GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF)
UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)

TERMINAL EVALUATION

OF THE

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND MAINSTREAMING FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT PROJECT (PIMS 3413)

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Thank you

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CCA	Common Country Assessment (of the United Nations)
CDC	Civil Defence Commission
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CPD	Country Programme Document (of UNDP)
DLUPP	Development of Land Use Planning Project
EPA	Environment Protection Agency
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GFC	Guyana Forestry Commission
GGMC	Guyana Geology and Mines Commission
GLSC	Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission
GUYSUCO	Guyana Sugar Corporation
LDC	Least Developed Country
LogFrame	Logical Framework Matrix
LUP	Land Use Plan
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MSP	Medium-sized Project (of the GEF)
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NAP	National Action Plan (for the UNCCD)
NEX	National Execution (of UNDP projects)
NGO	Non-Government Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OFP	Operational Focal Point (of the GEF)
PDF/PPG	Project Development Facility/Project Preparation Grant (of the GEF)
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
ProDoc	Project Document
PSC	Project Steering Committee
QR	Quarterly Report
RDC	Regional Democratic Council
RSC/LAC	Regional Support Centre/Latin America and the Caribbean (of UNDP)
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor (UNDP/GEF)
SIDS	Small Island Development State
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SRF	Strategic Results Framework (also known as LogFrame)
TE	Terminal Evaluation
UNCCD	United Nations Convention on Combatting Desertification
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Project

Guyana is well endowed with natural resources including fertile agricultural lands, diversified mineral deposits, and an abundance of tropical rain forests. This endowment is however threatened by a progressive pattern of land degradation that will in the long term curtail ecosystem services and functions. Land degradation in Guyana, while perhaps not very visible at this stage, has been increasingly occurring and the potential exists for it to expand at an increasing rate corresponding to an increase in the exploitation of natural resources and coastal erosion. Cognizant of this possible eventuality, the Government welcomed the UNDP offer of assistance and requested funding support. The result was a GEF Medium-Sized Project and the chief Implementation Partner was the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission.

Implementation started in March 2008 and it was due to run for three years until the end of 2010. However, it was extended twice and eventually was closed operationally in March 2012.

The Immediate Objective of the project was - "*to establish an enabling environment to combat land degradation through a participatory process, capacity building, mainstreaming of SLM into national development strategies and processes, broad stakeholder participation and resource allocation for SLM.*"

The Evaluation

The Terminal Evaluation has been carried out according to the guidance and principles of UNDP, the GEF and UNEG and it aimed to provide a comprehensive overall assessment of the project and critically assess administrative and technical strategies, issues and constraints. The methodology to be employed in this evaluation was planned and described in the Inception Report which was presented in the early stages of the mission. Among the tools developed during the inception phase was an evaluation matrix to guide the evaluation process.

Two basic tools were used in the search for primary data and information – firstly documents review, secondly face-to-face consultations.   Face-to-face meetings were the preferred method of consultation and were carried out with a number of stakeholders mainly from government organizations.

The evaluator consulted 20 individuals, all in Georgetown. Particular emphasis was placed on whether the consultee felt that the project had achieved its Objectives, whether it had done this effectively and as required, and whether the project's products and benefits were likely to be sustainable.

Following the gathering of data and information, the evaluation focused on analysis, discussion and drafting. This phase started with the presentation of Preliminary Findings to the PSC. Following the end of the mission, the work continued from home base and a draft version of the report was delivered to UNDP to be released for comments. The third and final phase refined the draft in the light of the comments received, and produced the final report. Information provided in the comments received was used substantially in revising the draft.

Key Findings and Conclusions

The project has raised awareness on SLM, especially among the school population. It has also provided significant training although it has not always been ascertained whether this has resulted in enhanced capacity. SLM has not been mainstreamed, resources have not been mobilized and

neither has the enabling environment for SLM been created. There are indications that rehabilitation of degraded land is not well understood – a nursery has been established which will utilize exotics for planting on land degraded by mining. Integration of SLM into land use planning is likely, but it is not certain yet.

However, on a more positive note, the project has established a good foundation for SLM through the capacity enhancements, policy development, and tools and mechanisms for SLM that it has developed and piloted. This was in spite of weak project design, modest budget and too short a timescale and the project is rated as **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)** overall.

Project design is simple and uncomplicated – each of the three Outcomes addresses an identified barrier to SLM and makes a direct contribution to the Objective. However, the design was flawed by selecting Outputs which were not entirely relevant to the respective Outcome. This meant that although Outputs had been achieved, the Outcomes were not. Project design is **Moderately Satisfactory**.

The project was **relevant** to the identified barriers to SLM and its results are beneficial from the global as well as the local perspective. But, it had little or no relationship with the UNDP Country Programme current at the time. Relevance is **Moderately Satisfactory**

The ProDoc is silent regarding the **participation of stakeholders** in project formulation. However, consultation sessions with stakeholders during project formulation are known to have taken place – **Moderately Satisfactory**

Governance of the project reflected the high level of government ownership together and the active interest taken by UNDP. This made up for the demise of the PSC after only three meetings – **Moderately Satisfactory**

It was not possible to observe at first hand **project management and administration** (the evaluation took place after the project was operationally closed), however, from all accounts and from the products produced, the Team appears to have worked cohesively and successfully – **Satisfactory**

Stakeholder involvement in project implementation was according to plans. However, some who had been identified as stakeholders, failed to participate and it is of some concern that these were local level, communities and famers, to whom the project did not deliver – **Moderately Satisfactory**

It is incumbent on project design to not only identify **risks**, but to assess their likelihood and their degree of severity and prepare mitigation measures, at least for those with a high likelihood and high severity rating. This was not done – **Moderately Unsatisfactory**

Financial planning and management appear sound and together with Co-financing arrangements are considered to have been **Moderately Satisfactory**

The GEF **M&E** requirements regarding Monitoring Plan and budget have been met **Satisfactorily**.

Many of the commitments made in the ProDoc regarding Indicators and other elements of the LogFrame were not followed through and there is no evidence of **systematic use of the LogFrame** in monitoring and evaluation leading to adaptive management – **Moderately Unsatisfactory**

The results claimed as achieved towards the **Objective** could not all be confirmed through consultations or site visits and questions regarding achievement of the Objective remain unanswered – **Moderately Satisfactory**

The data show that **Outcome 1** has not been achieved fully but the useful products arising from project activities, their relevance to Guyana and their contribution to the Objective, show that a foundation has been laid for follow-up and upscaling interventions – **Satisfactory**

Outcome 2 sought the mainstreaming of SLM into the national development sector, but a number of elements required for mainstreaming have not been obtained and crucial among these is legislation. The most likely result which is the integration of SLM principles into the National land Use Planning process is not yet assured. On the other hand, awareness within the school system has been raised through a number of pertinent activities – unfortunately awareness among the school population does not equate to mainstreaming and the outcome has not been achieved – **Moderately Unsatisfactory**

Outcome 3 sought targeted resources for SLM mobilized through an investment planning framework. This has not been successful, at least not entirely. While a good foundation has been laid through the technical investigations and reports and the Investment Framework, resources have not been mobilized and this Outcome has only been partly achieved – **Moderately Satisfactory**

The project targeted capacity building for SLM, mainstreaming SLM into the land use planning process, and mobilizing of resources for SLM. Capacity building has been partly achieved, mainstreaming is still elusive, and although resources have not been mobilized, the framework has been set up. The enabling environment sought by the Project Objective is still some way from being achieved, however, a foundation has been laid. The project has not been entirely **effective** not because of implementation weaknesses but because of design flaws and overly optimistic expectations – **Moderately Satisfactory**

Sustainability The project has worked successfully through existing administrative structures and this has created a strong sense of ownership. This, coupled with assurances of the continuing interest of key institutions in the work started by the project, augur well for the institutional and social sustainability of project products, services and other benefits, at least at the central level, institutional sustainability is **Highly Likely.** The Medium Term Investment Plan produced by the project provides little detail on current or potential investments on SLM and means through which funding resources could be accessed. This will depend on the right institutional and policy frameworks and financial sustainability is only **Moderately Likely**. The rehabilitation of degraded land by planting exotics does not contribute to environmental sustainability and the project needed to take into account the changing climate. In the short term, and without a fair degree of further research, investigation and analysis, environmental sustainability is **Moderately Unlikely**.

Recommendations

As the project is well and truly closed operationally, these recommendations are for the benefit of future projects. They therefore incorporate the key lessons that have emerged from this evaluation.

7.1   Issue: Exit strategy

The project has produced a good Sustainability Matrix identifying potential beneficiaries but did not take it to the next important step of obtaining firm commitments from those inheriting the project's products and services.

Recommendation:
It is recommended to GLSC to utilize any remaining funds to organize an Exit Strategy Workshop to achieve consensus on who is taking over the responsibility both for unfinished work as well as for products and benefits that need to be "adopted" and sustained by someone else.

7.2   Issue: Timing of Terminal Evaluations

The TE took place five months after project closure. The PIU had disbanded and both the government and UNDP had moved on to other and more pressing priorities. As a result, it was difficult to arrange firm appointments and many were not kept. Of those that did take place, the interviewee had to be reminded and briefed about the project. The PIU had disbanded and it was not possible to explore their involvement in the project. At the presentation on preliminary findings to the PSC, the Project Associate (de facto Project Manager) was absent and apart from UNDP and the Implementing Partner there was only one other member, even after personal phone calls from the chair. The project had gone completely cold.

Recommendation:

It is recommended to UNDP that Terminal Evaluations are carried out before a project is closed operationally, ideally between 6 and 4 months before project closure and when the Project Final Report and the last PIR are available, at least in draft.

7.3   Issue: Project Steering Committee

The Project Steering Committee stopped functioning after three meetings and there was a hiatus of three years before it met again, three days after the project had closed, thus denying the project the benefit of the collegial policy, guidance, support and accountability normally coming from a PSC. The fact that the members were very senior officials and they were very busy was given as the reason. This is very plausible and has led some UNDP offices to adopt a two-tier arrangement comprising a small Project Executive Board at senior level, and a broader-based Technical Advisory Committee.

Recommendation:

It is recommended to UNDP that in order to avoid the conundrum posed by the seniority/executive requirement of a PSC *vs* a less senior/more technical advisory function, it issues guidance to Country Offices to split project governance into two tiers, namely, an Executive Board to make policy and accountability decisions and a Technical Advisory Committee to provide guidance, advice and support for the PIU.

7.4 Issue: Project design

The structure and design of this project was flawed. Terms such as "enabling environment", "capacity" and "mainstreaming" seemed to be misunderstood, and certain elements pertaining to these terms were absent from project design. The Indicators did not comply with the SMART requirements and most were not relevant to the Outcomes. There was also discontinuity between the Outputs and Outcomes such that the project may have achieved its Outputs and satisfied its Indicators but still not achieved its Outcomes and Objective.

Recommendation:

It is recommended to UNDP and the GEF that following the production of project formulation guidance in the form of a Handbook for Project Formulation which is closely allied with the Project Evaluation Handbook, more thorough vetting is carried out of the integrity and robustness of project design at the initial approval stages.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 The Project

1.1.1 Background

When the GEF became a financial mechanism of the UNCCD, Land Degradation became a new Focal Area of the GEF and Country Parties were given access to GEF resources through the Operational Programme 15 for Sustainable Land Management (SLM) as a means to maintaining and improving ecosystem integrity in the context of sustainable development. Subsequently, UNDP/GEF tested several approaches to facilitating and streamlining access by LDCs and SIDS to OP 15, with mixed results and an umbrella approach was proposed to answer to these various needs. The primary goal of the umbrella project was to develop capacities and mainstream for effective mitigation of land degradation through sustainable land management in selected LDC and SIDS and Guyana was offered the possibility of requesting an expedited medium-sized project (MSP) under the Umbrella Project. The goal was that by the end of the project, Guyana will have begun a process of capacity development and mainstreaming, elaborated its NAP, and produced a Medium-Term National Investment Plan for SLM together with its Coordinated Resource Mobilization Plan as part of the NAP elaboration process.

Guyana is well endowed with natural resources including fertile agricultural lands, diversified mineral deposits, and an abundance of tropical rain forests. This endowment is however threatened by a progressive pattern of land degradation that will in the long term curtail ecosystem services and functions. Land degradation in Guyana, while perhaps not very visible at this stage, has been increasingly occurring and the potential exists for it to expand at an increasing rate corresponding to an increase in the exploitation of natural resources and coastal erosion. Change in land use has been due to a rapid upsurge in economic activity over the last 10 years, in particular the sectors of agriculture, forestry, and mining, with the expansion in state land leases for these commercial activities. Cognizant of this possible eventuality, the Government welcomed the UNDP offer through the Umbrella Project and requested assistance in sourcing funding support. The result was a project designed to apply the acquired funds to combat the land degradation trend which was appearing.

1.1.2 Immediate Objective and Outcomes of the project

This was a GEF Medium-Sized Project. Implementation started in March 2008 and it was due to run for three years until the end of 2010 according to PIR2009. By the PIR2010 the termination date had been extended to June 2011 and according to the PIR2011 this was extended further to October 2011. According to the UNDP Guyana website[1], the project was extended further and eventually was closed operationally in March 2012.

The project was meant to respond to the threats and barriers that had been identified and according to the revised LogFrame (as in the ToRs), its **Immediate Objective** was - "*to establish an enabling environment to combat land degradation through a participatory process, capacity building, mainstreaming of SLM into national development strategies and processes, broad stakeholder participation and resource allocation for SLM.*"

It was expected to reach this objective by attaining four **Outcomes**:
Outcome 1: Increased individual and institutional capacity for planning SLM at the national and regional level
Outcome 2: Mainstreaming and harmonization of SLM into the development framework
Outcome 3: Resources for SLM implementation mobilized within an investment planning framework

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[1] See http://www.undp.org.gy/web/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=97

Outcome 4: Effective project management through learning, evaluation and adaptive management

Each of the Outcomes had a cluster of Outputs and activities.

