enable progress on a range of livelihood concerns linked to LD.

The proposed capacity building, awareness, and mainstreaming activities would also contribute to the finalizing of the SNAP and make the SNAP operational. While the project was not expected to make direct investments in the form of local projects, it would enable the promotion of SLM and increased financing within all agencies thereby increasing their exposure. The increased capacity of the government would also result in increased services from the government to support NGOs/CBOs, farmers and forest users to implement new appropriate technologies for SLM and match them with traditional knowledge. This would, in turn, contribute indirectly to the fight against poverty.

Through this project, individual, institutional, and systemic capacities would increase, and thereby contribute to the Portfolio project's effort to produce global benefits. The actions promoted through the SNAP and financed under the mid-term financing plan would lead to on-the-ground and specific actions to produce global benefits, such as increased carbon sequestration, and reduction of damage by contaminants and inappropriate practices that would contribute to the maintenance and protection of ecosystem functionality and integrity of terrestrial and coastal ecosystems, as well as protection of habitats for globally important species.

# 3. Findings

(In addition to a descriptive assessment, all criteria marked with (*) must be rated )

## 3.1 Project Design / Formulation

*Relevance with respect to UNDP and Public Policy in Suriname*

The ProDoc's Situation Analysis describes the process of LD in Suriname, its root causes, and barriers to overcoming those root causes. The overall objective, which aims "to reduce LD trends by creating an enabling environment for responses to LD through capacity development and mainstreaming of SLM amongst key stakeholders," is an appropriate response to the problem of LD in Suriname. The project is considered relevant not only with regards to supporting Suriname in meeting its obligations to the UNCCD, but also with priorities identified in Suriname's UNDAF, UNDP-Suriname's Country Programme Document, and within the MLTDE Environment Directorate's Thematic Areas.

At the time of ProDoc formulation, the project demonstrated links to the UNDP-Suriname Country programming through both the CCF and the UNDAF, as well as the GoS' Multi Annual Development Plan (MADP):

> For the CCF period, 2002–2006, four thematic focus areas have been identified as key areas for UNDP support: (a) poverty reduction and policy development; (b) democratic governance; (c) environmental management and sustainable development and (d) HIV/AIDS prevention and impact mitigation. The programme areas selected are fully in line with the country's priorities as identified in the Multi Annual Development Plan (MADP) for 2001–2005 and the Declaration of Government for the period 2000–2005. This support contributes, directly and indirectly, to the achievement of several of the Millennium development goals and targets, more specifically those on poverty eradication, HIV/AIDS, environmental sustainability, and gender equality. This project links to the area of Environment and its focus to support the management of the environment sector within the context of the interactions between the ecosystems and ecosystem users (national and local stakeholders) through the integration of environmental concerns and the sound management of renewable and non-renewable natural resources. The project also links indirectly with the "Coastal zone management" priority areas.

> The goal for the environment policy within the framework of the MOP 2001-2005 has been "to protect, conserve, and rehabilitate the environmental quality." With regard to land policy, efficient use of land as a resource has been highlighted and with regard to the forest policy the focus has been clearly defined as sustainable use of the forest and sustainable management of protected areas. With regard to agriculture, the main policy goals are focused on increase of the contribution to the national economy and employment and development of rural areas. The same policy is defined for the fishery sector with emphasis on sustainable development.

> The project links to the UNDAF 2002-2006 by increasing awareness of a problem that is going un-noticed and supports the UNDAF focus on land degradation as stated:

"Although deforestation rates in the country are the lowest in Latin America (0.1 per cent), there is a risk that forest degradation rates will accelerate in the near future should authorities fail to establish environmental policy and resources. Environmental risks include extensive river silting (resulting in depletion of fish populations), soil degradation, deforestation, and the invasion of nature reserves and traditional settlement areas of the Amerindian and Maroon populations." (ProDoc, p. 32)

*Analysis of LFA (Project logic /strategy; Indicators)*

This project attempts to address the problem of Land Degradation. As such, the overall Objective of the project is "to reduce land degradation trends by creating an enabling environment for responses to land degradation through capacity development and mainstreaming of sustainable land management amongst key stakeholders." To accomplish this, the project sets out to accomplish 4 Outcomes to remove the barriers that prevent the realization of this Objective. The underlying goal for this section is to determine whether the chosen course of action, as detailed in the Logical Framework, was clear, practical and feasible within the project's timeframe.

*Outcome 1: System, Institutional and Individual capacities to implement SLM at the national level increased* **(GEF U.S. $200,000, Co-financing U.S $747,763).** This outcome was designed to respond to the capacity barriers identified in the ProDoc by elevating the individual technical skill-set with regards to LD problems and SLM through training, as well as increasing the institutional and system level capacity to generate information to facilitate land use planning and the institutional capacity to both access and use the information through the comprehensive development of a land information data base.

The key indicators for Outcome 1 were established to determine the skill levels and awareness levels of different stakeholders in an attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of training and awareness building components through needs assessments and surveys. For the development of improved information, the level of access and use of the system would determine not only that the land management data bank is up and running, but that all actors have open and unrestricted access to updated information on land degradation, tenure, and on LD problem situations.

*Output 1.1 Increase in GIS and land-use planning skills in 8 ministries, 3 key institutes, private companies and NGO's:* The activities laid out in the ProDoc begin with a training needs assessment and progress through the training cycle of materials development, implementation, and evaluation of the training results. Initial workshops would be held with the national-level actors to be trained in SLM, LD and land management concepts, as well as technical GIS skills. Once the results were evaluated of the initial round of workshops, training programs would be adapted and implemented with ministry delegates and stakeholder groups[2] in the young and old coastal plain, the savannah belt and the interior at the local level.

This Output is clear and logical from a training and capacity building point of view. However, given the lack of a coordinated SLM structure in place, and the acknowledged fragmentation of roles and overlapping responsibilities within and among institutions, there is a gap regarding which participants were consulted during ProDoc elaboration and which ones were identified for training during the project's

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[2] NGO's and other groups such as: Conservation International-Suriname, Pater Albrinck Foundation, Assembly of Indigenous Chiefs in Suriname, small gold miners, Maroon and indigenous people.

implementation.  During project elaboration, representatives of relevant organizations were consulted for project involvement as government institutions. For the training, selected government organizations were requested to nominate a participant. The selection of these government organizations was based on a training needs assessment which also included those government institutions involved in project elaboration.   However, several participants interviewed for this TE, and the trainers themselves, noted some confusion regarding the individuals nominated by these institutions to participate.  This ultimately impacted the training as reflected in discussions with trainers and trainees as well as the Training Evaluation report:

> A better selection of the participants ensures that there is a dedicated participation. There was one case of a drop-out and in at least one case during the process of the selection, there was an issue within the ministry of who to delegate (Ministry of Trade and Industry (HI)). This is perhaps based on assumptions or misconception of the content of the training within the stakeholder, the process of registration (invitation letters were sent to the directors of the ministries whereas this director was not always aware of the initiative since during consultation another representative was consulted). (p. 22)

Also, given the novelty of SLM in Suriname, the timeframe (4  months) provided in Table 7 of the ProDoc seems a bit ambitious in terms of hiring a consultant to perform the capacity needs assessment, do the assessment, design a training course accordingly, do a follow-up assessment and adapt the course for local level training.  Furthermore, given the logistical difficulties associated with engaging local agencies and extension services, particularly in the interior, it is unclear how the second part of this Output (at the local level) would have been implemented.

*Output 1.2 An integrated land information data bank established and functioning:*  The key activities involve the establishment of protocols for information management, the technical development of the system, implementation and testing, training to support the management and accessibility of the system, and development of multiple nodes for connectivity.  The monitoring of the function and accessibility of the system is also planned.

While necessary and relevant to achieving a coordinated SLM effort in Suriname, the institutional capacity and resources were insufficient to embark on such a huge task, as discovered when initial discussions were held with potential consultants.  In practice, because of the nature of the data, the process involved in establishing legal protocols, identifying data sources, developing nodes for connectivity for date exchange, without a SLM Coordination structure in place, this Output went beyond the feasibility of the project in terms of institutional capacity, time and resources. Consequently, this was put aside while the project focused on other Outputs. The delay in pursuing this has had an unexpected and positive consequence: recent technological advances make most of the planned activities obsolete, and can offer a potentially simplified option to make achieving this Output much more feasible. Cloud technology can help lessen the burden regarding the acquisition and maintenance of computer equipment/servers to house this data bank. Consequently, this new situation has the potential to complement the achieved project results and facilitate sustainability.

*Output 1.3 Awareness of land degradation, SLM issues and impacts, and on ecosystem concerns increased among public and private sector actors:*  The abovementioned efforts would be enhanced through the implementation of a strong awareness building campaign.   Increased awareness is a

desperately needed individual capacity to increase the understanding and support of policy-makers and cooperation of the private sector stakeholders, as well as collaboration among competing government interests. This output responds to the realization during stakeholder meetings that awareness concerning SLM matters, including the ecosystem concerns (services, function, integrity, and stability), is poor especially at the policy making levels.

Although integrated into Outcome 1, the awareness building component was expected to be cross-cutting in support of the results of all project components. Increased awareness on all levels for the main target groups would increase the impact of the overall project, revitalize the SNAP process, and ultimately increase the understanding of LD issues to generate support for SLM at the institutional and system levels.

The approach to this Output is clearly defined in the LogFrame and should have been feasible within the original timeframe of the project. Activities include a Baseline Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey of government officials, private sector and NGOs on LD and SLM-related issues, as well as the development, implementation and evaluation of a LD/SLM awareness campaign. This is also one of the project's components that expected to engage targeted stakeholder involvement. However, this Output was not achieved during the lifetime of this project. A partial baseline was defined but not finalized, thereby inhibiting further measurement of awareness levels at project end. An awareness campaign to promote SLM was not pursued due to recruitment constraints in hiring consultants and time constraints.

***Outcome 2: SLM principles and SNAP framework integrated into national development plans and sector strategies*** **(GEF U.S. $156,000, Co-financing U.S. $50,000).** This outcome was a response to the barriers related to the insufficient harmonization of policies and the lack of synergies caused by overlapping mandates. Outcome 2 would create a framework for SLM that would ultimately result in mainstreaming of policies, planning, and an administrative structure to manage the many dimensions of land degradation.

*Output 2.1 Structure for coordinating mainstreaming of Land Degradation policy established:* This is the first of two important structures to be created under Outcome 2. This structure was to be a cabinet-level committee, or Project Steering Committee (PSC), comprised of the Permanent Secretaries and/or designated representatives of the MLTDE, MNR, MPDC, MALF, MPH, MRPLF, ME, MRD, the Department for Nature Management, the Foundation for Nature Preservation Suriname, the National Institute for Environment and Development in Suriname, and a UNDP representative. The PSC would be chaired by the MLTDE. Based upon Suriname's laws, specific actions to form this type of high-level coordination mechanism require that statutes and workplans be authorized by Parliament. This committee would manage the political issues that were expected to arise during the development of a more comprehensive structure to champion SLM as discussed below, and would eventually form part of MLTDE to provide support for immediate activities to mainstream SLM into national policies and plans.

