TERMINAL EVALUATION OF THE UNDP / GEF PROJECT

Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Country Pilot Partnership on Sustainable Land Management in Cuba

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GEF ID: 3587

Evaluation report

Evaluation period: March – May 2021

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ACRONYMS

AMA	Environmental Agency (by its initials in Spanish)
ANAP	National Small Farmers Association (by its initials in Spanish)
BASAL	Environmental Bases for Local Food Security (by its initials in Spanish)
CIGEA	Centre for Environmental Management, Information and Education (by its initials in Spanish)
CITMA	Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (by its initials in Spanish)
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CPP	Country Partnership Programme
EAN	National Environmental Strategy (by its initials in Spanish)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FONADEF	National Forestry Development Fund (by its initials in Spanish)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GoC	Government of Cuba
IGT	Institute of Geography
IAgric	Institute of Agriculture Research and Engineering (by its initials in Spanish)
INRH	National Water Resources Institute (by its initials in Spanish)
IPF	Institute of Physical Planning
INSMET	Institute of Meteorology
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEP	Ministry of Economy and Planning
MINAG	Ministry of Agriculture
MINCEX	Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment (by its initials in Spanish)
MTR	Mid-term review
NAP	National Action Plan
NSC	National Steering Committee
OP15	GEF's Operational Programme on Sustainable Land Management
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PMU	Project Management Unit

PNCMS	National Programme for Land Conservation and Restauration (by its initials in Spanish)
SGP	GEF Small Grants Programme
P1	CPP's Project 1
P2	CPP's Project 2
P3	CPP's Project 3
P4	CPP's Project 4
P5	Coordination, monitoring and evaluation of Cuba's SLM CPP
RF	Results Framework
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Convention on Climate Change
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brief description of the project

The project entitled "Coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the Country Partnership Programme (CPP) on Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in Cuba" aimed to ensure that the effectiveness and efficiency of SLM initiatives in Cuba was maximised through a nationwide programme. In that sense, this project, better known as P5, was one of five CPP projects aimed at reducing land degradation to enable Cuba to achieve its sustainable development and food security goals. P5 was funded through a Global Environment Facility (GEF) grant of US$ 800,000 and US$ 2,826,929 in co-financing from the Government of Cuba. The project was implemented by UNDP and executed by the Cuban Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (CITMA) for 13 years, from November 2008 to May 2021.

Objectives and scope of the evaluation

The objective of this consultancy is to carry out the final evaluation of P5. This evaluation assesses the relevance, design, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the project. It also identifies lessons learned and provides recommendations. The conclusions of the document are based on the review of relevant documentation and interviews with key stakeholders. The evaluation team is composed of two evaluators. The evaluation team has triangulated the data collected to answer the evaluation questions.

Overall Project Rating

The evaluation concludes that P5 was relevant, effective and efficient. Monitoring and evaluation was moderately satisfactory. Implementation by the implementing and executing agencies was very satisfactory. Sustainability is likely in financial, socio-political and institutional terms, and moderately likely from an environmental point of view.

Table 1. Evaluation results[1]

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	***rating***	**2. IA& EA Execution**	***rating***
M&E design at entry	MS	Quality of UNDP Implementation	HS
M&E Plan Implementation	S	Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	HS
Overall quality of M&E	MS	Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	HS
3. Assessment of Outcomes	**rating**	**4. Sustainability**	**rating**
Relevance	R	Financial resources:	L
Effectiveness	HS	Socio-political:	L
Efficiency	S	Institutional framework and governance:	L

[1] Following the rating scales provided in the UNDP/GEF guidelines for final evaluations.

Overall Project Outcome Rating	S	Environmental:	ML
		Overall likelihood of sustainability:	L

Main findings

In terms of **relevance**[2], P5 is consistent with the UN conventions on combating desertification and drought, biodiversity and climate change, the Sustainable Development Goals and the strategic objectives of the GEF. The project is also in line with UNDP priorities at the national level and the UN Development Assistance Framework for Cuba. Furthermore, the project is in line with national strategies and priorities on economic and social development, environment and climate change, including combating desertification and drought, and responds to the needs of the provinces where it is concentrated. All stakeholders were actively involved in the design and implementation of the project, which has integrated SLM into the state's programme framework, into multiple legal and regulatory instruments, and into the education system.

From the **project design**[3] point of view, the project results framework (PRM) of P5 has adequate vertical integration, but the project goal, objective and outputs are not verifiable and the articulation between the project and programmatic PRF is weak. The project's objectives, outcomes and outputs were not feasible within the available budget and programmed time, due to causes beyond the project's control, although they were realistically adjusted within the framework of adaptive management. Overall, P5's M&E system is not adequate to measure its results. While some risks were underestimated at the time of project design, they were adequately managed during implementation. Lessons learned from other projects were incorporated to a limited extent in P5 design. Other interventions within the sector were clearly identified in the design documents and synergies were generated at national and international level.

In terms of **effectiveness**[4], the achievement of targets has been highly satisfactory at the objective level and satisfactory at the outcome level. This analysis is based on important assumptions. The qualitative data collected allows for the identification of multiple contributions of the project to the desired results. Section 3.6 examines impacts in detail. To achieve these outcomes, P5 had to overcome some important challenges. The project identified emerging risks and their causes in a specific and timely manner, as well as appropriate measures to mitigate them. The actions and adjustments made enabled the continued and effective operation of P5 in a changing context.

In terms of **impact**[5], P5 increased the integration of SLM principles into local practices, which appears to have resulted in positive environmental and socio-economic impacts. There are indications that P5 contributed to decreasing soil degradation and increasing land productivity, thus improving farmers' incomes. There are also indications that the CPP helped reduce vulnerability to climate change. P5 supported the production of public goods in the form of new knowledge, approaches and technologies under the CPP and successfully adopted measures to disseminate them, including 21 demonstration sites in 10 provinces, the publication and dissemination of materials through different media, and training, technical assistance and

[2] For details, see section 3.1.
[3] For details, see section 3.2.
[4] For details, see section 3.3.
[5] For details, see section 3.4.

awareness-raising actions. P5 led to important replication processes at the national level, both within and outside the programme's intervention areas.

From an **efficiency** perspective[6], the project adopted a pragmatic, but not systematic, approach to adapt to changing circumstances. The project budget had to be restructured in the face of CPP delays, supplemented by resources from other CPP projects where there were synergies between activities and additional co-financing. The accounting and financial systems established for the management of the project were adequate. While formal M&E requirements were met, there are weaknesses in the design and implementation of the M&E system that limit the use of the information generated for adaptive management at both project and programme level. P5 was successful in establishing partnerships with stakeholders at different levels and in promoting stakeholder participation in the CPP. P5 also helped to integrate a gender perspective into the design of CPP projects and activities on the ground.

In terms of **sustainability**[7], the sustainability of M&E and coordination activities linked to the programme is assured and the sustainability of the implementation of SLM activities in the country is very likely. SLM has been integrated into the Cuban strategic, legal, political and regulatory framework and has gained recognition through effective external communication mechanisms, despite the lack of a strategy to do so. Institutional foundations have also been laid for the continued implementation of SLM activities, and the allocation of funds for continued implementation is highly likely. There are also good prospects for the continuity of the technical capacities needed to implement SLM activities. While no major risks are anticipated from the socio-economic angle, despite progress in vulnerability reduction, climate change may affect the progress made on the ground.

Recommendations

Based on the findings above, this evaluation has the following recommendations.

Table 2. Summary of recommendations and responsible parties

No.	Recommendation	Responsible Party
1	Clarify the specific roles of the coordination and M&E team of P4 in relation to the programme coordination team.	UNDP, AMA and CPP Coordination
2	Clearly identify lessons learned and specify how these will inform the design and implementation of P4.	UNDP, AMA and CPP Coordination
3	Make preferential access to credit and insurance a reality, and further explore the possibility of preferential market access for SLM certified producers.	UNDP, AMA and CPP Coordination
4	Strengthen the results frameworks of the CPP and P4 so that they are integrated and robust, including establishing a	UNDP, AMA and CPP Coordination

[6] For details, see section 3.5.
[7] For details, see section 3.6.

	baseline, and integrating and aggregating impact information at the programme level.	
5	Organise M&E training prior to the revision of the results frameworks, including all key people involved in M&E activities.	UNDP, AMA and CPP Coordination
6	Design a communication strategy for the programme and P4 to systematically implement effective communication actions.	UNDP, AMA and CPP Coordination
7	Continue horizontal and vertical inter-institutional coordination processes, with complementary projects, and with the education system and research institutions.	UNDP, AMA and CPP Coordination

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Objective of the evaluation

As indicated in the ToR, the objectives of this final evaluation are

- To evaluate the achievement of the results of the project " Coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the Country Partnership Programme (CPP) on Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in Cuba "; and
- To develop recommendations and identify lessons learned that can improve both the sustainability of the benefits of this project and the overall programming of the activities of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Cuba.

1.2. Scope and methodology of the evaluation

1.2.1 Scope

The evaluation analyses the different phases and aspects of the project, namely

- The project formulation phase: project design, logical/results framework, assumptions and risks, management arrangements, complementarity with other projects and initiatives in the same field, expected involvement of stakeholders.
- The project implementation phase: management and coordination system, financing and co-financing, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, stakeholder participation, adaptive management.
- The project results: impact, country ownership, catalytic or replication effect, integration of other UNDP priorities, and sustainability (political and institutional, financial, socio-economic and environmental) of the project benefits.

1.2.2 Methodology

The evaluation team is composed of one international evaluator (Jon Garcia, as team leader) and one national evaluator (Orlidia Hechavarria). The evaluation has been carried out following a structured process that integrates data collection and analysis. The evaluation examines the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the project results.

The evaluation process takes into consideration the guidelines and procedures set out in the UNDP Guide to Conducting Final Evaluations of UNDP-implemented GEF-funded projects. In addition, the evaluation has been conducted in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Consultants in Evaluation established by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). In this regard, the evaluation has adopted a participatory, consultative and gender-sensitive approach.

It is important to mention, however, that this evaluation has been implemented in a special context: the global health crisis related to the COVID 19. This crisis compromises the full application of the UNDP/GEF guidance for conducting final evaluations, particularly as it relates to face-to-face meetings and field visits. The evaluation team, in coordination with UNDP, the Environmental

Agency (AMA by its initials in Spanish) of the Government of Cuba (GoC) and the Project Management Unit (PMU), has adjusted the methodology according to a changing context, as the health situation and the Cuban Government's actions evolved. While the evaluation team believes that it has had access to adequate information, in terms of both quantity and quality, to produce a robust, evidence-based evaluation report that is credible, reliable and useful, the inability of the international evaluators to travel to Cuba and the difficulties of the national consultant to travel to the field are limitations that are important to bear in mind.

Data collection

Data collection was carried out through two main methods, described below.

Document review: During the preparation and implementation of the evaluation, a detailed review of relevant documentation provided by project management staff was carried out, as well as of relevant national and regional strategies, plans and legal documents, documents from other similar projects and interventions in Cuba (in particular from reference projects). The documentation reviewed is listed in Annex 5.2.

Interviews: 32 people were interviewed (Annex 5.3) on the basis of a questionnaire, with the possibility to ask additional questions to elaborate on emerging issues. Interviewees were selected according to their relevance, with the aim of collecting information from actors who have interacted with the project in different ways. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all interviews were conducted remotely/by phone.

Data analysis

The evaluation team compiled the data obtained on project results and analysed it against the project objectives and the expectations set out in the project's logical framework, which provides performance and impact indicators, together with their corresponding means of verification. To ensure the validity and accuracy of the findings, quantitative and qualitative information obtained from different sources was triangulated. Conclusions were drawn from relevant information through interpretative analysis, using both deductive and inductive logic. This systematic approach ensures that all findings, conclusions and recommendations are supported by evidence.

The analytical framework for this evaluation included the following elements:

- Evaluation matrix: based on an initial review of available project documentation and following the guidance of the evaluation ToR and the UNDP guidelines for conducting final evaluations of GEF projects, an evaluation matrix presented in Annex 5.1 was developed. This matrix, which guided the data collection and analysis, includes the evaluation questions considered under each criterion, as well as the qualitative and quantitative indicators to operationalise these questions, sources of information and data collection methods. Gender equity issues were considered in a cross-cutting manner throughout the matrix.
- Rating table: The framework provided in the ToR was used to provide specific ratings on performance criteria, including quality of monitoring and evaluation (M&E), quality of implementation by implementing and executing agencies, assessment of results, and sustainability.

1.3 Structure of the evaluation report

This evaluation report begins with an executive summary. Section 2 briefly describes the project and the development context. Section 3 presents the findings with regard to the project's relevance, design, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. Section 4 provides conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. The annexes include the evaluation matrix, lists of documents and persons consulted, statements by the evaluators and detailed comments on the project results framework.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AND THE DEVELOPMENT CONTEX

2.2 Context of the evaluation

The Republic of Cuba has a total area of 110,860 km^2, most of which is located on the island of Cuba, which has a total area of 104,945 km^2. Around the year 2000, the total area of productive agricultural land in Cuba was 6,686,749 ha, equivalent to 63% of the total area of the country. Land degradation was a major problem in that period: 77% of the country's productive land was under-productive. In addition, 14% of the productive land affected by desertification and drought had extreme land degradation conditions. This was particularly the case in the low coastal plains up to 40 metres above sea level and in the plains associated with mountain ranges up to 500 metres. Other areas had at least one of the main degradation processes significantly advanced. For example, 1 million hectares were affected by salinity (representing 14% of agricultural land); 2.9 million hectares by medium or heavy erosion (43% of agricultural land); 2.7 million hectares by poor drainage (40% of agricultural land); 1. 6 million hectares by high levels of compaction (24% of agricultural land); 2.7 million hectares by high levels of acidity (40% of agricultural land); and 4.7 million hectares by low organic matter content (70% of agricultural land). It is no surprise that the 1997 National Environmental Strategy identified land degradation as one of the country's top five environmental problems.

The main processes causing land degradation were anthropogenic in nature. In particular, the main causes of desertification around 2000 were deforestation, improper establishment of crops and plantations, propriate management of farming technologies, improper use of irrigated land and land use changes. Some other aspects also explained land degradation, in terms of limited application of Sustainable Land Management (SLM) processes and practices. In particular, i) limited inter-institutional integration and coordination; ii) inadequate incorporation of SLM considerations into extension and environmental education programmes; iii) limited development of financing and incentive mechanisms for SLM; iv) inadequate system for monitoring land degradation and related information management; v) limited availability of instruments for planners to incorporate SLM into their plans, programmes and policies; and vi) inadequate development of the regulatory framework for combating land degradation.

The Government of Cuba (GoC) decided to actively address this problem. At the international level, it signed the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in 1994 and ratified it in 1997. In 1996 it set up a national working group on the subject, which led to the adoption in 2000 of a National Strategy and National Action Plan (NAP) to Combat Desertification and Drought. The

overall objective of the strategy was "to prevent and control the causes that contribute to the development of the processes leading to desertification, through the implementation of necessary and appropriate practical measures to halt and reverse these processes, mitigate the effects of drought and contribute to the sustainable development of the affected areas, with the aim of improving the livelihood of their inhabitants". The main elements of the NAP were: (i) economic and social development of the areas affected by desertification processes; (ii) improvement and application of legal and administrative instruments for the implementation, monitoring and control of the progress of the NAP; (iii) integration and coordination of policies and strategies; (iv) information, environmental education and citizen participation; (v) scientific research and technological innovation; (vi) institutional strengthening; and (vii) international cooperation.

2.2 Brief description of the project

In this context, in 2008 Cuba developed a Country Partnership Programme (CPP) on Sustainable Land Management (SLM) with a 10-year horizon (2008-2018). The CPP is formally entitled "Supporting the implementation of Cuba's National Programme to Combat Desertification and Drought", and is also known as OP15, because it contributes to the Global Environment Facility's (GEF) operational programme 15.

The CPP aimed to "reduce land degradation to enable Cuba to achieve its sustainable development and food security objectives". It had a budget of US$ 89,437,499, composed of a GEF grant of US$ 10 million and US$ 79,437,499 in co-financing, mostly from the GoC (US$ 76,806,474).

The CPP includes five projects, two full-size projects (i.e. over US$ 2 million) and three medium-size projects (i.e. between US$ 1 and 2 million). Four projects focus successively on different thematic aspects of land degradation and work in five different intervention areas across the country. Specifically, the four projects are as follows:

- Project 1 (P1): Capacity building for planning, decision-making and regulatory systems and awareness raising / SLM in severely degraded ecosystems. Years 1-5. Implementation budget included US$ 3,500,000 from GEF and US$ 21,181,000 from GoC (implemented by UNDP).
- Project 2 (P2): Capacity building for information coordination and monitoring / SLM in areas with water resources management problems. Years 3-7. The budget for implementation included US$ 2,375,000 from the GEF and US$ 18,538,000 from the GoC. In addition, the GEF provided a preparation grant of US$ 125,000 (Implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)).
- Project 3 (P3): Capacity building for sustainable financial mechanisms / SLM in dry forest ecosystems and livestock areas. Years 5-8. The budget for implementation included US$ 1,425,000 from the GEF and US$ 18,000,000 from the GoC. In addition, the GEF provided a $75,000 preparation grant. (Implemented by UNDP)
- Project 4 (P4): Validation of SLM models at the landscape scale. Years 7-10. The budget for implementation included US$1,290,500 from the GEF and US$19,063,000 from the GoC. In addition, the GEF provided a preparation grant of US$62,000. (Implemented by UNDP and UNEP).

The fifth project, this medium-sized one, sought to coordinate the implementation of the four large projects mentioned above. In that spirit, it was entitled "Coordination, monitoring and evaluation of

the Country Partnership Programme on Sustainable Land Management in Cuba", and was known as P5. Specifically, its objective was to ensure that the effectiveness and efficiency of SLM initiatives in Cuba was maximised through a nationwide programme. In this sense, P5 sought to ensure the effective coordination and monitoring of the CPP and its constituent projects so that the CPP could show its potential as a coherent programmatic framework.

It is important to note that P5 was not intended to carry out the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the four larger projects. Each of them had its own budget specifically for coordination and M&E activities. The P5 was only responsible for coordination and M&E at the Programme level, i.e. activities whose benefits are not specific to any one project and are essential to ensure the success of the CPP as a whole.

To maximise the programme's objectives, P5 sought to achieve the following outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Institutions effectively coordinate their SLM programmes and initiatives at the national level.
- Outcome 2: SLM initiatives respond to the M&E outcomes of conditions across the programme.
- Outcome 3. Adaptive management and M&E

These outcomes contributed to CPP Outcome 3: "Institutions, productive and service sectors, territorial governments and communities enhance the protection and wise use of natural resources and ecosystems, resilience to climate change and comprehensive disaster risk reduction management." Specifically, P5 contributed directly to removing barriers i) and iv) to SLM implementation mentioned above.