1.1.3 Key stakeholders

The ProDoc identified a number of stakeholders for the project and noted the various roles which ranged from membership of the PSC, to collaborators and beneficiaries. The Implementing Partner was the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission (GLSC). Partnerships and stakeholder participation are discussed in section 3.4.

1.2   The evaluation

1.2.1 The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Principles

In accordance with the monitoring and evaluation policy of the GEF[2], this evaluation is guided by, and has applied, the following principles:

Independence   The Evaluator is independent and has not been engaged in the Project activities, nor was he responsible in the past for the design, implementation or supervision of the project.

Credibility   This evaluation has been based on data and observations which are considered reliable and dependable with reference to the quality of instruments and procedures and analysis used to collect and interpret information.

Utility   The Evaluator strived to be as well-informed as possible and this ensuing report is considered as relevant, timely and as concise as possible. In an attempt to be of maximum benefit to stakeholders, the report presents in a complete and balanced way the evidence, findings and issues, conclusions and recommendations.

Impartiality   The Evaluator endeavoured to provide a comprehensive and balanced presentation of strengths and weaknesses of the project. The evaluation process has been impartial in all stages and taken into account all the views received from stakeholders.

Transparency   The Evaluator conveyed in as open a manner as possible the purpose of the evaluation, the criteria applied and the intended use of the findings. This evaluation report aims to provide transparent information on its sources, methodologies and approach.

Disclosure   This report serves as a mechanism through which the findings and lessons identified in the evaluation are disseminated to policymakers, operational staff, beneficiaries, the general public and other stakeholders.

Ethical   The Evaluator has respected the right of institutions and individuals to provide information in confidence and the sources of specific information and opinions in this report are not disclosed except where necessary and then only after confirmation with the consultee.

Participation   This evaluation has been carried out with the participation of in-country stakeholders, including the GEF OFP, as well as other national stakeholders such as project managers involved in project implementation. This participatory approach has provided an opportunity to project beneficiaries to participate in the learning process with the GEF and to enable the GEF partnership to learn from them.

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[2] Global Environment Facility Evaluation Office (2010) *The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy 2010*. Washington.

Competencies and Capacities The credentials of the Evaluator in terms of his expertise, seniority and experience as required by the terms of reference (Annex 1) are provided in Annex 2; and methodology for the assessment of results and performance is described below (section 1.3).

1.2.2 Evaluation objectives and Terms of Reference

The Terminal Evaluation is intended to provide a comprehensive overall assessment of the project and serves as an opportunity to critically assess administrative and technical strategies, issues and constraints. The evaluation sets about attempting to provide answers to the following questions:

- Did the project identify and respond to a real need in Guyana and to the objectives of the GEF? (= relevance and design)
- Did it do it well? (= efficiency)
- Did it achieve the targeted results? (= effectiveness)
- Are the results sustainable? (= sustainability)

According to the Terms of Reference (Annex 1), this TE is being carried out to:
- Assess overall performance against the project objectives as set out in the Project Document and other related documents
- Assess project relevance to national priorities, as well as UNDP and GEF strategic objectives
- Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the project
- Critically analyze the implementation and management arrangements of the project
- Assess the sustainability of the project interventions
- Document lessons and best practices concerning project design, implementation and management which may be of relevance to other projects in the country and elsewhere in the world

1.2.3 Mission activities and assignment timeline

The evaluation was conducted by a sole evaluator who commenced work from homebase in late July and culminated in the delivery of the Inception Report. He then arrived in Georgetown on 10 August and consulted widely with stakeholders before undertaking a day trip to the area along the Soesdyke to Yarrowkabra highway. The locality served as the case study area for the Resource Valuation and Watershed Analysis studies. Unfortunately, security considerations prevented any travel to and from Linden where some local government stakeholders may have been available. The evaluator presented his Preliminary Findings to a PSC meeting comprising representatives from GLSC, UNDP and EPA on 20 August and the mission ended on the next day.

Following a period of about ten days, the evaluator delivered a draft version of his report and invited comments from stakeholders. The draft report has been reviewed in the light of comments received and this final Terminal Evaluation Report is the result.

A detailed schedule and time line for the evaluation is in Annex 3.

1.3   Methodology and approach

The methodology employed in this evaluation was according to UNDP guidance[3]. It was planned and described in the Inception Report which was presented a few days before the mission. Among

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[3] UNDP Evaluation Office (2012) *Project level Evaluation - Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects*

the tools developed during the inception phase was an evaluation matrix to guide the evaluation process. This is in Annex 4.

Two basic tools were used in the search for primary data and information – firstly documents review, secondly face-to-face consultations. Face-to-face meetings were the preferred method of consultation and were carried out with a wide catchment of stakeholders. Triangulation was used to ensure that empirical evidence collected from one source, for example documentation such as reports, was validated from other sources, for example through interviews. Sometimes, the information was not available in document form and only available from consultations. In this situation, the evaluator sought to corroborate opinions expressed and information given, by posing the same questions to more than one consultee.

1.3.1 Evaluation boundaries and limitations

Some difficulties may have been created by the fact that the project had closed some four months prior to the evaluation and although the Project Associate (who functioned as *de facto* Project Manager) kindly made herself available in principle, she was on leave and therefore not as available as an incumbent Project Manager would be. This may have been one of the reasons why some appointments did not work out. I turned up at the appointed time to each of the 11 appointments indicated in my schedule prepared by the UNDP/Project Team, however, over 50% of the appointments were either cancelled or they had not been confirmed and the interviewee was therefore totally unprepared. Another reason for this may have been the fact that the PSC had stopped functioning for the better part of the project duration, some three and a half years earlier, before meeting again a few days after the formal closure of the project in March 2012. Some of those consulted appeared unsure of themselves and had to be briefed by the evaluator even though they had been members of the PSC – the project had gone totally cold.

Another limitation was the time available for site visits and the lack of planning for such visits. The evaluator was taken by the Project Team to visit one (in Region 4) of the localities where the project had been active (see Annex 5) but as a result of the security situation, no stakeholders were present and no consultations could be carried out. While accepting that the project had an upstream focus with few incursions at the community level, it had been active in Region 1 and it may have been more fruitful for the Project Team to organize a visit to that locality.

1.3.2 The approach adopted

The evaluation process comprised three phases. The first phase was one of data and information gathering. It started with a review of relevant documents made available electronically by UNDP and the Project Team. In addition, relevant websites were also visited and studied. Soon after his arrival in Georgetown, the evaluator received extensive briefings and additional documentation. Following this, the evaluator embarked on a broad programme of consultations with key stakeholders in Georgetown. The aim was to capture as broad a catchment of views and opinions as possible within the time available.

The second phase focused on analysis, discussion and drafting. This phase started with the presentation of Preliminary Findings to UNDP and other key stakeholders. Following the end of the mission, the work continued from home base and this phase concluded with the production of a draft version of the report. This was forwarded to UNDP to be released for comments.

The third and final phase refined the draft in the light of the comments received, and produced this final report. Information provided in the comments received was used substantially in revising the draft and where there was a difference of opinion between the comment and the original text, this has been acknowledged in the text or in a footnote.

Guidance provided by GEF and UNDP, was adhered to in undertaking this terminal evaluation. As noted in the Acknowledgements, the evaluator benefited greatly from the wide spectrum of views, opinions and advice that he received during the course of his work. However, the conclusions reached and the recommendations made, represent the independent views of the evaluator alone.

1.3.3 Documents reviewed and consulted

The Terms of Reference provided an extensive list of documents for review, and the response to the evaluator's request for additional relevant documents was in most cases swift by both UNDP and the Project Team. References to documentation are noted in this report, in most cases, in footnotes. The full list of documents reviewed and/or consulted is in Annex 6 which also contains a short list of the websites that were visited and reviewed.

1.3.4 Consultations

Consultations by the evaluator took place exclusively in Georgetown and the evaluator consulted 20 individuals in all. The greater majority were government officials and technical specialists (80%).

Most meetings followed the same pattern, namely, a brief introduction on the purpose of the mission followed by an identification of the relationship that the consultee had with the project, if any, and his/her views on the project. Particular emphasis was placed on whether the consultee felt that the project had achieved its Objectives, whether it had done this effectively and as required, and whether the project's products and benefits were likely to be sustainable. The evaluator gave an undertaking that the sources of information will not be disclosed unless this was important for the report and in such cases, only with the agreement of the source.

A full list of persons met and consulted by the evaluator is to be found in Annex 7.

1.3.5 The basis for evaluation

The basis for the terminal evaluation has been the ProDoc which is the signed contract for delivery of certain agreed results, products and services. Signatories bind themselves through the ProDoc and are accountable on that basis. As noted by GEF, "*the results framework included in the project appraisal document submitted to the GEF for approval/endorsement by the CEO establishes project outcome expectations. At the time of project completion, these ex-ante expectations generally form a yard stick for assessment of outcome achievements.*"[4] In particular, the Logical Framework Matrix (LogFrame) or Stratetgic Results Framework (SRF) captures the essence of the ProDoc and the project.

During the life of this project, some minor changes were carried out on the LogFrame scope and these are discussed in section 3.5.2 below. The LogFrame served to guide this evaluation together with Annual Work Plans, Quarterly Reports, and the annual accounting to the GEF through the PIRs.

1.3.6 The rating system

GEF guidance requires certain project aspects to be addressed by a terminal evaluation and a commentary, analysis and rating is required for each of:
>   Project concept and design
>   Stakeholder participation in project formulation

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[4] GEF Evaluation Office, *Annual Performance Report 2008*. GEF Council Paper GEF/ME/C.35/Inf. 5, May 28, 2009

Implementation approach
Monitoring and evaluation
Stakeholder participation
Attainment of Outcomes and achievement of Objective

These aspects, which form the framework of the core sections of this report, are augmented as considered necessary to also address issues that arose during the evaluation.

Each of the aspects has been rated separately with brief justifications based on findings. In addition, the various project elements have also been rated, as has the project as a whole.

According to GEF guidance[5], when rating the project's outcomes, *relevance* and *effectiveness* are to be considered as critical criteria – satisfactory performance on relevance and effectiveness is essential to satisfactory performance overall. This means that the overall outcomes rating of the project may not be higher than the lowest rating on relevance and effectiveness. Thus, to have an overall satisfactory rating for outcomes, the project must have at least satisfactory ratings on both relevance and effectiveness.

The standard GEF rating system was applied, namely:

Highly Satisfactory (HS): The project has no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
Satisfactory (S): The project has minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
Moderately Satisfactory (MS): The project has moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): The project has significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
Unsatisfactory (U): The project has major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The project has severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency

The rating of various elements of the project is necessarily subjective but it is carried out according to GEF guidance and ethics, and based on the experience of the evaluator. A score of Highly Satisfactory is not common (around 4%)[6] since it can only be applied in situations which are exceptional and where no improvement is possible. At the other end of the scale, a score of Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) is also not common (1%) and the greater part of projects and project elements are rated in the Satisfactory (S) to Moderately Satisfactory (MU) quartile (76%).

1.4   Structure of this report

The evaluator made an effort to keep this report brief, to the point and easy to understand. It is made up of four substantive parts guided by the structure and scope in the ToRs (Annex 1) which reflect GEF generic guidance[7] and is according to the standards established by UNEG[8].

Following the executive summary that encapsulates the essence of the information contained in the report, the first part provides the introduction and the background to the assignment. It starts with a

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[5] *Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations.* Global Environment Facility, Evaluation Office. Evaluation Document No.3. 2008
[6] GEF Evaluation Office, *Annual Performance Report 2008*. GEF Council Paper GEF/ME/C.35/Inf. 5, May 28, 2009
[7] Global Environment Facility Evaluation Office (2008) *Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations*. Evaluation Document No.3.
[8] UNEG United Nations Evaluation Group (2005) *Standards for Evaluation in the UN System*.

brief introduction to the project and it then explains the purpose of the evaluation, exactly what was evaluated and the methods used.

The next part is the main substantive part of this report and comprises four inter-related sections. It presents the findings of the evaluation exercise in terms of the basic project concept and design, its implementation, administration and management, its achievements, results and impacts, 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.

The third part is the conclusions section which gathers together a summary of the ratings given and conclusions that had been reached throughout the rest of the report and augments them to create a cohesive ending arising from the investigation. This section in turn leads to the final section comprising the recommendations.

A number of annexes provide supplementary information.

2 FINDINGS: PROJECT CONCEPT, DESIGN AND RELEVANCE

2.1 Project concept and design

The project arose out of a desire to prevent (as well as remedy) land degradation and manage land in a sustainable manner, hence its Objective to create an enabling environment to combat land degradation. It set about doing this by addressing the three barriers that had been identified, namely – fragmented policies and overlapping mandates, weak capacity at the individual, institutional, and system levels, and financial constraints. These three were adopted as the three project components and each, in turn, led to an Outcome focussing on individual and institutional capacity, mainstreaming and harmonization of SLM into the development framework, and resources mobilization within an investment planning framework, respectively.

