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Terminal Evaluation of UN Environment Project: "Prevention, control and management of Invasive Alien Species in the Pacific Islands"

March 2017

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Photos Credits:
Top left: Project Staff and volunteers restoring forest at Mt Vaea, Samoa. Top and bottom right: English and Maori language IAS awareness posters Cook Islands. Bottom left: Interpretation sign Toloa Rainforest restoration, Tonga

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Prevention, control and management of invasive alien species in the Pacific Islands
GEF ID: 3664 IMIS number: GFL-2328-2712-4C16
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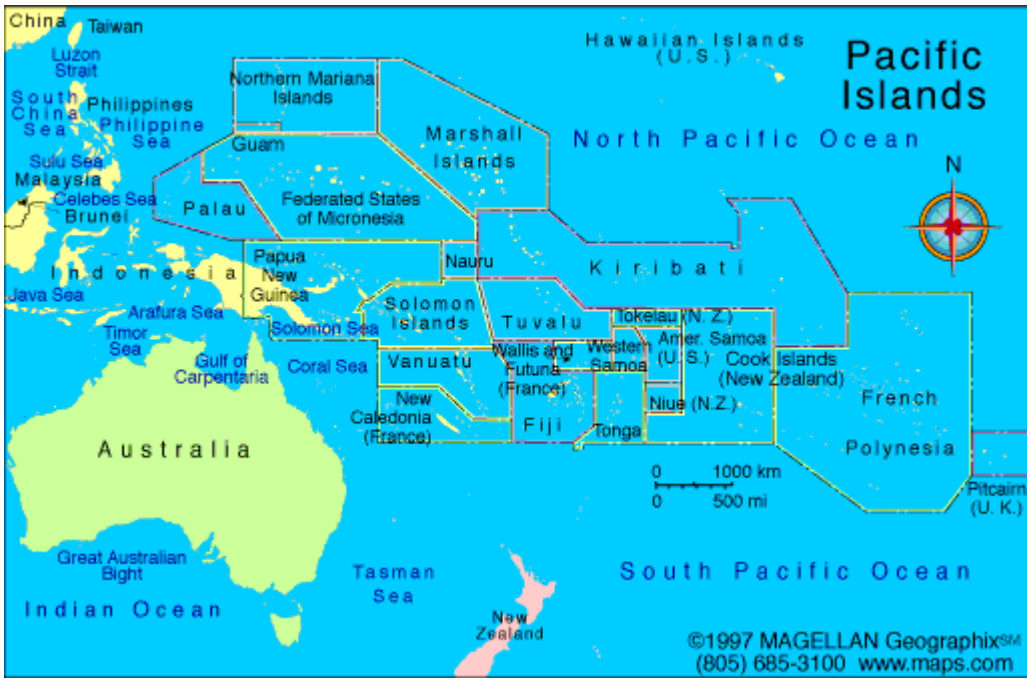
List of abbreviations and acronyms

BSP	Bali Strategic Plan
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CI	Conservation International
DAFF	Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (Niue)
DEC	Division of Environment and Conservation (Samoa)
DEC	Department of Environment and Conservation (Vanuatu and PNG)
DEPI	Division of Ecosystem Policy Implementation (of UN Environment)
EDRR	Emergency Detection and Rapid Response
FSM	Federated States Of Micronesia
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GISD	Global Invasive Species Database
GISIN	Global Invasive Species Information Network
GISP	Global Invasive Species Program
GEFPAS	GEF- Pacific Alliance for Sustainability
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
IUCN	World Conservation Union
KIRMA	Kosrae Island Resources Management Agency
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAFBNZ	Ministry Agriculture And Forestry Biosecurity New Zealand
MC	Micronesia Challenge
MCT	Micronesia Conservation Trust
MELAD	Ministry Of Environment, Lands And Agricultural Development
MICS	Marshall Islands Conservation Society
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
MSP	Medium Sized Project
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NES	National Environment Service (Cook Islands)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NISSAP	National Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan
NISC	National Invasive Species Committee (especially Palau)
PIF	Project Identification Form
PII	Pacific Invasives Initiative
PILN	Pacific Invasives Learning Network
PIP	Pacific Invasives Partnership
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PIW	Project Inception Workshop
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PPG	Project Proposal Grant
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PSU	Project Support Unit
RAF	Regional Allocation Framework (for GEF funding to countries)
R&D	Ministry of Resources and Development (Marshall Islands)
RMI	Republic of Marshall Islands
RMIEPA	Republic of Marshall Islands Environment Protection Agency
ROtI	Review of Outcome to Impacts
RTOC	Reconstructed Theory of Change
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound indicators
SNITT	Samoa's National Invasive Task Team
SPC	Pacific Community
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
TC	Technical Committee
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TNC	The Nature Conservancy

