TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT OF THE UNDP/GEF PROJECT

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT IN SIERRA LEONE

(PROJECT ID: PIMS 3391- LD - SLM/CB CAF Cap Bdg for SLM ; ATLAS 00044980)

FINAL REPORT PREPARED BY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The "Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone" project was submitted and approved under the global UNDP-GEF Targeted Portfolio Project for SLM in LDC and SIDS on behalf of the Government of Sierra Leone. It was implemented by a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) hosted at the Environment Protection Agency (EPA-SL) under the Office of the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

The long-term goal of the project is to attain a universal implementation of sustainable land management to contribute to the mitigation of land degradation and promotion of ecosystem integrity and stability with enhanced ecological functions and services, as a firm basis for sustainable development and livelihoods.

To attain the above goal, the project sought to build capacity for Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in Sierra Leone by the removal of the key barriers to sustainable land management and to mainstream SLM into, laws, university and school curricula, budgets through an Investment Plan and Regulatory Frameworks. It further pursued to create sustainable capacity and ownership in Sierra Leone to mitigate land degradation and thereby meet the country's obligations under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

The project has a total budget of USD 917,000 that were financed by the GEF (USD 475,000) and by co-financing commitments of about USD 442,000. GEF committed a total of US$475,000.00 (Four hundred and seventy five US Dollars) in the project document and the same amount after final project approval.

The project was implemented over a period of three years, actually slated to have started in June 2009 and ended in June 2012, but an extension to December 2012 was granted upon request by the PIU due to delays in start-up. It therefore finally ended in December 2012.

This terminal evaluation was commissioned by the UNDP Sierra Leone office as the GEF Implementing Agency, in compliance with the UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, and in accordance to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects. The overall objective of the Terminal Evaluation is to provide an end of project assessment in terms of its success and achievements of its targeted objectives and outcomes as outlined in the initial project document. It provides a professional assessment of the performance of the 3-year implementation, with particular reference to the achievement of its target objectives and outcomes.

This evaluation addressed key issues most relevant to the assessment of the fulfillment of project objectives and outcomes. The report is structured around the key issues, which relate to the GEF five evaluation criteria: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Results/Impacts and Sustainability. It also provides recommendations for follow-up activities and lessons learned.

This evaluation was done through a thorough review of project documents and interviews with project staffs, UNDP-GEF officials, relevant NGOs and key project stakeholders (Farmers, traditional leaders, community representatives, etc.)

Main Findings

Relevance

The project provides a platform to develop the capacity of the key players in land management at national, regional and local levels. It addresses the identified barriers preventing the implementation of the obligations under the UNCCD, which Sierra Leone ratified. It serves therefore as an important national intervention in the fulfillment of UNCCD objectives, particularly as regards to capacity building. The

goals and objectives of the project and the activities implemented to realise these goals and objectives match with some of the specific objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) regarding sustainable land management and poverty alleviation.

In general, therefore, the project was highly relevant to Sierra Leone with respect to capacity building for developing sustainable land management practices to arrest land degradation and promote healthy ecosystems and sustainable livelihoods in different ecological zones of the country.

Effectiveness and Efficiency

Assessment of the effectiveness of the project was based on changes in development and/or in sustainable land management in the project areas, a measurement of the changes in relation to the achievement of project outcomes, the overall contribution of the project to capacity building on sustainable land management practices, and the management of identified risks.

The project delivered and met almost all of its objectives. It and has successfully put in place tangible measures to prevent land degradation in the project areas through SLM practices, and has a high potential for sustainability and replication. For these reasons, thereof, the achievements of the project, thus its effectiveness, are rated as highly satisfactory.

Assessment of the efficiency of the project was based on its implementation and management approaches, the organisational structure, financial planning and dispensation, and the views and perceptions of stakeholders. Despite the relatively smaller size of the staff of the PIU than was required, and its late start-up, the project's efficiency was rated as satisfactory.

Impact

Overall, the evaluator rates the long-term impacts of the project on the local environment and poverty reduction as highly satisfactory. The project has performed satisfactorily in introducing better land management practices including fire prevention mechanisms, use of organic fertilizers, better agricultural practices, and knowledge in tree planting are now prevalent in the project areas. These are viewed by stakeholders and direct beneficiaries to yield positive impacts on the environment and improve the living conditions of the people.

Sustainability and Replicability

The PIU considered the issue of sustainability throughout project implementation. Awareness-raising in workshops and training in sustainable land management practices improved the capacity of stakeholders in SLM. The community participatory approach adopted in project implementation ensured the full involvement of the communities, thus further facilitating consistent exchange of ideas and knowledge within the communities in the project areas. The generosity of community leaders to offer lands for the project demonstration sites without excessive financial demands is a demonstration of their acceptance of the project and appreciation of its potential benefits. The enthusiastic participation in project activities by local communities demonstrated their belief in ownership of the project. The introduction of SLM into Schools and Universities ensures consistency in the adoption of sustainable land management practices across generations. All of the above constitute a strong premise to conclude that there is a high potential for the sustainability of the project interventions and their replication in other areas. The sustainability and replication elements of the project were therefore rated as satisfactory.

Recommendations

The evaluation exercise concludes with the following recommendations for the sustainability of the impacts of the project:

1. It is strongly recommended that the Government of Sierra Leone intervenes by cautioning land owners against the massive lease of land to foreign investment companies. Land owners should not dispose of lands within 1km buffer distances around settlements. This will allow other sustainable alternative land use activities around settlements, and ensure the availability of land for pilot activities for SLM. The foreign investment companies should be mandated to adopt sustainable land use management practices and they should state this very clearly in the Environmental and Social Impact Analysis (ESIA) document, which is a requirement for the grant of licenses for their operations.
2. For the sustainability of the achievements of the project, it is recommended that the provision of alternative livelihood activities to farmers and the local community be incorporated in project design, and as a project objective. The risk is that in the absence of alternative livelihoods, the local community is most likely to revert to their unsustainable land use practices in order to meet their immediate needs.

   An assessment of short-term or immediate needs is required at project inception, in order to identify alternative livelihood activities that possibly would meet these needs.
3. For the sustainability of site maintenance and the continuous realization of the project achievements associated to the maintenance of these sites, it is strongly recommended that Government takes the responsibility to provide remuneration and continue to engage the site workers through one of the Line Ministries.

4. PASSACOFAS and Green Scenery to use their involvement in the SLM project as a success story to propose to the UNDP for funding to continue their activities at the project sites and to extend these to other areas in the country.

Lessons Learned

i. Provision of alternative livelihood especially for poor rural communities within the SLM project is vital to ensure community buy-in into the project.

ii. Involvement of project affected communities in the design (PDFA phase) and implementation of SLM projects.

iii. Sustainable partnership with Non-Governmental Organisations is a practical means to ensure sustainability of the project for future up-scaling and replication. Examples are the current involvements of PASSACOFAS and Green Scenery NGOs, being a factor of project achievements at pilot sites.

iv. Future projects should be designed such that the actual field implementation of some project components is done by a government institution with the mandate and competence. The project management should oversee the process to ensure the component outcomes are achieved.

List of Abbreviations

CSSL	-	Conservative Society of Sierra Leone
EFA	-	Environmental Foundation for Africa
EPA-SL	-	Environment Protection Agency – Sierra Leone
ESIA	-	Environment and Social Impact Assessment
FAO	-	Food and Agricultural Organisation
GEF	-	Global Environment Facility
LDC	-	Least Developed Country
LWDD	-	Land and Water Development Division
M&E	-	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	-	Millennium Development Goals
MSP	-	Medium Sized Project
MTR	-	Mid Term Review
NEPAD	-	New Partnership for African Development
NGOs	-	Non –Government Organisations
PASSACOFAS	-	Pa Santigie Conteh Farmers' Association
PIR	-	Project Implementation Review
PIU	-	Project Implementation Unit
SLM	-	Sustainable Land Management
UNCCD	-	United Nations Convention to Combat Dessertification
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme

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1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable Land management (SLM) is a strategic component of sustainable development and poverty alleviation, as it underpins sustainable agriculture especially in developing countries. Globally, land degradation has increasingly become a central challenge to sustainable development. Reports about the status of and changes in natural resources indicate that there is a problem of land degradation at a global scale. It manifests itself at the global level by undermining the integrity, and stability functions and services of ecosystems; and at local levels, by affecting the economic wellbeing of the people. In the developing world, it particularly affects those who depend most directly on natural resources for their survival and its impacts.

In Sierra Leone, it is being observed that almost 70% of the country's original forest cover has been lost / degraded. The principal direct causes of land degradation in Sierra Leone have been associated to several factors, including the unsustainable use of forest resources, unsustainable agricultural practices, especially those resulting in soil fertility loss and decline in crop yields on upland rain-fed sites, wildfires on farm fallows and wooded savannas; and deforestation from clearing for agriculture and mining. Specifically, land degradation is perpetrated by continuous cropping with reductions in fallow and rotations (using slash and burn farming practices), overgrazing, clearing of forests for charcoal and domestic firewood, mining

activities, and to some extent human settlement encroachments. The impacts of these practices include loss of soil and other natural resources, changes in natural habitats and ecosystems, reduced ecosystem services such as water infiltration and loss of agro-biodiversity and wild biodiversity as well as decreases in land productivity leading to poor harvests and food shortages. Taken together, these impacts result in poorer living conditions and poverty. Climate change is now further exacerbating these problems.

Persistent and uncontrolled land degradation in a country is an important indicator of the existence of barriers that may be preventing the country from implementing sustainable land management practices. The underlying causes of land degradation may be complex, but once identified, it requires a complete and systematic approach to address. The solution often lies in the adoption of SLM practices, which address both processes of resource degradation and underlying causes of unsustainability. This will prepare policymakers to make informed decisions about the use of natural resources without putting at risk the resilience of the ecosystems.

Resolving the problem of land degradation in Sierra Leone would require a holistic and participatory approach, demanding both the willingness of the Government to include SLM into its national development priorities and the cooperation of the people directly deriving livelihoods from the country's natural and land resources. The introduction of the UNDP/GEF Project – *Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in Sierra Leone*, responds to the problem of land degradation in the country.

The SLM project in Sierra Leone was designed to build the capacity for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone through the removal of the key barriers to sustainable land management and to mainstream SLM into, laws, university and school curricula, budgets through the Investment Plan and Regulatory Frameworks. This project focused on creating sustainable capacity and ownership in Sierra Leone that would mitigate land degradation and thereby meet the country's obligations under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

The SLM Project in Sierra Leone was implemented over a period of three years - between June 2009 and July 2012. Though no Mid-Term Review (MTR) was undertaken of the project, the Terminal Evaluation reported in this document was undertaken in April 2013.