The project design is illustrated in the following diagram –
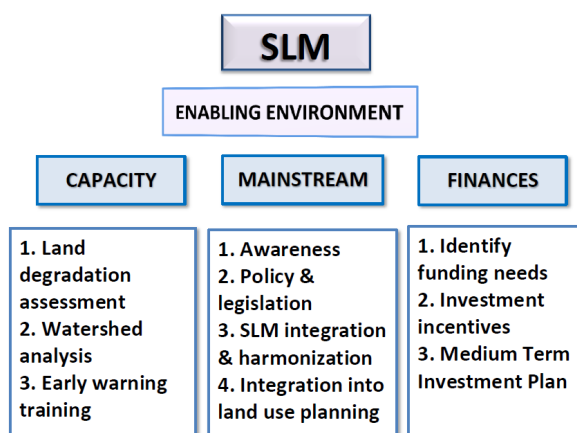
The three boxes at the base of the pyramid are the Activities and Outputs that have been targeted by the project. These are meant to contribute to the achievement of the three Outcomes namely Capacity Building, Mainstreaming and Resources Mobilization. The Outcomes, in turn, contribute to the Project Objective which was to create an enabling environment for SLM in Guyana. The design is simple and uncomplicated – each of the three Outcomes addresses an identified barrier to SLM and makes a direct contribution to the Objective.

The ProDoc as well as the revised LogFrame both had an Outcome 4, Effective Project Management. However, in the results based management approach adopted by UNDP, project management is not an outcome but a means through which outcomes are achieved. This is a deficiency in project design.

Apart from seeing project management as an outcome, the project design was flawed by selecting some Outputs which were not entirely relevant to the respective Outcome (such as Outcome 1 which sought *increased capacity for SLM planning* but was expected to be achieved by three Outputs which targeted land degradation assessment, watersheds analysis and training in early warning and natural resource valuation). This created problems for the project implementers who targeted the Outputs and achieved them, however, this did not mean that they also achieved the Outcomes.

The financial resources available to the project are discussed in section 3.3 below and while very modest, appear to have been adequate. The time originally allocated was three years and this proved too short and extensions had to be sought.

Overall rating for project concept and design is **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

2.2   Relevance of the project

Relevance, according to the OECD[9] is a measure of the extent to which the objective and outcomes of a project are consistent with "*beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies.*" In other words, does the project address the identified threats and barriers? Is it bedded within the UNDP Country Programme? Does it contribute to the GEF global objectives?

The CCA 2005[10] and the UNDAF 2006-10[11] could be expected to provide the background against which projects during that quinquennium would have been formulated. Both identified challenges related to human capabilities, human empowerment, and creating opportunities for people; and the UNDAF followed this logic with its focus on eliminating poverty by investing in people, building an inclusive system of governance based on the rule of law, and creating a macroeconomic framework and sustainable economic base conducive to the elimination of poverty. However, neither the CCA nor the UNDAF counted environment as an area of interest and unsustainable land use or land degradation was not an issue. The UNDP CPD 2006-10[12] did bring in environment as an additional area of focus but it too failed to mention land use or land degradation explicitly.

However, as the ProDoc stated, "*Land degradation in Guyana, while perhaps not very visible at this stage, has been increasingly occurring and the potential exists for it to expand at an increasing rate corresponding to an increase in the exploitation of natural resources and coastal erosion*" and it listed (as in the following table) the activities contributing to land degradation and root causes.

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[9] DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation (2002) *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management*. OECD, Paris.
[10] United Nations Country Team (2005) *United Nations Common Country Assessment of Development Challenges in Guyana.* Georgetown
[11] Government of the Republic of Guyana and the United nations Country Team (2005) *United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the Republic of Guyana 2006-2010*. Georgetown
[12] Executive Board of UNDP and the UNFPA (2005) *Draft Country Programme Document for Guyana (2006-2010).* Second Regular Session, 2005. New York

Table 1.   Activities contributing to land degradation in Guyana (from the ProDoc)

Activity	Region	Contribution to Land Degradation	Root Causes
Rice production	2,3,4,5,6	1. Uncontrolled irrigation leads to water-logging and salinization. 2. Uncontrolled application of agro-chemicals leads to water pollution, further salinization and reduction of soil structure.	1. Inadequate water regulations and management systems for irrigation and drainage 2. Users do not pay adequately for water use leading to wastage
Sugar cane cultivation	2,3,4,5,6	1. Expansion of cane cultivation into new areas and at times areas not suitable for cane cultivation leading to deforestation 2. Uncontrolled application of agro-chemicals leads to further salinization and reduction of soil structure.	1. Modernisation of sugar industry to increase competitiveness requiring more production for output. 2. Application of agro-chemicals to increase production and productivity
Cash crop farming	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9,10	1. Land clearance through slash and burn leading to deforestation. 2. Uncontrolled application of agro-chemicals leads to further salinization and reduction of soil structure.	1. Poor production planning and execution. 2. Application of agro-chemicals to increase production and productivity
Mining (gold, diamonds, bauxite, sand)	1,2,4,6,7,8,9,10	1. Deforestation in localized areas. 2. Destruction of vegetation and topsoil. 3. Destruction of habitats and creation of waste dumps, open pits, lakes and ponds. 4. Uncontrolled application of chemicals (mercury) and 'washing process' leading to reduction in soil structure, sedimentation loading of creeks and rivers and acid leachates into ground and surface waters.	1. Destructive land clearing practices. 2. Poor production planning and execution. 3. Little or no post-mining rehabilitation 3. Insufficient monitoring and enforcement.
Forestry	1,2,3,4,5,6,8,9,10	1. Land clearance and habitat destruction from log markets, skid trails and the creation of primary and secondary roads. 2. Opening up of forest canopy and destruction to habitats and other tree species from felling. 3. Indirectly facilitating other resource use such as mining through improved access.	1. Scarcity of traditional commercial species. 2. Limited number of commercial species targeted. 3. Poor production planning. 4. Destructive harvesting methods. 5. Insufficient monitoring.

In fact, as UNDP explained, environment was not an issue nationally at the time and when parts of government approached UNDP for assistance in addressing the problem of land degradation, the project that was designed was ahead of its time. Momentum on environmental issues in Guyana picked up some two years after the project started.

The ProDoc went further and identified the three barriers that were hindering action to prevent and combat land degradation. These were:

Barrier 1: Insufficient harmonization of policies … overlapping mandates among
Institutions … limited understanding of roles and responsibilities … [limited] stakeholder involvement
Barrier 2: Capacity … gaps and barriers at the individual, institutional, and system levels
Barrier 3: Financial

As noted in section 2.1 above, the project was designed to address these barriers.

The ProDoc then went on to explain that the project was developed *"based on the results of the NAP and on the NCSA process … the proposed project will operationalize the NAP by providing an enabling environment through capacity development, mainstreaming of functions, and through sustainable financing … and mainstreaming of SLM into the multiple national development plans. The project coordination mechanism will build upon existing structures established by the NAP"*. It also said that *"the proposed project also responds to the UNDAP and CCD for Guyana"* (sic). As noted above, the evaluator reviewed the CCA, the UNDAF and the CPD current at the time of project formulation and initiation and disputes the ProDoc claim.

The project addressed the identified barriers to SLM and its results are beneficial from the global as well as the local perspective. But, the project had little or no relationship with the UNDP Country Programme current at the time. The relevance of project initiatives is considered as **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

3 FINDINGS : PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCY

3.1 Project governance

3.1.1 Implementation framework

As the ProDoc explained, UNDP was the Implementing Agency for the project and the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission (GLSC) served as the Executing Agency (= Implementing Partner). The project was executed by the Government of Guyana in the NEX modality. As Implementing Partner, the GLSC was responsible for directing the project, meeting the immediate objectives and projected outputs, making effective and efficient use of the resources allocated in accordance with the project document, and ensuring effective coordination between this project and other projects in Guyana which are addressing either directly or indirectly land degradation and sustainable land management.

The ProDoc noted that the project "*will be coordinated*" through a Project Steering Committee (PSC) which will be set up by the GLSC and chaired by its CEO, who is also the UNCCD focal point for Guyana. The PSC is discussed below (section 3.1.2).

The next level below the PSC and the governance level was the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) which was set up by the GLSC and which is also discussed below (section 3.2). It was responsible for the day-to-day management of project implementation. The project was very much a foundational project and its prime focus was "upstream". As such it had no operational/implementation presence outside Georgetown and no ownership at local level although the ProDoc also stated that a *"wide cross-section of organizations and institutions including the private sector, Governmental, Non-Governmental and Community-based organizations will be involved in the implementation of the project."*

3.1.2 Project Steering

The ProDoc indicated that it was the GLSC, along with UNDP-Guyana, that had the responsibility of establishing the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and ensuring the participation of all interested sectors. The PSC, which was meant to meet quarterly, had a membership not to exceed 7-9 members drawing from representation on the existing UNCCD Steering Committee and arising from agencies such as UNDP, EPA, GGMC, Hydromet Division, CDC, GFC, and MoLG.

According to the ProDoc, the Project Steering Committee was charged with two sets of responsibilities as follows –

General Responsibilities
Oversight of the project with regards to financial and operational accountability and general guidance on the direction of interventions based on political, economic and social climate in the country.

Specific Responsibilities
1) Understand the objectives of and desired outcomes from the project;
2) Understand UNDP's national execution modality;
3) Understand, generally, the roles and responsibility of the Execution Agency (GLSC), UNDP, donors, the Project Manager and the stakeholders;
4) Review and comment on annual workplans and budgets;
5) Make recommendations to the GLSC and UNDP on the allocation of the Project's funds;
6) Review and comment on half yearly and annual project reports including financial and

expenditure reports;
7) Recommend changes that should be made based on internal and external evaluations and achievements of outputs/outcomes; and
8) Monitor the implementation of activities and expenditure

According to PIR2009 "*This Committee meets to provide oversight in terms of financial and operational accountability, and general guidance on the direction of interventions to the Project*".

With such an important set of functions, the PSC was recognized as the highest level of project governance and it is therefore inexplicable that the PSC had only three meetings and seemed to dissolve after some 18 months. It met on 10 April 2008 – eight members attended and the meeting lasted 1hr 20mnts. It met again five months later on 22 September 2008, it lasted one hour and five members attended. It met on 26 February 2009 when seven members attended and the meeting lasted 50 minutes. The project continued for a further 36 months without the PSC. According to the Project Team there had been no specific decision to disband the PSC, it just happened mainly because the members were too busy, it was not easy to obtain a quorum, and there seemed to be less need for it. As the Project Manager/Coordinator noted, advice and support were still available from the members, and they were still active individually in facilitating the project. However, the evaluator feels that the PSC could not be considered as redundant because responsibilities 4 to 8 in the list above (from the ProDoc) are best discharged in a collegial manner following the benefit of an exchange of views and collective discussion.

The PSC met again, for a fourth time, on 02 April 2012, three days after the project was closed operationally. It is surprising that a meeting such as this which could be considered the final meeting, simply referred to the fact that "*the project had completed its execution phase*", it did not discuss the exit/sustainability strategy, it made no specific reference to this Terminal Evaluation and in fact it carried on as if it was a normal quarterly meeting, spending most of its 50 minutes duration discussing the SLM Handbook and the Resource Guide.

According to the ProDoc, the PSC was expected to report annually to an Executive Committee comprising UNDP, GLSC and the Ministry of Finance. The Executive Committee was to "*adopt strategic decisions, approve the project's operational plan and its budget and meet yearly in a tripartite review meeting.*"

The evaluator was able to sight the four sets of minutes of the PSC alluded to above, but no meeting records of the Executive Committee. The functional relationship between the two bodies is not clear.

3.1.3 The role of the Government as Implementing Partner

The OECD[13] considers partners as "*The individuals and/or organizations that collaborate to achieve mutually agreed upon objectives*" and it adds that "*the concept of partnership connotes shared goals, common responsibility for outcomes, distinct accountabilities and reciprocal obligations*".

Going by this definition, the Government can be seen as a true partner in the implementation of this project. It was certainly fully involved in the search for the same goals and objectives as UNDP and the GEF; it shared responsibility for achieving the project outcomes through the involvement of its officials, both senior and at the technical level; it saw itself as sharing accountability (through GLSC) for delivering the project products; and it satisfied its obligations to the project particularly through the availability of its personnel to work on various aspects of the project from governance to administration and management.

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[13] DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation (2002) *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management*. OECD, Paris.

This was certainly a project of the Government of Guyana. The Government was the owner of the project and it was fully involved in the governance of the project. Although the PSC did not last, it was government officials who provided advice, support, guidance and direction. The Government was also fully involved in project implementation, particularly through the provision of expertise by its local officials and experts.

While various arms of Government were clearly among the main beneficiaries of the project, the Government was also just as clearly the owner of this project and this augurs well for the sustainability of the project's benefits, products and services.

3.1.4   The role of UNDP as the GEF Implementing Agency

As Implementing Agency, UNDP was responsible for administering the resources in accordance with the immediate objectives of the project document, and observing its own guiding principles of transparency, competitiveness, efficiency and economy. Financial management and accountability of resources as well as other project execution activities were under UNDP Guyana Country Office's direct supervision. It was responsible to the GEF for the timely and cost-effective delivery of the agreed project outcomes. It achieved this through its understandings with the Government and its contractual arrangement with GLSC as implementing partner. UNDP had an obligation to ensure accountability, and its efforts in this respect were spearheaded by the Country Office in Georgetown which was delegated with legal responsibility for the GEF funds.

The role of UNDP also extended into co-funding and the ProDoc identified the sum of US$25,000 as the UNDP contribution in cash.