ToC	Theory of Change
TOC -D	Theory of Change at Design
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

Figure 1: General Map of the Pacific Region and its States and Territories



Source: http://www.infoplease.com/atlas/pacificislandsandaustralia.html

Table 1: Project Identification Table

UNEP PIMS ID:		IMIS number:	GFL-2328-2712-4C16
Sub-programme:		Expected Accomplishment(s):	
UNEP approval date:	November 2010	PoW Output(s):	
GEF project ID:	GFL 3664	Project Type:	FSP
GEF OP #:	N/A	Focal Area(s):	Biodiversity
GEF approval date:	November 2010	GEF Strategic Priority/Objective:	BD1, BD3, BD4.
Expected Start Date:	12 September 2011	Actual start date:	12 September 2011
Planned completion date:	28 February 2015	Actual completion date:	30 September 2016
Planned project budget at approval:	7,010,890	Total expenditures reported as of [date]:	
GEF Allocation:	$3,031,818	GEF grant expenditures reported as of [date]:	
PDF GEF cost:	$150,000 (PPG)	PDF co-financing:	$145,000 (PPG)
Expected MSP/FSP co-financing:	$ 3,979,072	Secured MSP/FSP co-financing:	
First Disbursement:	12 September 2011	Date of financial closure:	N/A
No. of revisions:	One	Date of last revision:	3 November 2014
Date of last Steering Committee meeting:	3 November 2014		
Mid-term review/ evaluation (planned date):	March 2014	Mid-term review/ evaluation (actual date):	July 2014
Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	30 November 2016		

Executive summary

Evaluation Overview

1. Invasive alien species represent an insidious and pervasive threat to the environmental, economic and human well-being of the Pacific islands. Pacific island ecosystems make up one of the world's important biodiversity hotspots, with high numbers of endemic species that are particularly vulnerable to extinction due to their limited habitat and isolation. The maintenance of the ecosystem services of the islands is fundamental to their social and economic viability and with economies based on natural production, the impacts of introduced pests and weeds on the critically important sectors such as agriculture and tourism can be catastrophic for the region's small island States and Territories.

2. The UNEP/GEF *Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species in the Pacific Islands project* also known as the IAS project, commenced on 12 September 2012 and was due for completion on 30 September 2016, following an extension of one year. The project was designed to provide support to Pacific Island countries in their national efforts to implement the *Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific – a Pacific Strategy for managing pest, weeds and other invasive species (Tye 2009)* which were developed and adopted as the regional strategic framework for invasive species management in 2009.

3. Ten Pacific Island countries originally participated in the IAS project, these being the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu. These were reduced to nine countries with the withdrawal of Papua New Guinea following the Mid-Term Review due to issues related to the country's readiness to engage with the project. The project was therefore, responsible for delivering of support to a culturally, geographically and economic diverse set of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) spread across the vast geographical scope of the Pacific Ocean.

4. The project was implemented by the UN Environment as the Implementing Agency (IA) and Executed by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) as the Executing Agency (EA). In-country sub projects and activities were facilitated by National Project Coordinators and overseen by national Invasive Species Coordinating Committees. Its goal "*to conserve ecosystems, species and genetic diversity in the Pacific region*" is broad and aspirational and is backed by the Objective "to reduce the environmental economic and human health impacts of invasive alien species in both terrestrial and marine habitats in the Pacific region".

5. The Project consisted of 5 core components:

    - Building foundations for sustainable Invasive Alien Species (IAS) management by generating awareness and support, building institution and human capacity and strengthening legislation, policy and protocols.
    - Defining problems, prioritisation and decision making by improving baseline information on IAS distribution and status, establishing systems to assess risk and prioritise action and developing or utilising effective management techniques.
    - Taking management action through improved bio-security and border protection, direct management action through eradication and application of best practice methods and restoring ecosystems after IAS management.
    - Undertaking effective monitoring and evaluation of the project.
    - Establishing effective and efficient project management and governance.