The total cost of P5 was US$ 3,626,929, funded through a GEF grant of US$ 800,000 and US$ 2,826,929 in cash co-financing from the GoC.

The project was implemented by UNDP Cuba and executed by the Cuban Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (CITMA by its initials in Spanish), following the UNDP National Implementation Modality. The project had a National Steering Committee (NSC), which gave strategic guidance and had final authority on matters requiring official approval, and a Technical Advisory Committee, which provided technical inputs. The NSC was composed of the AMA, the Ministry of Economy and Planning (MEP), the International Relations Directorate of CITMA, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment (MINCEX by its initials in Spanish), which since 2009 encompasses what was formerly the Ministry of Foreign Investment and Collaboration (MINVEC), the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG by its initials in Spanish), the National Institute of Water Resources (INRH by its initials in Spanish), the National Small Farmers Association (ANAP by its initials in Spanish), UNDP, UNEP and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). The Expert Group was composed of representatives from AMA, MINAG, INRH, the Institute of Physical Planning (IPF by its initials in Spanish), the Institute of Meteorology (INSMET by its initials in Spanish) and the Institute of Agricultural Research and Engineering (IAgric by its initials in Spanish).

The project started in November 2008. Its initial completion date was December 2018. This was extended to May 2021 because the start of the remaining projects that are part of the CPP was delayed.

3 FINDINGS

3.1 Relevance

The relevance of P5 should be analysed in the context of the CPP, as P5 plays a leading and articulating role within this programme, contributing in a cross-cutting manner to its objectives. By enabling effective and efficient inter-institutional coordination, monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management of the CPP, P5 is expected to contribute to increased and improved implementation of SLM practices, which reduce pressure on ecosystems, resulting in reduced levels of land degradation, thus contributing to increased agricultural productivity, increased protection and restoration of biodiversity and reduced vulnerability to climate change. In light of the above, the consistency of P5 with the national and international legal-programmatic framework in which it is embedded is analysed below.

3.1.1 Is the project coherent with the objectives of international conventions on combating desertification, environment and climate change?

P5 emerged within the framework of the **UNCCD**, which aims to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought through an integrated approach (art. 1), to support the implementation of the National Action Programme to Combat Desertification and Drought (NAP), elaborated in 2000 in accordance with art. 10 of the UNCCD (see section 3.1.4 for more details). By facilitating long-term planning, adaptive and efficient management, as well as replication, P5 supports the SLM capacity development work of the CPP, in line with the supporting measures listed in UNCCD articles 13 and 19.

P5 is also consistent with the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** by supporting the CPP's contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity through SLM and environmental monitoring. According to the V National Report to the CBD (2014), the CPP is one of the main projects that contribute to compliance with this convention, as it promotes the application of soil conservation practices, the increase of agricultural biodiversity and the multiplication of pollinators, also contributing to the Aichi targets[8].

In congruence with the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**, SLM measures implemented with P5 support include direct climate change adaptation actions, including the strengthening of the early warning system for drought in Cuba through P1. These measures are in line with Cuba's Nationally Determined Contribution 2020 (NDC), which recognises Cuba's high vulnerability to the effects of climate change and includes crop diversification, soil improvement, reforestation and the strengthening of monitoring and early

[8] In particular, target 15, which refers to the restoration of degraded land, as well as targets 1 (raising awareness of the value of biodiversity) and 18 (respect for traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of local communities).

warning systems among the priority adaptation actions. An example of this is the inclusion of CPP in Cuba's Third National Communication to the UNFCCC (2020) as one of the main interventions for adaptation to climate change and the transfer of technology and knowledge. On the other hand, with regard to the climate change mitigation targets in the NDC, the CPP is consistent with the target of increasing forest cover by 33% by 2030, which responds to the fact that agriculture, forestry and other land uses (AFOLU) constitute one of the main sectors responsible for the country's greenhouse gas emissions.

Finally, P5, under the CPP, links to the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** adopted in 2015 by the UN. An analysis conducted in 2019 identifies a direct link with Goal 15 "Promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss", in particular with targets 15.1 (conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems), 15.2 (sustainable management of forests) and 15.3 (combat desertification, rehabilitate degraded land and soils).

The analysis also identifies an indirect relationship of the CPP with Goals 1 (end poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 4 (quality education), 5 (gender equality), 6 (clean water and sanitation), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 11 (sustainable cities and communities), 12 (responsible production and consumption), 13 (climate action) and 17 (partnerships to achieve the goals). P5 is particularly aligned with the latter, given its key role in developing partnerships for SLM in Cuba, and with SDG 4, having supported the development of educational programmes and publications on SLM.

3.1.2 Is the project consistent with GEF's strategic priorities?

The CPP was approved in 2005 under the GEF Operational Program on Sustainable Land Management (OP15), launched during GEF-3 with the objective of mitigating the causes and negative effects of land degradation on the structure and functional integrity of ecosystems through SLM practices, as a contribution to improving people's livelihoods and economic well-being. In GEF-4, OP15 was integrated into the Land Degradation Focal Area, which has since become the GEF's main window of support for UNCCD implementation.

The CPP reflects the integrated and cross-sectoral approach outlined in OP15, including two levels of intervention: on the one hand, institutional capacity building, and on the other, the implementation of SLM activities on the ground to improve the health of ecosystems and the livelihoods of local people. Since the CPP was approved at the end of GEF-3 and its implementation, including that of P5, started in 2008 (GEF-4), there is alignment at both levels with that cycle's strategy for the Land Degradation Focal Area, especially with the adoption of a landscape approach to promote integrated natural resource management.

In subsequent GEF cycles, the CPP has been adjusted to emerging impact criteria, approaches and procedures, facilitated by sequential project design and implementation over the years. In any case, the Land Degradation Focal Area has remained broadly consistent with the strategy set out in GEF-4, resulting in the CPP's continued consistency with the GEF programmatic guidelines. It should be noted, however, that the CPP programme approach, which was part of a pilot in different countries, was subsequently abandoned by the GEF.

3.1.3 Are the objectives of the project in tune with UNDP priorities in the country?

The CPP is linked to the national priority "Environmental sustainability and disaster risk management of the **UNDP Programme for Cuba (2014-2018)**[9], especially with its first desired outcome, in terms of supporting the integrated management of ecosystems to increase their resilience to the impacts of climate change. On the other hand, the CPP Programme Document (2013 update) points out its close linkage with the UNDP Country Programmes for Cuba for the periods 2003-2007 and 2007-2010, contributing to the components on strengthening the productive sectors and improving the quality of life, as well as to the line of action on strengthening the management of human development. The project also contributes to subsequent versions of the UNDP country programme, including the current one.

The CPP also aligns with **Cuba's United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2014-2018**, mainly with outcome 7, which refers to strengthening the integration of environmental considerations, including climate change adaptation, in the development plans of productive and service sectors, as well as with the current UNDAF. The CPP also responds to the areas of cooperation of the UNDAF 2018-2012, as outlined in the CPP Programme Document (2013 update). It should be noted that, with regard to previous cooperation, the UNDP Cuba Programme (2014-2018) points out, among the important experiences with the possibility of sustainability, the introduction of the concept of SLM through awareness-raising and the revision of regulatory frameworks, which is a direct reference to the CPP.

3.1.4 Is the project in harmony with national strategies and priorities on combating desertification, environment, climate change and sustainable development?

As indicated above, the CPP emerged within the framework of the UNCCD to support the implementation of the **National Programme to Combat Desertification and Drought** (2000), which includes the National Strategy and the NAP on Desertification and Drought. In 2012, the GoC conducted an exercise to align the NAP with the Ten-Year Strategic Plan and Framework to Enhance the Implementation of the UNCCD 2008-2018. The following year, an update of the CPP was carried out to reflect these changes; in this document, the consistency of the CPP with the NAP is highlighted, as well as the central role of the CPP for the implementation of the NAP.

As part of the process, begun in 2011, to update Cuba's economic and social model, in 2016 the **National Economic and Social Development Plan** to 2030 was approved, which is the guiding document of the national planning system to date. The CPP is directly aligned to the strategic axis "Natural resources and environment" of this plan, in particular to its specific objectives 8 and 9[10]. The CPP, through P5, is also aligned with specific objectives 2 and 5 of the strategic axis "Effective

[9] Note that this was extended by one year (2019) to synchronise with national planning

[10] Specific objective 8 refers to halting soil degradation through the implementation of sustainable agriculture as a way to contribute to achieving food security in the country. Specific objective 9, on the other hand, aims to halt and reverse the deterioration of water quality and increase its availability through the protection and adequate management of water sources, sustainable distribution balances, reuse and recycling, and the promotion of a culture of saving, conservation and rational use of this resource.

and socialist government and social integration", which refer to consolidating a system of effective and efficient public administration, and to promoting territorial development by strengthening the powers and capacities for planning and management of the territories, the participation of social actors and coordination with other state bodies.

Similarly, the CPP is congruent with the **National Environmental Strategy** (EAN by its initials in Spanish) 2016-2020, as it addresses five of the seven priority environmental problems identified therein and is related to the strategic direction "Rational management of natural resources", in particular to its specific objective of reducing land degradation and the lines of action proposed for this purpose. It also contributes to the strategic directions "Tackling climate change" and "Improving environmental policy and management instruments". As shown below, P5 has contributed to the latter in terms of strengthening the role of economic instruments, the implementation of environmental information systems, as well as environmental education, communication and training. Available documentation suggests that the CPP is also in tune with the previous phases of the EAN (1997/2006, 2007/2010 and 2011/2015 and 2016/2020), which consistently identified land degradation as a priority environmental issue. Interviews noted that the CPP is also aligned with the sectoral strategy on agriculture.

Under the umbrella of the EAN, the CPP is linked to the **National Biodiversity Programme** 2016-2020 in its objective D "Enhance the restoration and conservation of ecosystems that provide essential services for all", specifically target 14, which aims to reduce the degradation of habitats, ecosystems and landscapes. It also contributes to the **National Environmental Education Programme** 2016-2020, which includes soil degradation and sustainable land management among its priority themes.

Furthermore, an analysis conducted by P5 found that the CPP directly relates to six of the eleven tasks included in Tarea Vida, the plan approved in 2017 to address **climate change**[11]; P5 contributes to these tasks in a cross-cutting manner through its coordination and M&E activities. In addition, many of the geographical areas prioritised by Tarea Vida coincide with the areas of intervention of the CPP.

In the agricultural sector, the CPP is mainly articulated with the **National Programme for Soil Conservation and Improvement** (PNCMS by its initials in Spanish), which aims to fully or partially finance projects or activities aimed at the protection and sustainable management of soils, and with the **National Forestry Development Fund** (FONADEF by its initials in Spanish), oriented towards the promotion and financing of projects and activities dedicated to the conservation and development of forest resources, especially in terms of inventories, management, protection and research. As explained below, P5 helped link the CPP to these instruments in order to facilitate agricultural producers' access to funding for the implementation of SLM practices.

As detailed in section 3.4.2 on public goods, the project contributed to improving the public policy and regulatory framework, in terms of supporting the development and/or updating of laws, policies and strategies. The CPP, with the support of P5, played a key role in introducing the SLM approach into the country's legal framework and planning instruments.

[11] Namely adaptation to climate change (tasks 1 and 8), availability and efficient use of water as part of addressing drought (4), reforestation to protect soil and water (5), strengthening monitoring, surveillance and early warning systems (9), as well as managing and using international financial resources (11).

Finally, interviewees agree that the **CPP is consistent with the needs of the provinces**, as it responds to priority problems of land degradation and drought in those territories, and is relevant to support the implementation of provincial environmental and agricultural policies.

3.1.5 Have all relevant stakeholders been involved in the design and implementation of the project?

The alignment of the CPP with national priorities is due, in part, to its **high level of country ownership**, which has led to the integration of SLM into the programmatic framework, into multiple legal and regulatory instruments, as well as into the education system; as detailed in section 3.6.2, the P5 played a key role in this process. Moreover, the CPP directorate, in which the P5 management team is embedded, was first located in the Centre for Environmental Management, Information and Education (CIGEA by its initials in Spanish), and then transferred to the AMA following a wider process of restructuring of the public administration. The project is staffed by civil servants, which has allowed the project activities to be fully articulated with the GoC's institutional framework.

The CPP is also notable for the **high level of stakeholder participation** in its design and implementation. The CPP stems from the NAP, whose formulation lasted three years (1997-2000) and included 15 workshops involving communities and organised civil society (one in each province and one in the special municipality of the Isle of Youth), as well as six workshops with the scientific community. Subsequently, the CPP and P5 formulation stage included 14 workshops and meetings between 2003 and 2005, with consultation, partnership building and validation objectives. As a result of this process, the P5 project document identifies 25 key institutions and 46 collaborating institutions; it also specifies the governmental institutions that would be part of the National Steering Committee, as well as the technical institutions and territorial organisations that would participate in the Executive Committee. The CPP inception workshop in July 2005 and the P5 inception workshop in November 2008 were attended by representatives of several of these institutions. Additionally, in 2010, the CPP Expert Group was established, with members from nine institutions, which held nine meetings between 2017 and 2019. As explained in Section 3.2.4, the P5 has played a central role in creating and consolidating partnerships across the CPP.

At the local level, interviewees report the involvement of a wide range of actors, recognising the role of the P5 in facilitating inter-institutional coordination and programme monitoring, even in provinces that were not initially considered by any of the other four OP15 projects. For its part, the P5 team highlights the importance of having provincial delegations to respond to the specific needs of each area and to obtain feedback from the field.

3.2 Project design[12]

3.2.1 Assessment of the logical/results

¿How clear and integrated were the objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities of the project?

P5's Project Results Framework (PRF) is well integrated vertically, but the project goal, objective and outcomes are not clearly formulated. The outputs contribute to the outcomes and the outcomes contribute to the objective, which in turn is aligned with the goal[13]. However, as detailed in Table 1, the description included in the PRF contains vague expressions and unverifiable elements; for example, it stands out that the objective and outcome 1 refer to "effectiveness" without specifying what this means in the specific context of the project[14]. This makes it difficult to identify SMART indicators for monitoring, as shown below[15]. As detailed in section 3.5.1 on adaptive management, these shortcomings were already pointed out in the mid-term valuations of P5 and the CPP in 2015, which recommended adopting SMART indicators. However, as indicated in section 3.5.1, these recommendations were not fully addressed. The outputs, on the other hand, are clearly and precisely formulated; only in one case (output 3.3) is it identified that the output is formulated as an activity. On the other hand, the text accompanying the PRF in the Project Document focuses on detailing the outputs, but does not describe the goal, objective and outcomes in detail, nor does it explain the causal relationships between the elements of the logical framework.

Table 1. Assessment of the key elements of the results framework

Result framework element	Comment
Goal: Cuba has the **capacities and conditions** for sustainable land management in a way that contributes to maintaining productivity and ecosystem functions.	Which capacities and conditions are being referred to?
Objective: The **effectiveness and efficiency** of SLM initiatives in Cuba are **maximised** throughout the programme.	Which behavioural changes are observed when effectiveness and efficiency are maximized?
Outcome 1: Institutions **effectively** coordinate their SLM initiatives throughout the programme.	Which behavioural changes are observed when institutions coordinate initiatives effectively?

[12] Was the project internally coherent and robust in its design?
[13] Note that the RF does not include activities.
[14] It is important to mention that the CPP and P5 were written about 15 years ago, when M&E knowledge and requirements were perhaps more limited, although it is not certain that this is the case. The results framework was certainly endorsed by the GEF. This does not imply that it is, however, perfect, as explained in the text and detailed in Annex 5.5.
[15] For specific, measurables, achievable, realistic and time-bound.

Result framework element	Comment
Outcome 2: SLM initiatives in Cuba **respond** to the M&E outcomes of the broad programme conditions.	What does “respond” mean in this context? Which behavioural changes are observed when this takes place?
Outcome 3: Adaptive management and M&E	This outcome is not formulated as a direct outcome, but as an activity

Source: Own elaboration based on the Project Document.

P5 is broadly aligned with the CPP programmatic logframe, but the articulation between the project and programmatic RF is weak. The Project Document identifies the alignment of P5 as a whole with Outcomes 1.1 and 1.5 of the CPP logframe and the barriers they address (Table 2). However, the elements of the P5 PRF do not fully coincide with these outcomes, as different units of measurement are used, which cannot be aggregated at the programmatic level. For example, CPP Outcome 1.1 refers to planning processes and regulations that take SLM into account, while the P5 PRF does not identify the project's contribution to this outcome. In addition, P5 contributions to the CPP additional to what was initially planned are not reflected in the programme's RF. While an update of the CPP's RF was carried out in 2018, it focused on revising the planned indicators and targets, without addressing these limitations.

Table 2. Alignment between P5 and CPP outcomes and the barriers they address

Outcomes	Barriers
Outcome 1.1: Planning structures and processes for land use and regulations take into account SLM principles and implementation practices compatible with the conservation of the integrity of the system.	Barrier 1: limited intersectoral integration and interinstitutional coordination
Outcome 1.5: Information on land conditions and trends across Cuba being applied by planners in decision making.	Barrier 4: Inadequate systems to monitor land degradation and manage related information

Source: Own elaboration based on the Project Document.

The inclusion of P5 in the structure of the CPP has facilitated a holistic landscape approach throughout the programme. The CPP has a sequential structure, with successive emphases on different elements: soil (P1), water (P2), forests (P3) and finally landscapes (P4), which does not seem to reflect a holistic landscape approach at all stages of the programme. According to the interviews conducted, this structure is related to the context in which the programme emerged, given the high level of soil degradation in the country, which is why it was decided to focus initial efforts on this aspect. However, the interviews suggest that P5 is inserted in this structure as an articulating mechanism, which has facilitated a comprehensive landscape approach throughout the programme, adding the contributions of previous projects to the successive ones.

How feasible and realistic were the project objectives, outcomes and outputs within the available budget and time frame?

The budget programmed for P5 was insufficient in the face of the extension of the CPP. The P5 was designed to accompany the implementation of the programme throughout its planned 10-year duration (2008-2018), with a constant budget of USD 80,000 per year. However, project implementation suffered a series of delays, which led to the extension of the CPP until 2024. According to the P5 project implementation reviews (PIRs) and interviews, the causes of the delays were essentially the following:

- The learning curve during the first years of implementation, given the complexity of the CPP programme model and the paucity of previous experience to draw on.
- Difficulties with procurement processes throughout the CPP, due to limited capacities of national suppliers, complicated and changing import procedures, and increased costs due to the US economic blockade of Cuba.
- Institutional and personnel changes in the framework of the restructuring of the Cuban public administration (2012-2016), which implied the introduction of new procedures and the need to mentor new staff.