This evaluation report provides a thorough assessment of the progress of the project. The assessment contains evidence that can be used to determine the success of the project based on the project achievements. It also provides guidance to future UNDP and UNDP/GEF projects in the fields of Sustainable Land Management. Generally, as recommended for all GEF projects, the evaluation is structured around the GEF five evaluation criteria: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Results/Impacts and Sustainability.

This report is organised into four substantive parts, in adherence to instructions given in the Terms of Reference, and as follow:

1. An executive summary that encapsulates the essence of the information contained in the entire report.
2. A general introduction and background information of the assignment.
3. A section on findings of the evaluation exercise in terms of the basic project concept and design, its implementation, administration and management, its achievements and limitations, and the potential for sustainability of the products and services that it produced. The findings are based on factual evidence obtained by the Evaluator through document reviews, and consultations with stakeholders and beneficiaries.
4. A section on Lessons learned and recommendations.
5. A number of annexes that provide other supplementary information.

1.1 Description of the Terminal Evaluation

1.1.1 Scope

This terminal evaluation, was commissioned by the UNDP Sierra Leone office as the GEF Implementing Agency, in compliance with the UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, and in accordance to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) funds activities that help remove barriers to the adoption of sustainable land management. Sierra Leone has identified a plethora of barriers, ranging from institutional and governance, economic and financial, social and behavioural, and technological and knowledge barriers preventing sustainable land use. The sustainable land management project was designed to remove these barriers by strengthening national institutional and human resource capacity to combat land degradation in the country. Having completed the project, the UNDP-GEF, as a requirement, commissions this Terminal Evaluation in order to assess the project's performance and achievements of its target objectives and outcomes.

1.1.2 Objectives

The overall objective of the Terminal Evaluation is to provide an end of project assessment in terms of its success and achievements of its targeted objectives and outcomes as outlined in the initial project document.

Specifically, the main deliverables of the evaluation as indicated in the Terms of reference (TOR) are:

- ✓ An assessment of the overall performance against the project objectives as set out in the Project Document and other related documents
- ✓ An assessment of the relevance of the project to national priorities, as well as UNDP and GEF strategic objectives
- ✓ An assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the project

- ✓ A critical analysis of the implementation and management arrangements of the project, including financial management.
- ✓ An assessment of the sustainability of the project interventions and impacts
- ✓ Documentation of lessons and best practices concerning project design, implementation and management that may be of relevance to other projects in the country and elsewhere in the world.

1.1.3 Key Issues

This evaluation addresses key issues most relevant to the assessment of the fulfilment of project objectives and outcomes. These include: the impacts and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global environmental goals. It also provides recommendations for follow-up activities. The evaluation investigates the current status of the National Action Plan, as in outcome 1, the development of Capacities for SLM Practices in Sierra Leone and the mainstreaming of SLM into policies, laws, programs, budgets and regulatory frameworks, as in outcome 2. Finally, it investigates the achievement of the process of capacity building for participatory sustainable land management, and the proposed mid-term investment plan for SLM, as stated in outcomes 3 and 4 respectively, in the project document.

1.1.4 Methodology

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This evaluation was based on a desk review of project documents and on interviews with project staffs, UNDP-GEF officials, relevant NGOs and key project stakeholders and informants. The approach was participatory – incorporating views of the relevant stakeholders, including land owners, land users, Government institutions, educational and law enforcement institutions, NGOs, PIU staff and UNDP-GEF officials.

The methodology included the development of an evaluation matrix to guide the entire data gathering and analysis process. The findings were triangulated with the use of multiple sources of information. Particular attention was paid to the GEF principles of independence, impartiality, transparency, disclosure, ethical, partnership, competencies/capacities, credibility and utility. This is within the overall GEF-related objectives of (i) promoting accountability and global environmental benefits; and (ii) promoting learning, feedback and knowledge sharing on results and lessons learned among the GEF and its partners.

Three basic tools were used in the search for primary data and information for the evaluation. These included:

1. Review of existing and related documentation
2. Consultations and Interviews
3. Written comments.

Triangulation was used to ensure that empirical evidence collected from one source, for example documentation such as reports, will be validated from other sources, for example through interviews. It is possible to seek undocumented information through consultations.

The process of the evaluation was done in three phases, namely;

1. Data and information gathering. This included a review of relevant documents made available electronically by UNDP-GEF and the Project Management Unit at the EPA. In addition, other relevant documentation will be sought from other

Government departments and also from the World Wide Web. This phase included visits to project sites for consultations and interviews with project beneficiaries and stakeholders. It will also include consultations with Government, UNDP, other NGOs and the wide range of stakeholders.

2. Analysis, discussion and drafting of evaluation report. This phase was concluded by the production of a draft evaluation report for the appraisal of the PMU and UNDP to be returned with comments.
3. Refining draft report with comments and production of final evaluation report.

The stipulated rating system, in accordance to the UNDP-GEF TE Guide was applied to rate main project elements identified in the Terms of Reference for assessment.

1.1.5 Terminal Evaluation Consultant

A National Consultant conducted the Terminal Evaluation, working closely with the relevant government institutions and officials, the UNDP focal point, farmers, project staff, implementing partner NGOs and pilot communities.

2. THE PROJECT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT CONTENT

Sierra Leone has a problem of deforestation and land degradation caused by many factors presenting as barriers that prevent the country from implementing sustainable land management practices.

The Sustainable Land Management Project in Sierra Leone was a four-year Government of Sierra Leone project, initiated in July 2009 and completed in December 2012. It was designed to build capacity for sustainable land management in Sierra Leone by the removal of key barriers to SLM and to mainstream SLM into, laws, university and school curricula and budgets through a Mid-Term Investment Plan. It was to prioritise training and capacity building, mainly in the areas of sustainable resource management practices for mangroves, wooded savannas, woodlots and fallows.

The Environment Protection Agency (EPA-SL) under the Office of The President was the official key partner. The Project was implemented by a Project Management Unit, headed by a National Coordinator, situated at EPA-SL.

UNDP Sierra Leone Country Office provided guidance to the project implementation and evaluation reviews. A Steering Committee made up of representatives of several Ministries and UNDP provided oversight for project implementation.

2.1 Project Objectives and Expected Outputs

The long-term goal of the project is to attain a universal implementation of sustainable land management to contribute to the mitigation of land degradation and promotion of ecosystem integrity and stability with enhanced ecological functions and services, as a firm basis for sustainable development and livelihoods.

The overall objective is to build / strengthen national institutional and human resource capacity in Sustainable Land Management and to mainstream SLM into national policies, laws, university and school curricula and budgets.

The following are the expected outcomes and outputs of the project:

Firstly, it was expected that the implementation of this project will result to the completion and funding of a National Action Plan (NAP) that should be based on measures identified to overcome the barriers identified in the land degradation problem analysis. The expected outputs of this outcome are:

a) A NAP document that is validated through a participatory process, involving the participation of the relevant stakeholders.
b) The validated NAP document being approved by Parliament and becoming and official Government Policy document.

Secondly, the project was expected to mainstream SLM into Policies, laws, programs, budgets and Regulatory Frameworks. The specific outputs under this component relate to:

a) Legal and/or regulatory framework for participatory SLM systems for mangroves, wooded savannas, woodlots and fallows including participatory fire management of fallows, and
b) University curricula integrated with SLM/participatory forest management.

Thirdly the project was expected to build and yield an increased capacity for Sustainable Land Management Practices in Sierra Leone. This was to be realised through the development and testing of tools and methods for community-level land use planning; development of Knowledge management capacities for the participatory management of mangroves, wooded savannas, woodlots and fallows; developing and ensuring the operation of community-based capacities for the management of mangroves, wooded savannas and forest plantations mangroves;

and developing M&E systems to be used as management tools to provide the information needed for improving the management systems.

Finally, it was expected that once the NAP is approved, a medium-term Investment Plan (IP) will be developed for the financing of the implementation of the NAP. It was expected that the IP should be developed and approved by the end of the project, and that its financing is ensured through Government contributions and donors.

2.2 Baseline Indicators Established

The project document outlined a set of objectively verifiable indicators for all its expected outcomes, and baseline information on the status of the indicators at project inception.

The indicators for the achievement of the first outcome, the NAP, is a completed and validated NAP document that is accepted as an official government policy, and containing sections on sustainable agriculture, natural forest and forest plantation management, control of deforestation, wildfire control and management and minimization of land degradation caused by mining activities. The document should be based on a full land degradation diagnostics that include a description of bio-physical impacts and root causes, the identification of barriers to SLM and the identification of solutions for each barrier.

The development of the NAP document will review and strengthen the land degradation problem analysis conducted for this project. The production of this documentation will mark a major milestone in project implementation and a strong indicator for its success.

For the achievement of mainstreaming SLM into policies, laws, programs, budgets and regulatory frameworks, the indicators will directly relate to physical evidences in terms of new laws and regulations for SLM, number of communities empowered under the new laws and regulations, introduction of SLM into the curricula of at least two universities or colleges, number of students participating and completing SLM related modules in the curricula, the formation of a National Coordination Committee charged with overseeing the implementation of the NAP, and training for committee members in the problem analysis and strategy development for sustainable agriculture, forest management and the control of deforestation.

The achievement of "*Capacity Building for Participatory Sustainable Land Management Practices in Sierra Leone*" is to be indicated by actual evidence of community practice of SLM, and this should be measured by the number of communities that have land use plans with delineated areas set aside for forest management (at least 8 communities were expected to have approved land use plans), the existence of guidelines for participatory land use planning at the community level, and at least a 200% increase in average crown cover of mangroves and wooded savannas. Also, public documents summarizing best practices and lessons learned for forest and fire management should be available at community levels.

The development, approval and publication of an Investment Program as a government policy document, and the frequency of contacts with potential donors is the main indicator for the achievement of a *Medium-Term Investment Plan for the implementation of the NAP,* which is one of the outcomes of this project.

2.3 Main Stakeholders

The main stakeholders are:

1. Government of Sierra Leone

2. The Environment Protection Agency – Sierra Leone (EPA-SL)
3. Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and Environment
4. Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security
5. Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
6. Njala University and University of Sierra Leone
7. Local Councils
8. local farmers
9. local schools
10. NGOs, CSOs and CBOs
11. UNDP
12. GEF

3. FINDINGS

The main findings of this terminal evaluation are structured around the GEF five major evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, results/impacts and sustainability and replicability. The findings are structured within the overall context of (a) project relevance and country drive (relevance to desertification convention and GEF objectives, NEPAD goals and MDGs, as well as national development needs) (b) project effectiveness (achievements of expected results, including contribution to national capacity needs), (c) project efficiency (implementation and management approach, management arrangement, stakeholder/partnership participation, financial planning, project monitoring of outputs/outcomes); (d) impacts; and (e) sustainability and replicability of project outputs and policy/enabling environment.