According to the ProDoc, the LD Committee was initially envisioned to act as the PSC. It also provided technical advice to the PMU where needed. However, it was only in place 2010-11, and was dismantled thereafter by the new government, along with all other ad-hoc committees. Consequently, the PSC function was in practice taken on by MLTDE and UNDP. No formal TAG was put in place.

*Output 2.2 Establish legislation and groundwork for a coordinating unit within the Sub-Directorate Environment at MLTDE to develop and coordinate all matters on SLM:* The framework legislation and actions to establish a consolidated coordinating unit within the Sub-Directorate Environment at MLTDE championing SLM would be initiated to harmonize all policies and actions in response to LD and the root causes of land use problems, land tenure issues, and promotion of sustainable land-use planning.

To realize this Output, the ProDoc prescribed a set of actions to create the overall framework within the project's timeframe. First, an inventory of responsibilities of existing institutions would be undertaken with an analysis that would determine the exact role of the coordinating unit with regards to existing institutions. This would provide the information necessary for the establishment of the unit and its administrative structure. Once established, a national land management system would be developed in draft form. This system would then be authorized through an integrated sustainable land management policy. As part of the system, the unit would work to develop initial land-use plans for each of Suriname's geographic regions, effectively linking land use to policy. The policy, which is a ministry-level action, would later be supported by legislation to increase the sustainability of the integrated land management system and establish legal parameters.

The initial part of this Output (an inventory of responsibilities for SLM at existing institutions) was clear and should have been feasible within the specified timeframe (originally envisioned during the first two quarters of Year 1, ProDoc Table 7). An inventory of responsibilities and subsequent coordination unit to monitor and coordinate SLM activities within those institutions is a basic and necessary part of any mainstreaming project, and particularly vital to a cross-cutting, cross-sectorial issue such as SLM. However, the consultancy for this Output did not produce a satisfactory product and the bidding process for consultants will be re-initiated.

Due to the incompletion of the above inventory, the project has not begun to pursue the other part of this Output, which is to establish supported legislation and groundwork issues relating to SLM coordinating unit at MLTDE. The TOR for this consultancy has been written and is ready to be implemented once the proposal for the coordination structure has been elaborated and finalized. Had the first half of the Output been achieved as planned, given the elections that were expected mid-project, it is not clear whether this part of the Output - establish new legislation - would have been able to garner sufficient political support to be achieved during the lifetime of the project. Consequently, the feasibility of this part of the Output is questionable and should be reassessed when moving ahead to determine its attainability.

*Output 2.3 SNAP framework enhanced through additional workshops and consultations:* The first step in this Output was to be the updating and completion of the SNAP to make it a more operative and guiding document for all stakeholders, both government and private. This was to be achieved through co-financing. Based on the articulated need for an overall review and assessment of the policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks necessary to successfully implement SLM in Suriname, it was deemed essential to draw attention to the SNAP and promote a process that could lead to the completion and ratification of this framework document.

This process was expected to engage stakeholders through workshops, consultations and updated data to develop the strategic elements and recommended SLM strategies for all five geographical areas mentioned in the ProDoc. The specific problems for these areas and the remoteness of communities living in the interior were to be taken into consideration by this project in order to finalize an effective

SNAP that would provide a cornerstone for the policy instruments previously discussed. It was fully expected that the awareness building activities of Output 1.3 would increase the participation of policy makers in this process.

However, the SNAP was neither updated nor finalized due to prioritization of other project activities and limited availability of human resources to pursue this. Had a SLM Coordination Structure been in place with the necessary political will to coordinate the relevant institutions and pull in adequate human resources, the SNAP might have been feasible during the lifetime of the project. There are plans to restart this process in the coming year. Given the fact that the current draft is outdated, stakeholders will have to be reconvened and consulted to update information. The project team has expressed a commitment to pursuing this past the closure of the GEF portion of the project and a TOR has been elaborated to guide their efforts.

*Output 2.4 SNAP is integrated into the Environmental Sector Plan:* The second aspect of the process was to be the integration of the SNAP into an updated Environmental Sector Plan (ESP), requiring further consultations and a process of redrafting with follow-on activities to promote and secure formal approval by Parliament. This would require an overall review and assessment of the existing policy and legislative and regulatory frameworks. The improved institutional structure proposed in Output 2.1 and 2.2 would limit the fragmentation of actions to be taken nationwide and would improve coordination of activities in this context. Furthermore, effective integration of SLM concerns into the ESP would enable mainstreaming of SLM into the Multi-annual Development Plan to achieve among others the Millennium Development Goals and PRSP targets, which are already integrated into the MADP.

This Outcome was to be key in mainstreaming SLM, particularly through the incorporation of an organization to champion SLM, which would indicate that project activities were effective in bringing together the multiple ministries to participate in the SLM steering committee. Output 2.1, in particular, would have created an institutional backbone for the rest of the project to build upon. Unfortunately, a preliminary attempt at Output 2.1 was unsuccessful, and the project was unable to pursue the Activities and Outputs for this Outcome. As stated in the ProDoc, "without these, effective mainstreaming of SLM will not take place." (p. 29) While the Development Plan 2012-16 includes wording to position environment as part of the overall policy area on spatial planning, an actual framework, as put forth in the ProDoc, does not yet exist.

**Outcome 3: Resources in support of SLM mobilized (GEF U.S$ 20,000 USD, Co-financing U.S. $30,000).** This Outcome was to deliver two Outputs:

*Output 3.1 Strategic funding needs for further targeted capacity development and on-the-ground investments developed:* This Output was to identify strategic funding needs for additional, targeted capacity development and on-the-ground investments for SLM.

*Output 3.2. Medium Term Investment Plan developed:* Based upon the needs identified in Output 3.1, this Output was to create an Investment Plan that included mechanisms for the identification of incentives for private sector involvement, and the targeting of strategic funding needs through existing environmental foundations as revolving resources through donor funds allocated to the government. The financing needs of the SLM coordinating unit within the MLTDE would also be included in the plan.

The principal indicators for this Outcome included the verification that the financing needs to respond to the strategic framework in the improved SNAP would be calculated, as well as the amount of funding committed from both Government and non-government sources. The principal assumptions in this outcome were the willingness of the government to allocate loans or higher percentages of their profits to the resource mobilization plan.

This Outcome was never implemented. While MLDTE staff (Permanent Minister and Environment Policy Officer) attended a training program regarding the development of a financing/resource mobilization plan, there was not sufficient human capacity to pursue the development of a plan. A SLM Coordinating Unit could assist in the identification of opportunities for increased human capacity within other institutions to help pursue this. However, this was designed based on a set of circumstances at the time of ProDoc elaboration that no longer existed with the new government's changes in approach to budget access, so further pursuit of this will require updating to account for the new procedures and shifts in relevant ministries.

***Outcome 4: Effective project management through learning, evaluation, and adaptive management (GEF U.S. $99,000\*, Co-financing U.S. $120,000) (\*Includes M&E Budget).*** This responds to the need of the project partners for transparent, cost effective, and adaptive management with dissemination of lessons learned. Effective project and adaptive management were to ensure robust project implementation. Workshops at the national level and the integration of project and agency staff and local leaders would facilitate the dissemination and exchange of lessons learned and the adaptation and incorporation of the results of the NCSA into the capacity building component of the MSP as that information became available. The participatory evaluation process that is called for within the Portfolio Project would also contribute to the sharing of lessons learned at the rural level.

*Output 4.1: Adaptive management through monitoring and evaluation determines the next phase of regional and community development:* Through adaptive management and execution of the scheduled monitoring and evaluation plan and disseminating lessons, the results of the project would contribute to strengthening other related initiatives in Suriname.

*Output 4.2: Project execution through adaptive management:* Project execution would involve support to project management personnel and equipment.

The key indicators for this outcome were the degree of integration of recommendations from participatory evaluations into the annual workplan and the speedy establishment of the PMU. The M&E plan that was included in the ProDoc provided a clear set of mechanisms to help the PMU accomplish this. Unfortunately, the project was plagued with human capacity and time constraints that were a major impediment to implementation and the accomplishment of most of the Outcomes. Consequently, the project never reached a level of maturity to engage stakeholders and develop lessons and results to be disseminated as envisioned. As discussed in more detail below, adaptive management was in essence only used at project inception in terms of prioritizing which Outputs to pursue, and at project end to define ways forward.

While all of the Outcomes are relevant on a general level, the logic behind *which* Outcomes and Outputs should have been addressed *when* is unclear and proved difficult to implement in the Suriname context, as discovered by the PMU. For example, the GIS & LUP training took place without a formal data-sharing

structure in place to provide the necessary data and tools to implement the skills acquired in the training. While GISSat has made available some data, many institutions have private data that is highly detailed and could permit detailed analysis and planning, but due to its private nature is not easily accessible across institutions. Consequently, the trainees have the skills but often lack adequately detailed data to put in practice their training. However, a data-sharing mechanism would not have been feasible prior to relevant stakeholders receiving training to fully understand their needs and identify the data they require and potential uses. The formation of a coordinated SLM structure provides another example as it could have provided the political will to support the identification of appropriate partners to pursue awareness, training, legislative and perhaps even financing activities. On paper it made logical sense to pursue things simultaneously, however, the human capacity constraints created a serious impediment to the effective pursuit of much of the project.

Furthermore, a major issue to consider is the fact that the overall indicator of success at the objective level "will be the % change in the scores as measured by the GSU sponsored toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluation." Based on this tool, the baseline situation dealing with capacity and mainstreaming was to be documented and re-evaluated on an annual basis throughout the lifetime of the project. This was to reflect the overall change and impact at the objective level, while at the outcome level, several surveys as part of the M&E Toolkit and other criteria were to be considered. However, it appears this M&E Toolkit was never made available (and the website provided in the ProDoc leads to an error bringing into question whether this was ever developed), so a key tool for tracking and measuring indicator success was absent throughout the project.

Ultimately, the ProDoc's design failed to make it an effective guide during the project's implementation due to two reasons:

1) The ProDoc was written and approved more than 2 years before implementation actually began, so the institutional context had changed;
2) The ProDoc was incomplete with regards to the roles and responsibilities of the different actors that were to comprise the PMU, as well as possible risks that could affect the PMU and implementation as a whole.


The ProDoc was written in 2006, when the project's executing agency, MLTDE, was the UNCCD Focal Point and seemingly well-positioned to execute this initiative. The ProDoc also cites specific institutions engaged in planning and land use management, many of which were ultimately expected to play a role in the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Technical Advisory Group (TAG). After the project was approved in 2008, internal changes in UNDP and MLTDE hindered the availability of sufficient human capacity to properly initiate implementation. Furthermore, with the change in government in 2010, Suriname began experiencing an institutional transformation. To begin with, the UNCCD Focal Point was changed from MLTDE to the President's Cabinet, with little link to MLTDE. Furthermore, many of the institutions that were expected to play a role in the project have been undergoing a slow but meaningful transition, including the dismantling of the Ministry of Planning & Development Cooperation (ProDoc Signatory and execution partner), a change in Minister of MLTDE, the potential move of the Environmental Directorate of MLTDE to a different ministry, as well as the complete dissolution of all ad-hoc commissions, such as the LD commission established specifically to guide the project.