In view of the extension of the CPP, budget shortfall was identified since 2016 as a critical risk of P5 in the PIRs and in 2019 it was reported that the project had already implemented 92.4% of its budget (see section 3.5.2 on financing). From a project design point of view, it is worth mentioning that the initial learning curve and the possibility of sourcing from domestic suppliers were underestimated; on the other hand, the intensification of the US economic blockade and institutional adjustments would have been difficult to foresee at the time of programme design and given the long duration of the programme, making it more relevant to analyse the measures implemented to manage emerging risks and their effect on programme progress (see Section 3.3.2). In any case, it is worth noting that in most of the RIPs, the performance of P5 was rated as satisfactory and the cumulative progress to 2020 reaches or exceeds most of the targets set, which suggests that these were realistically defined and adjusted in the framework of the adaptive management of a long-term programme.

How effective was the M&E system (indicators, baselines, targets, methods and sources of verification) in measuring the progress/results of the project? Were they SMART and consistent with the project objectives, outcomes and outputs?

Overall, **P5's M&E system is not adequate to measure its results**. Many of the indicators are not specific, they often include several elements without clearly distinguishing them, indicators and targets are not always consistent, there are shortcomings in the definition of the time horizon, and verification methods are often not robust. The system is particularly weak with regard to outcome 1, where it is not possible to measure results for four of the seven indicators. To measure results for two of the other seven indicators, strong assumptions have to be made. It is important to recognise in any case that the development of a system of indicators, baseline, targets and methods and sources of verification for this project was a difficult task in terms of the relevance of the indicators, given the fine line that separates their results from those of the programme. Underlining this, the system reflects limited capacities to formulate indicator systems that are specific, measurable and with a clear time horizon. Annex 5.5 presents specific comments on the indicators.

3.2.2 Assumptions and risks

The Project Document clearly identified the assumptions and risks for the achievement of the objective and outcomes of P5, and rated the level of associated risk. A total of six assumptions were identified, referring to the continuity of political commitment to SLM in Cuba, the timely management of resources and the stability of staff in key institutions. In all cases, the level of risk was rated as low, so no strategies were identified for their management, nor were they considered in determining the expected outputs. As shown in Table 3, the political commitment assumption was checked, but not those related to the stability of key project staff. Also, as explained above, the extension of the CPP meant that P5 resources were running out before the end of the programme.

Table 3. Status of P5 assumptions

Element	Assumption	Risk level	Status
Objective	Commitment with SLM in Cuba continues to be a state policy.	Low	The GoC kept its commitment to SLM
Outcome 1	GEF resources are disbursed on time	Low	Resources were disbursed on time, but this became insufficient as the CPP was being extended
Outcome 1	Co-financing to support the PMU is properly provided	Low	Cofinancing was provided to support the PMU
Outcome 1	Staff stability in the institutions that make up the CPP	Low	There was staff turnover linked to institutional changes
Outcome 2	Reliable allocation of funding to M&E in the long term	Low	GEF funding became insufficient, but the Project was able to mobilize additional funding from other projects and the GoC
Outcome 2	Staff stability in key institutions	Low	There was staff turnover linked to institutional changes

The CPP Programme Document also identified five assumptions for the achievement of the outcomes, specific objectives and purposes of the programme as a whole, which relate to institutional conditions (continued political commitment, environmentally friendly institutional, legal and planning framework, staff stability) and on the ground conditions (favourable social and economic conditions for SLM in rural areas and continued commitment of local stakeholders). All assumptions were rated as low risk, except for the one related to social and economic conditions in rural areas, where a continued risk due to geopolitical factors was highlighted. As for P5, the assumptions related to stakeholder commitment and the favourable public policy framework were checked, but not staff stability. In terms of social and economic conditions in rural areas for SLM, it is worth noting that these may have changed as a consequence of the economic decentralisation process that occurred in Cuba and the US economic blockade. Despite these changes, the CPP

Results Framework update document (2018) does not refer to assumptions and risks, which seems to indicate that these were not subject to revision.

In designing P5, the risks associated with the long-term horizon and the programmatic complexity of the CPP were underestimated. However, risks were continuously monitored and managed throughout the project. As noted by interviewees, there were many changes in the project context throughout the implementation of the project, which affected its progress and duration. While it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to anticipate some of these, it is striking that operational risks linked to the learning curve and procurement processes were not identified, nor was the possibility of delays due to unforeseen situations foreseen. Despite this, as explained in Section 3.3.2, emerging risks were closely monitored through the project monitoring mechanisms (PIR, NSC meetings) and actions to manage them were identified in a timely manner.

Neither the P5 nor the CPP considered environmental risks, in particular those associated with the effects of climate change, but such risks were considered on the ground in each intervention area. In each area, the first step was to carry out an environmental, social and economic diagnosis, including pressures and ecosystem services. From this, a management plan was established to mitigate pressure factors, reduce land degradation, optimise the use of soil, forest and water resources, and adapt to the effects of climate change. Thus, although the CPP was not born with an explicit climate change focus, this was integrated on the ground during its implementation from a co-benefits perspective. According to the interviews conducted, partnerships with other initiatives, such as the FAO/EU project " Environmental Bases for Local Food Security" (BASAL by its initials in Spanish), the UNDP/Adaptation Fund project "Reducing vulnerability to coastal flooding through ecosystem-based adaptation in the south of Artemisa and Mayabeque provinces of Cuba" (known as Manglar Vivo) and the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) played an important role in this.

3.2.3 Lessons from other relevant projects integrated in project design

Lessons learned from other projects were incorporated to a limited extent in the design of P5. In the interviews conducted, it was mentioned that the CPP took up the information generated, methodological bases and lessons learned from the FAO LADA project. However, the P5 Project Document does not include an analysis of lessons learned from previous projects. The CPP Programme Document includes four general lessons, based on the OP15 guidance for GEF-4, but does not indicate exactly which projects they come from. Specifically, the following lessons are mentioned:

- Control and prevention are less costly than rehabilitation measures;
- Effective strategies for prevention and control of land degradation require an appropriate combination of local management with macro-policy approaches;
- Capacity building and an enabling environment for SLM are key conditions for positive outcomes; and
- Comprehensive approaches based on stakeholder participation and established national planning frameworks are likely to ensure the sustainability of SLM activities.

The limited retrieval of lessons learned from other projects is partly due to the fact that the CPP is part of the piloting of a novel programme model for SLM. However, other initiatives with similar

management models in other sectors (e.g. economic, political, governance) were not reviewed, especially in relation to P5 as a coordination and M&E project.

3.2.4 Complementarity with other interventions

Other interventions within the sector were clearly identified in the Programme and Project Documents. Both documents list other ongoing GEF projects in Cuba and in the region with the potential to share learning, as well as programmes with which there are opportunities for synergy and replication, such as the UNDP Local Human Development Programme and the GEF SGP, initiated in 2005 in Cuba, respectively. More generally, the CPP is also identified as being related to the work carried out by FAO, UNEP and the UNCCD Secretariat. Moreover, in its 2013 update, the CPP Programme Document foresees the search for synergies with other international conventions, projects and related programmes through participation in joint actions and the signing of collaboration agreements, in particular with the LADA project, the National Capacity Building Project, the GEF "Sabana Camagüey" Project and the FAO Conservation Agriculture Project, among others.

The P5, within the framework of the CPP, has coordinated with other donors to seek complementarity and synergies, without duplicating activities. Interviewees agree that there was no duplication between the CPP and other initiatives in this area, and point to numerous instances where synergies were built. These were formalised by P5 through the signing of cooperation agreements that specify the thematic and geographical areas, as well as including an action plan. To date, the P5 has concluded more than 15 such agreements and has been responsible for following up on the partnerships thus established. In this way, joint activities were undertaken to achieve common objectives, both at the strategic level (e.g. for the updating of standards) and at the territorial level, where the replication of the SLM model was facilitated through its integration into other interventions. This coordinated work was facilitated by the fact that the same institutions, and often the same people, are in charge of several projects funded by different donors, thus being in a privileged position to articulate them.

From the review of the RIPs and the interviews conducted, it is possible to highlight synergies with the following international donor programmes:

- The GEF SGP, which supports communities and civil society associations. According to the PIRs, P5 worked with the SGP between 2012 and 2018; as a result, by 2017 there were 21 SGP projects under implementation in Cuba that promoted SLM approaches, were in the same areas as the CPP and engaged in technical exchanges with CPP partners, allowing for mutual sharing of lessons learned. For example, in some municipalities of Camagüey Province, a movement of replication of SLM actions originated through a close alliance with the CPP, which supported the elaboration of SLM diagnoses and plans with a climate change adaptation approach in eight farms.

- UNDP/EU/Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation BASAL, launched in 2013 with the objective of reducing climate change-related vulnerabilities in the agricultural sector. In a first stage, BASAL adopted the SLM model in its areas of intervention, introducing trainings on farms and enterprises. Some of these, located in the province of Camagüey, adopted SLM practices and are in the process of certification to receive support in this area. Subsequently, BASAL selected soil polygons of the CPP among its areas of

intervention. Throughout this process, BASAL supported the acquisition of equipment, while the CPP provided technical assistance and information (indicators and early warning system).

- UNDP/Adaptation Fund Manglar Vivo, which started in 2014 with the objective of increasing the resilience to the effects of climate change of the populations living in the coastal zone of the provinces of Artemisa and Mayabeque, promoting the application of Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) measures. This project joined efforts in particular with P2 for water management monitoring and canal rehabilitation. Like BASAL, Manglar Vivo also helped to integrate the climate change perspective into the CPP.

- The UNDP/GEF project "A landscape approach for the conservation of threatened mountain ecosystems" (known as "Connecting Landscapes"), established in 2014 to establish a landscape approach to biodiversity conservation and protected area management in Cuba, integrating the latter into the surrounding areas. This project has adopted and replicated the SLM approach introduced by the CPP, as well as exchanged experiences with the CPP and carried out some joint activities such as workshops. There is, however, an opportunity to integrate the farm certification systems established by CPP and Connecting Landscapes on SLM and landscape management, respectively.

At the national level, interviewees also noted synergies with the Ecovalor project (UNDP/GEF) on valuation of ecosystem services, currently under implementation; the UNDP/GEF project Improving the Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species (2012-2017) and UNDP projects on employment and small businesses. At the regional level, South-South cooperation exercises were carried out with Panama and the Dominican Republic. For example, Cuba sent two specialists to train Panamanian technicians and producers in SLM in the framework of an FAO project in semi-desert areas and is currently exploring the extension of the Master's degree in SLM to this country.

3.3 Effectiveness

3.3.1 Has the project been effective in achieving its expected objectives, outcomes and outputs?

As noted in section 3.2.1, P5's M&E system is not adequate to measure its results. The results framework includes two indicators at the objective level and twelve indicators at the outcome level. **The achievement of the targets has been highly satisfactory at the objective level**, as the two original targets have been exceeded. **The achievement of the targets has been satisfactory at the outcome leve**l. At this level it is only possible to measure the achievement of eight of the twelve targets. Of these eight, seven of the targets (or 88% of the targets) were met satisfactorily, while the achievement one of the targets (or 12% of the targets) was moderately unsatisfactory. The achievement of the targets was satisfactory in Outcomes 1 and 2 and mixed in Outcome 3, where achievement was satisfactory in one target and moderately unsatisfactory in another. It must be stressed that, given the weaknesses of the results framework, this analysis is based on strong

assumptions, which need to be considered. Table 4 presents the analysis for each indicator, justifying the ratings.

It is useful to qualitatively analyse the project's progress on the three expected outcomes beyond the indicator system (Section 3.4 discusses the second-order impacts of the project). Overall, it can be argued that P5 has contributed to the coordination of SLM actions in the country (outcome 1). This has been the result of increased interaction of a large number and diversity of institutions (ministries, research institutes, agricultural management bodies...), manifested in the signature of cooperation agreements and the formation of multidisciplinary and multi-scale working groups. As noted, the project contributed to the coordination of national and international projects. In addition, the project has contributed to informed, context-responsive SLM initiatives (outcome 2). In that sense, P5 has developed and implemented M&E systems, tools and formats, collected strategic information through them, and contributed to their use in the design and implementation of SLM initiatives in the country, within and outside the programme. One of its main contributions has been the documentation of lessons learned from projects, and the use of lessons from one project in subsequent projects. Monitoring has included key aspects not originally envisaged, such as biophysical aspects, which allow the effectiveness of SLM to be assessed (see section 3.4 on impacts). However, P5 has not been able to finalise an IT-based programmatic monitoring tool. In addition, as noted above, P5’s results framework is not appropriate. Finally, the project has contributed to the M&E of the different projects of the programme and of the programme itself (outcome 3), also supporting the formulation of the former.

Table 4. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of Outcomes against End-of-Project Targets)

Indicator system			**Reporting**	**Assessment of achievement of end of the project targets**	
				Rating[16]	**Justification**
Objective	**The effectiveness and efficiency of SLM initiatives in Cuba is maximized programme-wide**				
Description of Indicator	**Baseline Level**	**End of project target level**	**Cumulative progress since project start[17]**		
Proportion of the core target group of 25 key institutions nationwide which is participating in the coordinated and integrated use of lands based on sustainable land management principles	0	25 members of the core target group by end of Program	94 institutions are participating in the implementation of the CPP.	HS	Assuming that all the above-mentioned institutions carry out coordinated SLM actions, the target has been largely exceeded: instead of the 25 planned institutions, 94 institutions participate in the implementation of the CPP at the end of the project.
Proportion of area covered by CPP where agreements for coordination between national, provincial and municipal authorities for the use of lands based on sustainable land management principles are developed and in place	No systems exist specific to SLM	80% of national territory covered by agreements by year 10 (end of the project)	100% of national territory is covered by agreements, since they are signed by national entities that regulate activities that promote SLM model application, which have branches up to municipal levels.	HS	Assuming that all signed agreements are being implemented, the target has been exceeded: 100% of the territory instead of 80%.

[16] The following scales have been used: highly satisfactory (HS), satisfactory (S), moderately satisfactory (MS), moderately unsatisfactory (MU), unsatisfactory (U), highly unsatisfactory (HU).
[17] The analysis is based on the latest available PIR, which covers the period up to 30 June 2020.

Indicator system			Reporting	Assessment of achievement of end of the project targets	
				Rating[16]	Justification
Outcome 1	**Institutions coordinate their SLM initiatives effectively programme-wide**				
Number of CPP projects whose startup responds to the achievement of milestones identified in the CPP document	0	5 (100%), throughout the life of the CPP	1 project concluded and 4 projects are in execution phase as described below: Project 1: Execution was completed. In the final evaluation, it obtained a highly satisfactory rating. Project 2 is being implemented according to schedule. Its mid-term evaluation rating was satisfactory. Project 3. In implementation. Project 4 It's PRODOC was completed during first trimester of 2020 by an international consultant and the Central Coordination Unit of CPP. Reference Terms were written. Project 5 It has been accompanied the execution of the others projects of CPP.	S	Assuming that the indicator refers to the design of projects in the life of the CPP, the target has been met: 5 projects have been designed. If the indicator is taken to refer to the implementation or completion of projects in the life of the CPP, the target would also be met. On the other hand, if the indicator is taken to refer to the implementation or completion of projects in the life of P5, the target would not be met, as P4 has not started implementation by the close of P5.
Number of constituent projects within the CPP which meet their impact targets in a cost-effective manner	0	80%, throughout the life of the CPP	Project 1 completed successfully since 2015 (100%). Project 2: 92%, Project 3: 76.6%. Project P5: 96%.		Given the deficiencies in the indicator system and reporting, it is not possible to assess the achievement of this target.

Indicator system			Reporting	Assessment of achievement of end of the project targets	
				Rating[16]	Justification
Degree of coincidence between activity targets established in annual work plans of CPP and constituent projects, and actual execution	0	90%, throughout the life of the CPP	The degree of coincidence between the activity target established in the work plans of the constituent projects and the CPP is 100% The real execution of the constituent projects in the period is: •Project 1 - 100%, •Project 2 - 81 %, •Project 3 - 57.1% •Project 5 - 76%		Given the deficiencies in the indicator system and reporting, it is not possible to assess the achievement of this target.
Degree of coincidence between financial targets established in annual budgets of CPP and constituent projects, and actual execution.	0	90%, throughout the life of the CPP	The degree of coincidence between the financial objectives established in the work plans of the constituent projects and the CPP as of April 2021 is 92%, making a comparison between the total budget of the CPP and the execution of all the projects to date. If all projects are considered (including P4, which has not started), the degree of coincidence is 75%. Total execution 7 485 468.15 (as of 30/04/2021)	MS	Assuming that the indicator refers to the disbursement of financial resources, the achievement of the target depends on whether one considers the five projects or the projects implemented to date, as P4 has not yet started, and will start once P5 has closed. If the five projects are considered, the target has not been met: 75% of the resources have been implemented. If the four projects implemented to date are considered, the target has been met: 92% of the resources have been executed.

Indicator system			Reporting	Assessment of achievement of end of the project targets	
				Rating[16]	Justification
					The evaluation team considers that it is more reasonable to consider the four projects implemented to date in the rating, taking also into account the other possible interpretation.
Proportion of planned CPP staff and institutional staff seconded to projects in place and satisfying performance requirements	5 full time and 3 part time members of the central team	100% (6 full time and 6 part time staff of the central team, 4 project leaders and 5 intervention area staff)	100% according to goal, we have 8 full-time specialists. (5 SLM specialists, the financial administrator, the logistic and 1 full-time driver.) 8 part-time specialists (6 coordinators in the management units and 10 territorial coordinators of the program)		Given the deficiencies in the indicator system and reporting, it is not possible to assess the achievement of this target.
Number of national and international institutions (both within and outside the CPP), which coordinate with and complement GEF-funded investments in the CPP in their initiatives and plans related to SLM	0	All 25 members of the core target group, all 46 key collaborating institutions and 4 international agencies	94 institutions are participating in the implementation of the CPP. Developed synergy actions with the GEF Small Grants Program (PPD).		Given the deficiencies in the indicator system and reporting, it is not possible to assess the achievement of this target.
Proportion of local stakeholders in area covered by CPP who are satisfied with CPP decisions, results and products	0	80% from year 7 on.	To date, 2 surveys have been applied in 2018 and 2019, respectively, which have shown satisfaction degree of stakeholders with CPP results is above 90% in all intervention areas.	S	Assuming that the report states that the surveys reflect that 80% or more of respondents are satisfied, the target has been met.

Indicator system			Reporting	Assessment of achievement of end of the project targets	
				Rating[16]	Justification
Outcome 2	**SLM initiatives in Cuba respond to the results of monitoring and evaluation of programme-wide conditions**				
Number of programme-level indicators related to SLM being measured in accordance with plans	Zero	80% of CPP indicators and Purpose and Intermediate Objective levels	An update of the evaluation of the CPP indicators was completed in this period. Specific Objective 1 of CPP: 97% achieved. Specific Objective 2 of CPP: 70% achieved. (Some results of this objective depends on the projects 4)	S	The target has been met.
Number of target institutions receiving regular and up to date information on programme-level CPP indicators	Zero	The 25 members of the core target group receive information on 100% of indicators within 6 months of measure	The 25 key institutions and others are kept receiving updated information on the CPP and its projects. Printed and distributed a book named Law of Water (Annex3). Dissemination of CPP actions and its projects through the social network Facebook, television programs and the written press (Annex4).	S	Assuming that the report reflects the point of view of the institutions, the target has been met.
Number of institutions which take into account programme-level indicators in their management of initiatives contributing to SLM	None	The 25 members of the core target group	There are 94 institutions up to now which take into account programme-level indicators in their management of initiatives contributing to SLM.	S	Assuming that the report reflects the point of view of the institutions, the target has been met.