6. This Terminal Project Evaluation is undertaken by the Evaluation Office of the UN Environment in order to assess the effectiveness of the project and its likely future impact on the state of IAS management in the region and its likely impact on invasive species and the environmental health of the participating countries. Further, the report aims to discern lessons and offers recommendations which may help improve the development and implementation of similar multi-country projects in the future both in the Pacific region and globally.

Evaluation methodology

7. The findings of the evaluation were based on desk reviews, field visits and evaluation of the technical aspects of the project in all nine participating countries. Due to budgetary constraints, field visits were confined to Samoa, Tonga, the Cook Islands and Kiribati. Information was acquired through e-mail exchanges and Skype interviews with the project management team as well as face to face interviews with key stakeholders during country visits and at important regional IAS focussed meetings such as the PILN meeting in Samoa in August 2016. In-depth consultations including one on one and group interviews, were undertaken with Implementing Agency and Executing Agency personnel who provided valuable insights on the project and its implementation. Other country-specific documents related to project management were also consulted prior to and after the field missions which included the material developed for national awareness campaigns.

Summary of the main evaluation findings

Strategic relevance:

8. The Project's objectives and implementation strategies were well aligned with national, regional, international and donor (Global Environment Facility - Pacific Alliance for Sustainability - GEFPAS) needs and priorities. At the national level, the project worked to align with the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans of the participating countries and, at the regional level, harmonisation of the project with the regional IAS Guidelines was a design priority. Internationally and globally the project fitted with GEF 4 global biodiversity protection priorities and the biodiversity and development aims of UNEP's Medium Term Strategy 2010-2014 and the Bali Strategic Action Plan.

B. Achievement of outputs:

9. The project was slow to get underway and there was concern expressed in the Mid-Term Review (MTR) that the raft of national sub projects and activities would be more than could reasonably be implemented in the remaining 2 years of the project. However, judicious re-assessment of priorities and a concerted effort by project management backed by strong national cooperation led by the National Coordinators and local partners saw a remarkable turnaround resulting in all outputs being achieved by project termination. Many of the field activities leading to the outputs resulted in multiple benefits and were instrumental in raising public awareness, reducing ecosystem and habitat threats, training in best eradication and restoration techniques, garnering government and political support and linking with and mutually supporting the conservation priorities of the Integrated Island Biodiversity (IIB) and Phoenix Island Protected Area (PIPA) GEFPAS projects. It should also be noted that benefit accrued to both the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands which were also part of the related Micronesia Challenge GEF4 project which identified IAS and biosecurity as a major issue affecting biodiversity in the Micronesia sub-region of the Pacific. In this regard the synergies between these four projects went some way to achieving the regional scale objectives of the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (GEFPAS) programme. The evaluation rated the achievement of Outputs as Highly Satisfactory.

C. Effectiveness (attainment of project objectives and results).

10. To achieve its objective and its overall impact, the project delivered outcomes across three critical inter-related components needed to build the foundations and capacity for improved and effective invasive species management in the region. These were i) building awareness, capacity and institutional processes, ii) improving information based decision making and prioritisation and, iii) building experience and management capacity through field based action. It is fair to say that overall, the project was successful in delivering its outcomes in these three key areas and generating impact in the form of improved understanding of the impacts of IAS and strengthened institutions and management capacity in the participating countries. Furthermore, in those instances where direct management action (eradication, bio-control and restoration projects) was undertaken, the project's impact is clearly discernible in terms of improved and restored ecosystems and habitats.

11. Most participating governments have committed to and are supporting the mainstreaming of IAS management and some have placed priority on seeking additional funding from international donors to help sustain national IAS efforts.

12. However, although the project has demonstrated effective results in terms of the reduction of priority IAS populations, improvements to island biodiversity and reduction of threats to health and risks to important

economic sectors such as agriculture, ongoing improvement of national IAS capacity and capability is still required. In this regard, a long term perspective needs to be adopted by regional and international support as achieving the desired level of impact is beyond the domain of single GEF projects. In this regard, regional and international agencies like SPREP, UNEP and the GEF have a critical on-going role in assisting the countries to identify and access potential funding sources and in building and strengthening effective regional IAS networks and partnerships capable of delivering capacity building support and technical assistance in the future.