Consequently, neither the Implementation Arrangements nor the Stakeholder Involvement Plan was applicable.

### *Assumptions and Risks*

> "Key assumptions are the continuity of government support and full agreement among key institutions are important factors for the long-term success of this outcome. The structure created in output 1.4 is intended to minimize the risks if this assumption does not hold. A second assumption is the effectiveness of the awareness building activities translating into political action. Additional assumptions are that stakeholder consensus is possible and that the process will fit within the project's timeframe, given the slow pace of political change. No risks have been identified for this project." (ProDoc, p. 30)

The failure of the ProDoc to identify risks and the requisite associated management responses had a tremendous impact on the project. To begin with, a major issue that was ignored in the risks section is that of "brain drain." Over the past 30 years, Suriname has suffered from "a brain drain of skilled technicians and workers, leading to a decline in technical and field capacities." (ProDoc, p. 22) This impacted the project from the beginning with the leave of senior officials in MLTDE, and implementation being passed on to inexperienced junior staff. Without proper backstopping and capacity, the project was unable to begin implementation until more than two years after approval.

The project also failed to consider the impending elections set for mid-project. This meant that when the change in government occurred, and the institutional changes began (especially the change in Minister in MLTDE and dismantling of the LD Commission), the ProDoc was unable to provide guidance and alternatives, and the project was plunged into a series of unknowns which not only impacted its execution but ultimately its ability to deliver its objectives.

The fact that a change in government was not considered a risk was due to the fact that there was a sense of stability at the time of ProDoc formulation. However, it is standard practice to at least identify it as a risk (perhaps with a low rating), especially given that general elections were set for 2010, in the middle of the intended implementation lifetime of the project. Consequently, the change in government has had varying degrees of impact on the project and the enabling environment for SLM in general. For example, the disarmament of the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation (a signatory of the ProDoc) left MLTDE alone to execute the project without institutional backstopping from a project partner that was also expected to play a role in the PSC. The PMU has also had to struggle with significant internal Ministerial changes and uncertainty that are ongoing at the time of this report, 2 years after the new ruling party came into power. Of particular concern is the fact that the Environment Directorate might be removed from MLTDE and merged into another Ministry. Furthermore, while the previous Minister of Environment participated in several meetings regarding the project, the new Minister has been less involved and the general uptake of the SLM concept within the new government is unclear. Rather, there is only brief mention in the Government Declaration and Development Plan 2012-16 in support of the concept of sustainable development. Specifically, policy will focus on the rehabilitation of mined out areas, the promotion of sustainable land use in Suriname through mitigation of LD and improvement of the ecosystems for agriculture and other production sectors. (Source: Development Plan 2012 -2016). The continuation of project activities beyond GEF funding will benefit from the placement of the Environment

Directorate at a high institutional and political level. A positive sign is that project activities have already been made part of the policy measures (related to SLM) of the annual plan and budget for 2012 and 2013.

Furthermore, as a clear sign of the Environment Directorate's interest in continuing project activities past the lifetime of GEF funding, the PMU has taken measures to safeguard the project by transferring funds from its budget to UNDP to be set aside for the continuation of key project activities. However, unless the brain drain and related human capacity issue is addressed, this project will continue to flounder.

*Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g., same focal area) incorporated into project design*
There are no LD OP15 projects in Suriname from which to draw lessons regarding SLM in Suriname. Consequently, the project was intended to connect with and learn from other on-going initiatives in the country that had relevant SLM components. Both GEF and non-GEF activities formed a varied baseline that was to contribute to capacity development and in the exchange of lessons learned, especially in terms of institutional strengthening and resource mobilization. The UNDP/GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) is providing initial support to community based organizations in developing some SLM-related programmes such as agro-forestry and sustainable agriculture. It is therefore recommended that this MSP develop linkages with these initiatives to consider lessons learnt or engage in further collaboration. This would provide an opportunity for developing trust and cooperation at the ground level and could eventually showcase successful examples to key stakeholders (e.g. high-level officials), thereby creating synergies and awareness at different levels.

*Planned stakeholder participation (U\*)*
Given the short implementation period of the project, the participation of stakeholders (public sector, semi government institutes, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other key partners) was considered crucial. The ProDoc provides a general overview of the roles and responsibilities of the different parties, but the summary of responsibilities by Outcome and Output is overly-simplified and does not truly define specific opportunities for stakeholder involvement. Based on their contribution to national development, the stakeholders that were identified to be involved in the project implementation are:

a)  the government (MLTDE, MPPLFM, MF, MRD, MPW, MPDC, MNR, MALF);
b)  government institutes (FFM, GLISS, NIERS) who would have the full responsibility to ensure SLM at the national, regional and international level; and
c)  NGOs already implementing projects that contribute to SLM.

Additional collaborators expected in the project activities included the donors, CBOs and the private sector. NGOs were envisioned to be both beneficiaries and collaborators through the dissemination of lessons learnt, recipients of training and awareness building, as well as information exchange. Meanwhile, the Private Sector was expected to collaborate through technical inputs on investment plans for SLM as well as be a recipient of targeted skills training and awareness building activities. The research institutions were also expected to participate by collecting data on land degradation for monitoring and the exchange of information with relevant government institutions to safeguard the prevention of land degradation.

In short, of the 15 Stakeholder groups identified in ProDoc Table 15 (p. 74), eight were to be members of the PSC, three were to be members of the TAG and the rest were to be beneficiaries of training & equipment and/or collaborators in the investment plan.

As it stands, however, without a long-standing PSC and TAG, the project has only managed to engage a limited number of stakeholders on a beneficiary level through training (14 individuals from 8 ministries and 3 institutes) and equipment (to date, delivered to 4 ministries and 5 institutes).This low level of engagement is perhaps due to the fact that the project document was prepared without sufficient key stakeholder involvement, as evidenced by the remaining funds from the Preparatory phase that were intended for stakeholder meetings in the drafting phase. While the most relevant institutions participated in the stakeholder meeting, the awareness of SLM did not always reach the appropriate level to permeate to work on the ground. Institutions need assistance in disseminating the information to workers to increase a sense of ownership, however, the delays caused by limited human capacity and changes in prioritized activities impacted on the project's ability to consistently engage stakeholders' attention and ownership. Had the stakeholders been more engaged during the preparatory phase and felt a true sense of ownership or relevance of the project to their own activities, they might have made more of an effort to engage in the project during implementation and supported it throughout, ultimately increasing the potential for mainstreaming and sustainability. As such, the planned stakeholder participation suffered major shortcomings and is rated as *Unsatisfactory*.

## Replication approach

The only specific mention of *Replication* is in the LogFrame under Outcome 4 where there is mention that the TE would "describe replication aspects" based on the assumption that "the SLM project has had positive results to be replicated at both the national and regional level."

The ProDoc does, however, prescribe mechanisms for the dissemination of lessons learnt. For example, lessons were to be disseminated through awareness and continuous education programs, as well as incorporated into the curriculums of the School for Engineering and Natural Resource Sciences (Nature Technical Institute-NATIN) and the Anton de Kom University of Suriname (ADEKUS) (p. 34). There was also to be the sharing of information between projects, stakeholders and policy representatives as an effective measure of mainstreaming. However, there is no evidence that this has happened. Rather, due to the project's level of achievement of its outputs, there has not yet been a product delivered that is replicable with regards to SLM and mainstreaming. In terms of project execution, however, the difficulties incurred and the PMU's adaptation to challenging circumstances could provide replicable lessons regarding adaptive management and "out of the box" thinking, particularly when hiring consultants.

## UNDP comparative advantage

UNDP's comparative advantage for this project is based on its vast experience in integrated policy development, human resources development, institutional strengthening, and non-governmental and community participation. It has a history of assisting countries in promoting, designing and implementing activities consistent with both the GEF mandate and national sustainable development plans. Furthermore, UNDP has extensive inter-country programming experience, thus it adds value through acting as a catalyst of ideas via the demonstration of new ideas, experiences, and sharing lessons learned from other countries.

## Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector

As mentioned above, the project was intended to connect with and learn from other on-going initiatives in the country that had relevant SLM components. These were to contribute to capacity development and in

the exchange of lessons learned, especially in terms of institutional strengthening and resource mobilization.  These are:

1) The NCSA, which was supposed to serve as a tool for coordinating national and internationally supported capacity building programs, and given that both were implemented by UNDP with MLTDE, it was expected that there would be an in-house conduit for communication between the two initiatives.   All activities concerning SLM and the environment would be coordinated through the sub-Directorate Environment of the MLTDE and the PMU would then incorporate actions that responded to the needs identified in the NCSA process, as applicable, into the annual work plans.  The MLTDE would also, in turn disseminate and encourage the exchange of lessons learned between stakeholders, especially with those actors able to disseminate these lessons at the grass roots level.
2) The environment portfolio of UNDP expanded to include coastal zone management, the analysis of the non-urban environment sector, and the Guiana Shield biodiversity conservation initiatives involving Suriname and neighboring countries.
3) The OAS project for Sustainable Development and Bio-cultural Conservation in the Suriname Trio and Wayana Border region (2004-07) presented another opportunity for collaboration/exchange of lessons learned, especially regarding sustainable land management with two indigenous communities at the community level along the border with Brazil.
4) The UNDP/GEF Capacity Building Support to the Suriname Conservation Foundation (from 2004 – 2010) would provide valuable lessons in institution strengthening and in the appropriate methodology and approach to resource identification and mobilization for a similar process to support SLM.  This would contribute to increased knowledge, awareness and information on land degradation issues such as ecosystem integrity, loss of habitat and impacts on the livelihoods issues in the interior areas as well as in the coastal zones.
5) The research program "Development of Sustainable Agro-forestry Systems based on Indigenous and Maroon Knowledge in the Guiana Shield Region" (GUYAGROFOR)  would contribute to obtaining knowledge to incorporate in government extension systems to promote SLM and empower beneficial groups while contributing to the national economy.

Unfortunately, the project never matured to the point of truly being able to capitalize on these linkages, and the available human resources and the termination of the PSC limited the opportunity to engage these actors and make these linkages.

*Management arrangements*
The ProDoc provides a general overview of the roles and responsibilities of the different parties, including an overly-simplified summary of responsibilities by Outcome and Output.  In accordance with the agreement between UNDP and the Government of Suriname, this project was implemented by UNDP under the National Execution (NEX) modality, with MLTDE designated as the Executing Agency for project activities. The project was to receive high level guidance from the PSC, composed of the Permanent Secretaries of relevant Ministries and the UNDP Resident Representative.  The TAG was to provide technical support to the project.

While the PSC's focus would be on policy and management issues, the TAG was to focus on technical aspects of SLM and quality of outputs.  Furthermore, a Project Management Unit (PMU) was to play a

key role in project execution, located at MLTDE and headed by a Project Manager (PM). The PMU was to oversee the selection process for all local contracts and consultants, including preparation of Terms of Reference (TOR), call for bids and organization of the selection process. The ProDoc also states that in accordance with NEX modality, the awarding of all contracts and recruitment of all consultants was to be administered by UNDP (ProDoc, p. 40). However, per the understanding of NEX/NIM in Suriname, both the Executing (EA) and Implementing Agency (IA) expected contracts were to be administered by the EA (MLTDE) and UNDP was only to provide support for carrying out specific procurement (i.e. international consultants) when requested by the EA.