Indicator system			Reporting	Assessment of achievement of end of the project targets	
				Rating[16]	Justification
Outcome 3	**Monitoring, learning, adaptive feedback & evaluation**				
Proportion of annual work plans and budgets which adequately take into account the results of monitoring and evaluation	0	100% throughout the life of the CPP	100% of the work plans, as well as their budgets, have been adapted according to the monitoring and evaluation plan.	S	The target has been met.
Numbers of documents on lessons learnt produced and disseminated within the GEF system, based on project final evaluation reports	0	5, during the life of the CPP	Only P1 has concluded, its final report includes an annex with the learned lessons from it. Following a recommendation of CPP's MTR, a publication about CPP lessons learned during program lifetime was published.	MU	The target has not been met because the CPP has yet not been completed (only one of its projects is complete and has an terminal evaluation)[18].

[18] This analysis follows the indicator in the PRF, which is not adequate. Performance in terms of lessons learned is assessed in a more robust way in section 3.5.1.

3.3.2 How were risks managed and mitigated?

What factors helped and hindered the achievement of the expected objectives and outcomes?

Among the **factors that enabled** the achievement of the expected results were institutional ones, such as collaboration between institutions in different sectors and levels of government (including MINAG), formalised institutional support for the project and ownership by the GoC. Other enabling factors were the formation of multidisciplinary teams with staff with high technical expertise, as well as partnerships with good quality scientific institutions and universities linked to field practice and the business sector. From the point of view of project management, some interviewees highlighted the creation of project management units, expert and working groups, the development of monitoring systems and the capacity for adaptive management. Also, the long duration of the project allowed for greater results to be achieved.

On the other hand, the main **factors that hindered** the achievement of the expected results were, firstly, the slowness of equipment procurement processes in the face of the US economic and trade blockade, which has delayed the arrival of key resources for the implementation of SLM practices, and secondly, changes in the country's economic policy and institutional framework, although given the high level of national ownership the PSC adapted quite quickly. In addition, the achievement of the expected results faced some management difficulties, such as the need to develop implementation protocols at the beginning of P1 and P5, given the novelty of the programme, and the need to adapt to a changing context due to the long duration of the project. This is in line with the emerging risks identified in the RIPs. Other important factors include staff turnover, unfamiliarity with SLM, slow project approval process at national and international level, use of complex technical language and language barriers (English/Spanish), accessibility of intervention areas, restrictions caused by COVID-19 and more frequent and intense drought processes.

How well were risks and assumptions managed, e.g. COVID-19? What was the quality of the risk mitigation strategies developed? Were they sufficient?

The project identified emerging risks and their causes in a specific and timely manner, as well as measures to mitigate them. Delays in the implementation of the other CPP projects meant that P5 had to adjust its targets on the fly and operate with limited resources in its final years. In this context, the main risk faced by P5 was the depletion of resources allocated to the project due to the extension of the CPP. This risk was pointed out since 2016 in the RIPs, where two mitigation strategies were reported to manage it: seeking new sources of funding and supporting P5 activities through the other projects under implementation. This was compounded in 2019 by the GEF's request to close P5 and incorporate CPP coordination, including P5 functions, into P4, which is the final stage of the programme. In 2018 and 2019, this issue was discussed at the annual meetings of the NSC, which took the following agreements on the matter:

- Agreement 9/2018: Ensure that projects 2, 3 and 4 have funds available for the implementation of P5.

- Agreement 4/2019: Convene a meeting with all parties involved (MINCEX, CITMA, UNDP, CPP) to assess the proposed closure of P5 and its administrative and technical impact on the implementation of the programme.

These adaptive measures allowed the continued and effective operation of P5, which is reflected in the fact that, in the 2020 PIR, the progress of the project is rated as satisfactory, reaching and in some cases exceeding the targets. Based on this analysis, it is possible to conclude that the budgetary risk mitigation strategy was adequate and sufficient.

As mentioned above, the assumption of staff stability was not met due to institutional changes in the GoC during project implementation, to which P5 responded by sensitising and training new staff and involving the new institutions in the PSC[19]. While this led to some delays in project implementation, it is considered an adequate and sufficient mitigation strategy to ensure continuity of partnerships under the CPP.

The 2020 PIR identified COVID-19 as a risk, noting that, as a result of pandemic-related constraints, the entire team was working remotely, with no possibility for project site visits. It also reported the establishment of the following measures to keep the project operational and ensure the health of project members, which are considered adequate:

- Implementation of remote (virtual) working;
- Supporting communication and connectivity of the whole team;
- Follow-up and monitoring actions in the intervention areas are carried out by the territorial coordination groups with logistical support from the project management;
- Maintaining a regular exchange with the territorial teams and producers through the established communication channels; and
- Systematic monitoring of the situation in order to adopt new mitigation measures.

3.4 Impact

3.4.1 Are there signs that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress towards, the intended outcomes?

Through agreements with authorities, P5 increased the integration of SLM principles into local practices. In 2017, P5-sponsored replication agreements covered 141 municipalities, or 84% of the country's municipalities. In addition, between 2018 and 2020, the project supported the signing of agreements with different national authorities on SLM, covering the entire Cuban territory. This is reflected in the fact that, in 2020, 84,000 people were registered applying SLM practices in an area of 34,780 ha within the five programme intervention areas (including agricultural, forest and pasture lands), which represents a progress of 60% and 90%, respectively, with respect to the programme's coverage targets.

[19] As the NSC is made up of senior managers from the main institutions working in the CPP, the decisions taken in the NSC took into account the restructuring processes that have taken place over the years.

The project has not consolidated information on the second-order impacts of the programme, i.e. SLM impacts. While the CPP's RF includes indicators on eroded soils, crop yields, water use and forest ecosystem restoration, among others, it is not possible to systematically determine the programme's impact on these aspects from the available information (see Section 3.5.3)[20]. Moreover, the CPP's RF does not include indicators to monitor the programme's impacts on biodiversity and climate change. Although soil and water quality studies were recently carried out in a sample of CPP demonstration and replication sites, these do not allow determining the progress achieved, as the initial situation of these sites is unknown, as there is no baseline against which to compare the findings of these studies. Also, as noted in the 2019 Mid-Term Review, the programme's contribution to climate change remains to be measured, as several SLM actions promoted by the CPP have the potential to contribute to addressing the negative effects of climate change. However, there are indications of notable positive impacts, which are reported below.

There are signs that the P5 contributed to decreasing soil degradation and increasing land productivity. While there is no exact measurement of the impact of the CPP in terms of decreasing soil degradation and increasing crop yields, there are indications that the programme has contributed significantly to these, at least in some areas. For example, in the Provincial Delegation of Matanzas, 65% of the areas in MINAG's PNCMS suffered from severe degradation processes in 2015, while these currently represent 25-30%, a decrease that was achieved thanks to the CPP. In all the provincial delegations interviewed, an increase in productivity was reported, although in this case the results are mixed depending on the crop and each participating farm. As an example, between 2015 and 2019, in the Los Barzagas farm (Guantánamo), maize yields increased from 1 to 1.4 t/ha, bean yields from 0.8 to 1.4 t/ha, and tomato yields decreased from 18 to 14.4 t/ha[21]. As a result of this, the average income increased from 850 to 1,540 CUP, thus improving the livelihoods of the participating farmers.

There are indications that P5 helped reduce vulnerability to climate change. Despite the information gaps noted above, interviews suggest that the CPP has contributed in multiple ways to reduced vulnerability to the effects of climate change. In particular, P5 has contributed to increased resilience to climate change through the strengthening of the early warning system, which has led to increased use of meteorological information[22]; crop and livelihood diversification[23]; reforestation; integrated water resource management, including the

[20] This situation of limited impact information has occurred despite the fact that impact measurement methodologies have been developed (see Section 3.4.2), which may indicate that they are not robust or were not fully implemented by the project.

[21] See the document "Yields and wages" provided by P5 for this assessment. Almost all examples of farms included in the document show decreasing yields in one or more crops.

[22] Producers in the CPP intervention areas receive agrometeorological and extreme event information customised to the conditions of their farms and the crops they grow. This information allows them to improve the planning of agricultural activities such as planting, irrigation and harvesting, as well as to prepare for extreme events. The information is disseminated through printed bulletins from the Provincial Meteorological Centres to the producers' cooperatives and farms. In the case of the Southern Plains area of Pinar del Río, information is sent by text messages to the producers' mobile phones. The strengthening of engagement between producers and users of this information has increased the relevance of this information.

[23] Traditionally, agricultural practices in Cuba only considered one crop, mainly sugar cane. The project has encouraged the cultivation of various grains and vegetables, as well as the introduction of fruit trees. In addition, the project has encouraged agriculture to be complemented by livestock farming.

promotion of more adequate water infrastructure[24]; the introduction of climate-resilient varieties[25]; and firefighting[26]. Importantly, these measures have been implemented in each site in a manner consistent with its specific conditions, including climatic conditions, thus strengthening their relevance and effectiveness. The synergies already mentioned with BASAL and Manglar Vivo have also contributed to fostering adaptation to climate change. In this regard, it is worth recalling that, as indicated in section 3.1.4, P5 activities are clearly aligned with Tarea Vida. As will be explained in section 3.6.1 on sustainability, progress in vulnerability reduction does not imply that the resulting vulnerability and risk are low[27]. Furthermore, project activities contribute to climate change mitigation.

Finally, according to the interviews conducted, the main **unexpected impacts** were, on the one hand, the closure of P5 before the end of the CPP (negative) and, on the other hand, the replication of the project activities (positive) (see section 3.4.4).

3.4.2 Production of public goods

The CPP was a pioneer in promoting the integration of SLM into the normative and policy framework. The CPP, with the support of P5, through the NSC, which involves the participation of the top management of the institutions where standards and policies are set in the country, played a key role in introducing SLM into the legal framework and planning instruments. By 2020, 101 updated regulations with an SLM approach were reported in MINAG, in addition to the technical regulations of Decree 179 on the protection, use and conservation of soils. Likewise, the SLM approach was included in the National Environmental Strategy 2010-2015 and was recognised as a priority in the National Environmental Education Strategy 2010-2015. Similarly, P5 contributed to the development of five land-use plans in the cooperatives belonging to ANAP, two provincial plans, 12 municipal plans and eight plans of community organisations with SLM principles.

The CPP developed methodologies to support SLM. These include: the Procedure for declaring areas under SLM; the Procedure for assessing the economic, environmental, social and technological impact of SLM practices; the Methodology for carrying out a procedure for assessing the impact of SLM; the Methodological procedures for the introduction of agroforestry systems in semi-arid zones; the Methodology for seed banks; the Instructions for carrying out a land-use planning study under the SLM principle in small areas; and technical manuals for adapting irrigation regulations to the National Water Policy. Likewise, SLM

[24] This has included the improvement of irrigation and drainage canals and the monitoring and repair of irrigation and drainage machinery

[25] In particular, rice and maize species resistant to drought and salinity have been introduced in Guantánamo, as well as rain-fed mango seeds and goat species more resistant to the type of diseases that attack it Pinar del Río and Guantánamo

[26] The CPP has strengthened the equipment of the Forest Ranger Corps and has encouraged its specialists to train producers in fire fighting, both to prevent fires and to know how to extinguish them in case they occur. It has also improved the monitoring of forest fires and their causes, which contributes to better management of these events.

[27] According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, risk is the result of the interaction between hazard, exposure and vulnerability, which in turn is the result of the interaction of sensitivity or fragility and the capacity to prepare and respond.

principles were incorporated into the Technological Instructions for the cultivation of sugar cane and inputs were provided to the drought hazard, vulnerability and risk studies carried out at the national level.

The CPP supported the implementation of innovative SLM certification and financing mechanisms. In 2017, through Resolution 6/2017, AMA established an SLM Recognition in three categories: initiated in SLM, advanced in SLM and with SLM, where the third one accredits the elimination of anthropogenic factors that have generated land degradation thanks to the systematic application of SLM principles. This recognition was created with the objective of acting as a prerequisite for accessing the moral and economic incentives established in the country for agricultural and forestry activities, including the PNCMS, which grants priority financing to producers categorised as SLM. In this way, it sought to encourage the adoption of SLM and to support the investment required for it. The implementation of this recognition was initially aimed at the areas of intervention of the CPP, and then extended to other areas of the country and even to farms supported by other projects such as BASAL. As of 2019, there were nine categorised SLM sites in Cuba (eight initiated and one advanced). Of these, three are located in CCP intervention area 1 (Pinar del Río), two in area 5 (Guantánamo), one in area 3 (Macizo de Guamuhaya) and the remaining three outside the CPP intervention areas[28]. As a reference methodology, the SLM Procedures Manual developed by the CPP was chosen; the programme also plays a central role in the assessment of requests. Additionally, in 2019 the Bank of Credit and Trade issued an incentive for producers holding an SLM categorisation, which includes a package of general benefits in addition to a reduced interest rate on loans granted, which varies depending on the category. By 2020, 120,000 producers had been supported with one of these financial schemes (i.e. 60% of the target of 200,000 people).

The CPP promoted the adoption of SLM practices at the farm level. These practices were adjusted to the context and include diversification of activities and crops, use of more resilient species, use of green manure, vermiculture and minimum tillage, among many others. The CPP also supported the replacement of obsolete or inappropriate machinery. In this way, the programme contributed to the country's transition from monoculture to a more diversified and sustainable agriculture.

3.4.3 Demonstration

On the ground, the CPP's main mechanism for disseminating the Sustainable Land Management (SLM) approach was the **21 demonstration sites in 10 provinces**, where diagnostics were carried out and management plans were developed.

The project also undertook significant **information dissemination** work, including the publication of materials and the dissemination of the SLM approach on different national television programmes (see Section 3.6.2). A digital repository on SLM was develoed with more than 590 articles, accessible to the general public, and a geo-referenced tool to assist

[28] The corresponding area data is not available, but it should be noted that, for 2018, 2,428 ha were reported in the category of initiated in SLM.

MINAG's decision-making, which allows real-time consultation of soil, meteorological and hydrological data. As part of the strengthening of the early warning system in the framework of projects 1 and 2, the programme issued monthly drought bulletins, agrometeorological summaries with topics according to the productive stages in the companies, as well as information notes in the event of meteorological events. Similarly, educational and informative bulletins were published, such as "Itinerant" and "Colibrí", with information on the actions to be taken to contribute to the protection of natural resources.

By 2018, the CPP had developed more than 340 **training, technical assistance and awareness-raising** actions, which benefited more than 4,800 technicians, producers, students and decision-makers. Other notable actions in this area include the certification of the master's degree in SLM at the University of Camagüey, the first in the country; the strengthening of the national network of provincial specialists in desertification and drought, as well as two training centres for knowledge management at the Agricultural Engineering Research Institute and the National Institute of Hydraulic Resources; and the creation of 27 circles of interest for primary school students located in the programme's demonstration sites and polygons, dedicated to promoting environmental protection and SLM practices.

3.4.4 Replication / Scaling up

P5 promoted important replication processes at the national level. In addition to the demonstration sites mentioned above, the CPP totals 25 replication sites in 12 provinces, within and outside its intervention areas. Additionally, the CPP facilitated the creation of provincial polygons for soil, water and forest conservation by MINAG. Between 2012 and 2014, 30 polygons were granted this categorisation, which together amount to around 15,000 ha and include 665 farms. These polygons are distributed among Cuba's 15 provinces (two for each province, except for Ciego de Avila, which has three, and Santiago de Cuba, which has one).

The replication processes went beyond the scope of the programme. As explained in Section 3.2.4, the SLM model promoted by the CPP was adopted elsewhere through GEF and other donor initiatives such as the SGP, BASAL and Connecting Landscapes, where it was integrated with other approaches such as ecosystem-based adaptation and disaster risk management. For example, in Camagüey Province alone, replication processes have involved BASAL, the CITMA-funded project "SLM for climate change adaptation in agroforestry and livestock landscapes in Camagüey", as well as several SGP-funded projects (including a project on protection and sustainable use of biodiversity as part of SLM, which is in the process of being signed). P5 played a key role in building partnerships with these projects.

In addition to promoting replication in the country, P5 stimulated replication in other countries in the region. The project established a partnership with a project in Panama, including the travel of Cuban actors to Panama to train specialists. The project also forged an alliance with actors in the Dominican Republic, but the exchange did not materialise due to the emergence of the pandemic.

3.5 Efficiency

3.5.1 Adaptive management

P5 was able to adapt to changes during its implementation, but these adaptations were not reflected in significant adjustments to its design. Given its long period of implementation, P5 faced changes in staffing, CPP duration, GEF requirements (e.g. on gender) and Cuba's institutional set-up, among others, constituting a factor of continuity within the programme, together with UNDP's constant technical support. More recently, P5 had to adapt its operation to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, P5 had to adapt its role within the CPP to respond to emerging needs, sometimes taking on broader functions than initially envisaged in its design. This is reflected in the narrative description of progress included in the PIRs, but not in their monitoring indicators, which makes it difficult to systematically visualise P5's contribution to programme results.

P5 partially addressed the recommendations of the mid-term evaluations. P5 was subject to two interim evaluations, in 2012 and 2015, while the CPP had three interim evaluations, in 2012, 2015 and 2019, all of which addressed the role of P5 in the programme[29]. The 2015 mid-term evaluation of P5 includes 17 recommendations, 13 of which are consistent with those of the CPP's mid-term evaluation of that year. Additionally, 10 recommendations from the 2015 and 2019 CPP evaluations mention P5 or are particularly relevant to the coordination and M&E functions of this project[30]. While P5 developed a response plan to the recommendations from the 2015 evaluations and reported to have done this also for the 2019 evaluation, some of the recommendations were not fully addressed (see Table 5).