D. Sustainability and replication.

13. The probability of continued long-term project-derived results and impacts after the conclusion of the Project is rated "Likely" across socio - political, financial, institutional and environmental dimensions. Although immediate funding for on-going IAS work in the region is linked to the success of the follow up GEF6 project, awareness and government and political support and the institutional structures established in the participating countries point to sustainability of outcomes. Together with the regional IAS coordination mandates which reside with SPREP and SPC the sustainability of the project results is considered to be Likely.

Catalytic role and replication.

14. The project and the NISSAP process were catalytic in opening the way for a range of training /capacity needs assessments leading to training activities in Kiribati, Niue, Samoa, Vanuatu, Cook Islands and Tonga for key government agency and NGO/partner staff. These helped catalyse field based training and mentoring such as the Polynesian-New Zealand Restoration Study Tour which scaled up to the implementation of a number of rat eradication and forest restoration pilot projects. Overall the project has been highly catalytic in building inter-agency cooperation, strengthening institutions and policy, strengthening IAS awareness, and facilitating replication and scale-up of best practices.

E. Efficiency.

15. The level of expenditure together with the level of achievement across the three key operational components represents efficient use of funds, even more so taking into account the substantial budget cut experienced during the design phase of the project. A feature of the project has been the adaptive management capabilities of the PMU which has fostered efficiency in implementation during the second half of the project's term.

F. Factors affecting project performance.

16. The evaluation found that preparedness and readiness left much to be desired for and led to a slow start and eventually the need for a project extension. This was partly due to the departure of the original Project Manager (early 2012), the time required to recruit his successor, the arrival of cyclone Evan in Samoa which closed down the functioning of the EA offices until early 2013, the associated loss of continuity and the need to adapt project execution to the different styles of the individuals involved. It was also affected by the difficulties of recruiting National Project Coordinators in the participating countries. However, with adaptive project management and good teamwork between the IA and EA, together with the cooperation of the participating countries, these issues were eventually overcome and an overall successful Project performance was secured.

Table 2: Summary of Evaluation Ratings

Criterion	Overall Rating
A. Strategic relevance	**H**ighly **S**atisfactory
B. Achievement of outputs	**H**ighly **S**atisfactory
C. Effectiveness: Attainment of objectives and planned results	**S**atisfactory
1. Achievement of direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed TOC	**S**atisfactory
2. Likelihood of impact using ROtI approach	**H**ighly **L**ikely
3. Achievement of formal project objectives as presented in the Project Document	**S**atisfactory
D. Sustainability of outcomes	**L**ikely

Criterion	Overall Rating
1. Socio-political sustainability	**H**ighly **L**ikely
2. Financial resources	**L**ikely
3. Institutional framework	**H**ighly **L**ikely
4. Environmental sustainability	**M**oderately **L**ikely
5. Catalytic role and replication	**S**atisfactory
E. Efficiency	**S**atisfactory
F. Factors affecting project performance	
1. Preparation and readiness	**U**nsatisfactory
2. Project implementation and management	**S**atisfactory
3. Stakeholders participation, cooperation and partnerships	**S**atisfactory
4. Communication and public awareness	**H**ighly **S**atisfactory
5. Country ownership and driven-ness	**S**atisfactory
6. Financial planning and management	**S**atisfactory
7. Supervision, guidance and technical backstopping	**H**ighly **S**atisfactory
8. Monitoring and evaluation	
i. M&E design	**S**atisfactory
ii. M&E plan implementation	**S**atisfactory
Overall project rating	Satisfactory

Summary of recommendations and lessons learned.

17. The evaluation has generated two principal recommendations and five key lessons which may help to improve the design and implementation of future similar projects but perhaps more importantly, they may help strengthen future IAS management in the Pacific, improve the sustainability of project outcomes and enhance long term impact.