The PMU was also to maintain regular contact with the Global Portfolio Project via M&E activities and reports (QPR, PIR, MTE) as well as sub-regional workshops designed to provide periodic updates on the project.

The MSP ProDoc was formally approved with the Delegation of Authority letter in October 2007 and ProDoc signature by the government in February 2008. However, the establishment of the PMU through the identification of a Project Manager took more than 2 years from ProDoc approval, due to several factors:

1) There was a lack of support and supervision provided by UNDP. When the project was formulated and first approved, UNDP-Trinidad & Tobago was responsible for Suriname until a fully independent national office was established in 2009, coinciding that same year with the retirement of the National E&E Programme Officer at UNDP-Suriname and subsequent hiring of a replacement. Furthermore, the UNDP/GEF Regional Technical Advisor (RTA) at the Regional Service Center (RSC) in Panama left in 2010 and the RSC did not fill the position until 2011.
2) Meanwhile, within MLTDE, senior officers were not available during 2009-10, so less-experienced junior officers were left in charge to execute this project.
3) This was further compounded by the fact that there is limited individual capacity in Suriname regarding environmental management, specifically for sustainable land management, so consultancies were delayed due to lack of adequately-skilled local candidates.

Environmental, Services and Support (ESS) was initially hired as the Project Manager (PM) to support the management of the project in July 2010. However, the contract was discontinued in July 2011 and the Project Manager responsibilities were passed on to the Environment Directorate within the MLTDE.

As mentioned above, the project was also to be supported by a PSC composed of Permanent Secretaries and/or designated representatives of various relevant Ministries and Institutes (ProDoc page 40), as well as by a Technical Advisory Group (TAG). When implementation initiated, an adjustment was made to this scheme and the LD Commission created by the government was foreseen to take on the role of the PSC, while the TAG was never established. This was shifted again when the new government came into power and the LD Commission was disbanded along with all other ad-hoc commissions, leaving UNDP and MLTDE to take on the role of PSC. While monthly meetings were held between UNDP and MLTDE, they covered a number of projects and issues, rather than being dedicated to the sole purpose of steering this particular project.

The NCSA Thematic Assessment regarding the UNCCD (2008) provided an analysis of the existing capacity on both individual and institutional levels, as well as several areas of weakness and opportunities

to strengthen the institutionalization of the UNCCD within Suriname.  The SLM project was deemed a suitable platform to do this. As such, the NCSA document was taken into account regarding the coordination structure as well as on the information and training components. However, UNDP and MLTDE did not fully recognize and consider during implementation the constraints that the Assessment highlighted specifically for the SLM project concerning management arrangements.

For example, the Assessment forewarns that the installation of a pro-active PSC for the SLM project would be subject to individual, institutional and systemic constraints: (i) the lack of skilled persons, with knowledge of land related environmental problems; (ii) the same persons are members of other committees or Steering Groups and there is interference with other duties which are granted greater priority than the work of the UNCCD; and (iii) the lower priority given to the UNCCD in comparison to the UNFCCC and UNCBD.

The Assessment goes on to explain further constraints that would impact the implementation of the SLM project as a whole: (i) Lack of sufficient persons with an understanding of UNCCD, the obligations and issues of desertification and land degradation; (ii) insufficient human resources to timely implement project activities; (iii) no priority given to UNCCD at a systemic level, no clear system of accountability within Government to ensure that Suriname meets its obligations towards UNCCD, and no system to ensure that reports and other relevant information are disseminated in a timely manner.

Given the fact that this Assessment was written shortly after the SLM project had been approved, it would have been timely and relevant for UNDP and MLTDE to consider these weaknesses and incorporate the recommendations into a thorough review of Management Arrangements as part of the Inception activities. Had this been done, and special consideration made for a fully-functioning PSC, perhaps the project would have had enough internal stability to endure the ensuing institutional challenges and brain drain.  In particular, the project would have benefited from engaging key stakeholders and creating a network of partnerships to fortify and complement the institutional partnerships.


## 3.2    Project Implementation

*Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)*
Following the Inception Workshop in April 2010, MLTDE and UNDP-SUR made adjustments to the order of the Outputs and prioritization of the activities was done to maximize the available human resources and time.

Outputs 1.1 and 1.3 were switched:

> Output 1.3 is now 1.1 Awareness of land degradation, SLM issues and impacts, and on ecosystem concerns increased among public and private sector actors.

> Output 1.1 is now 1.3 Increase in GIS and land-use planning skills in 8 ministries, 3 key institutes, private companies and NGO's

The following Outputs were discarded:

*Output 2.4 SNAP is integrated into the Environmental Sector Plan*. While the SNAP has not yet been reformulated and finalized, the Environmental Sector Plan has been discontinued, thus nullifying this Output.

*Output 3.2 Medium Term Investment Plan Developed.* This was deemed to be beyond the scope of the project.

### *Partnership arrangements (with relevant stakeholders involved in the country/region)*
During implementation, the project engaged stakeholders through the short-lived LD Commission, Project Steering Committee, and perhaps most successfully through the GIS & LUP training workshop. As mentioned above, the project was also intended to connect with and learn from other on-going initiatives in the country that had relevant SLM components. These were to contribute to capacity development and in the exchange of lessons learned, especially in terms of institutional strengthening and resource mobilization. However, the project never matured to a point to be able to fully pursue any formal partnership arrangements.

### *Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management*
The lessons learnt from the MSP through evaluations were expected to be incorporated into implementation of the MSP. In addition to the monitoring, evaluation and feedback mechanisms identified in the project's M&E plan, the Project Steering Committee was expected to review progress on a quarterly basis, identify lessons learnt and discuss project progress with the involvement of wider stakeholder audience as necessary. The ideas and lessons learnt would then be incorporated into the management of the project and further implementation process by the PSC with adjustments to the Work Plan as required.

As discussed below, M&E activities were performed in an inconsistent manner, thereby preventing the intended opportunity for reflection and the corresponding adaptive management. For example, QPRs are a useful tool and simply were not taken advantage of in this initiative. They are particularly effective when a PM is onboard and can use the QPRs to garner results and effect proper adjustments in the project's implementation. The M&E conversations that did occur during the project's lifetime, resulted in a form of adaptive management within the Environment Directorate, with its dealings with UNDP, and between the Permanent Secretary, Minister and UNDP. A stable PMU and PSC throughout the lifetime of the project could have used the M&E activities more effectively as guidance for adaptive management to avoid and/or correct some of the implementing problems that occurred.

### *Project Finance*
The problems in implementation are reflected in low financial delivery rates. The total expenditure registered in ATLAS as the GEF contribution to the SLM project is $113,156.17, approximately 24% of the approved $475,000.

As to the in-cash co-financing contribution made by MLTDE, in light of the delayed budget negotiation process within the government, exchanges were ongoing between UNDP and MLTDE throughout the project's implementation reconfirming the GoS' commitment to the project and a decision was made that (1) GEF funds available under Outcome 1 for the purchasing of equipment would be used to finance other

project activities, and that (2) Government co-financing shall be used when available to fulfill their commitment. As such, the following in-cash co-financing contributions were made:

$ 67,035 (2009) + $ 34,689 (2010) + $ 215,370 (transferred to UNDP per an agreement signed by UNDP and GoS, in February 2012) + $ 7500 (payment to consultants) = $324,594 total, or 81% of the agreed $400,000 committed in the ProDoc.

An additional $63,395 was scheduled to be transferred before project end, bringing the total contribution to $387,989.

With regards to in-kind co-financing, MLTDE contributed $55,000 by housing the PMU within the Ministry.

*Monitoring and evaluation: design and implementation (U\*)*
The ProDoc provides a very clear set of activities to follow related to M&E. However, during the implementation of the project, there was a striking lack of compliance with these M&E activities. To begin with, under the guise of "day-to-day" monitoring of implementation process, the PMU /MLTDE was to inform the UNDP CO of any delays or difficulties incurred during implementation to ensure appropriate support or corrective measures could be adopted in a timely manner. However, MLTDE was either unaware of the seriousness of the problems or not persistent enough with their requests for support from UNDP, while it appears that UNDP was oftentimes either tardy in responding when problems were brought to their attention, or unable to immerse themselves in the problem out of respect for national autonomy per the NEX modality. For example, the contracting procedure for consultants, beginning with the PM, would have benefitted from more pro-active involvement from UNDP, from the sharing of TORs through follow-up with the legal department of MLTDE. Also, given UNDP's presence and contacts throughout the Caribbean, there could have been consideration of alternative hiring options, such as regional candidates. PSC meetings between UNDP and MLTDE could have provided support and corrective measures regarding this project but were not exclusive, so time and attention were divided among several different initiatives, as discussed in the following section. Consequently, "day-to-day" monitoring issues were not consistently addressed in a timely fashion during the implementation of the project.

While the project provided the requisite annual Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs) from 2009-2012, they are incomplete and/or inconsistent with regards to financial data provided from one year to the next. Quarterly reports (QORs/QPRs) were officially required for all projects at the time this project was approved. However, in practice they were not filled out. The initial reaction regarding the lack of QPRs was that there was no progress or change to report so there was no need to fill them out. Rather than seeing this as an opportunity to reflect on the progress, or lack thereof, and use it as a planning mechanism for adaptive management, it was simply ignored. UNDP should have stepped in and required compliance with this and use it as an opportunity to provide guidance toward the execution of the project. Additional stakeholder involvement could have provided supplementary support. QOR/QPRs are no longer mandatory, and in the context of Suriname being a HACT country, the FACE form is what is now mandatory. The Harmonized Approach for Cash Transfer (HACT) has introduced a new way of managing the process of transferring cash to implementing partners, giving national partners the ability to determine and manage their development processes. The new system relies on what is called a risk management approach which recognizes that there is a risk involved with cash transfers. With this

approach, agencies will adjust their cash transfer method and assurance activities according to the level of risk. It also utilizes a harmonized format - Funding Authorization and Certification of Expenditures Form (FACE) - for implementing partners to request funds and report on how they have been used.

In light of the low delivery rates and lagging implementation, internal discussions were held within UNDP HQ, the RSC and the CO regarding the possibility of closing the project early. However, in discussions with the Government, it was made clear that this would have political repercussions as well as stifle burgeoning awareness and interest in SLM. Consequently, in recognition of the amount of time already invested in the project as well as the reprioritization of activities and ongoing consultancies, it was determined that the project would finish within the specified timeframe rather than proceed with early closure. The government reconfirmed its commitment by signing an agreement with UNDP to transfer funds in fulfillment of its cofinancing obligations and the PMU in MLDTE has continued to support and promote the project's implementation.