Table 5. Level of addressing recommendations of mid-term reviews

Recommendation	Level of addressing it
P5's 2015 Mid-term review	
Improve the partial or full replicability of the programme by ensuring that the information presented is clear and consistent [for UNDP/GEF]*	No evidence is available demonstrating that it was addressed
Improve the evaluability of the model to compare its efficiency and effectiveness against other national and/or regional programming alternatives [for UNDP/GEF]*	No evidence is available demonstrating that it was addressed
Conduct an evaluation of alternative programme management models to identify their comparative advantages and disadvantages.	No evidence is available demonstrating that it was addressed
Visibilise the GEF and its mandate as a strategy to promote understanding of its objectives among stakeholders and direct and indirect potential beneficiaries*.	Addressed
Review the RF to correct some weaknesses, ensure that the description of indicators is SMART and identify indicators of achievement in some items that allow for this.	Partially addressed (some weaknesses remain)

[29] The evaluation team did not have access to the P5 and CPP mid-term evaluations conducted in 2012.
[30] These 10 additional recommendations addressed to the CPP may continue to be addressed in the remainder of the programme

Recommendation	Level of addressing it
Complete the circle of capacity building with training processes in "monitoring and evaluation" of their own initiatives.	Partially addressed (training was provided, but this evaluation shows it was not sufficient)
In order to distinguish the achievements of different projects and especially P5 and P1, it would be convenient if the P5 Coordinator would make a list with two columns, one for documents and training events and actions carried out by each project*.	Addressed
Systematise information on the elements/conditions that have facilitated or made attractive the participation in SLM of other national entities and especially of sectors other than the environmental sector.	Addressed
Include universities in the search for solutions to SLM problems.	Addressed
Request an extension of the P5 Closing Date in order to keep it active for the whole duration of the programme as initially foreseen*.	Addressed
Officialise any changes to the project budget with an updated version of the RF*.	The budget was revised, but there is no evidence of the RF being revised accordingly
Develop a management schedule and budget to ensure the presence of P5 activities throughout the life of the CPP and in line with the ML*.	Addressed
Establish an overall P5 schedule up to the tentative closing date of the programme and identify possible sources of co-financing to ensure the achievement of its goals and objectives*.	Addressed
In order to maximise the results of P5's mid-term and final evaluations, it is suggested that the evaluation be allocated its own time to verify specific elements of P5	Addressed
The suggestion made in the previous mid-term evaluation to have a distinct job description for the CPP Co-ordinator and the PIU5 is reiterated.	No evidence is available demonstrating that it was addressed [31]
Identify risks and assumptions that could affect the sustainability of the programme's achievements and identify what conditions would be required to overcome them that can be induced in the implementation phase.	No evidence is available demonstrating that it was addressed
Develop an exit strategy for the CPP and P5, including at least the definition of an institutional structure at national, regional and local levels*.	No evidence is available demonstrating that it was addressed
CPP's 2015 Mid-term review	
Design a Theory of Change scheme to ensure the contribution of the different projects to the achievement of the expected final impact	No evidence is available demonstrating that it was addressed
Ensure that the RF of the different projects have SMART indicators and that their wording expresses what is required to be achieved.	This evaluation shows that weakness remain on this
Promote capacity building in policy design, M&E and policy development	Partially addressed (training was provided, but this evaluation shows it was not sufficient)
Systematise learning to be replicated and sustained	Addressed

[31] The information provided in the response plan is not sufficient to consider this recommendation as having been addressed.

Recommendation	Level of addressing it
Identify replication options	Addressed
Develop CPP PIRs that refer to their own RF and independent of P5 PIRs	No evidence is available demonstrating that it was addressed
CPP's 2019 Mid-term review	
Develop a document setting out lessons learned that have ensured the successful operation of the SLM project and can be extrapolated to other national and international projects.	Addressed
Increase external communication to society and publications in English language at the international level.	Partially addressed (publications in English have not been found)
Produce a new edition of the programme with an updated Logical Framework approved by the Programme Steering Committee.	No evidence is available demonstrating that it was addressed
Keep P5 running throughout the life of the programme.	It does not apply (GEF did not approve the Project extension)

Source: Own elaboration based on P5 2015 and CPP 2015 and 2019 mid-term evaluations.
*Recommendations also included in CPP's 2015 mid-term evaluation.

P5 documented and disseminated lessons from the adaptive management process. In response to one of the recommendations of the 2019 mid-term evaluation, in 2020 P5 published a compendium of lessons learned throughout the CPP, covering project design, management and administration processes, coordination and ownership, implementation and results. In addition, annual CPP lessons learned workshops were held, where each of the projects had a space to share the results obtained during the year, plan new activities and exchange lessons learned. In the case of P2, there are different lessons learned documents that will be the basis for publishing its main lessons when the project closes. In addition, as mentioned above, P5 has been responsible for including and taking into account the main lessons learned during the life of the CPP in the development and implementation of new projects.

3.5.2 Financing and co-financing

It was necessary to redeploy and supplement the project budget due to the extension of the CPP. The cumulative executed budget of the project is 769,986 USD, i.e. 96% of the resources allocated in the Project Document (Table 6). However, it is worth mentioning some differences between planned and actual expenditures:

- In the Project Document, a budget of approximately 80,000 USD per year was envisaged for the entire duration of the CPP, then foreseen to be 10 years, until June 2018. Given the extension of the CPP, P5 was in turn granted an extension until May 2021, without receiving additional resources for it. As a project focused on supporting coordination and M&E throughout the CPP, this implied additional costs. Under normal circumstances, assuming an equivalent annual expenditure per year, the 3-year extension would have required an additional USD 240,000. In this context, it was necessary to redeploy existing resources over a longer period (Table 7)[32] and to supplement them with resources from

[32] Spending was modest in 2008 and 2009 because the project and the programme were just starting up. Between 2010 and 2017, spending ranged from USD 45,000 to USD 100,000, with the exception of 2012, when it was low, and 2016, when it was very meagre. In the last three years (2018, 2019 and 2020), spending has been very limited:

other CPP projects where there were synergies between activities (see Section 3.2.1). This situation also forced the project to reinforce efficiency in the use of resources.

- The distribution of the budget between components was different from what was planned, with a larger amount of resources spent on M&E at the programme level (Outcome 2), and M&E and adaptive management at the project level (Outcome 3). This could be related to the need to keep these systems operating for a longer period of time.

TABLE 6. PROJECT FINANCE PER COMPONENT

Components	ProDoc (USD)	Actual (USD)	% over ProDoc
Outcome 1	588,130.00	546,628.57	93%
Outcome 2	107,870.00	120,039.13	111%
Outcome 3	24,000.00	30,171.84	126%
Project Management	80,000.00	73,146.80	91%
Total	**800,000.00**	**769,986.34**	**96%**

Source: Own elaboration based on financial information provided by P5

around 20,000 USD in 2018 and around 10,000 USD in 2019 and 2020 despite the project being very active in that period.

Table 7. Project finance per year

	2008					2009					2010					2011				
	Previsto			Porcentaje		Previsto			Porcentaje		Previsto			Porcentaje		Previsto			Porcentaje	
	Prodoc	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión	Prodoc	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión	Prodoc	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión	Prodoc	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión
Outcome 1	66,555.00	37,555.00	18,692.45	28%	50%	64,369.00	64,369.00	17,189.09	27%	27%	67,020.00	84,852.23	47,650.33	71%	56%	67,950.00	136,650.79	70,439.79	104%	52%
Outcome 2	11,976.00	11,976.00	5,059.42	42%	42%	9,370.00	9,370.00	888.20	9%	9%	11,751.00	16,462.80	1,499.99	13%	9%	9,300.00	11,001.46	2,578.80	28%	23%
Outcome 3	5,000.00	5,000.00	786.84	16%	16%	0.00	0.00	600.00	0%	0%	3,000.00	2,400.00		0%	0%	0.00	3,001.00	0.00	0%	0%
PMC	2,200.00	2,200.00	499.97	23%	23%	6,800.00	6,800.00	625.45	9%	9%	11,150.00	14,874.55	500.00	4%	3%	8,750.00	35,091.60	15,948.15	182%	45%
Total	85,731.00	56,731.00	25,038.68	29%	44%	80,539.00	80,539.00	19,302.74	24%	24%	92,921.00	118,589.58	49,650.32	53%	42%	86,000.00	185,744.85	88,966.74	103%	48%

	2012					2013					2014					2015				
	Previsto			Porcentaje		Previsto			Porcentaje		Previsto			Porcentaje		Previsto			Porcentaje	
	Prodoc	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión	Prodoc	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión	Prodoc	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión	Prodoc	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión
Outcome 1	67,850.00	72,850.00	31,261.23	46%	43%	60,110.00	137,784.05	81,502.86	136%	59%	61,260.00	108,334.00	72,039.73	118%	66%	71,105.00	64,894.00	51,120.37	72%	79%
Outcome 2	11,600.00	11,600.00	4,409.39	38%	38%	10,660.00	12,268.00	30,245.23	284%	247%	12,590.00	41,885.00	30,550.86	243%	73%	11,600.00	20,035.00	17,574.91	152%	88%
Outcome 3	3,000.00	3,000.00	11,425.77	381%	381%	0.00	27,907.00	11,181.82	0%	40%	0.00	5,417.50	-11,181.82	0%	-206%	3,000.00	12,617.50	20,852.97	695%	165%
PMC	11,250.00	11,250.00	7,034.59	63%	63%	6,800.00		3,110.96	46%	0%	6,650.00	109,603.50	28,644.98	431%	26%	11,650.00	102,453.50	98,821.08	848%	96%
Total	93,700.00	98,700.00	54,130.98	58%	55%	77,570.00	177,959.05	126,040.87	162%	71%	80,500.00	265,240.00	120,053.75	30%	45%	97,355.00	200,000.00	188,369.33	193%	94%

	2016					2017					2018					2019				
	Previsto			Porcentaje		Previsto			Porcentaje		Previsto			Porcentaje		Previsto			Porcentaje	
	Prodoc	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión	Prodoc	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión	Prodoc**	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión	Prodoc**	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión
Outcome 1	50,461.00	21,150.00	7,226.80	14%	34%	11,450.00	11,500.00	99,105.66	866%	862%		18,992.33	20,924.79	0%	110%		11,000.00	9,604.86	0%	87%
Outcome 2	10,490.00	125.00	477.42	5%	382%	8,533.00	3,500.00	26,754.91	314%	764%				0%	0%				0%	0%
Outcome 3	0.00	15,120.00	14,398.03	0%	95%	10,000.00	2,700.00	-18,022.07	-180%	-667%				0%	0%				0%	0%
PMC	6,800.00	13,605.00	6,751.97	99%	50%	7,950.00	2,800.00	-92,567.83	-1164%	-3306%		1,007.67	-925.01	0%	-92%		1,000.00	942.82	0%	94%
Total	67,751.00	50,000.00	28,854.22	43%	58%	37,933.00	20,500.00	15,270.67	40%	74%	0.00	20,000.00	19,999.78	0%	100%	0.00	12,000.00	10,547.68	0%	88%

	2020					2021 (31 de Marzo)				
	Previsto			Porcentaje		Previsto			Porcentaje	
	Prodoc	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión	Prodoc**	Revisión	Actual	Sobre el prodoc	Sobre la revisión
Outcome 1		8,000.00	7,932.28	0%	99%		37,232.85	11,938.33	0%	32%
Outcome 2				0%	0%				0%	0%
Outcome 3			130.30	0%	0%				0%	0%
PMC		2,000.00	1,857.18	0%	93%		6,621.63	1,902.49	0%	29%
Total	0.00	10,000.00	9,919.76	0%	99%	0.00	43,854.48	13,840.82	0%	32%

Source: Own elaboration based on financial information provided by P5

The leveraging of funds was slightly higher than anticipated. The Project Document foresaw a co-financing of 2,670,215 USD for P5, 72% of which was allocated to Institutional Coordination Outcome 1 (Table 8) to cover the costs of local embedded staff, office and equipment. By 2020, the PIR reported a total amount of co-financing of USD 2,826,929.00, or USD 156,714 or 10% more than planned. Note that this amount is less than the additional budget required to cover the three-year extension of the project, considering an annual disbursement of 80,000 USD as foreseen in the Project Document.

Tabla 9. Cofinancing

Components	Cofinancing ProDoc (USD)	Actual cofinancing (USD)
Outcome 1	1,926,877.00	ND
Outcome 2	340,738.00	ND
Outcome 3	336,000.00	ND
Project management	66,600.00	ND
Total	**2,670,215.00**	**2,826,929.00**

Source: Own elaboration based on the project document and the 2020 PIR

The accounting and financial systems established for the management of the project were adequate. Financial reports were submitted on a regular basis. An audit was carried out for the period 2008-2011 and an unqualified opinion was issued, confirming that reliable and fair information was presented in accordance with UNDP accounting requirements on the expenditures incurred by the project. More audits were not produced.

3.5.3 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System

P5 was in charge of two M&E systems: the project's own M&E system and CPP's M&E system at the programmatic level, which aims to integrate the results of the different projects from a programmatic perspective. The following findings should be read in light of this dual role of the project.

The design of P5 includes an M&E plan and specifies the budget for its implementation. The Project Document contains an M&E plan that describes the main activities to be undertaken, the responsible actors, the estimated budget and indicative timelines. The document also includes a schedule of external evaluations (for the CPP and each project, including P5), the distribution of indicative M&E costs per project, and an outline of the link between the M&E system and adaptive programme management. For P5, three mid-term evaluations (in year 3, 5 and 7 of the programme) and a final one in year 10 were foreseen, all coinciding with those of the CPP. The estimated budget for these evaluations and P5 monitoring activities is USD 34,000, which is limited[33].

The project fully complied with the submission of progress reports, but their quality is mixed. The project submitted PIRs every year, but progress reporting was not adequate in all cases. In some cases, the unit of measurement used for the same indicator is not consistent over

[33] This amount does not consider P5 staff.

time, so the data are not comparable; for example, with regard to the indicator on coverage of agreements, the PIRs report municipalities with agreements within the intervention zones in 2010 and 2011, municipalities with replication agreements outside the intervention zones between 2012 and 2017, while from 2018 onwards they report agreements with national authorities, until in 2020 it is concluded that, as these agreements have a national scope, the target can be considered met. In some indicators, the report improved the results framework by simplifying or clarifying some issues. However, in some instances the reporting is incomplete or inconsistent, and compliance with four of the twelve outcome indicators cannot be assessed. Annex 5.5 presents specific comments on reporting for each of the indicators. At the programme level, the document "CPP 2020 Logical Framework Indicator Status" often includes the percentage progress of impact indicators without specifying the baseline and target to which they refer, which does not make it possible to understand what the percentage refers to. This limits the transparency of the project and the programme in terms of progress.

Weaknesses in the design and implementation of the M&E system have limited its use for adaptive management at both project and programme level. As mentioned above, two mid-term evaluations of the CPP were conducted in 2015 and 2019 containing findings relevant to P5, and two mid-term evaluations of P5 were conducted in 2012 and 2015. From a monitoring point of view, in addition to the weaknesses already described in the results framework and indicators at project and programme level, the 2018 RF update makes multiple references to the need to improve information flows to update indicators on a regular basis and, more generally, to resume the functionality and availability of the CPP's programmatic M&E system, so that all projects and institutions involved can access this information and use it for adaptive management. The limitations found in the "Status of CPP 2020 Logical Framework Indicators" (published in January 2021) seem to indicate that these problems persist.

3.5.4 Institutional arrangements and stakeholder involvement

From the design of the project, the role of P5's project management unit vis-à-vis the CPP coordinating unit was not clear. The functions of P5 are closely linked to the programme coordination activities. As a result, the P5 team worked closely with the CPP coordinating unit; while this had practical benefits in terms of programme management, it led to a certain lack of clarity regarding the scope of P5, which has hampered the transparency and accountability of the project. This is reflected, among other things, in the fact that M&E activities were carried out jointly.

The need to develop management and M&E capacities was not properly identified in the project design. Projects 1, 2 and 3 had a strong emphasis on SLM capacity development at different levels. In contrast, the design of P5 did not identify the need to strengthen the capacities of implementing entities for the management of a programme that is complex due to its duration and multiple components, nor for M&E activities. This has led, on the one hand, to an initial learning curve in the management of the CPP, of which P5 is a core part, and, on the other hand, to the deficiencies already noted in the M&E system, both at the project and programme level.

P5 was successful in establishing partnerships with stakeholders at different levels and in promoting stakeholder participation in the CPP. By 2020, partnerships had been generated with 111 institutions across the country, which were participating in the implementation of one of its projects. These include mainly local institutions in the CPP intervention areas, as well as

national institutions, from the public, academic and social sectors (producer organisations). As noted above, multiple consultation and validation workshops were held at the project design stage under the CPP, as well as annual workshops to share results and draw lessons learned. There were also bodies such as the NSC and the Expert Group for strategic and technical decision-making, respectively.

P5 helped to integrate a gender perspective into the CPP. The project did not have a gender analysis and plan in its design, nor gender indicators in its RF, nor a plan to carry this out during implementation, which should be read in the context of evolving GEF requirements. However, the project has been reporting progress on this aspect since its first PIR in 2010. According to these reports, P5 implemented the following measures over the years to strengthen the gender perspective of the CPP:

- Develop some actions within P1, such as the elaboration of a standard term and definitions on gender in MINAG, and carry out photo exhibitions on the topic.
- Ensure the inclusion of a gender perspective in the other CPP projects, especially from P2 and P3 onwards, ensuring the inclusion and reporting of sex-disaggregated indicators and the application of the GoC gender guidelines.
- Increase women's participation in the five intervention zones. At the programme management level this was not necessary, as women already made up around 60% of the staff at the outset of the programme.

Similarly, neither the project nor the CPP had an environmental and social safeguards plan, as this was not a requirement when they were designed. P5 started reporting on this aspect in the PIRs from 2019, when it was noted that P5 ensured that all new projects approved will develop social and environmental assessments.

3.5.5 Management system

Collaboration between the project implementing organisations was effective and was maintained on an ongoing basis despite institutional changes. The P5 team worked closely with the CPP coordinating unit, which allowed it to assume a strategic role within the programme and to respond in a timely manner to emerging situations. According to interviews, a good vertical integration with the Provincial Delegations was also achieved. For its part, UNDP, as the implementing organisation, provided constant technical support throughout the project. All of the above helped to make the necessary operational and budgetary adjustments so that P5 could continue to accompany the CPP, whose implementation was extended by four additional years to the 10 originally planned due to the situations described in Section 3.2.1, most of which are external to P5. In this context of adjustments, available documentation seems to indicate that the project satisfactorily fulfilled the planned activities on an annual basis.

3.6 Sustainability

3.6.1 Are there political, regulatory, institutional, financial, socio-cultural and environmental risks to the sustainability of the results of the project?[34]

The project document does not include a sustainability or exit strategy. The annexes suggest that there were exchanges on this, but the document does not seem to include one. Nevertheless, the project identified and implemented measures that contribute to sustainability. In analysing sustainability, it is important to distinguish between the direct or immediate results of P5, in terms of M&E and coordination activities linked to the programme, and its more indirect or second-order results, in terms of the implementation of SLM activities within and outside the programme.