Recommendations:

18. Maintaining and expanding the regional support services and network built by the project is critical to being able to maintain the momentum generated by the project (and the UNEP/GEF investment) and ensuring the outcomes will be fully achieved over time. The first recommendation calls on UNEP to "*strongly encourage SPREP and other regional (CROP) organisations with IAS mandates such as SPC with its bio-security focus, to collaborate with partners such as the Pacific Invasives Partnership and the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN) to undertake a review of the current regional IAS support network with a view to designing and institutionalising a coordinated support service within the core operations of SPREP and SPC. The service will be formally linked with key regional IAS partners and institutions and the design should include options for sustainable funding mechanisms for both the service and long term regional IAS support*".

19. The second recommendation is aimed at encouraging UNEP to strengthen its presence in the Pacific region to ensure it is able to deploy the resources necessary to engage effectively with regional partners and Pacific island governments in the advocacy of its environmental and ecosystem management programmes and the development of collaborative projects and funding initiatives. It recommends that "*UNEP undertake a strategic appraisal of its role in the region and related capacity requirements, including giving consideration to the relocation of technical positions currently located in the Asia Pacific regional office which have direct relevance to high priority issues for Pacific Governments such as climate change, ecosystem management, waste and chemical management and environmental governance*".

20. The following is a summary of the main lessons that have been learned from the project's successes as well challenges:

Lesson # 1

21. The project revealed that the majority of participating countries required substantial support, mentoring and technical assistance to achieve their outputs and overall project outcomes and impact. This was an important regional role for SPREP as the EA but initially at least, providing the levels of support needed with the very limited resources allocated in the project budget was difficult. However, a mid-project budget revision intensified regional support activities and provided new momentum. The **lesson** here is that it is critical in the design stages of multi-country projects of this scope and magnitude in the Pacific region to realistically assess the capacity and capability of the participating countries and understand the likely level of management and technical support which will be needed from the EA. Further and most importantly, adequate budgetary provision must be made to fund regional support services appropriately.

Lesson#2

22. The project performed the strongest in those countries where the National Project Coordinator was appointed to a full time position from the outset and exhibited a good understanding of the importance of IAS management, commitment and dedication to the coordination role, a willingness to learn and pass that knowledge on and a great deal of motivation. This is very important in projects which emphasise nationally led implementation. Consequently, the selection (or non-selection) of suitable candidates has an important influence on project success. The **lesson** here is that the selection of the best possible National Project Coordinators is critical to overall success and has a major bearing on the effective implementation. For these reasons the project IA and EA should strive to work closely with the participating country in the recruitment process to ensure the National Coordinator role is dedicated to the project and selection is carried out as objectively as possible with careful consideration being given to clear selection criteria. These should include appropriate qualifications, experience and importantly, an interest in the thematic area of the project, such as invasive alien species management and biodiversity conservation. Ideally, all National Coordinators would be appointed in advance of the inception process to ensure a full understanding of the project and its processes.

Lesson # 3

23. The project invested heavily in building the capacity of staff in the participating countries and particularly that of the national coordinators who were crucial to project implementation. The knowledge and experience gained is of great value and it is very important to try to retain these people in permanent government positions post project to help ensure sustainability and on-going national commitment. The **lesson** here is that retention of trained staff will always be a major factor in sustaining the capacity gains generated by projects. Therefore, during the design phase (PPG) of multi country projects efforts should be made to negotiate incentives for post -project retention of project trained national staff. Ideally, Government agencies will be encouraged to commit long term to these positions as a matter of policy, even if the decision to do so is reflected as one of "best endeavour". In view of their interest in seeing long term improvements in capacity, these negotiations should be undertaken with the support of Implementing Agencies and donors.

Lesson # 4

24. Often the management and implementation of large multi-country projects involves project reporting protocols which require strict adherence to the progress and financial reporting and accounting systems prescribed by either or both of the Implementing and Executing Agency which are aimed at meeting donor requirements. Adjusting to and accommodating the requirements of these new reporting systems can prove problematic and frustrating and can delay project implementation. In such situations, adoption of a flexible and adaptive approach together with the provision of project management training and support will create goodwill between Project Management and the countries concerned and lay a cooperative foundation for efficient and effective reporting throughout the project's life. The **lesson** here is that IA's and EA's need to be pragmatic and flexible in assessing the project management training and support needed to ensure that efficient and effective reporting can be achieved throughout the project's life. This needs to be built into the budget and outputs of the project and if linked with the security of tenure issue addressed in recommendation 3 above, could significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of project management. If this capacity and capability is not established early, reporting issues will lead to tension between the parties and delays in project implementation. Preferably the extent of training and

support needed will be identified prior to inception and an appropriate training and support programme will be negotiated with the countries concerned. Open and constructive dialogue greatly assists this process and may also lead to countries which don't initially have the capacity to manage project finances, devolving that responsibility to the Executing Agency until such time as the required capacity is in place.