3.1 PROJECT DESIGN / FORMULATION

3.1.1 ANALYSIS OF LFA/RESULTS FRAMEWORK (PROJECT LOGIC /STRATEGY; INDICATORS)

The project's strategic outcomes, their Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVI) stating indicators, baselines and targeted value dates, their sources of verification and assumptions were clearly presented in a Logical Framework table, which made it very explicit to understand and follow.

These were further expounded into specific outputs and corresponding activities with time lines, in an Output / Activity Framework table, which was also easy to follow and understand.

The project utilised modern technology in its strategic planning. For example, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools and techniques were used to identify and select the pilot sites, and the same have been used to measure and demarcate the selected pilot sites.

The Government of Sierra Leone considered that the project objectives and outcomes as stipulated in the project document met its capacity development priorities for UNCCD implementation and sustainable land management, thus its endorsement of the proposal for submission to the GEF for approval.

The outcomes are aimed at:

1. Developing capacities for SLM
2. Mainstreaming Sustainable land management is d into policies, laws, programs, budgets and regulatory frameworks.
3. Capacity Building for Participatory Sustainable Land Management Practices in Sierra Leone.
4. Approval and funding of a Mid-term Investment Plan for SLM

These outcomes are relevant for the achievement of the long-term overarching goal of the project, which is, the adoption of Sustainable Land Management Practices to provide a firm basis for sustainable development and improved livelihoods.

The engagement of two Non-Governmental Organisations, one having extensive experience in farming in the project area (PASSACOFAS); and the other (GREEN SCENERY) reputably known nationally as an advocate for environmental conservation is a salient strategy. The employments of local residents as project workers (Site and Fire belt Monitors) even make it a more salient strategy of stakeholder participation and ownership of the project.

3.1.2 Assumptions and Risks

The design and formulation of the project was based on assumptions, relating mainly to the commitment of the Government of Sierra Leone and its line Ministries in the implementation of SLM. It was assumed that the government, including the key line ministries and local councils will be committed to formulate national and sectorial policy framework documents as planned in their individual work plans,

and that they will be committed to adopting the sustainable land management policies and practices to improve productivity of land and reverse land degradation. That there is the political will of Government to support land degradation programmes.

It was also assumed that the pilot communities, local government and NGO officials will accept to be trained and that the local communities will cooperate with training.

An initial risk assessment identified amongst others the seasonal unavailability of water on project sites, inadequate staffing, late appointment of PIU, late availability of funds, late project start-up, and poor transportation as the main potential risks to the project. The PIU in consultation with the UNDP-CO always came up with measures / interventions to minimise these risks. For example, the hiring of Green Future and PASSACOFAS NGOs to take direct responsibility of managing project sites was a salient move that minimised the threat posed by inadequate staffing.

3.1.3 Planned Stakeholder Participation

The participation of the local community was assessed to be highly satisfactory. Beneficiary farmers were amongst project employees working at project sites. These people were pleased with the stipends they received from the project and they acknowledge that these stipends helped to improve their income and welfare. Traditional chiefs, local council administrators, women's and youth groups participated in project work. They attended workshops regularly and helped to disseminate project ideals to other communities. Traditional chiefs influenced neighbouring communities around project sites to attend workshops and to benefit from sustainable land management education that the workshops offered.

The participation of the local communities was more active and encouraging than the lukewarm approach of line Ministries and other national NGOs to the project.

The Parliamentary Oversight Committee on the Environment completely involved in planning and organization of the workshop and was able to use their contacts to get their membership to attend.

3.1.4 Replication Approach

The intensive involvement of beneficiary local communities and their neighbours is a good signal for future plans to replicate the project in other communities.

The project delivered training to the communities on SLM methodologies and practices. It introduced the use of SLM tools. It held several dissemination workshops across the communities. It established two demonstration sites in two areas identified as critical biodiversity ecosystems vulnerable to excessive land degradation.

Other communities outside the project pilot sites were invited to attend the dissemination workshops and they benefited from the education and sensitisation given in the workshops. School children from communities outside the project pilot sites help to disseminate information on the project to their own local communities.

Replication of pilot activities to other regions in the country is also a significant output of the project. For example, following the support to the NFF, there was a need to train pilot communities on fire control measures. Other communities outside the pilot sites expressed interest in having similar projects in their areas. Consequently, a joint workshop on wild bush fire prevention techniques and the processes for replication of SLM activities was undertaken around three pilot sites, and other communities outside the pilot sites were invited. The NFF provided facilitation on the training on wild bush fire prevention techniques whilst the two

NGOs (PASACOFAAS and Green Scenery) introduced local Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and other interested NGOs on replication opportunities.

With this, the evaluator is of the view that the potential for the replicability and scaling-up of SLM is very good, and therefore rates the replicability and scaling-up of the project as highly satisfactory.

3.1.5 UNDP Comparative Advantage

The role and involvement of the UNDP (including the UNDP Regional Coordination Unit in Pretoria and the Regional Technical Advisor) in project implementation was noted to have been very significant and useful. The UNDP Co-Management Officer maintained a close and healthy relationship with the National Coordinator. The UNDP Co-Management Officer participated and guided the recruitment process of technical consultants, attended field activities on invitation by the National Coordinator, attended workshops in the field and in Freetown. The UNDP-Co also implicitly provided a monitoring role by reviewing project reports prepared by the National Coordinator and the contracted NGOs and by completing Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports in collaboration with the National Coordinator. These reports were subsequently shared with the UNDP Regional Coordination Unit in Pretoria and the Regional Technical Advisor.

3.1.7 Management Arrangements

Based on the interviews and review of documentation, the evaluator is of the view that the project was well managed. The PIU used the Project document extensively and particularly the project log frame in executing the project. The PIU adhered to the contents of the project log frame and executed the activities as scheduled in the

output / activity work plan. There was at least one activity executed in pursuant of the achievement of every project outcome. The project log frame was discussed with all stakeholders at project inception. This was done in workshops held at several locations within the project area. The interviews revealed that the stakeholders understood the project log frame and that they were aware of the scheduled activities that should lead to the achievement of project outcomes.

The project log frame is a result-based framework in which project activities were prescribed based on expected outcomes. These progress reports were based on activities executed and the expected outcomes.
The evaluator was also convinced by the review of documentation that the procurement of project items and equipment, and recruitment of technical consultants were done in accordance to UNDP rules and procedures of the national execution (NEX) modality.

3.2 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

3.2.1 Adaptive Management Approach

The project started late in 2009, several months after its officially slated start-up date. The project management team through the UNDP, therefore, requested for a three month extension to ensure the achievement of some key project outcome. With the extension granted the final quarter work plan was geared towards accomplishing key project outputs within the various project components.

The evaluator noted more particularly that two participating NGOs submitted regular reports on progress with field work, and more particularly that the PIU

prepared quarterly and annual reports and that these reports were effectively consistent with the project's logical framework and the output / activity work plan. These reports highlighted the projects achievements and challenges, as well as the financial inputs.
The PIU has records in both hard copy and electronic formats of all field visits, all studies and activities undertaking on the project.

On these bases, the evaluator concludes that the implementation and monitoring of the project including the support of the UNDP desk in Freetown have been highly satisfactory.
There were elements of flexibility and adaptability in project implementation. The PIU adapted some of the functions in the work plan to suit the realities and availability of stakeholders, albeit on a very few occasions. They were also flexible to incorporate stakeholder initiatives, notably in the area of bee keeping, as an example. These two elements of adaptability and flexibility were to a reasonable extent responsible for the overall success of the project. It could have been a different situation if project implementation was done 'strictly by the book'. Nevertheless, the project document, its log frame and output / activity work plan remained the basic guiding implementation strategy of the project.
It is on the bases of these findings that the evaluator rates the management approach in the implementation of this project as highly satisfactory.

3.2.2 Partnership Arrangements

During the course of the year the key partnerships and collaboration earlier established with stakeholders and partners was strengthened. The old partnerships that were strengthened include:

- Line Ministries and Agencies - Land and Water Development Division (LWDD), Lands Registration and Mapping Project (LRMAP), Forestry Department
- Environmental NGOs - CSSL, EFA, Green Scenery etc.
- Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)
- National Association of Farmers in Sierra Leone (NAFSL)
- Faculty of Environmental Sciences, Njala University
- Local government authorities
- Communities around the pilot sites
- National Fire Force
- PASACOFAS
- Green Scenery

However, reports from the PIU indicate that the participation and support of other partners such as MDAs and other NGOs in the implementation of project activities was most of the times lukewarm. Other NGOs perceived the project as a competitor, for having similar objectives and aiming at the same goals. Some MDA personnel expected or requested pecuniary benefits for their involvement.

3.2.3 Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation design of the project at entry was satisfactorily maintained through implementation.

At the entry, a Project Inception Workshop was conducted with the full project team, relevant government counterparts and the UNDP. The objective of this Inception Workshop was to assist the project team to understand and take ownership of the project's goal, objective, outcomes, outputs and activities as well as to finalise preparation of the project's first annual work plan on the basis of the project's log frame matrix.

The Project Coordinator maintained the responsibility for the day-to-day monitoring of implementation progress based on the log frame indicators and the project's Annual Work Plan and its indicators.

The UNDP-CO undertook periodic monitoring of implementation progress through quarterly meetings with the project management team.

Project implementation was monitored through a systematic reporting mechanism. The National Coordinator prepared a ***Project Inception Report*** containing a summary of project start-up activities, a review of the key issues and work plan with regards to the delay in project start-up and a proposed budget for the first year. The report was satisfactorily prepared. This report was submitted to the Steering Committee and the UNDP. The National Coordinator reported regularly to the SC and UNDP on the progress of implementation.

The contracted NGOs, PASSACOFAS and Green Scenery prepared quarterly reports on activities at the pilot sites and submitted these to the National Coordinator. These reports were subsequently submitted to the SC and UNDP. The reports contained progresses achieved at the pilot sites as well as the challenges encountered.