The sustainability of programme-linked M&E and coordination activities is assured. As explained in section 3.5.2, from a financial point of view, P5 has in fact operated for the last three years almost as if P5 had ended[35], being financed essentially by resources from other programme projects and national co-financing. When P5 officially closes, P5 activities will be integrated into P4, which will provide the funding, complemented by national co-financing, for P5 activities to continue. This is certain, as the GEF has approved the P4 project document which stipulates this. From a financial point of view, the closure of P5 therefore does not imply too much discontinuity. On the other hand, the closure of P5 implies a discontinuity in the team in charge of its activities. However, this discontinuity is only formal, as the P5 team will be integrated into P4, following in practice the existing dynamics in which teams from previous projects (e.g. projects 1 and 2) are integrated into the programme management team or subsequent projects of the programme. In sum, during the implementation of P4, i.e. until 2026, the M&E and coordination activities of the programme are secured in terms of structure, people and funding. This is in fact one of the great advantages of a programme made up of interlocking projects. The question is whether there will be continuity in SLM coordination and M&E after the life of the programme. This is a long way off and, as this programme shows, it is risky to make predictions over such a long horizon.

On another level, **the sustainability of the implementation of SLM activities in the country is very likely** given the legal, institutional, technical, socio-economic and financial aspects. The only substantive risk is climate change.

SLM has been integrated into the Cuban strategic, legal, policy and regulatory framework. As explained in section 3.4.2 on public goods, SLM has been included in the development strategy, the environmental strategy, the climate change adaptation strategy, the agriculture strategy and the education strategy. In addition, it is explicitly promoted in a water law (another one is also in the pipeline on soil) and in policies related to soil and irrigation and drainage. It has also been incorporated in 101 MINAG rules and regulations. This has taken place at both national and local

[34] The question on country ownership has been integrated into this question, as this is related to legal, institutional and technical risks, and the question on institutional and community capacities, as this is related to technical, socio-economic and financial risks.

[35] In 2018, 2019 and 2020, P5 spending was very limited: around 20,000 USD in 2018 and around 10,000 USD in 2019 and 2020.

levels. For example, SLM has been integrated into both the national environmental strategy and provincial and municipal strategies. The provincial strategies have an SLM indicator that the provincial CITMA delegations have to monitor and report on and are evaluated on their performance. Many of these strategies are long term, many to 2030 and some to 2050. In that sense, SLM is firmly anchored in the country's strategic, legal, policy and regulatory framework.

From the institutional point of view, the foundations have also been laid to give continuity to the implementation of SLM activities. As indicated in sections 3.3.1 on effectiveness and 3.4.1 on impact, relevant institutions have signed cooperation agreements committing them to SLM (the agreements are not between projects, but between institutions, fostering sustainability). Furthermore, MINAG has included SLM in its two most important programmes, the soil improvement and conservation programme and FONADEF, and its extension strategy, integrating these practices in its more than 150 polygons, where scientific and technological advances are tested, thus ensuring their practical implementation. In that sense, the project's close relationship with research institutes that embrace and drive science and innovation and development will contribute to sustainability. In addition, the establishment of the SLM farm certification scheme, endorsed and supported by AMA, ensures the continuity of institutional recognition for farms with outstanding SLM performance.

There are also good prospects for the continuity of the technical capacities needed to implement SLM activities. As indicated, MINAG's extension programmes will contribute to this. The education system will also support the strengthening of these capacities, as SLM has been integrated into primary, secondary, technical and university education, through the updating of teachers' manuals and textbooks and the creation of a master's degree in SLM in Camagüey. In addition, the project has produced publications and other relevant communication products, which can be consulted in the future (see section 3.6.2 on communication). There are also communication strategies in place that will not perish with the project, as they are driven by partners with great interest in the subject, such as the radio programme in Matanzas in which the producers themselves explain the techniques they deploy. Furthermore, the project leaves behind M&E systems, tools and formats on SLM that will continue to be used and that will allow for the improvement of technical capacities on the implementation of SLM activities (see section 3.4.2 on public goods).

No major risks are anticipated from the socio-economic angle. As discussed in section 3.4.1 on impacts, SLM has demonstrated generally positive results in terms of higher and more resilient agricultural yields and incomes. This is increasingly being recognised by producers, as evidenced by the number of applications for certification and receipt of support increasing each year. Extension and publications and other communication products that demonstrate this effectiveness will increase ownership. Further liberalisation of the economy, with greater emphasis on private initiative, could perhaps reinforce ownership.

The existence of funds to continue the implementation of SLM activities is highly likely. On the one hand, SLM directly generates funds for producers by increasing returns and giving greater certainty of them. On the other hand, there are good prospects for external resource mobilisation. The two MINAG programmes, whose budgets have grown, will mobilise funds for this. In addition, the project has succeeded in establishing a system of incentives, through the agreement with the Banco de Crédito y Comercio, and is negotiating similar advantages with the Empresa Nacional de Seguros. Mechanisms are also being explored to favour exports from SLM certified farms. As

has been the case so far, other projects will also provide funding for SLM practices, even if they are called differently or come under a different umbrella (e.g. climate change adaptation or sustainable natural resource management).

Climate change is still a not insignificant risk. As explained in section 3.4.1, SLM contributes to reducing vulnerability to climate change. As it promotes adaptive management, adaptation measures will be adjusted to changes in climate. This does not mean, however, that the level of vulnerability or the resulting level of risk is or will be low. It is important to clarify the conceptual framework: according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, risk is the result of the interaction between hazard, exposure and vulnerability, which in turn is the result of the interaction of sensitivity or fragility and the capacity to prepare and respond.

From this perspective, if the initial level of vulnerability is very high, a reduction in vulnerability, even a significant reduction, may still result in a high or very high level of vulnerability (lower vulnerability does not necessarily imply low vulnerability). Although the project has contributed to increasing the capacity to prepare and respond and has contributed relatively to reducing sensitivity (see section 3.4.1), primary activities are certainly very sensitive to climate. It can be argued that despite progress, vulnerability remains high.

On the other hand, even if vulnerability reduction would result in low vulnerability, risk may still be high if hazard and/or exposure are high. In the case of Cuba, in general, and of the lands where the programme intervenes, both hazard and exposure are high, as indicated in the Third National Communication to the UNFCCC and the NDC. It can therefore be argued that the risk remains high. In this respect, it is worth mentioning the concepts of residual risk and limits to adaptation, in the sense that no matter how much progress is made in adaptation measures, non-negligible risks may remain[36]. In sum, from a sustainability point of view, progress in SLM could be negatively affected by climate change, especially by large-scale extreme events, the frequency of which is expected to increase.

3.6.2 Communication

P5 responded to emerging communication needs throughout the CPP without planning for them. Neither CPP nor P5 has a communication strategy or plan[37]. However, P1 and P2 had such a strategy, and P3 includes a communication component, with a person in charge of its implementation within the project team. In this context, the communication activities of the programme and P5 took shape over time on the basis of three criteria:

- The communication needs of the projects: in the case of P1, communications focused on disseminating what SLM is, as well as the regulations and manuals developed on the subject, while in P2 and P3 communication strategies set the tone.
- Producers' demands, e.g. in terms of financial incentives and insurance, which were not originally included in the projects.

[36] See for instance Véase, por ejemplo: https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/WGIIAR5-Chap16_FINAL.pdf

[37] Recently P5 designed and uses a tool for publications management and monitoring. This is not a long-term plan and is more of a monitoring tool than a strategic planning tool.

- Recommendations from previous evaluations, such as a publication on lessons learned, which was produced as a result of the mid-term evaluation.

External communication mechanisms were effective. By April 2021, around 40 technical, informational and educational materials had been published to support SLM implementation. In addition, communication actions were carried out through different channels: national and provincial television programmes, written and digital press, radio and social networks (Facebook and Instagram pages), as well as workshops on farms where the community was invited. This allowed the dissemination of the SLM approach and the results of the programme to a diversity of actors, contributing to the replication processes of the intervention model and to the high visibility of the CPP at the national level, as shown by the interviews conducted. However, as already noted in the 2019 Mid-Term Evaluation, no publications in English or other languages targeting an international audience were identified.

4. CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

Relevance

The project is consistent with the relevant international conventions and the strategic objectives of the GEF and UNDP. The CPP, including P5, emerged within the framework of the UNCCD and is in line with the CBD, UNFCCC and SDGs. It is also aligned with the strategic priorities of the GEF, as it is part of its Operational Programme on SLM (OP15), which is integrated into the Land Degradation Focal Area from GEF-4. The objectives of the CPP are also in line with the national priority "Environmental Sustainability and Disaster Risk Management" of the UNDP Cuba Programme (2014-2018) and with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014-2018 of Cuba, mainly with outcome 7, which refers to strengthening the integration of environmental considerations in the development plans of productive and service sectors. It is also aligned with previous and subsequent versions of these instruments, including the current ones.

The project is consistent with national priorities on combating desertification, environment, climate change and sustainable development. The CPP, and with it P5, was launched to support the implementation of the National Programme to Combat Desertification and Drought (2000). It is also aligned with the National Economic and Social Development Plan until 2030, especially its strategic axis "Natural resources and environment". Similarly, the CPP is congruent with the EAN 2016-2020 and its previous editions, linking with the National Biodiversity Programme 2016-2020, the National Environmental Education Programme 2016-2020 and the State plan for tackling climate change. In the agricultural sector, the CPP is mainly articulated with the PNCMS and FONADEF. At the local level, it is consistent with the needs of the provinces.

The alignment of the project with national priorities is complemented by a high level of ownership and stakeholder participation in its design and implementation. Since its design, the project has involved a wide range of stakeholders, first through workshops and then through the collegial bodies constituted for its implementation, namely the NSC and the Expert Group. The P5 has played a key role in facilitating inter-institutional coordination and monitoring of the programme, as well as in integrating SLM into the State's programmatic framework, into multiple legal and regulatory instruments, and into the education system.

Project Design

The project's objectives and results are not verifiable and not fully integrated with the CPP's programmatic results framework. P5's RF has adequate vertical integration, but the project goal, objective and results are unclearly formulated and therefore not verifiable, which makes monitoring difficult. At the programmatic level, P5 is broadly aligned with the CPP logframe, but the articulation between the project and programmatic RF is weak. Despite this, P5 has been an articulating mechanism for the different CPP projects, thus facilitating a holistic landscape approach throughout the programme.

The project's objectives, outcomes and outputs were not feasible within the available budget and timeframe, due to reasons beyond the project's control. The CPP, which was planned to close in 2018, was extended until 2024 due to delays generated by the initial learning curve, difficulties with procurement processes, as well as institutional and personnel changes in the framework of the restructuring of the Cuban public administration. P5, whose role was to accompany implementation throughout the programme's duration, obtained an extension until 2021 with no increase in its budget, so it had to operate with limited resources in its final years and will transfer its functions to P4 after its completion. In any case, it is worth noting that in most of the PIRs, the performance of P5 was rated as satisfactory and the cumulative progress to 2021 reaches or exceeds most of the targets set, which suggests that these were realistically defined and adjusted in the framework of adaptive management of a long-term programme.

Overall, P5's M&E system is not adequate to measure its results. Many of the indicators are not specific, they often include several elements without clearly distinguishing them, indicators and targets are not always consistent, there are shortcomings in the definition of the time horizon, and verification methods are often not robust. The system is particularly weak with respect to Outcome 1, where it is not possible to measure progress on four of the seven indicators.

While some risks were underestimated at the time of project design, they were adequately managed during implementation. Assumptions and risks to the achievement of results were clearly identified in the project design, but risks associated with the long-term horizon and the programmatic complexity of the CPP were underestimated. However, continuous risk monitoring and management was carried out throughout the project. Neither the P5 nor the CPP considered environmental risks, particularly those associated with the effects of climate change, but such risks were considered on the ground in each intervention area.

Lessons learned from other projects were incorporated to a limited extent in the design of P5. The CPP took the information generated, methodological basis and lessons learned from the FAO LADA project. However, the P5 Project Document does not include an analysis of lessons

learned from previous projects. The limited retrieval of lessons learned from other projects is partly due to the fact that the CPP is part of the piloting of a novel programme model for SLM. However, there was a missed opportunity to learn from other initiatives with similar management models in other sectors, especially in relation to P5 as a coordination and M&E project. This could have helped to identify and prevent some of the risks faced by the project.

Other interventions within the sector were clearly identified in the design documents and synergies were generated. From the interventions identified in the Project and Programme Document, P5 has built complementarities and synergies with other donor initiatives in Cuba, mainly with SGP, BASAL, Manglar Vivo and Conectando Paisajes. At the regional level, South-South cooperation exercises were carried out with Panama and the Dominican Republic, without incurring duplication of activities. The alliances were formalised by P5 through the signing of cooperation agreements and helped to avoid duplication of efforts.

Effectiveness

Available information suggests that the project has achieved its objectives and expected outcomes in a satisfactory manner. P5's M&E system is not adequate to measure its results, which prevents a clear and detailed picture of its effectiveness. However, available information suggests that the achievement of targets has been highly satisfactory at the objective level and satisfactory at the outcome level. Furthermore, the qualitative data collected allows for the identification of multiple contributions of the project to the desired results. Among the factors that facilitated these achievements are institutional ones, such as collaboration between institutions in different sectors and levels of government, formalised institutional support for the project and ownership by the GoC. On the other hand, the main factors that hindered the achievement of the expected results were the slowness of equipment procurement processes in the face of the US economic and trade blockade and changes in the country's economic policy and institutional framework, which led to delays in the CPP schedule.

The project identified emerging risks and their causes in a specific and timely manner, as well as appropriate measures to mitigate them. These risks included the above-mentioned delays, staff turnover in key institutions and the COVID-19 pandemic, among others. The actions and adjustments made allowed for the continued effective operation of P5 in a changing context.

Impact

Through agreements with authorities, P5 increased the integration of SLM principles into local practices, which appears to have resulted in positive environmental and socio-economic impacts. The project has not consolidated information on the socio-economic and environmental impacts of SLM. However, there are indications that the CPP contributed to decreasing soil degradation and increasing land productivity, thus improving farmers' incomes. There are also indications that the CPP helped reduce vulnerability to climate change. There is no robust information on impacts in terms of biodiversity and reduced pressure on ecosystems.

P5 supported the production of public goods under the CPP, including the integration of the SLM approach into the regulatory and policy framework, the development of multiple methodologies to support SLM, the implementation of innovative SLM certification and financing mechanisms, and the adoption of SLM practices at the farm level.

Measures to disseminate the public goods generated were successfully adopted. On the ground, the CPP's main mechanism for disseminating the SLM approach was the 21 demonstration sites in 10 provinces. The project also undertook significant information dissemination work, including the publication of materials and the dissemination of the SLM approach through different media. It also developed a large number of training, technical assistance and awareness-raising actions aimed at different audiences, including producers, students and decision-makers.

P5 led to important replication processes at the national level. Replication activities were developed both within and outside the programme intervention areas through GEF initiatives and other donors with whom synergies were established. Several factors encouraged replication processes, in particular, the long-term time horizon of the CPP, which allowed demonstrating results; the transversality of the SLM approach, which lends itself to be integrated into different projects; and Cuba's institutional context, characterised by high institutional coordination, ownership and technical-scientific capacity throughout the territory.

Efficiency

The project adopted a pragmatic, but not systematic, approach to adapting to changing circumstances. P5 was able to adapt to changes during implementation and documented lessons from the adaptive management process. However, these adaptations were not reflected in significant adjustments to the project design and were not accompanied by full attention to the recommendations of the mid-term evaluations.

The financial management of the project had to be adjusted in view of its extension. The project budget had to be redeployed in the face of CPP delays, supplemented by resources from other CPP projects where there were synergies between activities and additional co-financing. Although a 10% higher leverage of funds than initially planned was achieved, this was not sufficient to fully offset the required budget. The accounting and financial systems in place for the management of the project were adequate.

While formal M&E requirements were met, there are weaknesses in the design and implementation of the M&E system. The P5 design includes an M&E plan and specifies the budget for its implementation, but the M&E system developed has a number of weaknesses mentioned above that limit the use of the information generated for adaptive management at both project and programme level. Similarly, the project fully complied with progress reporting, but its quality is mixed. These challenges are associated, among other factors, with a lack of clarity regarding the role of the P5 project management unit in relation to the CPP coordinating unit and a failure to correctly identify the need to develop management and M&E capacities at the project design stage.

P5 was successful in establishing partnerships with stakeholders at different levels and in promoting stakeholder participation in the CPP. This was possible in a context where collaboration between project implementing organisations was effective and was maintained on an ongoing basis despite institutional changes. P5 also helped to integrate a gender perspective into the design of CPP projects and activities in the field.

Sustainability

Although the project document does not include a sustainability or exit strategy, the sustainability of the M&E and coordination activities linked to the programme is assured. On the other hand, the sustainability of the implementation of SLM activities in the country is very likely. SLM has been integrated into the Cuban strategic, legal, political and regulatory framework and has been positioned through effective external communication mechanisms, despite the lack of a strategy to do so. Institutional foundations have also been laid for the continued implementation of SLM activities, and the allocation of funds for continued implementation is highly likely. There are also good prospects for the continuity of the technical capacities needed to implement SLM activities. While no major risks are anticipated from the socio-economic angle, despite progress in vulnerability reduction, climate change may affect the progress made on the ground**.**

4.2 Lessons

The following lessons can be drawn from the above.

1. **Long-term programmes allow for greater progress towards environmental impacts, but pose management challenges.**

Because changes in natural resource management are slow, and impacts on natural resources take even longer to manifest themselves, long-term programmes are more desirable for environmental management than those with a limited time horizon. Longer programmes allow for greater changes in natural resource management, and for these to be more clearly manifested, which contributes to the ownership of management changes, their reinforcement and thus to greater ecosystem restoration. In addition, changes in environmental resource management require a multi-stakeholder approach at various scales. Long-term programmes are better suited than shorter ones to address these interlinked aspects.

However, long-term programmes also have disadvantages. One of their challenges is that given their long time horizon, there is a high probability that significant external changes at local, national and international levels will occur during their implementation, and that some of these changes will be difficult to manage. In countries with remarkable political and social stability, such as Cuba, this is a relatively minor risk, but not negligible, as changes in the international sphere can be substantial. To deal with this challenge, it is important for long-term programmes to have a solid system of adaptive management.

In this context, it is important that, when implementing long-term programmes, the GEF foresees mechanisms to ensure flexibility in the duration and funding of coordination and M&E projects, so that they last as long as the programme they help implement, considering the high probability of delays due to unknown risks at the time of design. This is especially important in Cuba given the consequences of the embargo on the provision of goods and services.

2. **A sound M&E system is vital to articulate complex and long-term programmes.**

When designing long and complex programmes with interlinked activities, it is vital to ensure that M&E actions backbone the programme, are sufficiently resourced, and begin and end when the programme begins and ends. Although, as in this case, this may take the form of a project within the programme (i.e. P5 within the CPP), it may be more appropriate for these activities to be part of the overall direction of the programme itself. When the M&E activities of a programme are not part of the overall programme direction, but constitute a project within the programme (P5 within the CPP), or a component within a project within a programme (M&E activities within P4 under the CPP), the articulation may be confusing, and it may not always be easy to distinguish between these aspects in terms of results, processes/activities and teams. In any case, any phased programme should have a structure that monitors and can link the particularities of one project in relation to the one that follows it throughout the duration of the programme.