While the possibility of closing the project 6 months earlier than programmed was deemed unnecessary, the project would have benefitted from other M&E tools, such as a Mid-Term Evaluation to help guide it through its final year. It was decided that due to the project's late start there would be too little progress/impact for an MTE to evaluate to make it worthwhile. In hindsight, however, it has been mentioned that perhaps it would have been wise to at least request a support/guidance mission to help the project get on track, especially in light of the short implementation period.

Finally, this project has not yet been audited. In practice, UNDP-SUR does an annual audit depending on risk marking and on the annual spending. This project had no risks identified in the ProDoc, did not have an annual spending of US$200,000, nor did it reach 70% implementation, so an annual audit was deemed unnecessary, despite GEF requirements for an annual audit as stipulated in the ProDoc. It will be audited after operational closure. Given the serious lack of compliance with the M&E Plan stipulated in the ProDoc, this section is rated *Unsatisfactory*.

### *UNDP and Executing Agency execution (U\*) coordination, and operational issues*
The LD Committee initially was envisioned to act as a PSC. However, the PSC function was in practice taken on by UNDP and ATM. Consequently, the LD Committee acted like a Technical Advisory Group. However this was only in place 2010-11 and was disbanded thereafter. The workplan was initially established in the ProDoc and thereafter updated annually through the AOP in collaboration with UNDP and ATM which were acting as PSC. Meanwhile, the tasks of the LD Committee were detailed in the TOR.

In the absence of a formal PSC, UNDP and MLTDE took on the role of PSC on an ad-hoc basis, holding monthly meetings to discuss the project. However, in fact the meetings were not exclusively for SLM, but on the whole environmental portfolio. Consequently, the SLM project received divided attention during these encounters and serious issues were not given adequate consideration to reach a full resolution.

The most fundamental of these issues was that of contracting. From the outset, this project has been plagued by contractual difficulties. The contracting of the PM finalized more than 2 years after ProDoc signature. The MLTDE staff that was handed the responsibility of executing this project had little or no experience in drafting TORs, searching for suitable candidates, and executing a contracting process.

Furthermore, the internal contracting process within the legal department of MLTDE was slow in finalizing the contractual arrangement with the PM. UNDP should have stepped in and provided clear guidance in the form of example TORs from other projects, a set of guidelines or recommendations on contractual/procurement procedures, etc. Also, UNDP's presence in neighboring countries implementing similar initiatives could have provided an extension of the candidate search to a regional level. However, this did not happen due to the internal changes that were occurring within UNDP.

The establishment of a fully independent UNDP national office in 2009 most certainly required effort and time from staff, thereby impacting their ability to provide consistent and timely guidance to the projects under their care. This also coincided with the retirement of the National E&E Programme Officer at UNDP-Suriname and subsequent hiring of a replacement in 2009. Without additional staff to backstop the gap while the new Programme Officer tackled the steep learning curve associated with a new post in a new office, implementation oversight continued to be weak. Furthermore, the UNDP/GEF Regional Technical Advisor (RTA) at the Regional Service Center (RSC) in Panama left in 2010 and the RSC did not fill the position until 2011. So, while junior staff at MLTDE might not have been aware of the extent of the guidance and support they needed to request from UNDP, UNDP's ability to provide extra guidance and support was compromised by internal changes, further hindering a smooth and timely hiring process.

This was further impacted by the fact that there is limited individual capacity in Suriname regarding environmental management, specifically for sustainable land management. Rather than revise the process to consider alternative approaches, such as regional candidates, bidding processes were simply extended and re-advertised. When a candidate was chosen, it was not necessarily because they fit all of the criteria or had adequate experience, rather it was because they were the better of a limited field of quasi-acceptable candidates and the PMU was trying its best to help the project progress. Once candidates were identified for all three consultancies (GIS & LUP Training, Communication Strategy, and SLM Coordination Structure), only one (GIS & LUP Training) was successful in providing acceptable results. The other two were terminated part-way through, after several drafts and months of discussion between the consultants and MLTDE, resulting in a loss of time, energy and resources. If MLTDE and UNDP had been in closer communication and engaged in a more collaborative process between themselves, and with the consultants, alternatives might have been identified and executed earlier, including the options that are now being considered by MLTDE such as more clearly defined TORs, opening the bidding process to Regional (Caricom) candidates, and terminating an unproductive consultancy early on.

The lack of communication and follow-up is also reflected in the execution of the M&E Plan. The PMU did not comply with the M&E requirements and UNDP did not follow-through to ensure compliance. As mentioned in the preceding section, the AOP was not updated on a regular basis, PIRs are inconsistent, and QPRs were not done as prescribed in the ProDoc. MLTDE was either unaware of their responsibilities regarding M&E or not persistent enough with their requests for support from UNDP. It appears that UNDP was also not as persistent or rigorous with its requests for compliance with the M&E plan and/or cautious out of respect for national autonomy per the NEX/NIM modality.

For the most part, the involvement of the RSC was limited to communications regarding compliance with M&E requirements, sub-regional meetings and workshops, concerns over delivery rates, and the closing of the GEF portion of the project. Regarding the former, UNDP HQ and RSC expressed concern over the

low delivery rates in several countries, including Suriname. Consequently, there was a communication over whether to consider early closure of certain projects should poor delivery rates continue. This may be perceived as a drastic measure, but it is a management response that shows action is being taken by the IA in the event of poor results. Given that the abovementioned issues were reflected in low financial delivery rates in Suriname, there might have been justification for choosing this option of early closure.

The total expenditure registered in ATLAS as the GEF contribution to the SLM project is approximately 24% of the approved project budget. As to the in-cash co-financing contribution made by MLTDE, an agreement signed by UNDP and GoS in February 2012 suggests a total of 80% will be provided over the next year (most of it in 2012 with a portion to be provided in 2013 after GEF funding closes). The in-kind co-financing has been estimated at approximately $55,000, but only cash contributions managed by the UNDP will form part of the project's audit.

Given the major shortcomings in I&E Execution, this section is rated *Unsatisfactory*.

## 3.3    Project Results

*Overall results (attainment of objectives) (U\*)*
The project's objective is "to reduce land degradation trends by creating an enabling environment for responses to land degradation through capacity development and mainstreaming of sustainable land management amongst key stakeholders." In order to attain the objective, the following 4 outcomes were designed to be implemented by the project, and the results attained thus far are:

*Outcome 1. System, Institutional and Individual capacities to implement SLM at the national level increased:* This Outcome was partially achieved through the GIS & LUP Training Workshop held for 17 participants (of which 14 attended), representing 8 Ministries and 3 institutes. The GIS and LUP course was designed in such a way that at the end of each training phase, participants should be able to orient on some basic principles, practices and approaches of GIS and LUP. Having seen the potential of the GIS technology and LUP methodology, participants ideally would take these newly acquired skills, techniques and methodologies to their organizations and develop and improve these skills, techniques and methodologies for base-line data collection, data sharing purposes, conceptual frame of Land Use and land degradation (incl. their issues), planning processes, integrated plan designs and plan evaluation. (Training Evaluation, p 19) The purchase of equipment and provision of further coaching will ensure that this result is consolidated.

*Outcome 2. SLM principles and SNAP-framework integrated into national development plans and sector strategies*: A Structure for coordinating Land Degradation policy and SLM efforts was not established. This structure was to be a cabinet-level committee (LD Committee), or Project Steering Committee (PSC), comprised of the Permanent Secretaries and/or designated representatives of different ministries and institutes, as well as UNDP. However, the PSC function was in practice taken on by MLTDE and UNDP in an ad-hoc fashion. Consequently, the LD Committee's role was shifted to that of Technical Advisory Group, but this was only in place 2010-11 and was disbanded thereafter without a replacement TAG put in place for the remainder of the project. A consolidated coordinating unit within the Sub-Directorate Environment at MLTDE championing SLM was to be established to

harmonize all policies and actions in response to LD and the root causes of land use problems, land tenure issues, and promotion of sustainable land-use planning. While a truly consolidated SLM Coordination Structure has not been established, the Environment Directorate of MLTDE has been appointed the responsibility of championing SLM, thereby internalizing this to some extent.

*Outcome 3. Resource mobilization to support SLM effected:* No results were attained for this Outcome.

*Outcome 4. Effective project management through learning, evaluation and adaptive management:* This project was not managed effectively due to major human resource capacity constraints.

Furthermore, the overall indicator of success at the objective level "will be the % change in the scores as measured by the GSU sponsored toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluation." Based on this tool, the baseline situation dealing with capacity and mainstreaming was to be documented and re-evaluated on an annual basis throughout the lifetime of the project. This was to reflect the overall change and impact at the objective level, while at the outcome level, several surveys as part of the M&E Toolkit and other criteria were to be considered. However, it appears this M&E Toolkit was never made available (and the website provided in the ProDoc leads to an error bringing into question whether this was ever developed), so a key tool for tracking and measuring indicator success was absent throughout the project.

Given the major shortcomings in achieving the project objectives, this section is rated *Unsatisfactory*.

### Relevance (R*)

There is no doubt that this project was relevant for Suriname when it was conceived and continues to be relevant today. As discussed above in detail, at the time of ProDoc formulation, the project was in-line with the UNDAF, CCF, and GoS priorities. This relevance still holds true today as the project falls in line with priorities identified in more recent, revised versions of Suriname's UNDAF, UNDP-Suriname's Country Programme Document (CPD), GoS Declaration for 2010-15 and especially within the MLTDE Environment Directorate's Thematic Areas.

For example, the Government Declaration for 2010-2015 can be summarized as follows:

- The Government places a high priority on programs for the food production and aims for Suriname to produce at least 80% of the domestic needs. It further aims for at least 40% to be destined to export. In order to accomplish this increased production, the Government is focused on the sectors of Forestry, Mining, Construction, Water and Energy.
- Natural resources are to play a leading role in sustainable development and their sustainable use make a significant contribution to the welfare and wellbeing of the nation. As such, the strategic policy proposals include realizing an optimal recovery from the natural resources and a fair share of the revenues for the State. To accomplish this, the following elements are to be considered:

  - Be responsible with the environment;
  - The issue of land rights for the indigenous people and Maroons;
  - Collaboration between governmental and local participation in the activities for exploration and mining;
  - The concept of sustainable development of minerals will be the guiding principle.

With regards to the UNDAF for 2008-11, the project is particularly relevant with Outcome 1: By 2011, pro-poor policies are in place to ensure that vulnerable groups in society benefit from growth and have equitable access to opportunities, assets, resources and decent work. Specifically, the SLM project is relevant to the UNDAF's Country Programme (CP) Outcome 1.4.:   A sustainable and participatory natural resources planning and management system is in place.  Direct links can be made between the SLM project and the 4 Outputs associated with this Outcome:

> 1.4.1 Responsible organizations have the capacity to plan, implement and monitor a mechanism for the management of mineral resources.

> 1.4.2. Responsible organizations have the capacity to establish a mechanism for SLM with a particular emphasis on reducing the vulnerability of the poor and expanded opportunities for sustainable livelihoods.

> 1.4.3. Responsible organizations have the capacity to: design, implement and monitor systems for the management, sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity; to implement measures on the adaptation and mitigation of the effects of climate change.