In addition, the National Coordinator produced *Annual Reports; and* in co-operation with UNDP-CO completed *Project Implementation Review (PIR)* reports for the periods: 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010; 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011; and 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012. These reports were based on the UNDP/GEF guidelines prepared on Simplified Project Implementation Review (PIR) /Final Project Report templates for Individual SLM MSPs under LDC-SIDS Global Targeted Portfolio Projects. The templates served as a good instrument to review the implementation of the project, the risks and the progress against the set of performance indicators. They included sections on project timeframe, progress towards meeting development objectives,

adjustments to project timeframe, financial information, challenges and difficulties in project start up and implementation, good practices and Lessons Learned, gender issues and a Project Implementation Status Questionnaire (Review of Accumulative Impacts).

These reports were in general very informative and they served as a tool for monitoring the implementation of planned project activities. They periodically highlighted areas of achievement, problems and challenges encountered.

All reports, however, generally indicated a highly satisfactory rating of implementation of project activities.

The project was subjected to two independent external evaluations, the first of which, was meant to be a mid-term evaluation to have been done at the end of the second year of implementation to determine progress made towards the achievement of outcomes, and to identify mid-course corrections as needed. The second is the Terminal Evaluation reported in this document, undertaken in April 2013.

3.2.4 UNDP and Implementing Partner implementation / execution coordination and operational issues

The relationship between the Project Coordinator, the project management team, the UNDP-Co, the UNDP Regional Coordination Unit in Pretoria and the UNDP Regional Technical Advisor was healthy, and coordination between them was effective. Apart from the late start-up due to late release of funds (for which none of these parties cannot be solely blamed), there were no reported undue problems in coordination and operational issues between the UNDP and the project management team.

The evaluator therefore rates coordination between the UNDP and the project management team as highly satisfactory.

3.2.5 Project Finance

The project has a total budget of USD 917,000 that were financed by the GEF (USD 475,000) and by co-financing commitments of about USD 442,000.

GEF allocated 475,000 while the UNDP allocated US$ 163,400.00 as co-finance to the project. Other co-finance allocations were in kind or aligned to complement the activities of similar projects undertaken by the partners.

It was however noted that there was a delay in the release of funds and consequently delay in recruitment of project manager in 2009. These resulted in the late start in the implementation of project activities in 2009.

3.3 PROJECT RESULTS

3.3.1 Overall results - attainment of objectives

This section reports on the assessment of the attainment of the overall goal and objectives of the project. It assesses the potential impacts of the project on its overall goal of building capacity for sustainable land management in Sierra Leone. It outlines the specific achievements of the project in relation to its immediate outputs and expected outcomes.

In summary, significant achievements of the project include:

1. Development of essential documents on Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone, as follow:

a) Manual for Community Land use planning for pilot project site in Sierra Leone.
b) Framework for the Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management into Government's Plans and Policies in Sierra Leone.
c) Framework for the Development of an Integrated Financing Mechanism for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone.
d) Socio-economic Profile of Communities within the Sustainable Land Management Pilot Project areas in Sierra Leone.
e) Development of an Integrated Financing Strategy (DIFS) for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone – Environmental Analysis and Stocktaking.
f) Development of an Integrated Financing Strategy (DIFS) for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone; Thematic Report for Financial Analysis and Stocktaking
g) Development of an Integrated Financing Strategy (DIFS) for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone – Legal & Policy Analysis and Stocktaking
h) IFS Launching Workshop report.
i) The needs assessment study report on Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management Practices in Sierra Leone.
j) Rapid Rural Appraisal in selecting Pilot Communities for the Sustainable Land Management Project in Sierra Leone.

2. Training of local communities on land use planning. Three communities have developed their local land use plans by end of project.
3. Support to the regional Fire Force Office in Makeni for patrolling during the fire periods
4. Training of communities on fire management techniques
5. Training of communities on self-financing mechanism such as vegetable gardening and sales of product
6. Training of communities on basic sustainable land management practices such as compost making and development of tree nurseries.

7. Development of a database of species composition, diameter base height (dbh), crown cover and other biological information of individual plants in each of the three sites, with plans to spatially enable the database and update it annually.
8. Supporting three communities to develop land use plans and manuals
9. Formation of a Technical Committee for Mainstreaming SLM
10. Hiring of mainstreaming consultant.
11. Sensitization workshop for Parliamentarians on SLM issues.
12. Data collection and elaboration of draft mainstreaming document.
13. Mainstreaming Strategy and action plan outline process of modification of curriculum of Njala University, resulting to the Environmental Sciences School in Njala University having a number of SLM related courses taught and an SLM manual developed to be introduced as part of the course structure.
14. Establishment of Green (Nature) Clubs in schools.
15. Three regional consultations and validation workshops held to draft the mainstreaming strategy and action plan.
16. Regulations on SLM adopted by the Government.

These achievements were within the period June 2009 and July 2012. The extension of these achievements into actual successes and a universal adoption of sustainable land management practices in Sierra Leone would depend largely on the empowerment of the local communities with more sensitisation, education, tools and financial resources; a comprehensive legal framework preventing further land degradation and promoting Sustainable Land Management; and a continuation of institutional capacity building to ensure the availability of sufficient staff with knowledge in Sustainable Land Management.

Also, notwithstanding, the introduction of tree planting to contribute to afforestation and conservation of biodiversity, the prevention of fires to maintain ecological equilibrium, and the development of capacities to promote environmental protection and improvement are potential global environmental benefits achievable by the interventions of this project.

Giving, nonetheless, all the constraints encountered in implementation, including insufficiency of time, lack of adequate personnel with experience in Sustainable Land management, and late project start-up, the evaluator's assessed the potential of the project to achieve its long-term goal and objectives as highly satisfactory.

3.3.2 Project Relevance

This section discusses the relevance of the project to International Conventions and development objectives, national priorities, action plans and programmes and country drive.

3.3.2.1 Relevance to the UNCCD

Sierra Leone signed the UNCCD on 11 November 1994, ratified on 25 September 1997. The country became an effective signatory to the UNCCD on 24 December 1997, with the office of the Chief Environmental Officer of the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and Environment as the National Focal Point.

The main objective of the SLM project in Sierra Leone is to build the capacity at national, regional, grassroots and institutional levels to practice sustainable land management; and this hints directly on one of the key operations identified for the success of the UNCCD process. The lack of adequate capacity has been identified as a major stumbling block in the effective implementation of the Convention, since its inception. The Conferences of the Parties (COP) of the Convention in recognition of the capacity problem call for the development and strengthening of capacity, so as to ensure meaningful implementation, in particular at the grassroots levels. In the

present dispensation, that is, since the adoption of the 10-year strategy, capacity building features prominently as one of its key operations. Capacity building is a cornerstone in the UNCCD process.

Article 19 of the Convention points to the importance of addressing capacity building by stipulating: "*The Parties recognise the significance of capacity building – that is, institution building, training and development of relevant local and technical capacities, in efforts to combat desertification and land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought. They shall promote, as appropriate, capacity building: …*".

The GEF SLM Project in Sierra Leone provides a platform to develop the capacity of the key players in land management at national, regional and local levels. It addresses the identified barriers preventing the implementation of the obligations under the UNCCD, which Sierra Leone ratified. It serves therefore as an important national intervention in the fulfilment of UNCCD objectives, particularly as regards to capacity building.

Advocacy, awareness raising and education are one of the main pillars of the UNCCD 10-Year Strategy, which aims to actively influence international, national and local processes and actors in adequately addressing desertification / land degradation and drought related issues. Through the implementation of the Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management Project in Sierra Leone, the PIU has raised awareness about the importance of sustainable land management and land degradation, and has put measures in place to mitigate the effects of land degradation.

3.3.2.2 Relevance to MDGS and NEPAD

The goals and objectives of the project and the activities implemented to realise these goals and objectives match with some of the specific objectives of the Millennium Development Goals and the New Partnership for African Development regarding sustainable land management and poverty alleviation.

The 7th MDG, for example, aims at ensuring environmental sustainability, restoration of natural resources (lands and biodiversity), and mainstreaming sustainable land management into national policies. The mainstreaming of sustainable land management practices into institutions, laws and national policies, university and school curricula, and the national budget is one of the main objectives of the Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management Project in Sierra Leone. The project has implemented activities towards the fulfilment of this objective.

The project also responds to some of the goals of NEPAD as regards the promotion of accelerated growth and sustainable development, and the eradication of widespread poverty. Its overall activities were designed to promote sustainable practices in land use in order to ensure sustainable development, as a means to alleviating poverty. Specific activities focus on the removal of key barriers that are facilitating unsustainable land use practices, and hence ornamenting land degradation. These activities include the incorporation of sustainable land management principles into institutional and governance structures, mainstreaming of these concerns into production programs and policies, and promoting education on sustainable land management principles as a priority in achieving sustainable development goals.

3.3.3 Effectiveness and Efficiency

The evaluator assessed the effectiveness of the project based on noticeable changes in development and/or in sustainable land management in the project areas, a measurement of the noticeable changes in relation to the achievement of project outcomes, the overall contribution of the project to capacity building on sustainable land management practices, and the identification and management of risks.

3.3.3.1 Changes in Development / SLM Conditions

The assessment focused on changes realised in development and sustainable land management as well as the conditions of the project communities, from project interventions. The evaluator discussed with various stakeholders including farmers, chiefs, NGO staffs, women's and youth group representatives in order to solicit their views on changes effected by the project in their communities.

In general, the communities acknowledge that there have been some changes in environmental conditions caused by project activities. For example, the Makoth and Makarie communities admit drop in temperature realised mainly at night due to reduction in occurrence of bush fires. They attributed this to fire control and management mechanisms introduced by the project. The fire belts established by project workers and the bylaws against bush burning have proven to be effective.

They also realise that the pilot sites have been recuperating tremendously in terms of biodiversity. In addition to the noticeable increase in forest cover, the sites are now serving as a safe sanctuary for animals running away from forest fires in non-project sites. They realise that some medicinal herbs, which were rare to find have reappeared in the pilot site ecosystem.

The communities acknowledge the ole of the project in helping to improve, albeit for the short time, the living conditions of especially local members of the community who were employed to work at project sites.

The project has also enhanced the understanding and knowledge of the local communities in sustainable land management and its potential benefits. This has generated a relatively more positive approach to sustainable land management practices, in comparison to pre-project times.

It was noted, interestingly however, that people's expectations of the project were very high. They looked forward to significant changes in development through this project, and they believe these changes should be noticed now. A way to manage these high expectations is to further educate the people that it is only through continuous adherence to the principles of sustainable land management that the huge benefits will be realised, and sustained in the long term.