Furthermore, the results frameworks of a programme and its M&E project must be integrated with each other and be comprehensive, covering the diversity of first and second order impacts from a baseline, using SMART indicators. During implementation, one of the essential tasks of an M&E project is to integrate and aggregate information on impacts, going beyond information from individual farms.

In many countries, project managers often have limited M&E capacities. It cannot be taken for granted that these capacities exist in advance. In that sense, it is important to consider M&E as a technical area that may require training or external technical assistance at the outset like other technical areas, e.g., in this case, SLM.

3. Documenting lessons learnt is key for adaptive management and replication

In all activities, but especially in programmes with interlinked projects, it is essential to document, systematise, transfer and integrate both positive and negative lessons learned to support adaptive management and replication processes. When designing and implementing a project, it is vital to take into account lessons from previous projects, including project management, not only technical issues.

4. Certification schemes linked to economic incentives can contribute to the scaling up and sustainability of the results of natural resource management initiatives.

In promoting changes in natural resource management, certification schemes can be useful in providing signals that confer social rewards, such as social prestige. Such schemes can stimulate more substantive changes if certificates are also linked to economic incentives, such as preferential access to credit, insurance or markets. This can make an important contribution to the effectiveness and sustainability of the results of projects aiming at paradigm shifts in natural resource use. Since these are signals in a context of imperfect information, it is important that similar signals are integrated.

5. Partnerships with research institutes, interdisciplinary work at multiple scales and communication are key to driving paradigm shifts in natural resource management.

Pilot programmes achieve greater results and are more sustainable when a country has research institutes that embrace and drive scientific innovation and technology development, and when programme activities, including M&E, are linked to the work of these research institutes, as well as

to extension efforts. It is also essential to link the results of such programmes or projects to the education system, by updating curricula, teaching staff and study materials.

The paradigm shift in the environmental field requires multi- and inter-disciplinary and multi-scale work. Working groups are a useful structure for integration, as is generating synergies between complementary projects.

Communication is also an essential element in driving paradigm shifts. Substantive change in natural resource management requires the deployment of a comprehensive and differentiated communication strategy.

4.3 Recommendations

In view of the integration of P5 activities into P4, which will constitute the closing project of the CPP, the following priority recommendations are issued for UNDP, AMA and CPP coordination:

Recommendation 1: In the P4 Project Document, or in an annex to be developed in the inception phase, clarify the specific roles of the P4 coordination and M&E team in relation to the programme coordination team, both while P3 remains in operation, and afterwards, when the programme consists only of P4. One option is to create an M&E unit dedicated to the processes of results and impact monitoring, documentation of lessons learned and knowledge management.

Recommendation 2: In the P4 Project Document, or in an annex to be developed in the inception phase, clearly identify the most relevant technical and project management lessons learned in projects 1, 2 and 3, as well as those included in this report and previous evaluations, specifying how these will be taken up in the design and implementation of P4.

Recommendation 3: Make preferential access to credit and insurance a reality, and further explore the possibility of preferential market access for SLM certified producers. Access should be differentiated, with greater benefits for those who achieve the highest certification. If possible, link the SLM certification system with the landscape management system implemented under the "Connecting Landscapes" project and other projects where they exist.

Recommendation 4: Strengthen the results framework of the programme and P4 so that they are integrated and robust. This includes establishing a baseline as soon as possible to systematically assess programme impacts on land degradation, productive yields (agricultural and non-agricultural), income, water and air quality, biodiversity and resilience to climate change. The programme coordination team, or if appropriate the M&E unit to be created, should integrate and aggregate information on impacts at the programme level.

Recommendation 5: Organise M&E training prior to the revision of the results framework, including all key people involved in M&E activities, including staff coordinating data collection and reporting activities in the intervention areas. To this end, one option to consider is for the project team to join existing programmes, such as, for example, those offered by the Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results for Latin America and the Caribbean. In any case, this training is urgently needed.

Recommendation 6: Design a communication strategy for the programme and P4 to systematically implement effective communication actions. This should include, among other activities, updating and disseminating the lessons learned document produced in 2019 at the end of the programme. Strengthen impactful national and international publications to achieve greater visibility.

Recommendation 7: Continue horizontal and vertical inter-institutional coordination processes, with complementary projects, and with the education system and research institutions to consolidate replication processes and the sustainability of results.

5 ANNEXES

5.1 Evaluation matrix

Table 7. Evaluation matrix

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
1. Relevance: To what extent was the project consistent with international environmental and climate change conventions, the strategic objectives of the GEF and UNDP and local, regional and national priorities in terms of development, environmental protection and adaptation to climate change?				
.1.1. Is the project consistent with the objectives of international conventions on combatting desertification, environment and climate change?	• To what extent is the project aligned with the objectives of the international conventions on combatting desertification (UNCCD), environment (United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)) and climate change (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)) conventions? • Is the Project in tune with international guidelines on EbA?	• Priorities and areas of work of UNCDD, CBD and UNFCCC incorporated into the design and implementation of the project	• Programme document • Project document • PIRs • UNCDD, CBD and UNFCCC websites • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU and AMA	• Document review • Interviews

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
.1.2. Is the project consistent with GEF strategic priorities?	• How does the project contribute to the GEF's strategic priorities?	• Existence of a clear link between the project objectives and the strategic priorities of the GEF	• Programme document • Project document • GEF strategic documents • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU and AMA	• Document review • Interviews
.1.3. Is the project align with UNDP priorities?	• How does the project contribute to UNDP priorities at the national level?	• Existence of a clear link between the project objectives and UNDP priorities at the national level	• Programme document • Project documents • UNDP Cuba country document • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA	• Document review • Interviews
.1.4. To what extent is the project consistent with national priorities and strategies on combatting desertification, environment, climate change and sustainable development?	• How does the project contribute to the country's strategies and priorities for combatting desertification, environment, climate change and sustainable development? • Has the project been appropriated by the country? • What was the level of stakeholder participation in the design and implementation of the project?	• Level of alignment between project objectives and National priorities, policies and strategies on combatting desertification, environment, climate change and sustainable development • Perception of the level of country ownership of the project • Perception of the level of stakeholder participation in project design and implementation	• Programme document • Project documents • National policies and strategies (National Development Plan, Tarea Vida…) • Interviews with AMA, MINAG and other national partners	• Document review • Interviews
.1.5. Is the project consistent with the provincial and	• To what extent does the project respond to provincial and municipal needs?	• Level of alignment between the project objectives and the needs of the relevant actors at	• Project document • PIRs	• Document review • Interviews

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
municipal needs and priorities?	• Have all relevant local actors been involved in project implementation?	the provincial and municipal levels, in terms of alignment with the provincial and municipal development plans • Perception of the level of involvement of local actors in project implementation	• Provincial and municipal development plans • Interviews with representatives of provinces and municipalities	
2. Project design: Was the project internally coherent and robust in its design?				
2.1. Analysis of the logical / results framework	• How clear and well-integrated were the project's objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities? • How feasible and realistic were the project objectives, outcomes and outputs within the available budget and time frame? • How effective was the monitoring and evaluation system (indicators, baselines, targets, methods and sources of verification) in measuring the progress/outcomes of the project? Were they SMART[38] and consistent with the	• Consistency between the objective, outcomes, outputs and activities of the project • Feasibility of objectives, outcomes and outputs within the project's budget and time frame • Quality of the monitoring and evaluation system in the project document • Understanding by the project management unit of the objectives, outcomes and outputs and the timetable • Understanding of objectives, outcomes, outputs and timelines by national, provincial and municipal implementation partners	• Project planning documents • Interviews with UNDP Cuba y RTA, PMU and executing partners (AMA, provincial y municipal governments)	• Document review • Interviews

[38] For specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-based.

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
	project objectives, outcomes and outputs?			
2.2. Assumptions and risks	• Were the project assumptions and risks well identified in the project document? • Did the identified assumptions and risks help to determine the planned activities and outputs? • Have the externalities (such as the effects of climate change, etc.) that are relevant to the results been adequately taken into account?	• Completeness of risk identification and assumptions during project planning and design • Degree and nature of the influence of external factors on the planned activities • Extent to which planning documents anticipated or reflected the risks/externalities already faced by the project during implementation	• Programme document Project document and other planning documents • PIRs • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments	• Document review • Interviews
2.3. Lessons from other relevant projects (in the same field) incorporated in the project design	• Were relevant lessons learned from other projects properly incorporated into the project design?	• Examples of consideration of relevant lessons learned/project recommendations in project design	• Project document	• Document review
2.4. Linkage and complementarity of the project with other interventions within the sector	• Were other interventions within the sector clearly identified in the project document? • To what extent does the project support (and not duplicate) activities and	• Other interventions in the sector duly described and their possible synergies with the project analysed • Level of coherence and complementarity of the project	• Programme document • Project document • PIRs • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, AMA, MINAG, UNEP and FAO	• Document review • Interviews

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
	objectives not addressed by others? • Has the intervention been coordinated with others to seek complementarity and synergies?	with projects and programmes of other donors		
3. Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected results and objectives of the project been achieved?				
3.1. Has the project been effective in achieving the planned objectives, outcomes and outputs?	• To what extent did the project achieve its objectives? • To what extent did the project achieve the expected outcomes? • What was the quality of the outcomes achieved? • To what extent did the project achieve the planned outputs? • What has been the quality of the outputs provided?	• Level of achievement of targets with respect to objectives • Level of achievement of targets with respect to outcomes • Level of achievement of output targets • Quality of outcomes • Quality of outputs	• Project document • PPR • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments	• Document review • Interviews • Field visits (to the extent possible)
3.2. How were risks managed and mitigated?	• Which factors enable and hindered implementation? • How well were the risks and assumptions managed, including COVID-19? • What was the quality of the risk mitigation strategies developed? Were they sufficient?	• Quality of existing information systems to identify new risks and other issues • Quality of risk mitigation strategies developed and followed	• Project document • PIR • Minutes of Steering Committee meetings • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments	• Document review • Interviews

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
3.3. ¿ What lessons can be drawn in terms of effectiveness for other similar projects in the future?	• What lessons have been learned from the project in terms of achieving objectives and outcomes? • What changes could have been made (if relevant) in the project design to improve the achievement of the project objectives and expected outcomes?	• Reporting of the lessons learned from the analysis	• Project documents • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments.	• Document review • Interviews
4. Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in accordance with international and national norms and standards?				
4.1. Adaptive management	• Did the project undergo significant changes as a result of recommendations from workshops, the steering committee or other review procedures? • What follow-up actions (if any) and/or adaptive management measures have been taken in response to the progress reports (PPRs)? • To what extent were the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation taken into account? • How were the lessons from the adaptive management process documented, shared	• Responsiveness of implementing and executing agencies to recommendations made through the review processes (PPR and mid-term evaluation) • Examples of changes in project strategy/approach as a direct result of recommendations • Proportion of adaptive management processes documented and shared with partners	• PIRs • Minutes of workshops and meetings of the Steering Committee • MTR • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA).	• Document review • Interviews

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
	with and internalised by key partners?			
4.2. Financing and co-financing	• Is there a difference between planned and actual expenditure and why? • Did the leverage of funds (co-financing) occur as planned? • Were the accounting and financial systems established for the management of the project and the production of accurate and timely financial information adequate? • Were the financial resources used efficiently? Could the financial resources have been used more efficiently?	• Level of discrepancy between planned and executed budget • Level of discrepancy between planned and leveraged co-financing • Availability and quality of financial reports • Level of project management costs and discrepancy with forecasts • Costs related to the results achieved compared to the costs of similar projects in other organizations • Cost-benefit ratio of applying the EBA approach, and comparison with alternative approaches (particularly infrastructure) to enhance adaptation	• Project document • PIR • Financial reports • Audits • MTR • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and PMU	• Document review • Interviews
4.3. M&E system	• Did the project have a strong M&E system to measure the achievement of results? • Did it have sufficient financial resources?	• Robustness of the M&E system • Financing the M&E system • Level of use of the M&E system • Timeliness and quality of monitoring and progress reports	• Project document • PIRs • MTR • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and PMU	• Document review • Interviews

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
	• Was the logical framework used during implementation as a management and monitoring tool? • Did the project meet the requirements/timeframe for progress reporting? • Were progress reports fully and adequately completed (in compliance with the guidelines and providing the necessary strategic information)?			
4.4. Institutional arrangements and stakeholder involvement	• To what extent were the capacities of the implementing entities analysed during the design phase? • To what extent were roles and responsibilities discussed and are these clear in the design? • To what extent were effective partnerships for project implementation established with relevant stakeholders at different levels? • To what extent were relevant stakeholders involved in the	• Number and types of partnerships established between the project and local bodies/organisation • Extent and quality of interaction/interchange between project implementers and local partners • Number, type and quality of mechanisms implemented to promote stakeholder participation at each stage of project design, implementation and monitoring • Number and level of participation in workshops	• Project documents • Minutes of meetings and workshops • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments. To the extent possible, interviews and focus groups with the direct and indirect beneficiaries	• Document review • Interviews

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
	design, implementation and monitoring of the project? (through information sharing and consultation) • Did national stakeholders have an active role in the project decision-making that guided the implementation? • To what extent did the project use local skills, experience and knowledge in the design, implementation and evaluation of project activities?	• Perception of the use of local skills, experience and knowledge		
4.5. Management systems	• Have the implementing and executing agencies put sufficient resources in place to achieve the project results? • What is the quality of project execution and implementation by the executing and implementing agencies, respectively? • How effective was the collaboration between the institutions responsible for project implementation?	• Evidence that clear roles and responsibilities have been established • Level of discrepancy between the actual and planned amount of budget and staff time spent on the project • Difference between the actual and the planned schedule for the implementation of the project • Quality of supervision of implementing and executing agencies, respectively	• PIRs • AWPs and budgets • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments.	• Document review • Interviews

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
	• Have the tasks programmed in the project's Annual Work Plans (AWP) been fulfilled? • Has the project experienced any delays in implementation? If so, why?	• Number of activities programmed / completed in accordance with the AWPs •		
4.6. What lessons can be drawn in terms of efficiency for other similar projects in the future?	• What lessons can be learned from the project in terms of efficiency? • What changes (if any) could have been made to the project to improve its efficiency?	• Reporting of the lessons learned from the analysis.	• PIRs • MTR • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments	• Document review • Interviews
5. Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic and/or environmental risks to sustain the project results in the long term?				
5.1. To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic and/or environmental risks to sustain the project results in the medium and long term?	• What are the main challenges that could affect the sustainability of the project results? Have they been addressed during the project management? • What factors may enable or hinder the achievement of sustainable results? • Did the project devise a sound sustainability strategy and did it include a specific exit strategy and implement it?	• Extent of obstacles and/or risks to the sustainability of project results • Existence and strength of a sustainability and exit strategy • Number of management plans developed and implemented as a result of the project	• Project documents • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and Panama, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments.	• Document review • Interviews

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
5.2. Communication	• How effective are communications in ensuring stakeholder awareness of the programme and the project? • Are there effective external communication mechanisms in place?	• Existence of an internal communication plan, communication protocols and feedback mechanisms • Level of awareness perceived by stakeholders about project results and activities • Number and type of external communication mechanisms or activities implemented • Estimation of the cost-benefit ratio of applying the EbA approach available to planners	• Project documents • Progress reports • Communication materials • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments; FAO, UNEP.	• Document review • Interviews
6. Impact: To what extent has the project contributed to or enabled progress towards reducing pressure on the environment, improving ecological status, adapting to climate change and generally improving the quality of life of direct and indirect beneficiaries?				
6.1. Are there signs that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress towards, the expected impacts?[39]	• To what extent has the project increased the integration of SLM principles into agreements for coordination between municipal, provincial and national authorities? • To what extent has the project promoted the	• Proportion of the area of the country covered by the CPP where agreements for coordination between municipal, provincial and national authorities are based on SLM principles.	• Monitoring and progress reports • MTR • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments. To the extent possible,	• Document review • Interviews

[39] The expected impact chain is as follows: the project contributes to increased and improved implementation of sustainable land management practices, which reduces pressure on ecosystems, which in turn results in a decrease in the level of land degradation, which in turn results in i) increased agricultural productivity, ii) increased protection and restoration of biodiversity and iii) reduced vulnerability to climate change (e.g. understood as reduced landslides and flooding, due to increased soil retention and water absorption and reduced runoff).