> 1.4.4. The knowledge and skills of key disaster management institutions are enhanced to mitigate, manage and reduce the impact of disasters. (UNDAF 2008-11, p. 16)

This is further detailed in UNDP's Country Programme Document (CPD) 2008-11, in which CP Outcome 1.4 states: An enhanced sustainable natural resources planning and management system is in place. Specifically, this is relevant to CP Output 1.4.1. and its associated Targets/Indicators:

> 1.4.1. Responsible organizations have acquired demonstrable and enhanced capacities to: manage the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; implement measures on the adaptation and mitigation of the effects of climate change; establish a mechanism for sustainable land management, with particular emphasis on reducing the vulnerability of the poor and expanded opportunities for sustainable livelihoods.

> Targets: data and management systems established with specific focus on land and biodiversity and accessible to the responsible ministries and institutes; Biodiversity Action Plan is under implementation; National Green House Gasses (GHG) inventory is prepared according to Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change guidelines; a climate change adaptation strategy is developed and under implementation; a mechanism for SLM and monitoring is established in key ministries and institutes; timely reports are submitted to the international conventions (UNCBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD). The country is preparing its REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP).

> Indicators: National biodiversity data in place; GHG inventory improved; climate change adaptation strategy in place.  A mechanism for SLM and monitoring is established; increased proportion of land areas covered by forests; percentage of land as protected areas; decreases in:

carbon dioxide emissions-per capita (metric tons); percentage of land area affected by degradation. (UNDP CPD 2008-11, p. 7-8)

Given the continued importance of SLM in National and UNDP programming, this section is rated *Relevant*.

### Effectiveness, & Efficiency (U*)

The project was effective and efficient in one output – the GIS & LUP training. The training was considered a success and an unexpected spin-off was an informal coordination group that continued to meet for some time afterward on their own initiative, thereby enhancing inter-ministerial and inter-institutional communication and coordination. Some of the participants have requested follow-up coaching as well as adequate equipment and licensing renewal (for the GIS software) to continue to support and develop their skills as tailored to their work.

Unfortunately, due to the human resource capacity constraints discussed throughout this report, the project was unable to produce effective and efficient results in any of the other Outcomes. Consequently, this section is rated *Unsatisfactory*.

### Country ownership

The GoS has demonstrated some ownership of the project through housing of the PMU within MLTDE, as well as through its co-financing contributions. However, the project has not yet matured enough to give the GoS the opportunity to truly internalize its objectives and show full ownership. The success of continuing activities will be able to attest to this in coming years.

### Mainstreaming

The project was in line with Suriname's development priorities and plans in a general way, as stated in the NDP and MADP. However, the crystallization of these priorities is only now occurring with the new government.

Relevant representatives from government Ministries and Institutes were involved in the LD Commission that served briefly in guiding project implementation in a mixed PSC/TAG role. However, with the dismantling of the ad-hoc commissions by the new Government, there was little opportunity for further engagement. Institutions, such as SBB (forest management authority), consider SLM as a very relevant, local means to dealing with environmental issues, rather than the more international issues like climate change. Given the hands-on, on-the-ground nature of SLM, it has the potential to be more meaningful at the local level, thereby creating an opportunity for mainstreaming it in development planning.

Given the inability of the project to implement the Outputs and advance toward the attainment of planned Outcomes, the project has been unable to truly mainstream SLM. The project has not matured to the point of enacting legislation and/or developing policies and regulations with regards to SLM.

### Sustainability (U*)

Despite the delays incurred, the Government's effort to comply with its cofinancing obligations has allowed for the project to continue beyond the closure of GEF funding, ultimately ensuring some degree of sustainability. Future financial risk comes with the possibility of further Government delays in budget approval, but for now, the project has acquired sufficient funds to carry on.

Beyond the issue of finance, social and political risks are indeed present. To begin with, the current uncertainty regarding where the Environment Directorate will be housed is troubling, as the current situation implies neither an approved budget, nor confirmation of where their physical offices will be. According to the current legal and institutional framework, the Directorate for Environment is formally still part of the MLTDE and therefore reports to the Minister of that Ministry. However, the possible change to a different Ministry could present a risk in terms of institutional stability and political support. Given that the project is currently housed within the Environment Directorate, this institutional "limbo" puts the project at risk.

An additional area of concern is the lack of enforcement with regards to illicit artisanal mines. The government is openly engaging large, international mining companies to open operations in the Interior, but these will be held responsible for proper reclamation of mined areas and are more likely to follow certain standards. Illicit artisanal mines, on the other hand, are a greater problem due to their open pits and uncontrolled use of cyanide and mercury. They follow no regulations and cause much more damage with regards to soil erosion and contamination. The government has established a whole new organization for the restructuring of the gold mining sector, especially small scale mines, to include control and enforcement, awareness and training on environmentally sound practices. However, without a solid SLM Coordination Structure in place, this has the potential of being yet another independently-executed initiative without meaningful linkages to this SLM project or any others.

Another area of concern is the focus of the government on housing and agricultural development. This could be an important opportunity for SLM concepts to be mainstreamed in the planning of these sectors, however, there is major disconnect within and among the different government entities that are enacting policy and action. Without a SLM Coordination Structure in place (or even a PSC or TAG), there is little opportunity for these actors to be engaged in a coordinated manner to consider SLM in their sectors.

Furthermore, a crucial issue to sustainability is a communication strategy that increases public and stakeholder awareness in support of SLM and enables the realization of the project's objectives.

With regards to sustainability of the capacity built in GIS and LUP, this is more related to knowledge and increased insight in LUP methodology and GIS skills and technology, than the synthesis of this knowledge in understanding and actual acting. It is not realistic to consider that this training prepared the trainees to apply everything in their organization immediately after the training, rather, only the first step has been taken. The course introduced the participants to many parts of LUP and spatial planning and provided them with a solid foundation of basic knowledge but no planning case studies were worked out by the participants themselves. In order to fully understand and apply the provided knowledge, case studies are vital. For example, there is a difference between the participants knowing that a Land Use Plan needs a spatial vision and independently developing a spatial vision. Therefore, it is necessary to provide follow-up to this process, because the 'understanding' and 'implementing' goals are skills that will develop gradually, rather than be solid measurable results at the end of a training.

While there is an interest in continuing with the project activities past the closure of GEF funding, the project to date has suffered major shortcomings in the achievement of a coordinated structure to ensure, without a doubt, its continuity and sustainability. As such, this section is rated *Unsatisfactory*.

*Impact*

While there are neither verifiable improvements in ecological status, nor in reductions in stress on ecological systems, this project did have a positive impact on the participants in the GIS & LUP training workshop. Consequently, there is potential for future impact on the planning aspect of their work in the different sectors they represent.

It also had a positive impact in terms of developing execution capacity within the Environment Directorate. The junior staff that was given the responsibility of executing this project has matured and developed capacity to continue the execution of this project beyond the closure of GEF funds. They recognize the importance of a stable PMU and the need to engage UNDP for support and technical input.

# 4.    Conclusions, Recommendations & lessons

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

a) Ensure project design includes potential risks and actions, especially those associated with a change in government, as well as changes in key personnel within government institutions.

b) Provide a detailed description of roles and responsibilities of all personnel (PMU, PSC, TAG) and stakeholders involved in the project. The ProDoc provided a general overview of TORs for some of the actors expected to be involved in the project, but it would be useful to revisit these TORs and expand them to clearly define mandates for those entities that will be engaged in the continuation of project activities.  For future projects, it is recommended that the TORs provided in a ProDoc be reviewed, thoroughly discussed, and adapted to the context that prevails at the time of ProDoc signature and project inception to ensure that what is prescribed in the ProDoc is still relevant and valid in terms of management arrangements.

c) Institutional support and backstopping, particularly from UNDP and the higher ranks of MLTDE, is vital especially at inception of project implementation.  It would be worthwhile for UNDP to review the intricacies of the NEX modality with project partners and, where deemed necessary by both parties, make temporary adjustments to allow more hands-on support from UNDP to support the commencement of project implementation. The government officers assigned to the project might not always have the requisite capacity to execute projects. There is limited human capacity, limited depth of experience, and the public sector is in dire need of reform to update procedures and tools.  A simple and basic example is the lack of institutional email addresses for government officials – they are using yahoo and gmail for official government communication.  While a working document of the Commission on e-government was presented in May 2012, the majority of government employees continue without institutional email, among other things.  Consequently, the infrastructural backbone is missing in government institutions, making it difficult for technically competent people to deliver robust products. Furthermore, a lot of "turf battles" within institutions lead to paralysis and capacity is impacted by the lack of political will to make a decision, so non-technical delays are oftentimes incurred. The current NEX/NIM agreement between UNDP and GoS limits UNDP's ability to step in and takeover certain processes – UNDP can advocate certain changes but ultimately cannot interfere. Some of these delays, particularly at project inception, could be avoided if UNDP and the project partners were to agree to temporarily extend UNDP's direct involvement in implementation activities. Ultimately, this would benefit the project in the short-term and simultaneously foster the development of important long-term skills within the national counterpart.

d) The project would benefit greatly from a formal project management structure, with a PSC and an external senior-level PM or CTA who possesses both technical knowledge and implementation savvy. A Steering Committee is vital to provide guidance, not only in terms of technical and political issues, but also the every-day tasks of project management, TOR development, and consultancy issues/conflict resolution.   The PSC should be a formal unit with an agreed mandate.  It should have political clout but could include members that are pragmatic and have implementation experience rather than a thoroughly formal ministerial entity. Perhaps some consideration can be made to form a Steering Committee or Guidance Group that doesn't require political approval, but consists of

members who are engaged in SLM-related activities/issues, i.e. universities, planning departments from different ministries, NGOs, and other stakeholder representatives that are not simply political appointments but can provide technical and practical guidance. The Head of the Environmental Directorate could preside over this Group and provide the necessary political support and advocacy. NIMOS is currently implementing a Results-Based-Management Certification program for its staff, thereby strengthening their project management skills.  It would be worthwhile discussing possible arrangements for collaboration with the SLM project.  Meanwhile, the TAG should engage relevant stakeholders with technical experience in LD, SLM and LUP to guide the project in technical areas. In a local climate change project, the structure of workshops with key persons was used to get technical backstopping. To ensure commitment of national staff consider incentives to bridge the gap between consultants and counterparts who have to coordinate project work in addition to their regular duties.

e)  Consider making an adjustment to the Project Management contracts from a purely outputs-based modality to a combined outputs-effort based modality. The management of a project goes beyond contracting of consultants and ensuring a timely delivery of products. Rather, in the Surinamese context there should be recognition of the effort required in coordination, logistics, finding suitable candidates for consultancies (beyond the borders of Suriname), and generating political interest.  It might be worthwhile re-considering an external PM or CTA who can commit to managing this project for the remainder of its lifetime. The PM/CTA should have a profile that is senior enough to be able to garner political support.

f)  When contracting bids for consultancies are not attracting suitable National candidates, open the bid to Regional/international candidates, preferably with Dutch language. Consideration should also be made to pursuing additional/alternative methods of advertising to attract potential consultants. Perhaps a network could be established of suitable candidates in Suriname and the Caricom region in addition to open advertisement. Many people are not regular newspaper readers, so additional forms of publicizing consultancies and project activities need to be explored, perhaps in collaboration with universities, NGOs, and other political and non-political institutions.