The UNDP senior management in Guyana had the power to approve, following consultation and agreement with the UNDP/GEF Regional Office and the Government signatories to the project document, revisions or additions to any of the annexes of the ProDoc, revisions which did not involve significant changes in the immediate objectives, outputs or activities of the project, and mandatory annual revisions which re-phased the delivery of agreed project inputs or increased expert or other costs due to inflation or to take into account agency expenditure flexibility. The UNDP Programme Analyst and Associate also chaired project reviews, coordinated inputs from the participating partners into the annual Project Implementation Review for submission to UNDP/GEF, ensured that project objectives were advanced and undertook official transmission of reports to the UNDP/GEF Regional Technical Advisor.

The work of the UNDP Country Office was supported by the UNDP/GEF Regional Service Centre (RSC/LAC). According to the Country Office, the RSC/LAC provided approval for the operational workplan, project extensions, the PIRs and any major changes to the use of the funds.

The overall rating for project governance is seen as **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

3.2   The Project Implementation Team

The ProDoc planned a Project Support Unit to be established to execute and administer the project comprising a National Project Coordinator and support staff. The National Project Coordinator was intended to act as Project Manager and have responsibility for administrative tasks and for the execution of activities under the project. In addition to the Project Manager, the Unit was expected to include an Administrative Assistant. Draft ToRs for the Project Coordinator/Project Manager and for the Administrative Assistant were provided in an annex to the ProDoc.

However, the project encountered serious difficulties in recruiting and retaining a project manager.

According to the PSC April 2008, the recruitment process for a Project Coordinator had been unsuccessful *because the limited funding for the position was not commensurate with the high quality of candidates*. At the same meeting it was proposed that the position would be redefined as a Project Associate, and that the incumbent acting in the position be appointed. PIR2009 reported that in April that year, a Project Associate was contracted *to undertake administrative duties and provide reports to UNDP & GLSC*. According to PIR2010, the duties of the Project Associate were extended to include *operational support to GLSC in the coordination, management and monitoring of the implementation of the Project*. At the same time, the formal title of Project Manager was assigned to the Commissioner of GLSC, the Implementing/Executing Partner.

Among the potential questions that could be raised about this arrangement, is the fact that the Project Manager, was the same person as the CEO of the Executing Partner and Chairman of the PSC, thus collapsing into a single position what is usually a three-level arrangement with respective reporting lines and accountability. However, in spite of its unorthodoxy, and although it was not possible to observe at first hand the working of the Project Team (the evaluation took place some 20 weeks after the project was operationally closed), from all accounts and from the products produced, the Team appears to have worked cohesively and successfully and project implementation is considered as **Satisfactory (S)**.

3.3   Financial management

3.3.1 Budget and financial planning

According to the ProDoc, the project had a total budget of US$1,005,000, of which the GEF provided US$475,000 (not including US$25,000 for the preparatory stages). UNDP provided the other cash contribution of US$25,000, whereas the Government provided co-financing in-kind amounting to US$95,000 and others US$370,000[14].

The ProDoc provided a budget breakdown by Outcome which showed the main areas of work/priority for the project as per its design. These figures were compared with the actual expenditure at project closure so as to bring out any changes in relative allocation to the outcomes. As can be seen from the following table based on information provided by UNDP, the differences are either not significant or they can be accounted for through commitments – the relative allocations remained the same.

Table 2.   Budgetary allocations by Outcome

OUTCOME	ORIGINAL BUDGET (from ProDoc)	ADJUST- MENTS[15]	FINAL EXPEND (Aug 2012)	CREDIT REMAINING	EVALUATORS COMMENTS
Outcome 1 *Increased individual and institutional capacity for planning SLM at the national and regional level*	250,000	275,000	268,525	6,474	Following the adjustment, the final expenditure came close to the budget
Outcome 2 *Mainstreaming and harmonization of SLM into the development framework*	100,000	95,700	71,316	24,384	Credit remaining is significant but it is earmarked for printing documents which are being finalized
Outcome 3 *Resources for SLM implementation*	50,000	50,000	42,058	7,942	Final expenditure is close to the allocated budget

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[14] The figures for co-financing, especially in kind, arising from various documents are not entirely consistent and the evaluator has not had a clear explanation of exact amounts and sources. However, it is known that the amounts are not significant and that neither are the differences.

[15] According to UNDP the adjustments comprised the reallocation of the UNDP co-financing ($25,000) to Outcome 1 from Outcome 2; and the allocation of remaining funds from the PDF 'A' budget as well as a contribution from UNICEF to Outcome 2.

mobilized within an investment planning Framework					
Outcome 4 *Effective project management through learning, evaluation and adaptive management*	50,000	100,000	70,736	29,264	The credit remaining will cover the costs of the terminal evaluation
Monitoring and Evaluation	50,000				
TOTALS	**500,000**	**520,700**	**452,635**	**68,064**	

As noted in the comments, the credit remaining is accounted for under Outcomes 2 and 4 and this leaves the unspent and unallocated credit around US$15,000. It is not known how this credit will be redeployed but it is the subject of a recommendation under section7.

One matter which requires further discussion is the split under Outcome 4 between project administration and management, and Monitoring and Evaluation. This is strictly in keeping with UNDP/GEF guidance issued for this and other projects under the Umbrella Project. Unfortunately it did lead to some confusion, *e.g.* in PIR2009, the amount for Outcome 4 was simply reduced to US$50,000, leaving the project total as US$425,000 which is US$50,000 short of the real allocation.

It is acknowledged that some of the activities carried out under Outcome 4, such as the setting up of a plant nursery at Matthews Ridge, are not of an administration or management nature even though the nursery does not fit well under any of the other three outcomes either.

Financial planning and management are seen as **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

3.3.2 Co-financing

At the time when this project was being formulated, the GEF requirement under GEF-3 was for co-financing on a proportion of 1:1 or better[16] and the figures provided, show that the amount pledged and realized for this project was just right. According to the ProDoc the co-financing situation at project formulation was as in Table 3 on the next page.

The table, which is from page 35 in the ProDoc is not consistent regarding co-financing with another table on page 53 of the ProDoc which shows the Government/NGO contribution of US$370,000, as in kind, not cash. This is obviously a genuine mistake in the ProDoc, however, it is perpetuated in PIR2010 and it betrays a certain lack of thoroughness in dealing with co-financing in the signed document which forms the basis of the agreement between the GEF, the Implementing Agency and the Executing Agency.

I hasten to add that the figures are known to be mere estimates in any case and from indications obtained from the investigations, it is very likely that the contribution in kind from GLSC and elsewhere in the government was higher than estimated.

Co-financing (and other expenditure) was tracked in PIR2010 and PIR2011; it did not appear in PIR2009 or in PIR2012 (which was provided as an incomplete draft). The co-financing amounts in each of PIR 2010 and 2011 are the same. As these are meant to be cumulative, this means that either there was no co-financing expenditure in the 2010-11 year, or the tracking system was flawed.

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[16] As far back as the GEF Council of October 2002 (Agenda item 9), 1:1 was being considered as a modest ratio of co-financing.

Table 3.   Co-Financing (from the ProDoc)

Co-financing Sources				
Name of Co-financier (source)	**Classification***	**Type***	**Amount (US$)**	**Status***
GoG for PDF A	Government	In Kind	15,000	Committed
GLSC	Government	In Kind	95,000	Committed
UNDP – Emergency Recovery Programme	Impl. Agency	Cash	25,000	Under Negotiation
GFC–FAO Capacity Building and Training in Forest Management for Indigenous Communities	Government-NGO	In Kind	20,000	Committed
GFC – ITTO Training for Reduced Impact Logging	Government-NGO	Cash	350,000	Committed
Sub-Total Co-financing			**505,000**	

Co-financing and co-finances management for this project are considered to be **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

3.4   Partnerships and stakeholder participation

3.4.1 Partnerships

The two most common relationships with a project are partners and beneficiaries and these are usually grouped together as stakeholders. The OECD[17] considers Stakeholders as "*Agencies, organizations, groups or individuals who have a direct or indirect interest in the development intervention or its evaluation*". The OECD considers Beneficiaries as "*the individuals, groups, or organizations, whether targeted or not, that benefit, directly or indirectly, from the development intervention*". On the other hand, Partners are defined as "*the individuals and/or organizations that collaborate to achieve mutually agreed upon objectives*". In the case of Partners, the OECD adds that "*the concept of partnership connotes shared goals, common responsibility for outcomes, distinct accountabilities and reciprocal obligations*".

On the basis of these definitions, the Implementing Partner for UNDP in the execution of this project was the GLSC. It worked fully in collaboration with UNDP to achieve the agreed objectives of the project, through shared goals, common responsibility for outcomes, full accountability and reciprocal obligations. On their part, the GLSC had partnership arrangements with the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission and with the Guyana Forestry Commission, both of whom contributed towards the project objective and outcomes, shared the goals and delivered according to agreed reciprocal obligations.

From what could be seen by the evaluator, this project benefited from effective partnerships and only through these was it able to deliver on its commitments.

3.4.2 Stakeholder participation at the project formulation stage

The ProDoc is silent regarding the participation of stakeholders in project formulation. Likewise, the PDF/PPG Status Report of March 2008 where the section headed as *B – Record of Stakeholder Involvement in project preparation* is completely blank.

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[17] DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation (2002) *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management*. OECD, Paris.

However, from information provided by UNDP in the form of a report on a Project Appraisal Workshop, the evaluator is satisfied that stakeholder participation in project formulation can be considered as **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

3.4.3 Stakeholder participation during the implementation stage

The ProDoc identified key and other stakeholders that were expected to be involved in the implementation of the project. Each stakeholder was assessed as to its area of interest and their expected role and contribution to the project was forecast according to a Stakeholder Participation Plan. This information is synthesized in the first column of the following table and it was updated by the Project Team according to the actual involvement of the specific stakeholder.

Table 4.   Stakeholder involvement in project implementation

STAKEHOLDERS IDENTIFIED IN THE PROJECT DOCUMENT, THEIR AREAS OF INTEREST AND THEIR EXPECTED CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROJECT	EXTENT OF INVOLVEMENT AND IN RELATION TO WHICH OUTCOME, ACCORDING TO PROJECT TEAM
GLSC –*Project Executing Agency and Coordinator of the PSC.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into LUP processes	*Project Executing Agency and Coordinator of the PSC.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into LUP processes- Outcome 1,2,3,4
EPA –*Member of the PSC, Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training	*Member of the PSC, Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training- Outcome 1,2,3,4
GFC –*Member of the PSC.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into LUP processes	*Member of the PSC.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into forestry practices - Outcome 1,2,3,4
CDC –*Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training	*Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training- Outcome 2,4
GGMC –*Member of the PSC.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into LUP processes	*Member of the PSC.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into land management/ use- Outcome 1,2, 4
Hydromet Dept. –*Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training	*Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training- Outcome 1,2,3
Central Housing & Planning Authority – *Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into LUP processes	*Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into LUP processes- Outcome 1,2,3
Ministry of Agriculture –*Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into LUP processes	*Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into planning for agriculture- Outcome 1,2,3
Ministry of Amerindian Affairs – *Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into LUP processes	*Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into development planning processes- Outcome 1,2,3
Ministry of Tourism, Industry & Commerce – *Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training	*Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training- Outcome 3
Ministry of Public Works & Communication –*Beneficiary.* Awareness	*Beneficiary.* Awareness- Outcome 2
Ministry of Legal Affairs –*Beneficiary.* Awareness	None
Sea Defense Division –*Beneficiary.* Awareness	*Beneficiary.* Awareness
NDCs –*Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into LUP processes	NO NDCs in Pilot Areas and to many to invite at the National level
RDCs –*Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into LUP processes	*Collaborator and Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training
CDCs –*Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into LUP processes	None
Municipalities –*Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into LUP processes	None
Village Councils –*Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training, Integrating SLM into LUP processes	None
GUYSUCO –*Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training	*Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training- Outcome 3
Saw-millers –*Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training	None
Loggers Associations –*Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training	*Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training- Outcome 1
Miners Association –*Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training	*Beneficiary.* Awareness Outcome- 1 (the technical baseline studies were distributed to this group)
Community Based Organizations – *Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training	None
Farmers Groups –*Beneficiary.* Awareness, Skills Training	None

It would seem from the Project Team response that with some exceptions where it did not happen at all, stakeholder involvement was exactly as planned. Out of the 24 organizations or groups of organizations that had been identified as stakeholders, eight organizations (33%) were reported by the Project Team as not having participated. It is of some concern that all the organizations who did not participate had been identified as beneficiaries and that the greater proportion of them were local level, communities and famers, to whom the project did not deliver.

The involvement of stakeholders in project implementation is considered to have been **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

3.5   Monitoring and evaluation

3.5.1   The GEF M&E requirements

The GEF requires that all projects must include *"a concrete and fully budgeted monitoring and evaluation plan by the time of Work Programme entry for full-sized projects"*. [18]   Although this is a Medium-Sized Project, and therefore, strictly speaking, the requirements do not apply, the Project Team's perspective on the requirements was sought and is recorded in the following table together with the evaluator's summary observations on the way that this project is seen as having satisfied these elements.