3.3.3.2 Measurement of Change

In order to determine the changes that have occurred and the magnitude of these changes as a result of the project, the evaluator compared changes in indicators at project and control sites to establish whether project activities / outputs were achieved.

Activities 1.1 and 1.2 of Outcome 1 have been satisfactorily achieved. These activities relate to the development and approval of a National Action Plan and this becoming an official document. The 2012 Annual Progress Report indicated that an Action Plan is available for development of regulations for adoption/ratification by parliament.

ii. Activities 2.1 – 2.3 of Outcome 2 were largely achieved, because considerable actions have been put in place to mainstream sustainable land management into laws, policies and educational curricula. A Technical Committee was formed to assume the responsibility of mainstreaming SLM into laws and policies, and a Technical Consultant hired to facilitate this process. A Sensitization workshop for parliamentarians on SLM issues was held and a data collection exercise undertaken for the draft mainstreaming document. The project held discussions with the School of Environmental Sciences at Njala University and came up with an action plan outlining the process of modification of the curriculum to incorporate sustainable land management principles. In addition, the project successfully organised and held three regional consultations and validation workshops of the draft mainstreaming

strategy and action plan. The 2012 Annual Report indicated that regulations on SLM have been adopted by the Government.

iii. The four activities for Outcome 3 were also to a large extent achieved. Tools and methods were established for developing and replicating community-level capacities for forest and fire management. Capacities of communities were developed for the management of mangroves, wooded savannas, existing woodlots and fallow lands and for the use of fire as a management tool. Knowledge management and adaptive management were key strategies in developing the capacities of communities in sustainable land management.

iv. Activity 4.1 for Outcome 4 was achieved. An Integrated Financing Strategy (IFS) for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone was developed and adopted by Government. Activity 4.2, which relates to funding of the IFS, is yet to be achieved.

3.3.3.3 Contribution to Capacity Building

The evaluator rates progress on capacity building of the communities around the project sites as highly satisfactory. Rural communities around the project sites have developed commendable capacities in sustainable land management. Farmers and the general rural community have been trained in tree planting, fire management, improved bee keeping techniques, and the use of organic fertilizers to replace expensive chemical fertilizers. The long term benefit of this is that the improved capacity in SLM of local communities would ensure sustainability of SLM good practices. Evidently, therefore, the evaluator optimistically concludes the assessment of the capacity impact of the project implementation on national effort to promote SLM practices as promising, and rates it as satisfactory.

3.3.3.4 Efficiency

The assessment of the efficiency of the project was based on its implementation and management approaches, the organisational structure, financial planning and dispensation, and the views and perceptions of stakeholders.

The Evaluator was convinced as highlighted by the Project Coordinator in the 2012 Annual Progress Report, that the size of the staff of the PIU was relatively smaller than it was required, giving the expectations and duration of the project. According to the National Coordinator, the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) was too small to effectively coordinate the project. The Coordinator required additional technical staff such as a Project Assistant, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer to enhance the implementation process of the project. Nevertheless, the involvement of GREEN SCENERY and PASSACOFAS NGOs augmented the need for additional PIU staff, and significantly minimised the problems that the PIU would have encountered with project coordination.

3.3.4 Country Ownership

Addressing the issue of land degradation in Sierra Leone was the main justification in proposing and formulating the Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management project. Land degradation was assessed to be perpetrated by a range of drivers including forest fires, unsustainable agricultural practices, overgrazing in animal husbandry, clearing of forests for charcoal and domestic firewood, mining activities, and to some extent in the cities, by human settlement encroachments. These drivers still exist in Sierra Leone and the issue of land degradation and its impacts on the productivity of the land and the national biodiversity have become an increasing concern not only to Government, but to sub-regional and global organisations partnering with Government in development. The evaluator is

therefore of the view that the project's relevance identified during its formulation and implementation remains valid.

In addition, and to further demonstrate the high relevance of the project to national development objectives, all of the relevant national policies, programmes and projects in the country emphasise on the importance of sustainable land management and they authoritatively prescribe sustainable land management practices as panacea for food security and sustainable development. These include: The National Environmental Policy, 1990; The Environment Protection Agency Act, 2008; The Forestry Act, 1988; The Forestry Regulations, 1989; The Wildlife Act, 1972; The Factories Act, 1974; The National Lands Policy, 2005; The Draft Land Policy (Supported by UNDP); and the Agriculture and Food Security Policy.

The strategy for country ownership of this project and the sustainability of its impacts were embedded in its design, which is the embracement and full involvement of its stakeholders from beginning to ending. The project activities were implemented mainly by Stakeholders. Two NGOs namely; GREEN SCENERY and PASSACOFAS were involved in the establishment of the pilot sites, and they have been directly responsible for the management of the sites. Stakeholders including local authorities were involved in the process of selecting the pilot sites, and the chiefs and land owners were generous to offer the lands for the establishment of the pilot sites.

All workers at the project sites are residents of the host chiefdoms. In general the participation of stakeholders and their ownership of the project have been highly satisfactory.

3.3.5 **Mainstreaming**

With regards to mainstreaming SLM into national policies, laws and regulations, educational curricula and budgets, the Environment Protection Agency Board took over the functions of the Project Steering Committee, which was established to oversee the progress of the project.

In addition, a Technical Committee was established and a consultant hired for mainstreaming SLM. This committee was supported by the consultant to produce the Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan. The draft Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan was validated at the end of three successive regional consultation and validation workshops organised by the project.

The Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan outlined the process of modification of the curriculum of Njala University to incorporate SLM related courses. As a result, the Environmental Sciences School in Njala University has incorporated a number of SLM related courses that are now taught at the school.

Upon assumption of the functions of the PSC, EPA-SL board members were sensitised and they received training together with the network of Parliamentarians, on SLM issues.

Project implementation considered gender representation, for example, by ensuring that almost equal numbers of men and women participated in workshops and training sessions. Women were included in the workforce at the pilot demonstration sites.

The women's group in pilot communities are major stakeholders and they have been consulted and encouraged to participate in project activities from start to finish. About 20% of the interviewees in this evaluation process were women.

3.3.6 **Sustainability**

The strategy for the sustainability of this project was embedded in its implementation from beginning to ending. The following elements explain how sustainability was strategically considered in project implementation:

1. Improved capacity of stakeholders in sustainable land management through awareness-raising in workshops, training in sustainable land management practices (fire management, tree nurseries, improved bee keeping techniques, better agricultural practices, etc.) ensures an adequate knowledge base and therefore a good reason to believe in their continuity and sustenance.
2. The community participatory approach that was adopted ensured the full involvement of the communities in project implementation, further facilitating consistent exchange of ideas and knowledge within the communities in the project areas.
3. The willingness and generosity of community leaders to offer lands for the project demonstration sites without excessive financial demands is a demonstration of their acceptance of the project and appreciation of its potential benefits. This can be interpreted as the presence of 'community-will' to support the project. And where there is a will, there is a way.
4. The communities demonstrate ownership of the project evident by their enthusiastic participation in project activities. As long as they believe the project is owned by them and that they are the direct beneficiaries, there is reason to believe that they will uphold the ideals of the project, thus reassuring that there is a strategy for long term sustainability.
5. The introduction of SLM into Schools and Universities is an effective strategy for sustainability. This ensures consistency in the adoption of sustainable land management practices across generations.

In light of the above, the assessment rating for a sustainability strategy is very satisfactory.

3.3.6.1 Sustainability of achieved results

The achievements of this project can be sustained only by empowering the local communities who have taken ownership upon the termination of external support. They need financial support to maintain particularly the project sites and the fire belts. They need further support to continue tree planting activities. Site workers would require some remuneration to encourage them to continue with work on the sites. At the moment, there is no mechanism in place to main the project workforce who definitely would be crucial in the sustenance of the achievements already realised by the project. Without these, there will be a potential risk of diminishment of the achievements already realised.

This notwithstanding, the achievements are with the communities who have already garnered the sense of ownership of the project, and from perceptions of its stakeholders including farmers and traditional leaders, there is a general conviction in the long term benefits of the project and the community being the direct beneficiaries.

In light of the above, the evaluators rated the potential for the long-term sustainability of the project achievements as satisfactory.

3.3.7 Impact

The building of the capacity of local communities and the introduction of best practices in sustainable land management will yield positive impacts on the local environment. Better land management practices including fire prevention mechanisms, use of organic fertilizers, better agricultural practices, and knowledge in tree planting are now prevalent in the project areas, and these are viewed by stakeholders and direct beneficiaries to yield positive impacts on the environment and improve the living conditions of the people. These in generate will improve the socio-economic environment in the local communities.

On this basis, therefore, the evaluator rates the impacts of the project on the local environment and poverty reduction as highly satisfactory.

4 CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS

On average, the overall performance of the project is highly satisfactory. Appendix 6 gives details of the performance rating for each of the evaluation criterion used in this report.

4.1 Recommendations

The recommendations made here are built from a series of observations that were noted during the evaluation process, and from reports prepared by the PIU. Some of the recommendations are in relation to the potential risks identified, the challenges and difficulties encountered during project implementation and how these could be resolved in a future case of replication and up-scaling; some are built on the good practices learned so that elements of these good practices can be incorporated in project design in a future case; others are in relation to issues of sustainability of the achievements of the project.

1. It was observed during the evaluation process that there is a big competition for agricultural land, posed mainly by foreign investment companies for the establishment of large-scale oil palm and rubber plantations. These companies are leasing thousands of hectares of land from local communities for at least 30 – 50 years. Often they pay annual lease fees in a lump sum, which is becoming attractive to land owners. The lease of lands at such scale will leave very little or nothing for pilot or demonstration sites for SLM in the near future.

   ***Recommendation**: It is strongly recommended that the Government of Sierra Leone intervenes by cautioning land owners against the massive lease of land to foreign investment companies. Land owners should not dispose of lands within 1km buffer*

distances around settlements. This will allow other sustainable alternative land use activities around settlements, and ensure the availability of land for pilot activities for SLM.

The foreign investment companies should be mandated to adopt sustainable land use management practices and they should state this very clearly in the Environmental and Social Impact Analysis (ESIA) document, which is a requirement for the grant of licenses for their operations.

2. The short-term or immediate needs of farmers and the local community pose serious concerns in the sustainability of the achievements of this project. Although they appreciate the potential benefits of SLM practices, the reality is that they are also very concerned about the immediate cessation or interruption of the unsustainable practices they have been engaged in for their livelihoods. For example, those who engaged in wood cutting for charcoal production as a livelihood would need an immediate alternative livelihood activity to encourage them to minimize or stop charcoal production.