g)  Consider timely termination of contracts when consultants are incapable of adapting their methods to the needs of the project, or default on deliverables.  If, after multiple meetings, discussions fail to generate a suitable method, consultancies should not be continued on the basis of "good faith" that the consultants will somehow manage to deliver a useful product.  This runs the risk of wasting time, money and political will.  While the termination of a contract and process of re-hiring might initially incur delays, in the long-run it will same time and resources, and most importantly will ensure usable and relevant inputs to the project. It is also important that the same discipline regarding time limits be exercised by the PMU with respect to communicating and sharing comments with the consultants.  If the PMU expects consultants to follow a prescribed timeline, then they also need to be disciplined to revert with comments in a timely manner.

h)  Encourage "out of the box" thinking when initial activities cannot be implemented as originally planned, and document them for Lessons Learned and Replication. Given the limited awareness surrounding SLM within Suriname, and the limited technical and human capacity, the PMU inevitably must engage in adaptive management with the input of UNDP.

i) The creation of a SLM Coordination Structure is vital to mainstreaming. It is of utmost importance for the project to engage relevant stakeholders in informal information sessions to brainstorm possible composition of such a structure: who should be involved, possible roles and responsibilities. Given the limitations in the government structure, care must be given to ensure that official letters to directors of government institutions are used to find and invite the relevant individuals that can truly contribute to the definition of and participate in such a structure.

j) The elaboration and implementation of a Communication strategy is of utmost importance – while a full strategy is under elaboration, the project should also look for short-term publicity opportunities so as to build on momentum created during training and evaluation activities. Consider reviewing the draft Communication Strategy to determine if there is anything useful that can be implemented in the short-term, or can provide a basis upon which to continue toward the development of a new plan.

k) A detailed workplan and timeframe must be developed for moving forward on the remaining activities, as well as the commitment and discipline to comply with these. A preliminary workplan should be agreed upon by MLTDE and UNDP. This would include the setting up of a Steering Committee and restructured PMU. Once established, these entities would collaborate with MLTDE and UNDP in the elaboration of subsequent workplans.

l) Contracting procedures might need to be revised to expedite procedures to ensure proper timing in accordance with the workplan. Contracts for consultants took 4-9 months to be finalized, thereby impacting negatively on the workplan of both the project and the consultants. This, in turn, impeded progress on a succession of activities and outputs that were dependent on preliminary products. It is unclear whether the bottleneck was in the TORs, the PMU or the contracts office within MLTDE, but the contracts procedure has been changed. As the Environment Section, the contracts had to be screened by the main office, but since the Section was made a Directorate, the contracts are screened directly at the Directorate. For those projects that are housed within a Section, rather than a politically-higher Directorate, and depend on other entities to do their contracts, a thorough review of the contracts procedure in coordination with UNDP could provide insight and recommendations for preventing some of the delays experienced in this project.

m) Compliance with an established M&E strategy is not only a requirement for UNDP and GEF, but also an effective opportunity to identify areas that are experiencing difficulty and require "out of the box" thinking and adaptive management. Look for and use opportunities within UNDP or GEF for training in project management.

n) Organizational communication must occur within and across MLTDE and UNDP, as well as with stakeholders. Encourage the linkage of SLM to activities and programs to the better known UN conventions (climate change, biodiversity and with REDD+). The need for improved organizational communication also applies to participation in project activities. For example, the selection of trainees can be more efficient. A better selection of the participants ensures that there is a dedicated participation. There was one case of a drop-out and in at least one case during the selection process, there was an issue within the ministry of who to delegate. This is perhaps based on assumptions or misconception of the content of the training within the stakeholder, the process of registration (invitation letters were sent to the directors of the ministries who were not always aware of the initiative since during consultation another representative was consulted).

o) While the provision of computers and other equipment is a positive contribution to stakeholders' work, UNDP/MLTDE must ensure they are fully converted to the intended SLM-related use once the coaching and data-sharing mechanisms are in place and functioning.

p) Given that the project did not complete its planned outcomes, the sustainability of the partial results obtained depends directly on the continuity of the actions by the Environment Directorate in cooperation with UNDP. Furthermore, current policy prospects depend on the ability of Senior officials to include SLM concepts in government priorities. There must be a commitment at the policy level, and the strengthening of entities such as NIMOS could be a mechanism by way of which that commitment can be defined and put into action.

### Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project

The plan to provide additional coaching to the participants of the GIS & LUP training workshop is essential to ensure the skills gained are not lost. It is not realistic to consider that this training prepared the trainees to apply everything in their organization immediately after the training, rather, only the first step has been taken. In order to fully understand and apply the provided knowledge, case studies are vital. For example, there is a difference between the participants knowing that a Land Use Plan needs a spatial vision and independently developing a spatial vision. Therefore, it is necessary to provide follow-up to this process, because the 'understanding' and 'implementing' goals are skills that will develop gradually and with practice.

Per the second half of this Output, the training programs would be adapted and implemented with ministry delegates and stakeholder groups[3] in the young and old coastal plain, the savannah belt and the interior at the local level. This is vital to developing skills at the local level to facilitate mainstreaming.

Two other areas to focus on are the development of a communication strategy and the establishment of a SLM Coordination Structure. Both are vital to engaging a variety of stakeholders and ultimately creating opportunities for mainstreaming SLM in local and national agendas and policy.

In order for any of this to succeed, however, it is vital that a formal and strong PMU and steering/guidance structure be established to provide stability, input and oversight to the project.

### Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives

As mentioned previously, this project remains relevant, and the opportunity to continue to work on fulfilling its objectives is crucial. The current National Development Plan for 2012-16 indicates that this project can be instrumental to the country's development:

> The country's coastal area is threatened mainly by a loss of coastal land, sea level rise and uncontrolled issuing of land. Protective measures will not only protect the terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in this area, but also the complete infrastructure and current residential centers. This

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[3] NGO's and other groups such as: Conservation International-Suriname, Pater Albrinck Foundation, Assembly of Indigenous Chiefs in Suriname, small gold miners, Maroon and indigenous people.

will improve economic development by ensuring possibilities for increase of large scale agriculture and animal husbandry (food security) and other productive sectors in these areas, as well as surface and groundwater resources (water security). The potential for ecotourism is also protected.

Land degradation is also taking place in the interior. This is due to increased mining which causes soil erosion and craters, which provide breeding-grounds for malarial mosquitoes. Furthermore, the loss of biodiversity, contamination of soil and surface and groundwater are increasing problems.

In the period 2012-2016, policy will focus on the rehabilitation of mined out areas, the promotion of sustainable land use in Suriname through mitigation of land degradation and the improvement of ecosystems for agriculture and other production sectors. (NDP 2012 -2016)

The project falls in line with the NDP's recognition of the need to consider sustainable land use practices. Consequently, there is a timely opportunity for the project to continue implementing its outputs and advance toward attaining its outcomes.

**Best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success**
This project presents important lessons regarding implementation/execution. It demonstrates how the lack of a strong and stable implementation/execution structure can paralyze even the most relevant of projects. Without a stable PMU and PSC, the good intentions and commitment of junior staff lacked the backstopping at senior levels to ensure efficient and effective execution of the project, despite the relevance of the project with regards to the national agenda and international commitments.

Furthermore, it demonstrates the challenge of determining corrective actions to be taken when a project suffers from low delivery rates and lagging implementation. This is particularly true when M&E tools such as QOR/QPR or MTE are not implemented. Quarterly reviews or recommendations from a MTE can provide pertinent guidance for improving the project's delivery in time to avoid having to consider drastic options such as early closure by UNDP. Nonetheless, reaching the point of having to contemplate early closure can, by itself, also prove to be useful in bringing together relevant parties to obtain reconfirmation of commitments from all involved in project implementation, and recognize the importance of allowing slow but important processes to continue in the long-term interest of raising SLM awareness and eventual mainstreaming.

# 5.  Annexes

1. ToR (attached as a separate document)

2. Itinerary and Meeting Schedule

3. List of persons interviewed

4. Summary Report of Meetings and Interviews (attached as a separate document)

5. List of documents reviewed

6. Project Logical Framework

7. Rating Scores

8. Evaluation Report Clearance Form

## Annex 2: Itinerary and Meeting Schedule

| | Monday 22/10 | Tuesday 23/10 | Wednesday 24/10 | Thursday 25/10 | Friday 26/10 and Sat 27/10 | Sun 28/10 | Monday 29/10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1st Morning session** | Allyson Tinney, Maureen Playfair, Bryan Drakenstein<br><br>UNDP office | Allyson Tinney, Maureen Playfair<br>SLM project management team members Mrs Aroma H. and Mrs. Plet<br>Min. of ATM<br><br>Former land degradation Committee members Leidsman Monsels<br>UN Conference room<br>UNDP office | Meeting with Gissat<br><br>Egbert Moerland<br>(n.v. GISsat) | Meeting with WLA<br>Dhr Amatali<br><br>WLA Geb<br><br>UNCCD Focal point Ellen Naarendorp<br>Cabinet Pres | Report writing<br><br>Meeting Allyson Tinney, Maureen Playfair | Meeting with Maureen Silos Caribbean Institute<br><br>Sunday farmers market<br><br>Report writing | Meeting: Ruben Martoredjo UNDP Evaluation and Monitoring office<br>UNDP office<br><br>De briefing meeting with ATM project team and UNDP<br>Min. of ATM |
| **2nd morning session** | Meeting with ATM<br>SLM project management team members Mrs Aroma H. and Mrs. Plet and UNDP | Meeting with consultants communication strategy<br><br>Mrs Bhairo and v/ d Kooye | Meeting with the Geological and Mining Service<br><br>Mw Haidy Saimbang and trainee GIS and LUP training<br><br>**GMD geb** | Meeting with Astracia Warner Ministry of Health (Milieu Inspection)<br>BOG office | | Report writing and Preparation of debriefing presentation | De briefing meeting with UNDP<br>UNDP office |
| **Afternoon session** | Allyson Tinney, Maureen Playfair, Bryan Drakenstein and Thomas Gittens<br><br>UNDP office | Meeting with ATM<br>SLM project management team members<br><br>Min. of ATM<br><br>Consultant coordination structure Girdhari Lalla Rookh | Meeting with Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control Mr. Jules and others<br>SBB geb. | ATM<br>SLM project management team members<br>Min. of ATM | | | |