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
	implementation of sustainable land management practices? • To what extent has the project reduced pressure on ecosystems? • To what extent has the project reduced land degradation? • To what extent has the project increased land productivity? • To what extent has the project improved ecosystem health in terms of biodiversity? • To what extent has the project reduced the vulnerability to climate change of the inhabitants of the intervention areas?) • To what extent have there been unintended outcomes (positive or negative) and what have they been?	• Number of people implementing sustainable land management practices • Number and intensity of stress factors on ecosystems • Levels of land degradation (in hectares) • Level of land productivity • Ecological status in terms of biodiversity • Number of people (men and women) with reduced vulnerability due to proximity to healthy ecosystems • Examples of undesirable, positive and negative outcomes	interviews and focus groups with the direct and indirect beneficiaries; FAO, UNEP	
6.2. Cross-cutting elements	• Did the project successfully integrate other UNDP priorities, such as the achievement of the Sustainable Development	• Contribution to SDGs • Promotion of sustainable livelihoods (e.g. jobs created, income generated)	• Monitoring and progress reports • MTR • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU,	• Document review • Interviews • Field visits (to the extent possible)

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
	Goals (SDGs), poverty alleviation and generation of socio-economic benefits, prevention and recovery from natural disasters, respect for social and environmental safeguards and empowerment of women?	• Evidence that the project results contribute to strengthening the capacity of communities to cope with natural disasters • Evidence that the project complied with social and environmental safeguards • Integration of gender equality in the project design (gender analysis and gender action plan) • Proportion of implementing partners and participants in workshops, training courses or knowledge sharing who are women during implementation • Evidence of activities that incorporate gender into planning or activities at community or national level as a result of the project	executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments. To the extent possible, interviews and focus groups with the direct and indirect beneficiaries	
6.3. Production of public goods	• Did the project promote new technologies and approaches?	• Examples of new technologies and approaches promoted and used during project implementation	• Progress reports • MTR • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments, FAO, UNEP	• Document review • Interviews

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methods
6.4. Demonstration	• Have steps been taken successfully to disseminate public goods, for example through the development of demonstration sites, information dissemination and training?	• Number and type of dissemination activities carried out • Number of demonstration sites • Number of trainings organized and number/type of participants in those trainings • Quality of activities for the dissemination of public goods	• Progress reports • Communication materials of the project • Progress reports • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments, FAO, UNEP	• Document review • Interviews
6.5. Replication	• Are activities, demonstrations and/or techniques being replicated within or outside the project, nationally or internationally?	• Examples of activities/techniques used in the project and reproduced in other projects/initiatives (other geographical areas and/or funded by other financial partners)	• Progress reports • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments, FAO, UNEP	• Document review • Interviews
6.6. Scaling up	• Are some of the approaches developed through the project, which are being widely accepted, and perhaps legally required, being adopted at regional/national level?	• Examples of laws and regulations inspired by the project results • Examples of large-scale initiatives based on project results or methods	• Progress reports • Interviews with UNDP Cuba and RTA, PMU, executing partners (AMA, MINAG…), provincial and municipal governments, FAO, UNEP	• Document review • Interviews

5.2 List of reviewed documents

In particular, the evaluation team has been reviewed:

- Programme document (2005 and 2013) and the update of its logical framework (2018)
- Project document
- Inception report
- PIRs for 2010-2020
- Status of programme level indicators 2020
- Yields in categorized farms
- Environmental biodiversity indicators for assessing sustainable land management in Cuba I: Biological soil quality (2020)
- Environmental biodiversity indicators for assessing sustainable land management in Cuba II: Biological Water Quality (2020)
- -Technical report on the status of biological diversity and bio-indicators in areas under SLM of the CPP-OP15 programme (2020)
- Mid-term evaluation reports 2015 and 2019
- NSC Minutes for 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019
- Expert Group Minutes for 2017, 2018 and 2019
- Budget revisions
- Audit 201
- Analysis of CPP alignment with SDGs and Tarea Vida
- Lessons learned document 2020
- Dissemination materials
- Publication tracking tool
- Project location maps
- AMA Resolution 07/2017 establishing the Recognition in SLM
- Economic and Social Development Plan 2030
- National Environmental Strategy 2016-2020
- National Environmental Education Programme 2016-2020
- National Biodiversity Programme 2016-2020
- State Plan for Addressing Climate Change in the Republic of Cuba (Tarea Vida) (2017)
- Third National Communication to the UNFCCC (November 2020)
- Cuba's Nationally Determined Contribution (2020 Update)
- UNDP Country Programme Document 2014-2018 for Cuba
- UNDP Country Programme Document 2018-2021 for Cuba
- United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Cuba 2014-2018
- GEF-3, GEF-4, GEF-5, GEF-6 and GEF-7 Programming Directions

5.3 List of interviewed persons and institutions

No	Nombre	Institución	Cargo	Fecha
1	Bernardo Calero	Suelo MINAGRI	Especialista de UM en DS del MINAGRI	23 de marzo
2	Felicita Gonzales	IAGRIC	Coordinadora de UM en IAGRIC del MINAGRI	23 de marzo
3	Miguel Ribot	IGT	Experto en geomática en IGT	23 de marzo
4	Alfredo Martínez	AMA	Dir de CPP	24 de marzo
5	Yulaidis Aguilar	AMA	Coordinadora de Programa	24 de marzo
6	Yaritza Gómez	AMA	Coordinadora del P5	24 de marzo
7	Maritza García	AMA	Presidenta de AMA	26 de marzo
8	Maritza Gonzales	AMA	Dir de Programas y Proyectos de la AMA	26 de marzo
9	Beatriz Crispín	MINCEX	Especialista del MINCEX	26 de marzo
10	Pedro Ruíz	DRI-CITMA	Dir de DRI	26 de marzo
11	Mailyvis Ynouwy	Cuerpo de Guardabosques	Coordinadora del monitoreo de indicadores biofísicos del CPP	26 de marzo
12	Juan Mario Martínez	IGT	Dir de BASAL	27 de marzo
13	Gricel Acosta	PNUD	Oficial de Programa a cargo del área de Naturaleza, Clima y Energía (NCE)	29 de marzo
14	Tomás Escobar	PNUD	Coordinador PPD	29 de marzo
15	Johan Navarro	PNUD	Oficial de Programa, NCE	29 de marzo
16	Patricia Fernández	PNUD	Asociada de Programa, NCE	29 de marzo
17	Simone Bauch	PNUD	Asesora Técnica Regional	29 de marzo
18	Ana María Rodríguez	Delegación del CITMA de Camag	Coordinadora de P5 en Camagüey	30 de marzo
19	Lisbet Font	Delegación del CITMA de Camag	Subdelegada del CITMA de Camagüey/ Coordinadora de maestría de MST	30 de marzo
20	Alexander Fernández	Delegación del CITMA de Guantánamo	Coordinador de P5 en Guantánamo	30 de marzo
22	Teudys Limeres	Delegación de MINAGRI en Guantánamo	Coordinador de P2 en Guantánamo	30 de marzo
23	Tony Márquez	ANAP Guantánamo	Productor categorizado Guantánamo	30 de marzo
24	Juan Carlos	Delegación del CITMA de Matanzas	Coordinadora de P5 en Matanzas	30 de marzo
25	Nelvis	Delegación del CITMA de Matanzas	Subdelegada del CITMA de Matanzas	30 de marzo
26	Fernando Donis	ANAP Matanzas	Productor categorizado Matanzas	30 de marzo
27	Geral Malagon	Delegación del CITMA de Pinar del Rio	Coordinadora de P2 en Pinar del Rio	30 de marzo
28	Onay Martínez	ANAP Pinar de Río	Productor Categorizado Pinar del Rio	30 de marzo
29	Luis David Almeida	AMA	Dir de Manglar Vivo	4 de abril
30	José M. Guzmán	AMA	Coordinador técnico de Manglar	4 de abril
31	Robert Erath	PNUMA	Coordinador portafolio MST	1 de abril
32	Enrique Moret	FAO		20 de abril

5.4 Statement of agreement of the evaluation consultants

Evaluators:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study imitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

Jon García

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of Consultant: Jon García Bañales

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant)**:**

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at *London, United Kingdom* on 1*/06/2021*

Signature: 

Orlidia Hechavarria

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of Consultant: Orlidia Hechavarria

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant)**:**

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at *La Habana, Cuba* on *31/05/2021*

Signature:

5.5. Detailed comments to the project's results framework

Table 8. Comments to the system of indicators included in the Project document[40]

Indicator system			Reporting	Comments to the indicators system and reporting
Objective	**The effectiveness and efficiency of SLM initiatives in Cuba is maximized programme-wide**			
Description of Indicator	**Baseline Level**	**End of project target level**	**Cumulative progress since project start[41]**	
Proportion of the core target group of 25 key institutions nationwide which is participating in the coordinated and integrated use of lands based on sustainable land management principles	0	25 members of the core target group by end of Program	94 institutions are participating in the implementation of the CPP.	Considering how it is verified (CPP coordinating body report), the indicator is neither fully relevant nor specific. It is not very clear what "engaging in coordinated and integrated land use" means. The way the indicator and target are worded, they are not consistent (the indicator refers to a percentage, and the target to a number), although this is a minor weakness. The report does not clarify this point. It refers to institutions participating in the implementation of the CPP, but does not indicate to what extent this participation is integrated and coordinated, e.g. whether they participate in a CPP coordination body that meets on a regular basis.

[40] This matrix comments on the detailed results framework included in the project document (pp. 61-63) that is used in the progress reports and not the logical framework summarised in the project document (pp. 20-21). It should be noted that the MTR does not provide a detailed analysis by indicator. It notes in general that indicators are not SMART and that there are no impact indicators and recommends fixing this. It also provides a proposal for an experimental design for the mangrove work (Annex 8), but this covers only some of the indicators in the logical framework and is not specific to the indicators.

[41] El análisis se realiza a partir del ultimo PIR disponible, que cubre hasta el 30 de junio de 2020.

Indicator system			Reporting	Comments to the indicators system and reporting
Proportion of area covered by CPP where agreements for coordination between national, provincial and municipal authorities for the use of lands based on sustainable land management principles are developed and in place	No systems exist specific to SLM	80% of national territory covered by agreements by year 10 (end of the project)	100% of national territory is covered by agreements, since they are signed by national entities that regulate activities that promote SLM model application, which have branches up to municipal levels.	The indicator is not entirely specific, as it is not clear whether the CPP area is the entire national territory or a part of it. The verification method is misleading and inappropriate. Furthermore, the indicator and the target are not consistent: the indicator refers to both the signing and implementation of agreements, while the target refers only to their signing. The report reflects these shortcomings by not reporting on the implementation of agreements. In the PIRs, it does not report % of the surface of the national territory, but rather % of municipalities. The measurement is inconsistent over time and the data is not comparable. In 2010 and 2011, municipalities with agreements within the intervention zones are reported (number and %); between 2012 and 2017, municipalities with replication agreements outside the intervention zones are reported (number and %); from 2018 onwards, agreements with national authorities are reported and in 2020 it is concluded that, as these agreements have a national scope, the target can be considered met. Year by year, reference is made in an undifferentiated way to the municipalities covered by agreements (signature) and those where the programme is being replicated (implementation), so it is not clear what the data actually refers to..
Outcome 1	**Institutions coordinate their SLM initiatives effectively programme-wide**			
Number of CPP projects whose startup responds to the achievement of milestones identified in the CPP document	0	5 (100%), throughout the life of the CPP	1 project concluded and 4 projects are in execution phase as described below: Project 1: Execution was completed. In the final evaluation, it obtained a highly satisfactory rating.	The indicator seems to be an indicator of the CPP rather than P5, because in principle P5 is not responsible for the design and implementation of the other projects. The time horizon is also unclear: reference is made to the life of the CPP, but as it turned out this was not necessarily the life of P5. As it is a P5 indicator, the time reference should be the end of P5 and not the end of the programme. Generally speaking, the time complement "throughout" is neither precise nor relevant.

Indicator system			Reporting	Comments to the indicators system and reporting
			Project 2 is being implemented according to schedule. Its mid-term evaluation rating was satisfactory. Project 3. In implementation. Project 4 It's PRODOC was completed during first trimester of 2020 by an international consultant and the Central Coordination Unit of CPP. Reference Terms were written. Project 5 It has been accompanied the execution of the others projects of CPP.	The indicator is not specific, as it does not indicate what is expected from the projects in terms of their implementation status (designed, under implementation or completed), and performance or results. The verification method is vague and not robust. Reporting improves the indicator by providing information on the implementation status and performance of projects. Regarding the latter, while it is useful to know the overall performance (taking into account the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability), no details are given on the assessment of effectiveness, which for this indicator is the most relevant aspect of the evaluations.
Number of constituent projects within the CPP which meet their impact targets in a cost-effective manner	0	80%, throughout the life of the CPP	Project 1 completed successfully since 2015 (100%). Project 2: 92%, Project 3: 76.6%. Project P5: 96%.	The indicator is not precise. It includes two dissimilar aspects: meeting impact targets and cost-effectiveness. Furthermore, it does not indicate how compliance with these aspects is measured in each project: when is a project considered to meet its impact targets, when it meets more than 50% of its targets, and how is cost-effectiveness measured? In this sense, the target is not precise, as it is not clear what it refers to: 80% of the projects or 80% of the targets? In addition, the verification method is inadequate. The prodoc refers to reports from the implementation teams, but this evaluation should be independent. The report reflects these problems. It seems to refer to financial execution, which would not be consistent with the indicator, which refers to meeting impact targets and cost-effectiveness, but not to financial execution, which is a totally different aspect.

Indicator system			Reporting	Comments to the indicators system and reporting
Degree of coincidence between activity targets established in annual work plans of CPP and constituent projects, and actual execution	0	90%, throughout the life of the CPP	The degree of coincidence between the activity target established in the work plans of the constituent projects and the CPP is 100% The real execution of the constituent projects in the period is: •Project 1 - 100%, •Project 2 - 81 %, •Project 3 - 57.1% •Project 5 - 76%	Again, the indicator includes different elements: i) the consistency between Project activities and programme activities, and ii) their level of implementation. This is inadequate: how would an activity that is consistent, but with limited implementation, be assessed? Moreover, what is measured in each case? For example, for implementation, is it considered to be under implementation, or is it considered to be implementation completed? The target is also unclear - what does 90% refer to, activities? In general, the time complement "throughout" is neither precise nor relevant. The report distinguishes between the two, but it is not clear what the implementation percentages refer to: ongoing or completed activities? Moreover, it does not aggregate: if the indicator refers to CPP activities, it should indicate how many activities each project has, mention the implementation percentage of each project's activities and aggregate to estimate the percentage of programme activities under implementation or implemented. At present there is one target (one figure) and the report mentions 4 that it is not known how to aggregate.
Degree of coincidence between financial targets established in annual budgets of CPP and constituent projects, and actual execution.	0	90%, throughout the life of the CPP	The degree of coincidence between the financial objectives established in the work plans of the constituent projects and the CPP is 66%, making a comparison between the total budget of the CPP and the execution of all the projects to date. Project 1 execution 3 500 000.00 (100%)	Again, the indicator includes disparate elements, which makes analysis difficult, and is not very precise. It is not clear how consistency between CPP financial targets and projects is measured, which should be the total, nor how financial execution is measured (e.g. resources disbursed or committed/programmed). Overall, the time complement "throughout" is neither accurate nor relevant. The report attempts to fix these shortcomings by simplifying the comparison and aggregating, which is simpler here. It should be noted that the exercise is not entirely robust, and not entirely aligned with the target. If the financial execution of projects is aggregated, the target should be 100% at the end of the CPP, and it would not make sense to

Indicator system			Reporting	Comments to the indicators system and reporting
			Project 2 execution 2 232 360.03 (91.3%) Project 3 execution 582 496.23 (40.8%) Project 5 execution 746 737.70 (93.3%) Total execution 7 061 593.96 (70.6%)	set a target throughout the CPP because the percentage of financial execution is necessarily changeable. .
Proportion of planned CPP staff and institutional staff seconded to projects in place and satisfying performance requirements	5 full time and 3 part time members of the central team	100% (6 full time and 6 part time staff of the central team, 4 project leaders and 5 intervention area staff)	100% according to goal, we have 8 full-time specialists. (5 SLM specialists, the financial administrator, the logistic and 1 full-time driver.) 8 part-time specialists (6 coordinators in the management units and 10 territorial coordinators of the program)	Again, the indicator adds dissimilar elements. The method of verification is inadequate, as reports made by the team are not an independent source for assessing whether they meet the requirements. The target is unclear: it is not known whether the total is 12 or 21 people, and whether the latter 9 would be full or part-time. There is no clear time reference, when the CPP team in principle changes as projects open and close. The report does not clarify these aspects, and appears to be inconsistent: 8 part-time specialists are mentioned and then 16 part-time specialists are indicated.
Number of national and international institutions (both within and outside the CPP), which coordinate with and complement GEF-funded investments in the CPP in their initiatives and plans related to SLM	0	All 25 members of the core target group, all 46 key collaborating institutions and 4 international agencies	94 institutions are participating in the implementation of the CPP. Developed synergy actions with the GEF Small Grants Program (PPD).	As formulated, this indicator is duplicated with one above for the objective. A clearer distinction could be made between the national and the international level. The target does not distinguish between these institutions (international agencies could be part of the 25 or the 46), nor does it indicate whether those implementing projects within the CPP, such as UNDP and UNEP, can be considered as partner institutions. The report is not consistent with the target, as it does not distinguish by type of actor. For example, that 94 institutions implement the project does not inform on whether 4 international agencies do so. Interactions

Indicator system			Reporting	Comments to the indicators system and reporting
				with other countries are very relevant, but not for this indicator which focuses on institutions (if in both cases it is UNDP, it could not be double counted).
Proportion of local stakeholders in area covered by CPP who are satisfied with CPP decisions, results and products	0	80% from year 7 on.	To date, 2 surveys have been applied in 2018 and 2019, respectively, which have shown satisfaction degree of stakeholders with CPP results is above 90% in all intervention areas.	The indicator system is relevant. The verification method is not adequate in the project document. The report uses a relatively adequate verification method - the characteristics of the surveys would need to be detailed to show that it is adequate. The report is not specific - it does not give percentages, as required by the target.
Outcome 2	**SLM initiatives in Cuba respond to the results of monitoring and evaluation of programme-wide conditions**			
Number of programme-level indicators related to SLM being measured in accordance with plans	Zero	80% of CPP indicators and Purpose and Intermediate Objective levels	An update of the evaluation of the CPP indicators was completed in this period. Specific Objective 1 of CPP: 97% achieved. Specific Objective 2 of CPP: 70% achieved. (Some results of this objective depends on the projects 4)	The target is not precise. There is no time reference. The report is partially adequate. It responds to the indicator, but gives information that is not entirely relevant (level of compliance).
Number of target institutions receiving regular and up to date information on	Zero	The 25 members of the core target group receive information on 100% of indicators within 6 months of measure	The 25 key institutions and others are kept receiving updated information on the CPP and its projects.	The target is not entirely clear (it is not clear what is meant by "within 6 months of measure", although it may be a mistake and mean "measurement").

Indicator system			Reporting	Comments to the indicators system and reporting
programme-level CPP indicators			Printed and distributed a book named Law of Water (Annex3). Dissemination of CPP actions and its projects through the social network Facebook, television programs and the written press (Annex4).	The report is adequate, although it does not seem to be based on the verification method indicated in prodoc.
Number of institutions which take into account programme-level indicators in their management of initiatives contributing to SLM	None	The 25 members of the core target group	There are 94 institutions up to now which take into account programme-level indicators in their management of initiatives contributing to SLM.	The indicators system is adequate. The reporting is adequate, although it does not seem to be based on the verification method indicated in prodoc.
Outcome 3	**Monitoring, learning, adaptive feedback & evaluation**			
Proportion of annual work plans and budgets which adequately take into account the results of monitoring and evaluation	0	100% throughout the life of the CPP	100% of the work plans, as well as their budgets, have been adapted according to the monitoring and evaluation plan.	The indicators systems and reporting are adequate.
Numbers of documents on lessons learnt produced and disseminated within the GEF system, based on project final evaluation reports	0	5, during the life of the CPP	Only P1 has concluded, its final report includes an annex with the learned lessons from it. As recommendation of CPP Interim Evaluation is under review a	The indicator is not entirely relevant, as it makes the development of lessons learned documents dependent on the development of final project evaluations. The reporting is adequate.

Indicator system			Reporting	Comments to the indicators system and reporting
			publication about CPP lessons learned during program lifetime.	

5.6 Audit trail

Annex In separate file.

5.7 Terminal Evaluation Term of Reference

Annex In separate file.

5.8 Clearance

Terminal Evaluation Report for *(Project Title & UNDP PIMS ID)* Reviewed and Cleared By:

UNDP - Cuba (Programme Analyst NCE[42])

Name: Gricel Acosta

Signature: _____ **Date:** 17-Jun-2021

Regional Technical Advisor (Nature, Climate and Energy)

Name: Simone Carolina Bauch

Signature: _____ **Date:** 24-jun-2021

[42] M&E Officer was on sick leave during the evaluation process