   ***Recommendation**: For the sustainability of the achievements of the project, it is recommended that the provision of alternative livelihood activities to farmers and the local community be incorporated in project design, and as a project objective. The risk is that in the absence of alternative livelihoods, the local community is most likely to revert to their unsustainable land use practices in order to meet their immediate needs.*

   An assessment of short-term or immediate needs is required at project inception, in order to identify alternative livelihood activities that possibly would meet these needs.

3. The continuity of staff at project demonstration sites is also very crucial for the sustainability of the achievements realized from the maintenance of the sites. Obviously, the site workers have since 2009, experienced increase in their incomes through this employment, and their dedication to the work at

the sites is largely due to this fact. The termination of their employments would lead to abandonment of the maintenance of the sites and consequently a diminishment of the achievements realized therein.

Recommendation: *For the sustainability of site maintenance and the continuous realization of the project achievements associated to the maintenance of these sites, it is strongly recommended that Government takes the responsibility to provide remuneration and continue to engage the site workers through one of the Line Ministries.*

4. The contributions of the two implementing NGOs, PASSACOFAS and Green Scenery have been invaluable in the realization of the project achievements associated to the maintenance of the project demonstration sites. They have made tremendous strides in undertaking information dissemination activities through workshops and the media, delivering training in tree nursery and planting, monitoring the project demonstration sites, and promoting all other SLM practices prescribed by this project. There is need to continue to engage them to help replicate their work at these sites and in other areas where SLM will be extended.

   Recommendation: PASSACOFAS and Green Scenery to use their involvement in the SLM project as a success story to propose to the UNDP for funding to continue their activities at the project sites and to extend these to other areas in the country.

4.2 Lessons

v. Provision of alternative livelihood especially for poor rural communities within the SLM project is vital to ensure community buy-in into the project.

vi. Involvement of project affected communities in the design (PDFA phase) and implementation of SLM projects.

vii. Sustainable partnership with Non-Governmental Organisations is a practical means to ensure sustainability of the project for future up-scaling and replication. Examples are the current involvements of PASSACOFAS and Green Scenery NGOs, being a factor of project achievements at pilot sites.

viii. Future projects should be designed such that the actual field implementation of some project components is done by a government institution with the mandate and competence. The project management should oversee the process to ensure the component outcomes are achieved.

Annex 1

Terms of Reference for Terminal Evaluation

I. Position Information	
Post Title:	Terminal Evaluation of the Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone project.
Contract type:	Individual contract (National Consultant)
Duration:	3 weeks
Duty Station:	Freetown

II. Background

This project was submitted under the global UNDP-GEF Targeted Portfolio Project for SLM in LDC and SIDS. Sierra Leone was originally a forested country with over 60% of its land covered by closed high forest of moist evergreen and semi–deciduous types, the rest being woodland savannah of the guinea type. Today nearly 70% of its forest cover has been lost. The Land area is roughly divided into four physical regions: coastal plains, plateau and hills and mountains, with approximately 56% of the land is below 150m. The principal direct causes of land degradation in Sierra Leone are the unsustainable use of forest resources, unsustainable agricultural practices, especially those resulting in soil fertility loss and decline in crop yields on upland rainfed sites, wildfires on farm fallows and wooded savannas; deforestation from clearing for agriculture and mining. Forest fire prevention and control is taking place, but there is the need for a holistic approach, which would include models for sustainable land management on savanna woodlands and coastal mangroves areas. Unsustainable harvesting of forest products is on the increase and made worse because of lack forest management models. Soil conservation in agriculture is not effectively addressed because of lack of basic knowledge on soil conservation practices, non-effective extension work, and the non-existence of soil testing facilities. The Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone project was to build capacity for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone by the removal of the key barriers to sustainable land management and to mainstream SLM into laws, university and school curricula, and the national budget. This project seeks to create sustainable capacity and ownership in Sierra Leone to mitigate land degradation and thereby meet the country's obligations under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

II. Justification

The project Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone seek to enhance the adaptive capacity of decision-makers and to support the government to develop

individual, institutional and systemic capacity to improve planning and implementation of efforts to address land degradation and to promote the mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management (SLM). The project enhanced the building of capacity for sustainable land management in Sierra Leone by the removal of key barriers to SLM and mainstreaming of SLM into laws, university and school curricula and budgets, through a Mid-Term Investment Plan which are criteria to meet the country's obligations under the Convention on Combating Desertification.

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. The Terminal evaluation will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects.

III. Objective

The main objective of the consultancy is to evaluate and assess the achievement of Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

IV. Functions / Key Results Expected

The terminal evaluation must provide evidence based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The consultant is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the GEF operational focal point, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP GEF regional office and key stakeholders. The consultant is expected to conduct a field mission to the sustainable land management project sites.

In preparing the terminal evaluation, the local Consultant will work closely and under the supervision of the UNDP Sierra Leone Deputy Country Director, Programme and the sustainable land management project Unit and will also work closely with government officials, donors, NGOs, CBOs and the private sector.

V. Deliverables

The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, and/or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements. The TE will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects (2011).

The consultant is expected to:

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

VI. Reporting Mechanism

The consultant will work closely with and under the supervision of UNDP Sierra Leone Deputy Country Director, Programme and the UNDP/GEF Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone Project Manager. The consultant will also work closely with government officials, donors, NGOs, CBOs and the private sector. All reports will be done for the attention of the UNDP Sierra Leone Deputy Country Director, Programme with copies for the attention of the Country Director, Programme, UNDP and the UNDP/GEF Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone Project Manager

VII. Duration

The consultancy is expected to be 3 weeks upon the signing of the contract and payments are based upon the deliverables

VIII. Payment Modalities

Payment to the consultant will be made in three instalments upon satisfactory completion of the following deliverables:

1st instalment: 20% upon signing the contract

2nd Instalment: 40% upon submission of the draft Evaluation Report

3rd Instalment: 40% upon submission of the final approved Terminal Evaluation of the Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone Project Report

IX. Evaluation criteria

The consultant will be evaluated against a combination of technical and financial criteria. Maximum score is 100% out of a total score for technical criteria equals 70% and 30% for financial criteria. The technical evaluation will take into account the following as per the weightings provided:

1. Background and education: **10%**
2. Methodology of approach in accomplishing the consultancy including though not limited to (a) timelines, (b) data collection and sources, (c) strategies addressing possible risks and barriers and management responses: **60%**
3. Professional Experience with respect to TOR: *(a)* Demonstrated experience with GEF projects, with particular focus on design of adaptation project; *(b)* A good understanding of the water sector in Africa, as well as mainstreaming climate change into policies; *(c)* Strong analytical skills, particularly applied to project design: **20%**
4. Substantial professional knowledge and experience in the Region: **10%**

Financial proposal: **30%**

XI. Recruitment Qualifications

Education:	• The candidates should have at least MSc or higher degree in Environment, Agriculture, Natural Resource Management or related fields.
Experience:	• Should have adequate experience in the management, design and/ or evaluation of comparable projects. • In-depth understanding of land and environment issues in tropical/ subtropical and island environments. A minimum of 10 years of relevant working experience is required. • Prior experience in evaluation of international technical assistance projects with major donor agencies, including UNDP-GEF projects, is an advantage. • Familiar with SLM approaches in Indian Ocean either through management and/or implementation or through consultancies in evaluation of land related projects. Understanding of local actions contributing to global benefits is crucial. • Demonstrated ability to assess complex situations, succinctly distils critical issues, and draw forward-looking conclusions and recommendations.
Competences	• Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English. • Ability to deliver quality reports within the given time.
Language Requirements:	Fluency in written and spoken English

X. Application Procedures

Qualified and interested national candidates are hereby requested to apply. The application must contain the following:

i. Technical Proposal- a detailed methodology on how to conduct the work
ii. Financial proposal based on a lump sum which should include: a consultancy fee, administrative expenses and travel expenses (if applicable).

iii. Completed P11 form http://sas.undp.org/Documents/P11_personal_history_form.doc
iv. Detailed achievement based CV

The financial proposal should be a breakdown of consultancy fee inclusive printing of the report.

Applications clearly marked **"Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone project"** should reach **UNDP Sierra Leone, 55 Wilkinson Road on or before 28 February 2013 at 4pm.**

Please note that applications will only be considered if they have both the technical (methodology) and financial proposals as well as CV.

Annex 2 **Itinerary**

DATE	**ACTIVITY**	**Number of days**
Week 1	Preliminary meeting with UNDP-GEF and PMU	1
	Review of relevant project implementation documents	4
	Review and finalisation of work plan and if possible production of an inception report	1
Week 2	Field visit to project sites in Makoth, Makarie and Gbendembu Ngowahun regions	5
	Return to Freetown	1
Week 3	Analysis of findings and drafting report	2
	Debriefings/Presentation to UNDP-GEF	1
	Meeting with PMU for review of the draft findings and recommendations and submission of a first draft report to UNDP	1
	Circulation of draft report by UNDP for comments	1
Week 4	Incorporating comments as appropriate and submission of final report.	2

Annex 3 **List of Persons interviewed**

1. Mr. Lahai Samba Keita, Project Coordinator, Capacity Building for SLM
2. Mrs Mariatu Swaray, UNDP-CO, UNDP, Freetown
3. Dr. Kolleh Bangura, Director of Environment (EPA-SL) & GEF Focal Person, Sierra Leone
4. Dr. B. M. Koroma, Faculty of Enviromental Sciences, Njala University
5. Mr. Andrew Conteh, Executive Director, PASSACOFAS
6. Mr. Edward Bendu, Senior Environment Officer, Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and Environment
7. Mr. Sorie Conteh, Section Chief, Makene Section, Makari Gbanti Chiefdom
8. Mr. Baba Mansaray, PASSACOFAS, Makoth
9. Mr. Kawusu Wurie-Sesay, Head of PASSACOFAS, Makeni branch
10. Mr. Mammy Kamara, Community Representative, Makoth
11. Mr. Baba Kanu, Project Animator, Makarie Pilot Site
12. Mr. Osman Bangura, Community Elder, Makarie
13. Mr. John T. Kamara, Fire Guard
14. Mr. John Conteh, Youth Representative, Makarie
15. Madam Yaebu Kalloh, Womens Leader, Makarie
16. Mr. Edward Sesay, Green Scenery
17. Mr. Edward, Green Scenery
18. Paramaount Chief, Gbendembu Ngowahun Chiefdom
19. Mr. Mohamed Kamara, Green Scenery, Makeni
20. Madam Kadiatu Conteh, Womens Leader, Gbendembu
21. Madam Isatu Fornah, Community Elder, Gbendembu

Appendix 4 List of Documents Reviewed

1. The Agriculture and Food Security Policy
2. The Draft Land Policy (Supported by UNDP);
3. The Environment Protection Agency Act, 2008;
4. The Factories Act, 1974;
5. The Forestry Act, 1988;
6. The Forestry Regulations, 1989;
7. The Mines and Minerals Act
8. The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP),
9. The National Environmental Action Plan (2002),
10. The National Environmental Policy (2008),
11. The National Environmental Policy, 1990;
12. The National Lands Policy, 2005;
13. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)
14. The Project Document: Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone
15. The Wildlife Act, 1972;

The following include documents that were prepared by the Capacity Building for SLM Project during project implementation:

16. Development of an Integrated Financing Strategy (DIFS) for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone – Environmental Analysis and Stocktaking
17. Development of an Integrated Financing Strategy (DIFS) for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone; Thematic Report for Financial Analysis and Stocktaking
18. Development of an Integrated Financing Strategy (DIFS) for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone – Legal & Policy Analysis and Stocktaking
19. Framework for the Development of an Integrated Financing Mechanism for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone.
20. Framework for the Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management into Government's Plans and Policies in Sierra Leone.