| | | geb. | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | |

## Annex 3: List of Persons Interviewed:

| Group | Institute | Name | Position |
|---|---|---|---|
| **SLM project Management team** | Ministry of Labour, Technological development and Environment. | Mrs. Aroma Haidy | Senior Environmental Policy Officer |
| | Ministry of Labour, Technological development and Environment. | Mrs Plet Nataly | Project Assistant |
| | | | |
| **Former land degradation Committee members** | Ministry of Regional Development | Mr. H.I. Leidsman | Policy Officer |
| | Planning Office Suriname | Mrs. Monsels S. | Staff member Environmental Division |
| | | | |
| **GEF Implementing Agency** | UNDP | Mr. Thomas Gittens | Country Director |
| | UNDP | Mr. Bryan Drakenstein | Program Officer E&E |
| **Consultants** | AP& G Consultancy | Mrs. Bhairo | Sub Consultant for the development of SLM KAP + Awareness and Satisfaction Baseline reports |
| | AP& G Consultancy | Mrs. R. van der Kooye | Assistant consultant awareness |
| | SMC Consultancy | Mr. S. Girdhari | Sub consultant for the Development of a SLM Coordination structure |
| | N.V GISsat | Mr. E. Moerland | Sub Consultants for the development and Implementation of a GIS and Land use Planning training program |

| Group | Institute | Name | Position |
|---|---|---|---|
| Beneficiaries | Water management Service (WLA) | Mr. Amatali | Head |
| | | Mr. Chotelall | GIS employee |
| | Geological and Mining Services (GMD) | Mr Autar | Head |
| | | Mr. R Ronodirjo | Topograph |
| | | Mr. M. Hansildaar | Chief Data management and GIS |
| | | Mrs. H. Sambiaing | Data management and GIS |
| | Bureau of Health (BOG) | Mrs Warner | Chief Environmental inspection |
| | Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control (SBB) | Mr. P Jules | General Director |
| | | Mr. R. Somopawiro | Director of Forest regulation |
| | | Mr. D. Lemen | Director Forest Management |
| | | Mr. G. Malone | Sub- Director Forest Management |
| Others | Cabinet of the President | Ms E. Naarendorp | Focal point UNCCD |
| | NIMOS | Mr. C. Nelom | Acting Director NIMOS |
| | The Caribbean Institute | Ms. M. Silos | Executive Director |

**Annex 5: List of Documents Reviewed**

1. Workshop reports;

2. Knowledge Attitudes and Practices (KAP) baseline report

3. Awareness and Satisfaction baseline report;

4. Analysis of Geographic information system (GIS) & Land use planning (LUP) training needs, April 2012;

5. GIS & LUP training program, April 2012;

6. GIS & LUP Training Evaluation report, June 2012;

7. ToRs for Consultancies;

8. Draft National Action Program to Combating Land degradation;

9. Multi Annual Development Plan 2006 – 2010;

10. UNDAF 2008 – 2011;

11. CPD 2008 – 2010;

12. Risk Logs;

13. Risk Management Strategy - Resource Kit (No. 6), UNDP-GEF;

14. UNDP's Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results;

15. UNDP-GEF Terminal Evaluation Guide 2012

16. Quarterly Operational Reports, QORs;

17. Project Document;

18. Project Progress Reports;

19. Minutes from relevant meetings UNDP – ATM;

20. Correspondence between UNDP RSC-CO and UNDP-ATM;

21. APRs/PIR reports;

22. Annual work plans.

**Annex 6. Logical Framework Progress**

| GOAL/OBJECTIVE/ Outcome | Performance Indicator | 2008 Baseline | 2012 End of Project Target | 2012 End of Project Status (at time of TE) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Objective: To reduce land degradation trends by creating an enabling environment for responses to land degradation through capacity development and mainstreaming of sustainable land management amongst key stakeholders | Overall change in status of 37 indicators as measured by the M+E Toolkit for LDC/SIDS portfolio project. | To be measured at inception and updated each year by July 1 | Demonstrated increase of at least one level for in capacities and mainstreaming per toolkit criteria. Target for each category to be assessed with UNDP country office at inception following a baseline survey. | Implementation of none of the components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally-revised plan. |
| Outcome 1: System, Institutional and Individual capacities to implement SLM at the national level increased. | Increase in % of responders at the ministry level and in the public that demonstrate awareness of LD concerns and SLM messages | Less than 25% of relevant ministries attended workshops on the MSP for SLM in 2006 | 75% of ministry personnel from 8 ministries and 50% of the general public demonstrate awareness of LD and SLM | A partial baseline was defined but not finalized, thereby inhibiting the ability to perform further measurement of awareness increase. An awareness campaign to promote SLM was not pursued due to recruitment constraints in hiring consultants and time constraints. |
|  | Increase in technical land management and GIS skills among National and local-level stakeholders | Recognized as <25%. Baseline to be determined based on training needs assessment. | Initial target is 50%. Target to be modified/set by steering committee and UNDP following training needs assessment. | refer to needs assessment on training and final analysis post-training |
|  | The number of stakeholders (public institutions, NGOs, and land users) with unrestricted access to improved information | 0 Stakeholders 0 Land information data bank | 1 Land information data bank established by the end of 2011.

8 Ministries, 3 institutes, connected by the end of 2011. | This was modified due to issues of protocol and an internal assessment of technical needs and feasibility, as well as an assessment of each ministry's skills, data sets, needs, and expectations. Rather than create a unified data bank |

| | | | Private sector users connected by mid-2011. | (which was determined to be beyond the capacity and scope of this project) the project supported the acquisition of hardware, software and training is planned for 3 ministries and 5 institutes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| on land use, land degradation, and land tenure from the integrated land information data bank. | | | | |
| Outcome 2: SLM principles and SNAP – framework mainstreamed into national development plans and sector strategies | Number of Ministries and Institutes with SNAP priorities incorporated in annual action plans | 0 Ministries or Institutes with action plans with integrated SLM | 8 Ministries and 3 Institutes with SLM incorporated into approved action plans by 2011. | SNAP was not updated/finalized due to prioritization of other project activities and limited availability of human resources to pursue this. There are plans to restart this process in the coming year. Given the fact that the current draft is dated, ATM recognizes that stakeholders will have to be reconvened and consulted. |
| | An established organization championing SLM | No (0) established organization for SLM | One (1) Sub-Directorate Environment established at MLTDE championing SLM | A LD Committee was formed in 2010 to oversee the SLM project and guide policy related to SLM, however the new government disbanded it in 2011 as part of a general policy related to efficiency. A subdivision of ATM is now the new Directorate of Environment and will take on this role to champion SLM. |
| | SNAP formally approved by parliament. | Preliminary SNAP work document has been developed | Completed SNAP document by mid 2011.<br>Approved SNAP document by end 2011.<br>Ratified SNAP by end 2011. | As explained above the working draft of the SNAP has not yet been updated and therefore not presented to the Parliament. |
| | Legislation to institutionalize SLM in effect | 0 Legislation | 1 supported legislation to effectively institutionalize and finance the SLM is ratified by parliament by 2011 | There has been no new legislation developed and put in place regarding SLM. |
| Outcome 3: Resource mobilization to support Sustainable Land Management. | The amount of funding commitments received from government and from private sources in support of actions detailed in the Medium-term financing plan. | To be outlined in mid-term financing plan | Initial funding from all sources for 20% of the value of the plan | 0% - no financing plan was developed. Staff (PM and Env Policy Officer) attended a training program regarding the development of a financing/resource mobilization plan, but there was not sufficient human capacity to pursue the development of a plan. |
| Outcome 4: Effective project management | Lessons learned from project widely | 0 evaluations to determine change in | A monitoring and evaluation system that promotes effective adaptive | The lessons learned from this project are being taken into account in the |

| through learning, evaluation, and adaptive management. | disseminated | management systems | management of the project and for identification of lessons learned that can be widely accepted. | implementation and M&E of other environmental [GEF] projects overseen by the Directorate of Environment at ATM. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Establishment & operation of Project Implementation Unit. | none | Project management Unit is operational within 1 month of Project start-up. | Between 2008 and 2010 the TORs for the PM were formulated and 2 attempts were made to acquire adequate candidates. There was 1 candidate that met some of the technical requirements but the financial bid was way beyond the project's resources per limits related to project management in the ProDoc. Therefore an outputs-based contract was elaborated and after 6 months of negotiation regarding specific articles in this type of contract, the PM signed in July 2010. Given the constraints in hiring other consultants for the other outputs (legis, comm strat, etc), the PM was unable to comply with the Outputs-based contract and therefore it was mutually decided to not renew this contract in 2011 and the PM responsibilities were passed on to the ATM. |

**Annex 7: Rating Scales**

| Criteria | Rating |
|---|---|
| **Monitoring and Evaluation: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S) Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)** | |
| Overall quality of M&E | (rate 6 pt. scale) |
| M&E design at project start up | (rate 6 pt. scale) |
| M&E Plan Implementation | (rate 6 pt. scale) |
| **IA & EA Execution: Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S) Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)** | |
| Overall Quality of Project Implementation/Execution | (rate 6 pt. scale) |
| Implementing Agency Execution | (rate 6 pt. scale) |
| Executing Agency Execution | (rate 6 pt. scale) |
| **Outcomes Highly Satisfactory (HS), Satisfactory (S) Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Unsatisfactory (U), Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)** | |
| Overall Quality of Project Outcomes | (rate 6 pt. scale) |
| Relevance: relevant (R) or not relevant (NR) | (rate 2pt. scale) |
| Effectiveness | (rate 6 pt. scale) |
| Efficiency | (rate 6 pt. scale) |
| **Sustainability: Likely (L); Moderately Likely (ML); Moderately Unlikely (MU); Unlikely (U)** | |
| Overall likelihood of risks to Sustainability | (rate 4pt. scale) |
| Financial resources | (rate 4pt. scale) |
| Socio-economic | (rate 4pt. scale) |
| Institutional framework and governance | (rate 4pt. scale) |
| Environmental | (rate 4pt. scale) |
| **Impact: Significant (S), Minimal (M), Negligible (N)** | |
| Environmental Status Improvement | (rate 3 pt. scale) |
| Environmental Stress Reduction | (rate 3 pt. scale) |
| Progress towards stress/status change | (rate 3 pt. scale) |
| **Overall Project Results** | (rate 6 pt. scale) |

The Rating scale for the above table is based on the following table:

| **Rating Scales** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, I&E Execution**<br>6: **Highly Satisfactory (HS):**<br>The project had no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency<br>**5: Satisfactory (S):**<br>There were only minor shortcomings<br>4: **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**:<br>there were moderate shortcomings<br>3. **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**:<br>the project had significant shortcomings<br>2. **Unsatisfactory (U):**<br>there were major shortcomings in the achievement of project objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency<br>1. **Highly Unsatisfactory (HU):**<br>The project had severe shortcomings | **Sustainability ratings:**<br>4. **Likely (L)**:<br>negligible risks to sustainability<br>3. **Moderately Likely (ML):**<br>moderate risks<br>2. **Moderately Unlikely (MU):**<br>significant risks<br>1. **Unlikely (U):**<br>severe risks | **Relevance ratings:**<br>2. **Relevant (R)**<br>1. **Not relevant (NR)**<br>**Impact Ratings:**<br>3. **Significant (S)**<br>2. **Minimal (M)**<br>1. **Negligible (N)** |
| *Additional ratings where relevant:*<br>Not Applicable (N/A)  Unable to Assess (U/A) | | |

**Annex 8: Evaluation Report Clearance Form**

Evaluation Report Reviewed and Cleared by

UNDP Country Office

Name: _____

Signature: _____          Date:_____

UNDP- GEF- RTA

Name: _____

Signature: _____          Date:_____