Lesson # 5.

25. Lengthy delays in establishing the project management and implementation structures for GEF (and other donor) projects, especially those involving multiple countries are a common occurrence in the Pacific region. Inevitably, project designers either under estimate the time this requires and or the capacity available to meet these needs resulting in projects lagging behind in their early phases as happened with the IAS project. The lesson here is that project design needs to be based on a realistic assessment of these start up factors and allow sufficient time to get partners signed up, staff recruited and trained and funds moved to the correct recipients. All project stakeholders must recognise these realities and be prepared to extend time frames accordingly, even by a year if necessary.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Subject and scope of the evaluation

26. The *Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species in the Pacific Islands project* (project number GFL 3664) hereafter referred to as the IAS project, commenced on 12 September 2012 and was due for completion on 30 September 2016. The project was designed to provide support to Pacific Island countries in their national efforts to implement the *Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific – a Pacific Strategy for managing pest, weeds and other invasive species (Tye 2009) (*hereafter the Guidelines) which were developed and adopted as the regional strategic framework for invasive species management in 2009. This terminal evaluation covers the design and implementation phases of the IAS Project.

27. Ten Pacific Island countries originally participated in the Pacific IAS project, these being the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu. These were reduced to nine countries with the withdrawal of Papua New Guinea following the Mid-Term Review due to issues related to that country's readiness to engage with the project. The project was therefore, responsible for delivering of support to a culturally, geographically and economic diverse set of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) spread across the vast geographical scope of the Pacific Ocean.

28. Meeting this responsibility fell to UNEP as the Implementing Agency (IA) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) as the Executing Agency (EA). More specifically, the responsibility of the IA was vested in the UNEP Task Manager and Pacific Regional Focal Point based in the UNEP Pacific regional office in Apia, Samoa as the project Task Manager (TM) and for the EA (SPREP) it was specifically vested in UNEP's Task Manager and Pacific Regional Focal Point based in Apia, Samoa and the SPREP Invasive Alien Species Advisor as Project Manager.

29. In line with UNEP Evaluation Policy and the requirements of the GEF, this IAS project terminal evaluation aims to objectively assess project performance particularly in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency and to determine its actual and potential outcomes and impact, including their replicability and sustainability. The Evaluation has two primary purposes: i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and ii) to promote operational improvement learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and the main project partners. These include organisations and networks active in invasive species management in the Pacific e.g. Pacific Invasive Initiative, Pacific Invasive Learning Network, Island Conservation, Pacific Invasive Partnership members, Conservation International, Global Invasive Species Network, Global Invasive Species Programme, MAF Biosecurity New Zealand, Landcare Research, Department of Conservation NZ and the Pacific Community (SPC).

30. It is in this context that the evaluation has taken place in October/November 2016 and has focussed on assessing whether overall, the project has resulted in increased awareness of the impacts of invasive species, improved institutional and policy framework for managing invasives, strengthened government and stakeholder support and importantly, resulted in improved human capacity and technical capability to manage invasive species in the participating countries. The results of the project in terms of reducing the environmental, social and economic impacts of invasives and whether it has added value to other similar projects in the region also under evaluation.

1.2 Evaluation approach and methodology

31. The Evaluation was undertaken by an independent consultant with considerable experience working with regional organisations, governments and NGO's in all facets of biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management in the Pacific. Overall responsibility for and management of the Evaluation rests with the UNEP Evaluation Office and it was undertaken in consultation with the UNEP Task Manager. It should be noted that the UNEP Task Manager retired during the Evaluation but to his great credit, remained personally committed and was able to assist with advice on an "as required" basis.