21. IFS Launching Workshop report.
22. Manual for Community Land use planning for pilot project site in Sierra Leone.
23. Rapid Rural Appraisal in selecting Pilot Communities for the Sustainable Land Management Project in Sierra Leone
24. Socio-economic Profile of Communities within the Sustainable Land Management Pilot Project areas in Sierra Leone.
25. The needs assessment study report on Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management Practices in Sierra Leone.

Appendix 5 **Summary of field visits**

The following is a summary of feedbacks obtained from interviews and discussions with Project Stakeholders during field visits:

1. **Andrew Conteh – Executive Director of PASSACOFAS**

"The SLM is a very good idea for the country and more particularly for this northern region of the country where land degradation has been very persistent due to wild bush fires. Farmers have noticed drastic reductions in production due to loss of soil fertility and the lack of chemical fertilizers. But with the introduction of Fire Management Techniques / Skills to the community as well as the introduction of the use of organic manures through this SLM project, I believe is helping to minimise farmers' problems. We have already started seeing the dividends. The pilot sites are demonstrating to us that we can restore our soil fertility through organic manures. Our local capacity to control and prevent bush fires has increased significantly, and truly we are realising the decrease in bush fires since the inception of this project".

Remarks

Mr. Andrew Conteh was once a Master Farmer in the Makoth-Makarie area where one of the SLM Pilot Sites is hosted. His observations are genuinely revealing the changes the community seem to have experienced in soil degradation and more particularly in the management of bush fires. This is a true testimony of the immediate positive impacts of the project.

2. **Pa Sorie Conteh – Chief, Makoth Town**

"My entire community is enthusiastic about the SLM project. I will start with the economic problem it has helped with, for members of my community. Men and women have been trained and paid as fire guards and as workers at the pilot sites. I must be grateful that the SLM has brought employment facility to my community, although as I understand, unfortunately, that there employment has been terminated by the end of the project. And this leads me to another point, which is the sustainability of the activities at the project sites. I would like you to inform Mr. Keita, the Project Coordinator, the Government and the UNDP that these people should be maintained to continue work at the project sites, because I am afraid that the activities at the project sites may not continue if they are not there to ensure that they continue.

But generally, the SLM has helped improve our knowledge in dealing with our usual problems of loss of our bush through bad agricultural practices and wild fires. We will assure you that we are going to adhere to the principles of good agriculture and land use introduced by the SLM. I believe that this project is a blessing for us. The

only concern that I have is that it stayed with us for a very short period. We had wished that the project stayed longer, and we wish and pray that similar projects can be sent to our area".

Remarks

There is a need to manage the expectations of the local communities. Pa Sorie's feedback is typically implying higher expectations of the local community who may not understand that projects are characterised with fixed durations and that they must end at the expiration of the stipulated duration.

He however makes very pertinent observations about the continuity of the activities at the pilot sites with respect to the sustainability of the achievements of the project. His observations were strongly noted and incorporated into the recommendations made at the end of this Terminal Evaluation Report.

3. **Madam Yaebu Kalloh – Women's Leader, Makarie**

"On behalf of the women of this community, I tell you that we are happy with the project. We are happy that we are learning new ways to manage our land resources and we will encourage and support our men to practice the new ways this project has taught us. For example, chemical fertilizers are expensive to acquire, and the new composting methodology of fertilising our land is really less expensive if I compare it to chemical fertilisers. We can afford to do it on our own.

Most of us in this community relied on sale of charcoal for our livelihood. We understand why the project wants us to stop cutting our trees for charcoal mining, but in the absence of an alternative livelihood, this is beginning to be hard for us. Although as you explain that the project is now ended, we are appealing to the UN to help us with a market centre, so that we can use it to sell our vegetable products, which is the only alternative livelihood we have as women. Our community does not have a market".

Remarks

Madam Yaebu's comments reveal two things: The first is that she can realise the immediate benefits of the project and equally claim ownership of the project, testifying that the community now has the capacity to undertake an SLM practice on its own. Second, she hints on a very important aspect, which is the provision of alternative livelihoods to facilitate the expedience of the implementation of projects of this nature in future. This was also incorporated into the recommendations.

4. **Mr. Mohamed Kamara, Green Scenery, Makeni**

Mohamed represents Green Scenery in Makeni for the Northern Region. He is directly overseeing the project pilot site in Gbendembu Ngowahun.

"We the NGOs have enhanced the effectiveness of this project. We came in with a lot of experience especially in the area of tree planting, which is an activity we have done several times in the past for different communities. With our involvement at the pilot sites, we can see the physical evidence of reforestation. We can see that the pilot sites are becoming safe sanctuaries for animals in other ecosystems outside the pilot sites. The animal population has increased and same with the plants. The fire belt around the pilot site is being very effective. Our pilot site has not experienced a single fire accident since we started. I believe the project is already showing its benefits. Although there were not sufficient project staffs, our involvement with the SLM project has augmented that lapse, and this has proved that NGOs like us are essential in any such future initiatives".

Remarks

Mohamed's comments are a testimony of increase in biodiversity at the project site and as a result of this project's interventions. It signals that this can be of a universal benefit to Sierra Leone, should the project ideas are replicated in other areas in the country. It also establishes the invaluable roles of Non-Governmental Organisations in such interventions. Above all, it suggests that Green Scenery and their counterpart (PASSACOFAS) can be reliable organisations for the scaling up of the project ideas, after its expiration.

Paramount Chief Kande Kia II – Gbendembu Ngowahun Chiefdom

"As a community, we quickly understood the potential benefits of the project and we manifested our acceptance of the project by offering our land for its pilot activities. We have helped the project team to disseminate the project ides to our communities. I have particularly encouraged communities in neighbouring chiefdoms to attend awareness-raising workshops organised by the project, and they have been attending with good representations.

I have welcomed the idea of introducing the SLM into our schools as I can foresee the future benefits in this. Our school children of today are the leaders of tomorrow, so if they can grow up with such salient ideas as introduced by this project, then we can have hope for the future of this community.

I commend the project team for a job well-done. In the beginning, Mr. Keita (Project Coordinator) visited us and the pilot site quite often, but he dedicated most of the

work to the NGOs as time went on. The NGO has been working with our people quite amicably and I also commend them for a job well-done.

I would not want to believe, however, that this can be the absolute end of this project. I would think and hope that it continues, because there has not been enough time to actually take this project to other areas in this district and the country where it is equally needed.

I hope that mechanisms are put in place to help take this project to our neighbours. For one reason; if we can stop the wild fires around us but our neighbours cannot stop the fires around their own communities, then we will still be prone to be affected in due course".

Remarks

The Paramount Chief has expressed satisfaction with project implementation, commending its effectiveness through the roles of the project management team and the NGOs. His concerns are like a summary of concerns raised throughout the investigations – issues of sustainability and replicability. One of the recommendations given in the report is strongly based on these concerns.

The Gbendembu Ngowahun Pilot Site

The site is in proximity to five villages including Gbendembu, Roukohun, Makokoi, Mayengu and Dubaya.

The project established a Project Site Committee comprising of the Paramount Chief, Landowners, Youth Leaders, Women's Group leaders, and representative of Elders. The committee serves an oversight role of project implementation at the site. They were instrumental in suggesting the particular project site, although the project used higher technology (GIS) in selecting the site for the pilot work.

The project held workshops in all five settlements educating the communities in the ideals and potential benefits of the project.

It brought in the National Fire Force to train the communities in Fire prevention, control and management, and in the establishment of fire belts. It was established that fire belts must be made before burning farms for agricultural purposes, and this has effectively stopped the wild spread of fire in these communities.

Cattle farmers have been sensitised to control bush fires by demarcating the grazing area before burning the bushes.

Honey harvesting at the sites has changed method to smoking the bees to become less active before harvesting. Previously, they burned the honeys before harvesting and the fires often jumped into the wild.

Composting method has been introduced to replace burning of vegetation that is cut before planting seeds for agriculture. Previously, burning followed clearing.

Green Clubs have been formed in the schools in the localities around the pilot site. Tree planting is done at the site to compensate for lost vegetation.

As a result of the above activities, the Gbendembu community pilot site has become more forested than before. There is clear evidence of increase in biodiversity in terms of both plants and animals. It is observed that animals are running away from fires in non-pilot sites to seek refuge at this pilot site, where rampant fire incidents are no more experienced.

Appendix 6 **Questionnaire used and summary of results**

The Interview Questionnaire

National Action Plan

1. How many communities have operational, self-financing, participatory management systems for mangroves, wooded savannas and woodlots?
2. Has a National Action Plan been completed as planned by the project?
3. Does the NAP cover sections on:
    a. sustainable agriculture,
    b. natural forest and forest plantation management,
    c. control of deforestation,
    d. wildfire control and
    e. Management and minimization of land degradation caused by mining activities.
4. Has the National Action Plan been endorsed in a national stakeholder workshop? Has it been approved?
5. Has the NAP become a national government policy document?
6. Is the National Action Plan based a full land degradation diagnostic that includes a description of bio-physical impacts and root causes?
7. Does the National Action Plan identify barriers to SLM and the identification of solutions for each barrier?
8. What are Government's contribution to the implementation of the NAP

Mainstreaming SLM

9. Has a national coordination committee been formed to oversee the implementation of the NAP?
10. What new law(s) for community-based forest management has(ve) been adopted
11. Have thee curricula of Njala University and any other University or College been modified to integrate participatory land use planning, CBNFM, fire management and adaptive management
12. How many students are attending or have completed courses in the new/modified curricula integrating SLM.
13. Has community-based forest and fire management laws and regulations been developed.
14. How many communities have been empowered under the new laws and regulations
15. Did the project provide training for committee members in the problem analysis and strategy development for sustainable agriculture, forest management and the control of deforestation?