Table 5.   GEF M&E minimum requirements

GEF M&E REQUIREMENTS	PROJECT TEAM PERSPECTIVE	EVALUATORS' COMMENTS
SMART indicators for project implementation, or, if no indicators are identified, an alternative plan for monitoring that will deliver reliable and valid information to management	-	Outputs in the LogFrame are provided with indicators, however, in most cases these are redundant as it is usually evident whether an Output has been obtained or not.
SMART indicators for results (outcomes and, if applicable, impacts), and, where appropriate, corporate-level indicators	-	Indicators are provided in the LogFrame at the Outcome level, however, many lack the SMART qualities
A project baseline or, if major baseline indicators are not identified, an alternative plan for addressing this within one year of implementation	Project Indicator – Number of organizations participating in SLM at the national, regional and local level. Project Baseline – Limited capacity for SLM exists and is confined to 1 regulatory agency with no planning system for SLM or financial mechanisms for SLM integration	This requirement has been misunderstood by the Project Team. The baseline as a departure point for the project is well covered in the ProDoc narrative. The baseline situation is also noted in the LogFrame against each indicator.
An M&E Plan with identification of reviews and evaluations which will be undertaken, such as mid-term reviews or evaluations of activities	M&E Evaluation was completed and most realistic recommendations executed during the remaining execution period	This requirement has been misunderstood by the Project Team. The ProDoc does contain a detailed M&E Plan following a good discussion of the topic.
An organizational setup and budgets for monitoring and evaluation	Yes, available	Responsibilities for M&E are not known, however, a budget of US$50,000 was set aside

As can be seen from the above summary table, the GEF M&E requirements have been met, at least partially.

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[18] See -   http://gefweb.org/MonitoringandEvaluation/MEPoliciesProcedures/MEPTools/meptstandards.html

An even more specific indication of a project's compliance with the GEF M&E expectations is provided by the instrument of assessment used by the GEF itself which states that – *a project needs to be in compliance with all the critical parameters and needs to perform sufficiently well on all the parameters together. To be classified as compliant, projects are required to score at least a 2 (on a scale of 1 to 3, with 3 being the highest) on each of the critical parameters and to have an aggregate score of 26 out of a maximum of 39.*[19]

Table 6. Instrument for assessment of M&E Plans

PARAMETERS	RAW RESPONSE AND POSSIBLE	PROJECT SCORE
1 Is there at least one specific indicator in the log frame for each of the project objectives and outcomes?	Yes.……………………………………………3 No.……………………………………………1	3
2 Are the indicators in the log frame relevant to the chosen objectives and outcomes?	Yes.……………………………………………3 Yes, but only some are relevant.……………2 No.……………………………………………1	2
3 Are the indicators in the log frame sufficient to assess achievement of the objectives and outcomes?	Sufficient.……………………………………3 Largely Sufficient.…………………..………2 Some important indicators are missing.…....1	1
4 Are the indicators for project objectives and Outcomes quantifiable?	Yes.……………………………………………3 Some of them are.………………………….…2 No, or else it has not been shown how the indicators could be quantified.…………..…...1	2
5 Has the complete and relevant baseline information been provided?	Yes, complete baseline info provided..…..…3 Partial info but baseline survey in 1st year.2.5 No info but baseline survey in 1st year.…….2 Only partial baseline information.………….1.5 No info provided.……………………………1	2.5
6 Has the methodology for determining the Baseline been explained?	Yes.……………………………………………3 No.……………………………………………..1	3
7 Has a separate budget been allocated to M&E activities?	Yes.……………………………………………3 No.……………………………………………..1	3
8 Have the responsibilities been clearly specified for the M&E activities?	Yes, and clearly specified.…………………..3 Yes, broadly specified.….………………….2 No.……………………………………………..1	2
9 Have the time frames been specified for the M&E activities?	Yes, for all the activities.………………..…3 Yes, but only for major activities .…………2 No.……………………………………………..1	2
10 Have the performance standards (targets) been specified in the log frame for the project outputs?	Yes, for all the outputs.…………………..…3 Yes, but only for major outputs.…..……….2 No.……………………………………..…......1	3
11 Have the targets been specified for the indicators for project objectives and outcomes in the log frame?	Yes, for most.….…………………………….3 Yes, but only for some indicators .………….2 No .……………………………………………1	3
12 Are the specified targets for indicators of project objective and outcomes based on initial conditions?	Yes, for most.….…………………………….3 Yes, but only for some of the indicators.…….2 No.……………………………………………..1	3
13 Do the project documents mention having made a Provision for mid term and terminal evaluation?	Yes, both mid term and terminal evaluation...3 Only terminal evaluation.……………………2.5 Only mid term evaluation.……………………1.5 No information provided.………………….…..1	3
TOTAL		**32.5**

The aggregate score of 32.5 achieved according to the above table is well above the minimum aggregate score of 26 and only one parameter (adequacy of indicators) is below the set threshold.

The evaluator concludes that the GEF M&E planning requirements have been **Satisfactory (S)**.

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[19] GEF Evaluation Office, *Annual Performance Report 2008*. GEF Council Paper GEF/ME/C.35/Inf. 5, May 28, 2009

3.5.2 The LogFrame Matrix, indicators, project monitoring and adaptive management

3.5.2.1 The LogFrame Matrix

The Logical Framework Matrix (LogFrame) normally provides a summary of what the project aims to achieve with departure points (baseline), targets, indicators and risks along the way. It serves as the basis for project monitoring and is the instrument through which adaptive management is effected.

The original LogFrame from the ProDoc was reviewed and changed but the changes do not appear in any of the minutes of the three PSC meetings that were held. There is no documentation on why and when the LogFrame was changed but according to UNDP, the UNDP/GEF RTA approved the changes. The latest version of the LogFrame is the one attached to the ToRs for this evaluation and this has been the version used in the evaluation.

The LogFrame is complete in showing the essential elements for the project – it shows the Outcomes that are to be achieved together with Indicators, the Baselines as departure points and the Targets that the project will strive for as well as the means of verification that the targets have been reached. The LogFrame also shows Risks and Assumptions. These elements are shown against all the LogFrame components namely, the Objective, each of the four Outcomes as well as the 12 Outputs. While it is essential that Indicators, etc, are provided for each of the Objective and the Outcomes, Outputs are meant to be tangible products of the project and therefore, by definition, there should be no difficulty knowing when they have been produced, and therefore they do not need Indicators.

A further observation on the LogFrame is that many of the so-called "means of verification" are in fact targets themselves. Furthermore, some of the Targets, which should arise from the baselines, do not relate well to the respective baseline. These are discussed in section 4 below.

As is usual in a terminal evaluation, this evaluation is focused primarily on the Objective and the Outcomes which are analyzed, discussed and assessed (see section 4 below). The Outputs are only considered to the extent that they illustrate progress towards the Outcomes.

3.5.2.2 Indicators

According to the ProDoc, the Indicators were derived from the Resource Kit for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting[20] and comprised compulsory and optional questions and indicators … "*for the optional indicators, the GLSC will select the most appropriate indicators for the project*" whereas "*those indicators included in the Logical Framework Matrix are compulsory and will not be modified.*" The ProDoc continues that the Annual Project Review Form (APR/PIR) will be used by the GLSC to submit all compulsory and optional questions and indicators to UNDP and the PSC by July each year. As far as can be ascertained no such presentations were made, at least not to the PSC according to the minutes of the meetings, and neither PIR2009, the first one for the project, nor PIR2010 reflect this expectation regarding indicators.

According to the Monitoring Plan in the ProDoc, the GLSC was expected to work with the GSU and the UNDP-Guyana "*to complete two annual surveys that each respond to two of the compulsory indicators, which are (a) a compulsory indicator at the Objective level of public awareness regarding sustainable land management; and (b) a compulsory indicator for Portfolio Outcome 1 that requires a survey of a group of land users to determine the percentage that is satisfied with available*

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[20] Fenton, Dennis and Greg Jacobs (2006) *Resource Kit : Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting for Sustainable Land Management in LDC & SIDS Countries.* UNDP/GEF

technical support."   It is not known if these surveys have been carried out annually, or at all.

The ProDoc also committed the GLSC to preparing a detailed schedule of project review meetings including (i) tentative time frames for Tripartite Reviews, Project Coordination Committee Meetings, (or relevant advisory and/or coordination mechanisms) and (ii) project related Monitoring and Evaluation activities. This was to be prepared in consultation with project implementation partners and stakeholder representatives and was to be incorporated in the Project Inception Report. As far as can be ascertained, the Inception Workshop did not discuss monitoring and the Inception Report has no such schedule.

3.5.2.3   Project monitoring and adaptive management

The Project Team maintained that the LogFrame was used to guide project implementation and this may be so, especially the amended version with which they could relate better. However, the evaluator could not see any reference to the LogFrame in either the Quarterly Reports, or the PIRs or the PSC Minutes of meetings, or the Annual Work Plans. There is no evidence of systematic use of the LogFrame in monitoring and evaluation leading to adaptive management and the rating is considered as **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU).**

3.5.3 The Mid-Term Evaluation

The project was the subject of a Mid-Term Evaluation carried out in late 2010 with a report in January 2011. The aim of the MTE was to review the design, objectives, implementation and management arrangements of the SLM Project, and assess the results achieved to date, measured against the planned outcomes and outputs. It was a comprehensive and thorough review which resulted in 23 primary recommendations.

A Management Response was prepared by UNDP in collaboration with the Government and the evaluator has obtained an update from the Project Team on the responses and commitments made in the Management Response. The recommendations are listed in Annex 8, together with the update from the Project Team and observations from the evaluator.

As can be seen from the Annex, the response to the MTE recommendations and subsequent action has been mixed. Of the 23 recommendations, only four (number 1, 2, 3 and 16) have been accepted and acted upon as suggested, while one recommendation (number 6) was accepted but not acted upon. A further four (numbers 5, 8, 21 and 23) were only partly accepted or partly acted upon and three (numbers 4, 9 and 10) seem to have been misunderstood. The rest, a total of 11 recommendations, were either not accepted or disputed, some as redundant. Some of these are supported by the present evaluator who feels that better acceptance and implementation of the MTE recommendations would have produced better results by the project. UNDP explained that "*several efforts were made to implement the recommendations but the primary emphasis was placed on the planning and facilitation of the high-level meeting with government ministers which would have positioned the project and its outputs as part of a wider policy dialogue. Given the timing of the MTE and the remaining resources available at this stage of the project, UNDP and GLSC felt that this was the most strategic path towards mainstreaming of SLM in the national development strategies. A deliberate choice to priorities a strategic recommendation should not be interpreted as little acceptance of the recommendations of the MTE*".

3.6 Risks and risk management

The ProDoc narrative is totally silent about any risks to the project, except in the LogFrame where it identifies risks that are specific to a particular element of the LogFrame and not the same risks as should have been considered in the narrative. It does not identify any risks which could prevent the project from achieving its aims successfully.

Furthermore, having listed risks and assumptions, the ProDoc does nothing about them – no mitigation measures are identified in case the risk materializes.

In the absence of any other consideration of risks, the evaluator listed those in the LogFrame and submitted them to the Project Team with a request to indicate whether they did arise and if so, how they were dealt with. The resulting table together with the evaluator's comments is as below.

Table 7. Risks and Assumptions

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS (taken from the original LogFrame)	PROJECT TEAM COMMENTS ON WHETHER RISKS EVENTUATED AND HOW THEY WERE DEALT WITH; AND WHETHER ASSUMPTIONS OCCURRED	EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS
Adequate political and social stability in the country	No risk	This was an assumption and it was met
Key stakeholders at the national, regional and local level maintain their support and involvement during project implementation	No risk to Project, Stakeholders supported the Project	The assumption was met
The risk is that organizations may not be able to retain trained personnel	No risk. Training was attended by more than one staff from Agencies. This was an issue with some Agencies because the trained staff moved to another Agency	The Project Team response seems to indicate that the risk did materialize and the project mitigation measure was to invite more than one trainee from each agency
Organizations will maintain commitments for staff involvement to involving and allow staff to participate in training programmes	No risk. Agencies released staff for 1 day to 5 day training programmes and stakeholder consultations	This assumption was met
Political will by Govt to mainstream SLM is maintained at current levels	No risk. Government has to mainstream SLM in order to sustain growth which depends on natural resource extraction and utilisation	This is an assumption which is by no means certain and the Project Team response does not allay fears
GLSC along with other partner organizations will be able to retain trained personnel	No risk, Personnel received training and some have been retained.	The Project Team response seems to indicate that the risk did materialize and was not mitigated
The willingness of government personnel to be involved in SLM activities is assumed	Yes. Government personnel were interested in SLM activities and there were new areas of exposure to some staff.	This assumption was proven correct
Political commitment in incorporate SLM into strategies and plans is maintained	Yes. There is commitment to use the recommendations of the SLM Policy and Land Use Plans	This assumption was proven correct
Effective inter institutional cooperation and coordination at the national level to review, update and in some cases finalise plans taking on board SLM criteria is achieved and maintained	Yes. It is expected that there would be an increase in SLM issues	The Project Team response does not show the assumption to have been correct, and it may have been misunderstood
Political commitment to a land use policy is maintained.	No risk. Land Use Policy is needed to deal with competing land uses such as mining, forestry concessions, protected areas, Amerindian titled lands, areas currently under agriculture, residential, commercial, eco-tourism and other uses, state forest areas under protection as carbon sinks and inaccessible areas reduce state lands available for development.	Whether it is needed as stated by the Project Team response, is a different issue from whether there is a commitment. The assumption has been misunderstood
Effective inter institutional cooperation and coordination at the national level for information sharing and the planning of land use is achieved and maintained	The data and information on the outputs of land use planning is shared among Governmental Agencies. Data derived would be shared with the natural resource and environmental sector.	Assumption appears to have been fulfilled
Political commitment at the regional and local levels to incorporate SLM into development plans	SLM policy guideline would be used in Regional Land Use Plans which could be used for community development plans since there is no prescribed methodology for community planning. Amerindian communities have been preparing community plans.	The Project Team states what could happen, whereas the assumption is about political commitment

Govt, bi and multilaterals, private sector and donors prepared to commit resources and invest in SLM	Gov. And donors like GEF and UNDP continue to commit resources and invest in SLM. There is a need to move towards private sector investments to invest in SLM	The Project Team response seems to indicate that the assumption is partly fulfilled
There is effective involvement of all institutions who have a role to play in SLM priority areas	SLM priority areas was prepared under Outcome 3 and Agencies are involved including GLSC	The assumption appears to have been misunderstood by the Project Team
Willingness on part of Govt and other stakeholder to offer incentives for SLM investments	Gov. Offers some incentives in SLM and there are other investments that could use investments	The assumption appears to be partly fulfilled
Willingness of private sector to invest in SLM	Some private sector investments require investment in SLM like agriculture due to limited availability of good to moderate soils and land availability for leasing and renting, therefore, investors would need to invest in SLM as competing land uses create challenges for investors	The Project Team talks about what should happen, whereas the assumption is that it will happen
Participation and information forthcoming from key stakeholders such as Govt, multilateral, private sector, NGO donors	Participation and information was forthcoming from stakeholders	Assumption shown to be correct
The SLM project has had positive results to be replicated at both the national and regional level	Yes, the Project had lessons learned and experiences that could be replicated	Assumption shown to be correct
Authorities, politicians, and technicians commit to a second phase of regional and community development	A Project concept was prepared and submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment to submit to the Environmental Protection Agency and UNDP	Assumption misunderstood

As can be seen from the table above, in spite of the heading in the LogFrame column, namely, Risks and Assumptions, the approach taken was to write them all as assumptions. This is acceptable since an assumption is defined as a pre-condition which is required for the project to be successful; whereas a risk is the possibility that the assumption will not be fulfilled. However, it is incumbent on project design to not only identify risks, but to assess their likelihood and their degree of severity and prepare mitigation measures, at least for those with a high likelihood and high severity rating[21].