32. The TE was carried out using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders were kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation process. Qualitative evaluation methods were primarily used to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. These included the development of a standard questionnaire and discussion which was used in a semi-structured way in face-to-face and Skype interviews and was designed to provide the evaluator with information from a cross section of project stakeholders on the key evaluation questions. In addition, the ToC diagram was used as a prompt for information during group discussions which were also guided by the questionnaire. To the extent possible information was triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources. In addition a quasi-quantitative evaluation of progress achieved, measured against outputs and activities, was undertaken in conjunction with the Project Manager and National Coordinators.

33. The TE was undertaken as a mix of desk reviews, in-depth interviews (face-to-face, by Skype or telephone, and by email) with SPREP staff, participating national government project coordinators and other relevant national staff that have been involved in the design, implementation and management of the Project, as well as selected national partner representatives and other international stakeholders, including technical experts who have participated in the Project. See Annex II Table 2 for a full list of persons consulted. An effort was made to re-interview some of the interviewees who took part in the MTR (interviewed in April - May 2014 to assess whether there have been significant changes in operational efficiency and execution of the Project since the MTR.

34. The findings of the evaluation were based on the following:

    - Relevant background documentation, inter alia,
    - The IAS Project Document including the Annual Work Plan and Budgets.
    - Minutes of the project design review meeting at approval;
    - Revisions to the project (GEFPAS IAS Project Revision Document 18 November 2015;
    - Project reports such as Quarterly Expenditure Reports, six monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports from some participating countries , project Register of Reporting 2016, Cash Overview - All Countries 2016, and Co-finance Report 2015;
    - Technical Committee and other meeting minutes relevant correspondence etc.;
    - Project Audit report(s);
    - Project outputs: (summary from project documents and MTR) documents) –NISSAP's NISC's established/supported, demonstration eradications of IAS, added value and other related projects,
    - MTR of the project;
    - Project documentation related to its activities, outputs and deliverables such as the Communication Strategy, media articles concerning the project, Project newsletter, information on the Project on the internet, and other communication products (see https://www.sprep.org/ias for many of the project's publications;
    - Relevant Project correspondence including confirmation of co-financing, and project approval documents;
    - Evaluations/reviews of other similar projects including the Integrated Island Biodiversity and Phoenix Islands Protected Area GEFPAS projects.
    - See also Annex III Bibliography for detailed list of additional reference documents.

35. During the course of the four country visits the consultant visually verified to the extent possible, written project outputs such as strategies, policy documents, awareness materials, activity and research reports and partnership agreements and cross checked these against project requirements. Further verification of completion of documentary outputs was sought through interviews with the SPREP staff and country project coordinators.

36. (b) Interviews (individual or in a group see Annex C) with:

    - UNEP Task Manager

- SPREP Project Manager and other project management and execution support staff at SPREP;
- Individuals that were involved in the project design and implementation;
- UNEP Fund Management Officers;
- A selection of the Project's stakeholders and participants;
- Representatives of other relevant stakeholder and donor organisations, with an interest in IAS in the Pacific.

37. To maximise the efficiency of the evaluation process the opportunity was taken to attend an important regional invasive alien species forum, the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN) meeting in Samoa in August 2016. This was attended by regional IAS practitioners including most of the project coordinators from the project's participating countries. This provided the opportunity to meet and interview national coordinators from three of the five countries not included in the field visit programme (Nuie, Marshall Islands and Vanuatu). The meeting provided opportunities to explain the Evaluation process, secure one on one and small group interviews with project participants and technical experts, as well as learn about the wide range of project and related IAS activities underway in the Pacific. All interviews were guided by a standard questionnaire which assisted in assessing overall response in terms of project efficiency.

38. Throughout the evaluation process the consultant was conscious of the potential for gender bias to affect the success and impact of the project, particularly in terms of the delivery of capacity strengthening services and support. To help ensure the evaluation addressed this issue, questions seeking information on women and youth group participation in project activities was asked of senior country project staff and observations on the number of women involved in various levels of project management were made.

(c) Field Visits.

39. The vast distances involved in travel between the small island countries of the Pacific coupled with the high costs of airfares, the irregularity of flights (some countries such as Kiribati have only two major flights a week), coupled with a limited TE budget, dictated that the evaluation would be restricted in the number of countries to be visited. Despite these constraints, the Evaluator undertook country visits to four of the nine participating countries (Samoa, Cook Islands, Kiribati and Tonga).