Capacity Building for Participatory Sustainable Land Management Practices

16. How many communities have approved land use plans
17. How many communities have community level Guidelines for participatory land use planning
18. Did the project publish documents summarizing best practices and lessons learned for forest and fire management
19. What is your estimate of percentage increase in average crown cover of mangroves and wooded savannas
20. Do communities have Account books of community-controlled forest management funds
21. How many institutions capable of helping communities develop forest management plans
22. Number of institutions capable of assisting communities to develop equitable, operational forest management structures with the necessary capacities for good governance and adaptive management.

Mid-term investment plan for SLM

23. Investment Plan approved
24. No. of projects and programmes on land degradation implemented through government budgetary allocations.
25. How many potential donors have you had contacts with, and how often?
26. IP is published as government policy document

Project Relevance

27. Is the project country-driven?
28. What was the level of stakeholder participation in project design?
29. What was the level of stakeholder ownership in implementation?
30. Does the project adequately take into account the national realities, both in terms of institutional and policy framework in its design and its implementation?
31. How does the project support the needs of relevant stakeholders?
32. Has the implementation of the project been inclusive of all relevant stakeholders?
33. Were local beneficiaries and stakeholders adequately involved in project design and implementation?
34. Has the experience of the project provided relevant lessons for other future projects targeted at similar objectives?
35. Is the length of the project sufficient to achieve project outcomes?

Effectiveness, Efficiency

36. Were the management arrangements for the project adequate and appropriate?
37. Were staff capacity and resources appropriate and sufficient for successful implementation of the project?
38. How well were risks, assumptions and impact drivers being managed?
39. What was the quality of risk mitigation strategies developed? Were these sufficient?
40. Are there clear strategies for risk mitigation related with long-term sustainability of the project?
41. How effectively is the project managed at community levels?
42. Do management systems, including M&E, reporting and financial systems function as effective management tools, facilitate effective implementation of the project, and provide a sufficient basis for evaluating performance of the programme?
43. What were the bottlenecks (if any) in the system of financial disbursement between donors and implementing agencies and institutions?
44. How effective has the project been in:
    - Institutional and capacity development?
    - Wide adoption of SLM practices?
    - Improvement to quality of life and MDG goals (poverty reduction and food security)
45. What has been the SLM contribution to eliciting interest and support among various stakeholders?
46. Were progress reports produced accurately, timely and responded to reporting requirements including adaptive management changes?
47. Was project implementation as cost effective as originally proposed (planned vs. actual.
48. Was there an effective collaboration between institutions responsible for implementing the project?

Impact and Sustainability

49. Are the activities and impacts likely to continue after external support is terminated?
50. Is the project getting the required support and acceptance from stakeholders at different levels?
51. What are the factors that may affect the sustainability of the overall programme, including at the local level?
52. Will the project contribute to lasting benefits?
53. Which stakeholders are key to ensuring continuity of the project?
54. Is there any evidence that the project activities will be scaled up by other organizations/partners?

55. Did the project operate at a sufficiently large scale to bring about desired impacts?
56. What strategies need to be put in place to help the sustainability of the Project?
57. Which aspects of the project are likely to be replicated elsewhere?

General Questions

58. In your own view, how do you see the introduction of SLM in Sierra Leone?
59. What are the efforts of government in promoting SLM?
60. What are the main challenges facing SLM wide-spread adoption in Sierra Leone?
61. How could the SLM be replicated in other parts of the country?
62. How could the SLM be further promoted in SLM in Sierra Leone?

63. How will SLM contribute to the socio-economic development of the country?
64. What do you consider as the main entry points for private sector intervention in the promotion of SLM in Sierra Leone?
65. How would your organization contribute to the promotion of SLM in your area of responsibility?

Summary Rating of Project Performance

Overall Results – Attainment of Objectives	Project Objectives as outlined in Project Document	The project attained all of its objectives as defined in the project document. However, the extension of these achievements into actual successes and a universal adoption of sustainable land management practices in Sierra Leone would depend largely on the empowerment of the local communities with more sensitisation, education, tools and financial resources; a comprehensive legal framework preventing further land degradation and promoting Sustainable Land Management; and a continuation of institutional capacity building to ensure the availability of sufficient staff with knowledge in Sustainable Land Management.	**Highly Satisfactory**
Project Relevance	Relevance to the UNCCD	The GEF SLM Project in Sierra Leone provides a platform to develop the capacity of the key players in land management at national, regional and local levels. It addresses the identified barriers preventing the implementation of the obligations under the UNCCD, which Sierra Leone ratified. It serves therefore as an important national intervention in the fulfilment of UNCCD objectives, particularly as regards to capacity building.	**Highly Satisfactory**
	Relevance to MDGS	The goals and objectives of the project and the activities implemented to	**Highly**

	and NEPAD	realise these goals and objectives match with some of the specific objectives of the Millennium Development Goals and the New Partnership for African Development regarding sustainable land management and poverty alleviation.	**Satisfactory**
Effectiveness	Changes in Development / SLM Conditions	In general, the communities acknowledge that there have been some changes in environmental conditions caused by project activities. For example, the Makoth and Makarie communities admit drop in temperature realised mainly at night due to reduction in occurrence of bush fires. They attributed this to fire control and management mechanisms introduced by the project. The fire belts established by project workers and the bylaws against bush burning have proven to be effective. They also realise that the pilot sites have been recuperating tremendously in terms of biodiversity. In addition to the noticeable increase in forest cover, the sites are now serving as a safe sanctuary for animals running away from forest fires in non-project sites. They realise that some medicinal herbs, which were rare to find have reappeared in the pilot site ecosystem	**Satisfactory**

	Measurement of Change	Comparison in changes in indicators at project and control sites to establish whether project activities / outputs were achieved. Activities 1.1 and 1.2 of Outcome 1 have been satisfactorily achieved Activities 2.1 – 2.3 of Outcome 2 were largely achieved, because considerable actions have been put in place to mainstream sustainable land management into laws, policies and educational curricula. Activity 4.1 for Outcome 4 was achieved. An Integrated Financing Strategy (IFS) for Sustainable Land Management in Sierra Leone was developed and adopted by Government. The four activities for Outcome 3 were also to a large extent achieved.	**Highly Satisfactory**
	Contribution to Capacity Building	Rural communities around the project sites have developed commendable capacities in sustainable land management. Farmers and the general rural community have been trained in tree planting, fire management, improved bee keeping techniques, and the use of organic fertilizers to replace expensive chemical fertilizers.	**Satisfactory**
Efficiency	Project Implementation, staffing, duration,	Implementation and management approaches, the organisational structure, financial planning and dispensation, and the views and	**Satisfactory**

	financial disbursements	perceptions of stakeholders.	
Country Ownership	Relevance to National Policies	All of the relevant national policies, programmes and projects in the country emphasise on the importance of sustainable land management and they authoritatively prescribe sustainable land management practices as panacea for food security and sustainable development.	**Highly Satisfactory**
Mainstreaming	Mainstreaming into laws, policies, institutions, budgets, etc.	Technical Committee was established and a consultant hired for mainstreaming SLM. This committee was supported by the consultant to produce the Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan. The draft Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan was validated at the end of three successive regional consultation and validation workshops organised by the project.	**Satisfactory**
Sustainability	Sustainability of Project achievements	Improved capacity of stakeholders in sustainable land management through awareness-raising in workshops, training in sustainable land management practices Training in sustainable land management practices, further facilitating consistent exchange of ideas and knowledge within the communities in the project areas	**Highly Satisfactory**

		The willingness and generosity of community leaders to offer lands for the project demonstration sites without excessive financial demands is a demonstration of their acceptance of the project and appreciation of its potential benefits. This can be interpreted as the presence of 'community-will' to support the project. And where there is a will, there is a way Introduction of SLM into Schools and Universities is an effective strategy for sustainability. This ensures consistency in the adoption of sustainable land management practices across generations	
Impact	Benefits and potential benefits to targeted beneficiaries	Better land management practices including fire prevention mechanisms, use of organic fertilizers, better agricultural practices, and knowledge in tree planting are now prevalent in the project areas, and these are viewed by stakeholders and direct beneficiaries to yield positive impacts on the environment and improve the living conditions of the people. These in generate will improve the socio-economic environment in the local communities.	**Highly Satisfactory**

Annex 7: The standard GEF rating system

- ✓ **Highly Satisfactory (HS):** No shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
- ✓ **Satisfactory (S):** Minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
- ✓ **Moderately Satisfactory (MS):** Moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
- ✓ **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU):** Significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
- ✓ **Unsatisfactory (U):** Major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
- ✓ **Highly Unsatisfactory (HU):** Severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency

Annex 8: Design of the Project's Logical Framework.

Project Strategy	Objectively Verifiable Indicators			Source of Verification	Assumption
	Indicator	**Baseline Value**	**Target Value Date**		
Long-term goal: SLM provides a firm basis for sustainable development and improved livelihoods.					
Project objective : Capacities for SLM are developed and mainstreaming of SLM is achieved.	Number of sites with operational, self-financing, participatory management systems for mangroves, wooded savannas and woodlots. Multi-sectoral oversight committee for the implementation of the NAP Government's contribution to the implementation of the NAP	Zero No oversight committee exists NAP has not yet been completed	Eight A fully cross-sectoral national coordination committee charged with overseeing the implementation of the NAP is established and operational by the middle of Year 1. Government's contribution is defined by a mid-term Investment Plan and is written into the	Project progress reports Mid-term evaluation Final evaluation Government document creating oversight committee with TOR	Sierra Leone government, the sectorial ministries and local councils are committed to adopt the sustainable land management policies and practices to improve productivity of land and reverse land degradation.

			Finance Law.		

Annex 9: Design of the Project Output Activity Wokplan Table

Output	**Activity**	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14
1.1**:** NAP Developed and Validated through a Participatory Process	1.1.1. Resensitize local and NCC on the finalization process														
	1.1.2. Reorganize NAP Secretariat														
	1.1.3. Identify and contract National and Regional Consultants														
	1.1.4. Drafting and submission of draft NAP to the NCC by regional consultant														