The project's identification, mitigation and management of risks are **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**.

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[21] UNDP referred the evaluator to the Quarterly Reports which were claimed to consider risks. The QRs do indeed have a column headed "Challenges, Risks & Issues & Recommendations", however, it is mostly blank and does not identify and discuss risks as claimed.

4 FINDINGS : RESULTS AND IMPACTS

4.1 Results achieved

4.1.1 The Immediate Objective

The Immediate Objective was *"To establish an enabling environment to combat land degradation through a participatory process, capacity building, mainstreaming of SLM into national development strategies and processes, broad stakeholder participation and resource allocation for SLM"*,

The statement of objective is very wordy and it sets up a number of conditions all of which must be satisfied in order to achieve the Objective. It also makes it difficult to know when the Objective has been reached, and the single Indicator in the LogFrame is not much help.

The Objective sought **an enabling environment to combat land degradation**. Elements of an enabling environment comprise legal, organisational, fiscal, informational, political and cultural provisions that are required for land degradation to be combatted. It is to be expected that indicators to help determine progress towards the Objective should have been focussing on these elements. Instead, the Indicator from the LogFrame, attempted to measure *the number of organizations participating in SLM* – this is a mis-match since no number of organizations *participating in SLM* (whatever that means) can be taken as indicating an enabling environment.

This Indicator is not **Specific** to the Objective. Without the Targets, it is not **Measurable** but it could be **Attributed** to the project. It is not a very **Relevant** indicator even though it may be **Trackable**. This is not an entirely SMART indicator. In addition, as written, on its own, this Indicator depends entirely on the Targets which, unfortunately, are not directly relevant to the Indicator or to the Objective. In fact, the Targets seem to bypass the Indicator and the Objective and relate directly to the three Outcomes, virtually repeating the actual texts.

In its efforts to assess progress towards the Objective, and without the benefit of a suitable Indicator, this evaluation sought answers to the following two questions –
- *Has an enabling environment to combat land degradation been established?*
- *Will the "combatting" be through enhanced capacity, or mainstreaming, or stakeholder participation, or resource allocation?*

The version of PIR2012 available to the evaluator was still in draft, and did not assess progress towards the Objective; likewise for the draft Project Final Report. The evaluator therefore asked the Project Team to assess progress towards the Objective and they reported as follows: *An enabling environment has been established to deepen SLM principles and integration of SLM into work programmes. Land degradation-drivers were analysed to provide solutions. One (1) land reclamation activity was conducted by providing a Plant Nursery and office to monitor land reclamation in Region 1, Mathews Ridge. The nursery could be used for other reclamation areas in the southern portion of Region 1. Capacity was built through training and consultation workshops and stakeholder participation.*

These results could not all be confirmed through consultations or site visits and although they can be considered as valid contributions towards the Objective, they do not provide affirmative answers to the questions. Overall progress towards the Objective is considered to have been **Moderately Satisfactory (MS).**

4.1.2 The four Outcomes

This is a results-based evaluation and as such, it has a focus on Outcomes. Outputs and Activities are not results although they are important as a means of achieving the Outcomes.

This assessment of progress towards the four Outcomes uses three main sources of information, namely, the draft Final Project Report and the draft final PIR2012, supplemented by the self-assessment by the Project Team based on a template provided by the evaluator. Consultations provided any necessary verification. Unfortunately, the draft Final Project Report is limited to assessing progress and achievement at the Output level and does not refer to progress towards the Outcomes. The draft final PIR2012 and the self-assessment do focus on the Outcomes.

In the following assessments, the focus is on the Outcomes and the Indicators that were selected for each. The upper half of each table shows the Indicator for the Outcome (and the baseline) and a critique of the indicator, especially its relevance. This part of the table also shows progress towards the Outcome as reported by PIR2012. The second half of the table shows the Outputs and progress towards each Output as reported by the draft Final Project Report. It is necessary to use the Outputs because often the Indicators are not helpful. The table is completed by the evaluator's comments on the lower right hand side.

4.1.2.1   Outcome 1: Increased individual and institutional capacity for planning SLM at the national and regional level

In an effort to determine whether the project has succeeded in increasing individual and institutional capacity for SLM planning, the evaluator examined the sources named above and noted the progress as reported. He also recalled the opinions expressed by those who were consulted and then added his analysis, comments and rating score. This assessment is summarized in the table below.

However, before doing this, there was a need to determine what is meant by "capacity" and UNDP[22] notes that … *Capacities at the level of the enabling environment include policies, legislation, power relations and social norms, all of which govern the mandates, priorities, modes of operation and civic engagement across different parts of society.*

The evaluator has therefore looked for proof that individual and institutional capacity, defined as broadly as above, for planning SLM has been increased (as measured by reference to the baseline). The assessment also takes into account relevance, contribution to the Objective and impact achieved under this Outcome.

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[22] UNDP (2008) *Capacity Development: Practice Note*. Edited by Kanni Wignaraja UNDP, New York

Table 8. **Analysis of the Outputs and Indicators for Outcome 1 and progress achieved**

OUTCOME 1: *Increased individual and institutional capacity for planning SLM at the national and regional level*		
INDICATOR Number of National, regional and local organizations applying SLM within their institutional and operational context **Baseline:** 0 organizations applying SLM **Critique of Indicator:** The Indicator is not **Specific** to the "*individual or institutional capacity*". It is **Measurable** but it is uncertain how to know when it has been **Achieved.** It is difficult to **Attribute** the results directly to the project. It is vaguely **Relevant** to the Outcome and **Trackable** but only if it can be determined how SLM can be "applied". In fact this indicator needs an indicator. This is not a SMART Indicator		
CUMULATIVE PROGRESS AT OUTCOME LEVEL AS REPORTED IN DRAFT PIR2012: • The Guide supplements information on land degradation and SLM. • The Resource Guide and Video would be prepared for distribution to Secondary Schools.		
OUTPUTS FROM REVISED LOGFRAME	**RESULTS AT OUTPUT LEVEL AS REPORTED IN DRAFT PROJECT FINAL REPORT**	**EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS**
1.1 Land degradation in Guyana is assessed using a widely accepted methodology	Technical Baseline Reports and Training Completed. Training Workshop provided a manual for assessment of land degradation. The manual could be used by the Natural Resource and Environmental Sector during inspection and monitoring exercises to collect data on land degradation	The Outcome sought *individual and institutional capacity for SLM planning* and the Outputs offered an assessment of land degradation, an analysis of one watershed, and training in early warning systems and natural resource valuation. The project delivered the Outputs especially a substantial amount of training coupled with technical handbooks. However, after giving training participants an opportunity to assess the workshops they had attended, there was no follow-up by the project to determine if indeed, capacity had been increased. In the absence of such follow-up surveys, indicators would have been useful. These are weaknesses in project design. The reported *cumulative progress* in PIR2012 is inexplicable and the evaluator wonders if there is a misunderstanding. The early warning system (EWS) activities carried out by the project appear biased towards disasters such as flooding. These are obviously important but their rightful place is not under this project on land degradation and SLM. EWS for land degradation is meant to focus on "*producing risk/vulnerability maps and early warnings on potential trends in poor agricultural productivity, desertification, drought, deforestation, soil erosion, and bushfires*" [23] and this is not evident in the documentation produced by the project under Output 1.3. The project has undeniably achieved the three Outputs as targeted and although it has not achieved the Outcome fully, this is because the Outputs are not very relevant to the Outcome, and this is due to weak project design.
1.2 Key watersheds are analyzed and better understood	Technical Baseline Reports and Training Completed. Training Workshop provided practical training on the use of a Soil and Water Assessment Tool to measure the effects of land use, vegetation and soil in a Geographic Information System using data of one of the major watershed areas in Guyana	
1.3 Government Agencies are trained in relevant early warning systems and natural resource valuation	Technical Baseline Reports and Training Completed. Training Workshop provided exposure of global goods available to monitor short term natural disasters. Resource valuation training provided techniques to value eco-system services. Resource Guide and Training video on the use of the Guide are under review by the Ministry of Education. The design of the cover and back pages was completed	
RATING SCORE: Outcome 1 has not been achieved fully but in deference to the useful products arising from project activities, their relevance to Guyana and their contribution to the Objective, it is felt that a foundation has been laid for follow-up and upscaling interventions. Achievement of Outcome 1 is seen as **Satisfactory (S).**		

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[23] *Early Warning Systems: A Review*. By Joseph E. Quansah, Bernard Engel, and Gilbert L. Rochon. In *Journal of Terrestrial Observation Vol 2, Issue 2 Spring 2010 Article 5.* and http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1072&context=jto

4.1.2.2   Outcome 2: Mainstreaming and harmonization of SLM into the development framework

In an effort to determine whether the project has succeeded in mainstreaming and harmonizing SLM, the evaluator examined the activities and Outputs that were carried out under this Outcome, assessed the Outcome Indicator and noted the progress as reported by the Project Team and as gleaned from interviews and documents review. He then added his analysis, comments and rating score. This assessment is summarized in the table below.

Before attempting the assessment, the evaluator sought a definition of "mainstreaming" to ascertain what the Outcome was targeting. According to the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD[24], "*SLM mainstreaming is a process which aims to integrate sustainable land management principles and objectives in development policies, plans, programmes and expenditures and evaluate their linkages with institutional and civil society actions leading to a comprehensive national response to the problem of desertification and other forms of land degradation*".

The evaluator has therefore looked for proof that SLM as a concept and as a process has been mainstreamed into the national development sector. The assessment also takes into account relevance, contribution to the Objective and impact achieved under this Outcome.

Table 9.   Analysis of the Outputs and Indicators for Outcome 2 and progress achieved

OUTCOME 2: *Mainstreaming and harmonization of SLM into the development framework*
INDICATOR: SLM principles and NAP priorities integrated into national and sector strategies **Baseline:** No mainstreaming or harmonizing of SLM into policies and plans **Critique of Indicator:** The Indicator is merely paraphrasing the Outcome. It is not **Specific** to "*mainstreaming*" as defined by the Global Mechanism. It is not **Measurable** and impossible to know when **Achieved.** It is not possible to **Attribute** directly to the project. It is vaguely **Relevant** to the Outcome and not **Trackable** without further indicators and milestones.   This is not a SMART Indicator and no help to determining whether the Outcome has been achieved.
CUMULATIVE PROGRESS AT OUTCOME LEVEL AS REPORTED IN DRAFT PIR2012: • UNCCD Publication '*There is no Rug big enough to sweep the Desert under*' and UNESCO Publication '*The School where the Magic Tree Grows*' were distributed to children who answered questions on land degradation and sustainable land management at a National Exhibition. • The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) received the public awareness equipment and some remaining supplies of prizes to be used for the Agency's public awareness activities such as support to the preparation of the SLM Handbook. • SLM Handbook was drafted and is awaiting design by the printer.

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[24] Global Mechanism (2007) Progress Report: 1. Updating of field database, 2. Development of Guidelines for SLM mainstreaming. From:
http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=4&cad=rja&ved=0CDAQFjAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fblengrafix.com%2FterrAfrica%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2Ffiles%2F6599694.doc&ei=gIo7UJ-NK9HE4gS94YDgAg&usg=AFQjCNGOOcM8swYFavdrn24m__ISgU---g

OUTPUTS FROM REVISED LOGFRAME	RESULTS AT OUTPUT LEVEL AS REPORTED IN DRAFT PROJECT FINAL REPORT	EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS
2.1 Government staff demonstrate awareness of SLM concerns at the policy, institutional and regional and local government level	SLM Handbook drafted and designed- awaiting final review. Completed:- DVDs disseminated with copies of the four technical baseline studies to Agencies to increase awareness of the outputs prepared by the Project Completed:- Publications from the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation were accessed and re-printed by the Project and distributed in packages to Primary and Secondary Schools in Guyana. Completed:- The Essay, Art and Photography Competitions were completed and the twelve winners and their classmates received their prizes in addition to the Schools. Some Schools requested text books in exchange for school tours while some schools chose nature tours at the Forestry Training Centre.	The Outcome sought "***mainstreaming of SLM***" and the four Outputs aimed to produce awareness, policy and legislation, harmonization of priorities, and SLM integration into Land Use Planning. These Outputs are relevant to the Outcome and between them make a valid contribution towards mainstreaming of SLM. The results reported by the draft Project Final Report are not all according to the original Outputs. Under 2.1 the project is meant to prove heightened awareness among government staff – the products produced do not do this explicitly, unless schools are included in the definition of government staff. Under 2.2 there seems to be no mention of the legislation that was targeted by the Output. Outputs 2.3 and 2.4 are closely related and both depend on the incorporation of SLM policy within the National Land Use Plans – this is not yet assured.
2.2 Improved policy and legal instruments for SLM	Completed:- Preparation of a framework to integrate SLM Policy into the Draft National Land Use Policy was completed. The Final Report provided areas for revision in the Draft National Land Use Policy	The PIR2012 report on Cumulative Results continues to be enigmatic and the Self-Assessment confirms the above as gleaned from the Project Final Report. Consultations by the evaluator also provided confirmation of the above and no new information.
2.3 SLM integrated and NAP priorities harmonized into national development strategies and action plans to achieve MDGs	Completed:- The Final Report on the framework of SLM Policy in Guyana provides updates for the National Land Use Plan. This would ensure that the updates and framework recommended is consistent with new development strategies and policies. The Development of Land Use Planning Project (DLUPP) would use the recommendations prepared by the SLM Project under Outcome 2.3. DLUPP would submit the Draft National Land Use Plan to the GLSC for submission to the Board and Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment	Mainstreaming requires SLM principles and objectives in development policies, plans, programmes and expenditures, and linkages with institutional and civil society actions. It also requires the individual and institutional capacity targeted under Outcome 1. As such, mainstreaming cannot be claimed to have been achieved. Among the very important missing elements is legislation which seems to have fallen between the two Outcomes[25].
2.4 SLM integrated into land use planning at the national and local planning level	The preparation of the Regional Land Use Plans has not commenced as yet. The framework on SLM Policy also provides guidance for the preparation of the three Regional Land Use Plans to be prepared by the DLUPP. The Plans would be submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment	

RATING SCORE: Outcome 2 has not been achieved. A number of elements required for mainstreaming have not been obtained and crucial among these is legislation. The most likely result which is the integration of SLM principles into the National land Use Planning process is not yet assured. On the other hand, awareness within the school system has been raised through a number of pertinent activities – unfortunately awareness among the school population does not equate to mainstreaming. The rating for Outcome 2 is seen as **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**.

4.1.2.3   Outcome 3: Resources for SLM implementation mobilized within an investment planning framework

This Outcome targeted the third barrier that had been identified for SLM in Guyana – financial resources. The evaluator sought to determine whether resources for SLM had been mobilized and whether this had been through an investment planning framework. The evaluator examined the Outputs that were set under this Outcome, assessed the Indicators that have been selected, noted the progress as reported by the relevant documents and added his analysis and comments. This assessment is summarized in the table below.

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[25] An effective legislation base is essential for mainstreaming and Output 2.2 as well as its Indicator (New and modified Policy and legislative Instruments), and the ProDoc in para 81, p.25 all refer to this as a target for the project.

Table10.   Analysis of the Outputs and Indicators for Outcome 3 and progress achieved

OUTCOME 3: *Resources for SLM implementation mobilized within an investment planning framework*
INDICATORS: • Number of project proposals and concepts presented for funding • GLSC coordinating the implementation of the Investment Plan • Government funding allocations for ….. (unfortunately incomplete) **Baseline:** No investment planning resource mobilization for SLM **Critique of Indicators:** The three Indicators are connected with, but not **Specific** to "*resource mobilization*". The first is **Measurable** but the other two are not , and all three are difficult to know when they have been **Achieved** and whether they can be **Attributed** directly to the project. They are remotely **Relevant** to the Outcome and probably **Trackable.** However, none of the three is a SMART Indicator
CUMULATIVE PROGRESS AT OUTCOME LEVEL AS REPORTED IN DRAFT PIR2012: The Studies completed and were useful to prepare a plan for future interventions for financing SLM. The Identification of incentives is useful for the Government to promote investment in SLM by private investors. The Funding Needs Assessment Study indicated the priorities for Agencies to promote sustainable land management and potential donors

OUTPUTS FROM REVISED LOGFRAME	RESULTS AT OUTPUT LEVEL AS REPORTED IN DRAFT PROJECT FINAL REPORT	EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS
3.1 Identification of funding needs for SLM priorities	Technical Reports and Stakeholder Consultation Completed. Reports disseminated to Stakeholders	The main product sought under this Outcome was *resource mobilization*; and this was to be achieved within an investment framework. Of the three Outputs, the first two comprise investigations to determine needs and to explore incentives for investment. The third Output develops the investment framework. The Outcome wording, creates an expectation that there should have been a fourth Output which comprised actual resources mobilized/obtained or at least pledged. The lack of such an Output is a weakness in the project design. The results obtained by the project cover all three Outputs which have all been achieved, however, in the absence of mobilized resources, the Outcome has not been achieved.
3.2 Identification of incentives to stimulate investment in SLM	Technical Reports and Stakeholder Consultation Completed. Reports disseminated to Stakeholders	
3.3 Develop Medium Term Investment Plan for SLM	Technical Reports and Stakeholder Consultation Completed. Reports disseminated to Stakeholders	

RATING SCORE: Outcome 3 was to have removed one of the barriers to SLM mainstreaming – it has not been successful, at least not entirely. On the other hand a good foundation has been laid through the technical investigations and reports and the Investment Framework, and achievement of this Outcome is deemed to have been **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

4.1.2.4 Outcome 4: Effective project management through learning, evaluation and adaptive management

As noted elsewhere project management is not considered an Outcome, but a means through Outcomes are achieved. It is therefore not being evaluated as other Outcomes, since project management has already been assessed in section 3 above.

Table 11. Analysis of the Outputs and Indicators for Outcome 4 and progress achieved

OUTCOME 4: *Effective project management through learning, evaluation and adaptive management*		
INDICATOR Lessons learned from project widely disseminated Baseline: 0 evaluations to determine change in management systems Critique of Indicator: If this was an Outcome, the Indicator would not be **Specific** to effective project management. It is not **Measurable** although **Achievable** and **Attributable** to the project. It is not **Relevant** to the Outcome but it could be **Trackable**. This is not a SMART Indicator		
CUMULATIVE PROGRESS AT OUTCOME LEVEL AS REPORTED IN DRAFT PIR2012: The Plant Nursery would support land reclamation of degraded areas and provide an office for monitoring the land reclamation work by the Commission in the southern Region 1 area		
OUTPUTS FROM REVISED LOGFRAME	**RESULTS AT OUTPUT LEVEL AS REPORTED IN DRAFT PROJECT FINAL REPORT**	**EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS**
4.1 Adaptive management through monitoring and evaluation determines the next development phase of, regional and community development	One Audit was completed. A Mid-Term Evaluation was completed. Plant Nursery was completed. The nursery is to be equipped with tools and office equipment to support the land reclamation of a mined site located in Perseverance, Mathews Ridge, Region 1	This so-called "Outcome" is an enigma. Firstly it targets project management which is not an Outcome; secondly it has an irrelevant Indicator; the PIR2012 lists one exclusive Cumulative Result – a plant nursery. The placement of the plant nursery for land rehabilitation under this so-called Outcome is strange. However, the nursery raises another, even more serious, question. This is regarding the choice of exotic Acacia plants to be grown and then distributed to degraded land some of which is in the midst of good quality indigenous forest.
4.2 Project execution through adaptive management	Project experience gained by GLSC Staff is useful to apply in future projects	
RATING SCORE: As this is not an Outcome it has not been rated here.		

4.2   Project impacts

4.2.1 Impact analysis

The achievement of Outputs which lead to Outcomes is assessed by LogFrame analysis which is mainly carried out by the Project M&E System, and confirmed by the TE with reliance on good Indicators. The conversion of Outcomes to Impacts often requires an Intermediate stage and this is assessed mainly by TE methodology. It is predicated by Assumptions, and is dependent on Impact Drivers which include Relevance, Sustainability and Catalytic effects.

The project has achieved the majority of its Outputs. However, some of these have not been entirely relevant to the Outcomes and the latter have therefore been achieved only partly. These have contributed to Intermediate Impacts namely, capacity, awareness, demonstrations, tools and methods. These foundational products of the project will, in turn, contribute to Impacts, in time and through the contributions of other interventions. These Impacts are expected to be global, regional and national.

Progress has been made by the project from Outputs to Outcomes which have been rated ranging from Satisfactory to Moderately Unsatisfactory; and progress has also been made through the Outcomes to the Immediate Objective which has been rated as Moderately Satisfactory. The final step to achieve Global and National impacts is dependent on sustainability of the project products and services, the extent of replication and upscaling of the project benefits, products and services. This will depend on a number of external assumptions being realized.

4.2.2 Global environmental impacts

The project addressed the GEF Operational Programme #15 : Sustainable Land Management with its Objective to mitigate the causes and negative impacts of land degradation on the structure and functional integrity of ecosystems through sustainable land management practices as a contribution to improving people's livelihoods and economic well-being.

The work of the project will ultimately lead to stabilization of soils, improvement in grazing, and restoration of degraded areas which in turn will bring global benefits in terms of maintenance and protection of ecosystem functionality, ecosystem goods and services, integrity of terrestrial and coastal ecosystems, protection of habitats for globally important species, and enhanced carbon sequestration. Guyana has been recognized as one of the last frontier forests in the world with biodiversity of renowned global importance.

The restoration of lands degraded by mining, as initiated by the project, will also have an impact on albedo, the reflectivity of the land surface, with implications for local and regional climate. The replacement of bare areas, or other degraded land surfaces, with either agricultural or natural vegetation, will also improve carbon sequestration and the protection of biodiversity. Slope management using forest rehabilitation will decrease stream sediment and regulate stream flow, both in Guyana and across national borders.

These global benefits cannot be claimed by the project as yet, however, it has laid the foundation for such positive impacts – progress has been made towards the eventual reduction in stress on Guyana's ecological systems.

4.2.3 National level impacts

At the national level, the project has promoted a new approach to land use planning; it has also built a strong case for the protection of forests and other vegetative cover. The project has raised

awareness of the benefits that can arise through wise land use such as the rehabilitation of land degraded by mining, and sustainable forest management; it has also enhanced the capacity of officials dealing with mining, forestry and the primary production sector as well as those in local government and at the local levels. However, in the same way as for global benefits, national level impacts have yet to materialize and this will happen through upscaling and replication.

Rehabilitation of degraded land will improve ground cover and allow better ground water percolation. Improved forest management will improve stability of hill slopes and reduce sediment flow to local streams. At the local level, sustainable land management allows for the restoration of soil, nutrients and vegetation and reduces the irregularity of surface and ground water flows. Ultimately, project benefits can be expected to lead to significant improvements in the quality of life of those who earn their living from their work on the land. Sustainable land management is good for production and good for natural resource sustainability.

4.3 Effectiveness of project execution

The OECD (*op.cit*.) defines effectiveness as *"the extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, taking into account their relative importance"*.

The justification for the project was based on the three identified barriers, and these were converted as the core aim for each of the three Outcomes – capacity building for SLM, mainstreaming SLM into the land use planning process, mobilizing of resources for SLM. As concluded above in section 4.1.2, capacity building has been partly achieved, mainstreaming is still elusive, and although resources have not been mobilized, the framework has been set up. The enabling environment sought by the Project Objective is still some way from being achieved, however, a foundation has been laid. The project has not been entirely effective not because of implementation weaknesses but because of design flaws and overly optimistic expectations.

The evaluator finds project execution to have been **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)** in terms of effectiveness

5 FINDINGS: SUSTAINABILITY

5.1 The current situation

The project has piloted and demonstrated successfully various techniques for SLM and conducted numerous training sessions in an effort to enhanced capacity. However, pilots, demonstrations and capacity are not results – results are obtained through the upscaling and replication of the pilots, and this is why sustainability of the project products, services and benefits beyond the life of the project, is so crucial.

The Project Team has developed a detailed Sustainability Matrix which describes what the project has done at the Outcome level, who has benefited and who else might benefit in the future. The matrix stops short of the next important step of identifying which agency or agencies must now pick up where the project left off so as to maintain the initiative, develop it further and spearhead further developments in that particular aspect of the project's brief.

A formal recommendation will be made in section 7 below for this next step.

5.2   Institutional sustainability

The project has worked successfully through existing administrative structures and this has created a strong sense of ownership. Key government organizations such as GLSC, GGMC and GFC have been actively involved technically throughout project execution. The evaluator was able to obtain assurances of the continuing interest of these and other institutions in the work started by the project and the institutional and social sustainability of project activities, together with their products, services and other benefits, at least at the central level, is seen as **Highly Likely (HL)**.

5.3   Financial sustainability

The project has been unable to mobilize resources as targeted under Outcome 3, however, the level of ownership of project activities among government institutions, augurs well for financial sustainability of the project activities and services. It was also heartening for the evaluator to be assured by key government institutions that they now considered project interventions to be part of their core function and that they will continue these through their institutional budgetary resources and through existing donor funded initiatives.

Outcome 3 sought the mobilization of resources and an Investment Planning Framework within which this could take place. The Medium Term Investment Plan produced by the project provides a great deal of background (such as policies, legislation, on-going or recent projects) and little detail on current or potential investments on SLM and means through which funding resources could be accessed such as various levies, taxes and licensing fees for natural resource use. This will depend on the right institutional and policy frameworks and on balance, financial sustainability is considered as **Moderately Likely (ML)**.

5.4   Environmental sustainability

This was an environmental project and the security of environmental sustainability should be a foregone conclusion. However, rehabilitating degraded land by planting exotics which are known to be invasive, does not contribute to environmental sustainability. Furthermore, environmental sustainability needs to take into account the changing climate which has not been addressed adequately in the project. Research is required to devise strategies to overcome the negative impacts of climate change on SLM and capitalize on the positive impacts.

In the short term, and without a fair degree of further research, investigation and analysis, environmental sustainability is seen as **Moderately Unlikely (MU).** However, the longer term prospects look **Moderately Likely (ML).**

6   CONCLUSIONS AND RATINGS

6.1   Key tasks arising from the evaluation ToRs

The following table comprises the key elements of the evaluation and arises from the purpose of the evaluation as in the evaluation ToRs. The elements were covered in the Evaluation Inception Report with an indication of the methodologies, sources of data and collection procedures that were planned by the evaluator to obtain answers. The table below summarises the evaluator's findings and draws conclusions.

Table 12. Key elements of the evaluation scope, findings and conclusions

KEY ELEMENTS (FROM THE TORS)	ASSESSMENT SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS ARISING
Assess overall performance against the project objectives as set out in the Project Document and other related documents	The ProDoc has been used as the departure point for this evaluation with overall performance and delivery assessed with reference to the Project Final Report (available in draft), the final PIR2012 (also in draft) and the self-assessment of progress by the Project Team. Neither the Objective nor any of the three Outcomes has been achieved outright. The Project Design was flawed through the adoption of Outputs which were not always relevant to the Outcomes and therefore even when the project achieved the Outputs, the Outcomes were not always achieved.
Assess project relevance to national priorities, as well as UNDP and GEF strategic objectives	The project was very relevant to the needs of Guyana where land degradation may not be a current problem but one which is on the increase with a bleak forecast if action is not taken to reverse the trend. The project was also relevant to GEF and Operational Programme #15 with its aims of Sustainable Land Management for global benefits. Unfortunately, at the time when it was developed and formulated, the project was not relevant to the UNDP Country Programme, or the UN Development Assistance Framework (the UNDAF) – in effect, the project was ahead of its time.
Assess effectiveness and efficiency of the project

Critically analyze the implementation and management arrangements of the project | The project implementers were effective in achieving the greater part of the Outputs, however, as these were not always relevant to the Outcomes, the latter were not achieved and neither was the Objective.
The PSC did not survive beyond 18 months of the project and the project was in effect, without a shared governance structure. This was exacerbated by the fact that the Project Implementation Unit was totally embedded in GLSC and the GLSC CEO was also Project Manager and the chair of the PSC. The emplacement of the PIU in GLSC had many benefits such as the high level of ownership by the government side, however, without a functional PSC, it also had disbenefits such as the isolation from other key institutions. |
| Assess the sustainability of the project interventions | The project set up a Sustainability Matrix identifying current and potential beneficiaries. This stopped short of an effective Exit Strategy which would have seen a "formal" handover of project products and services to those who were inheriting them, with a reciprocal acceptance and commitment. The deep level of ownership augurs well for institutional sustainability, however, financial sustainability is somewhat uncertain and so is environmental sustainability. |
| Document lessons and best practices concerning project design, implementation and management which may be of relevance to other projects in the country and elsewhere | Emerging lessons are incorporated in the recommendations below. |

6.2   Overall conclusion

The project has raised awareness on SLM, especially among the school population. It has also provided significant training although it has not always been ascertained whether this has resulted in enhanced capacity. SLM has not been mainstreamed, resources have not been mobilized and neither has the enabling environment for SLM been created.

There are indications that rehabilitation of degraded land is not well understood – a nursery has been established which will utilize exotics for planting on land degraded by mining.

Integration of SLM into land use planning is likely, but it is not certain yet.

However, on a more positive note, the project has established a good foundation for SLM through the capacity enhancements, policy development, and tools and mechanisms for SLM that it has

developed and piloted. This was in spite of weak project design, modest budget and too short a timescale.

The project is rated as **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)** overall.

6.3   Assessment summary and ratings

CRITERION	SUMMARY COMMENTS	RATING
PROJECT FORMULATION		
Project concept and design	The design is simple and uncomplicated – each of the three Outcomes addresses an identified barrier to SLM and makes a direct contribution to the Objective. Apart from seeing project management as an outcome, the project design was flawed by selecting Outputs which were not entirely relevant to the respective Outcome and leaving out others that could be seen as necessary to achieve the Outcome. This created problems for the project implementers who targeted the Outputs and achieved them, however, this did not mean that they achieved the Outcomes.	**Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**
Relevance	The project addressed the identified barriers to SLM and its results are beneficial from the global as well as the local perspective. But, the project had little or no relationship with the UNDP Country Programme current at the time.	**Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**
Stakeholder participation in formulation	The ProDoc is silent regarding the participation of stakeholders in project formulation. However, consultation sessions with stakeholders during project formulation are known to have taken place	**Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION		
Project Governance	The high level of government ownership together with the active interest taken by UNDP in this project made up for the demise of the PSC after only three meetings.	**Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**
Project Administration and Management	The Project Manager was the same person as the CEO of the Executing Agency and Chairman of the PSC. However, in spite of its unorthodoxy, and although it was not possible to observe at first hand the working of the Project Team (the evaluation took place after the project was operationally closed and the Team had disbanded), from all accounts and from the products produced, the Team appears to have worked cohesively and successfully.	**Satisfactory (S)**
Implementation Approach		
Stakeholder participation in implementation	With some exceptions where it did not happen at all, stakeholder involvement was exactly as planned. Out of the 24 organizations or groups of organizations that had been identified as stakeholders, eight organizations failed to participate and it is of some concern that all the organizations who did not participate had been identified as beneficiaries and that the greater proportion of them were local level, communities and famers, to whom the project did not deliver.	**Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**
Risk management	It is incumbent on project design to not only identify risks, but to assess their likelihood and their degree of severity and prepare mitigation measures, at least for those with a high likelihood and high severity rating. This was not done.	**Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**
Project finances		

CRITERION	SUMMARY COMMENTS	RATING
Financial planning and management	The relative allocations to the Outcomes appear sound and they did not change by much during implementation.	**Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**
Co-financing	Co-financing arrangements are not entirely clear, however, the GEF required ratio appears satisfied. Tracking of co-fin resources was not efficient.	**Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**
Monitoring and Evaluation		
M&E Design, Plan and Budget	The GEF M&E requirements regarding Monitoring Plan and budget have been met by the Project.	**Satisfactory (S)**
Use of LogFrame and Adaptive Management	Many of the commitments made in the ProDoc regarding Indicators and other elements of the LogFrame were not followed through and there is no evidence of systematic use of the LogFrame in monitoring and evaluation leading to adaptive management.	**Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**
PROJECT RESULTS : Attainment of Objective and Outcomes with reference to the Indicators		
Project Objective: To establish an enabling environment to combat land degradation through a participatory process, capacity building, mainstreaming of SLM into national development strategies and processes, broad stakeholder participation and resource allocation for SLM	The results claimed as achieved could not all be confirmed through consultations or site visits and although they can be considered as valid contributions towards the Objective, they do not provide affirmative answers to the questions: *Has an enabling environment to combat land degradation been established?* *Will the "combatting" be through enhanced capacity, or mainstreaming, or stakeholder participation, or resource allocation?*	**Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**
Outcome 1: Increased individual and institutional capacity for planning SLM at the national and regional level	The evaluator looked for proof that individual and institutional capacity for planning SLM has been increased. The data show that the Outcome has not been achieved fully but the useful products arising from project activities, their relevance to Guyana and their contribution to the Objective, show that a foundation has been laid for follow-up and upscaling interventions.	**Satisfactory (S)**
Outcome 2: Mainstreaming and harmonization of SLM into the development framework	The evaluator looked for proof that SLM as a concept and as a process has been mainstreamed into the national development sector. A number of elements required for mainstreaming have not been obtained and crucial among these is legislation. The most likely result which is the integration of SLM principles into the National land Use Planning process is not yet assured. On the other hand, awareness within the school system has been raised through a number of pertinent activities – unfortunately awareness among the school population does not equate to mainstreaming and the outcome has not been achieved.	**Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**
Outcome 3: Resources for SLM implementation mobilized within an investment planning framework	The evaluator sought to determine whether resources for SLM had been mobilized and whether this had been through an investment planning framework. it has not been successful, at least not entirely. While a good foundation has been laid through the technical investigations and reports and the Investment Framework, resources have not been mobilized and this Outcome has only been partly achieved.	**Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**
Outcome 4: Effective project management through learning, evaluation and adaptive management	As this was not an Outcome it has not been rated here	**not rated**
Effectiveness	The project targeted capacity building for SLM, mainstreaming SLM into the land use planning process, and mobilizing of resources for SLM. Capacity building has been partly achieved, mainstreaming is still elusive, and although resources have not been mobilized, the framework	**Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**

CRITERION	SUMMARY COMMENTS	RATING
	has been set up. The enabling environment sought by the Project Objective is still some way from being achieved, however, a foundation has been laid. The project has not been entirely effective not because of implementation weaknesses but because of design flaws and overly optimistic expectations.	
Sustainability		
Institutional sustainability	The project has worked successfully through existing administrative structures and this has created a strong sense of ownership. This, coupled with assurances of the continuing interest of key institutions in the work started by the project, augur well for the institutional and social sustainability of project products, services and other benefits, at least at the central level.	**Highly Likely (HL)**
Financial sustainability	The Medium Term Investment Plan produced by the project provides little detail on current or potential investments on SLM and means through which funding resources could be accessed. This will depend on the right institutional and policy frameworks and financial sustainability is not yet secure.	**Moderately Likely (ML)**
Environmental sustainability	The rehabilitation of degraded land by planting exotics does not contribute to environmental sustainability and the project needed to take into account the changing climate. In the short term, and without a fair degree of further research, investigation and analysis, environmental sustainability is at risk.	**Moderately Unlikely (MU)**
OVERALL PROJECT RATING	The project has raised awareness on SLM, especially among the school population. It has also provided significant training although it has not always been ascertained whether this has resulted in enhanced capacity. SLM has not been mainstreamed, resources have not been mobilized and neither has the enabling environment for SLM been created. There are indications that rehabilitation of degraded land is not well understood – a nursery has been established which will utilize exotics for planting on land degraded by mining. Integration of SLM into land use planning is likely, but it is not certain yet. However, on a more positive note, the project has established a good foundation for SLM through the capacity enhancements, policy development, and tools and mechanisms for SLM that it has developed and piloted. This was in spite of weak project design, modest budget and too short a timescale.	**Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**

7   RECOMMENDATIONS

As the project is well and truly closed operationally, these recommendations are for the benefit of future projects. They therefore incorporate the key lessons that have emerged from this evaluation.

7.1   Issue: Exit strategy
The project has produced a good Sustainability Matrix identifying potential beneficiaries but did not take it to the next important step of obtaining firm commitments from those inheriting the project's products and services.

Recommendation:
It is recommended to GLSC to utilize any remaining funds to organize an Exit Strategy Workshop to achieve consensus on who is taking over the responsibility both for unfinished work as well as for products and benefits that need to be "adopted" and sustained by someone else.

7.2   Issue: Timing of Terminal Evaluations
The TE took place five months after project closure. The PIU had disbanded and both the government and UNDP had moved on to other and more pressing priorities. As a result, it was difficult to arrange firm appointments and many were not kept. Of those that did take place, the interviewee had to be reminded and briefed about the project. The PIU had disbanded and it was not possible to explore their involvement in the project. At the presentation on preliminary findings to the PSC, the Project Associate (de facto Project Manager) was absent and apart from UNDP and the Implementing Partner there was only one other member, even after personal phone calls from the chair. The project had gone completely cold.

Recommendation:
It is recommended to UNDP that Terminal Evaluations are carried out before a project is closed operationally, ideally between 6 and 4 months before project closure and when the Project Final Report and the last PIR are available, at least in draft.

7.3   Issue: Project Steering Committee
The Project Steering Committee stopped functioning after three meetings and there was a hiatus of three years before it met again, three days after the project had closed, thus denying the project the benefit of the collegial policy, guidance, support and accountability normally coming from a PSC. The fact that the members were very senior officials and they were very busy was given as the reason. This is very plausible and has led some UNDP offices to adopt a two-tier arrangement comprising a small Project Executive Board at senior level, and a broader-based Technical Advisory Committee.

Recommendation:
It is recommended to UNDP that in order to avoid the conundrum posed by the seniority/executive requirement of a PSC vs a less senior/more technical advisory function, it issues guidance to Country Offices to split project governance into two tiers, namely, an Executive Board to make policy and accountability decisions and a Technical Advisory Committee to provide guidance, advice and support for the PIU.

7.4   Issue: Project design
The structure and design of this project was flawed. Terms such as "enabling environment", "capacity" and "mainstreaming" seemed to be misunderstood, and certain elements pertaining to these terms were absent from project design. The Indicators did not comply with the SMART

requirements and most were not relevant to the Outcomes. There was also discontinuity between the Outputs and Outcomes such that the project may have achieved its Outputs and satisfied its Indicators but still not achieved its Outcomes and Objective.

Recommendation:

It is recommended to UNDP and the GEF that following the production of project formulation guidance in the form of a Handbook for Project Formulation which is closely allied with the Project Evaluation Handbook, more thorough vetting is carried out of the integrity and robustness of project design at the initial approval stages.