40. These four countries were chosen because the activities, outputs and outcomes which have been achieved represent a representative sample of the work undertaken by the project under each of the three operational Components. The Cook Islands demonstrated the engagement of community and NGO groups including youth and school groups in leading IAS work on the ground and eradication initiatives including the introduction of biocontrols. In Tonga, site visits were undertaken in August 2016 and these helped demonstrate the impact of IAS mammalian eradications on specific priority sites in Vava'u Province and on Nukua'lofa. These sites also demonstrated the project's linkages with the biological diversity survey work carried out under the GEFPAS Integrated Island Biodiversity project. Further, the Tonga visit provided the opportunity to engage with local stakeholders including NGO's and communities which have been crucial to project implementation. The visit to Kiribati was possible as it coincided with the evaluator's visit to undertake consultations on the related GEFPAS Phoenix Island Protected Area (PIPA) project Terminal Evaluation. This provided a unique opportunity to assess the coordination between the two projects and to discuss the outcomes of the IAS interventions, particularly in relation to biosecurity policy and improvements.

41. Finally, at the conclusion of each group interview and country visit, the Evaluator discussed his preliminary assessment of the results with the key individuals involved. For country visits this usually involved a meeting with members of the focal government agency. The Evaluator outlined the strengths and weaknesses of the project performance in the host country and invited comments. Often this process led to further information being forthcoming and allowed for deeper understanding of the local perceptions of the issues being discussed. The Reconstructed ToC was also presented to the PMU in SPREP and used to guide discussion and assessment of the likelihood of outcomes leading to impact. It proved a very useful tool for this purpose and stimulated enthusiastic debate amongst those present.

Table 3. Schedule of Country Visits

Country Visit	Dates	Sites / Meetings
Samoa	26 July- 4 August 2016	SPREP/ Mt Vaea/ PILN

		Meeting
Tonga	8 - 16 August 2016	Vava'u/ Nukualofa
Cook Islands	11 - 15 September 2016	Rarotonga / Takitimu CA
Kiribati	19 - 23 September 2016	Tarawa

See also Table 13 Annex III

42. A theory of change (ToC) of the project was reconstructed using the result statements identified in the project document, including the logical framework. The ToC was then applied to formulate evaluation questions and to evaluate the project, particularly in terms of achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact. Furthermore, to assess the project's likelihood of impact, the evaluation applied the Review of Outcomes it Impact (RoTI) method. The ToC does not include the two project managerial components 4 and 5, which are about project management and establishment of project monitoring frameworks. The components 4 and 5 are thus not discussed under sections 3.2 (Achievement of outputs) and 3.3 (Effectiveness), but are discussed under section 3.6.2 (Project implementation and management) and 3.6.8 (Monitoring and evaluation).

Main evaluation criteria and questions

43. In line with UNEP Evaluation policy and the UNEP Programme Manual, the Terminal Evaluation is undertaken at the completion of the project to assess project performance in term of its relevance (to GEF, UNEP and UN global and Pacific regional policies), effectiveness and efficiency, and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project including their sustainability and replicability.

44. An evaluation matrix presenting broad categories of areas to be addressed and key sample questions to be asked during the evaluation process, with sources of data and information and the methods by which these would be gathered, was compiled and approved during the TE's inception period (set out in an Inception Report (an internal document submitted to the UNEP EOU) produced in August 2016). These questions served as guides and were integral to the guiding questionnaire used in all interviews. It should be noted that due to time constraints only questions relevant to each stakeholder were asked.

45. Overall the TE sought to determine answers to these key questions: Has the Project:

- led to increased awareness of the impacts of invasive alien species;
- resulted in the development of new or improved systems for prioritisation, decision making and monitoring;
- led to increased support by government and key stakeholders to manage and reduce the effects of invasive species;
- increased institutional skills, linkages, networks and technical capacity for IAS management;
- resulted in the development of revised protocols, policies and procedure which support the effective management of IAS;
- resulted in (or led to future achievement of) reduced environmental impacts of invasive alien species in both marine and terrestrial habitats;
- added value to or complemented other GEF PAS projects in the Pacific.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

2.1 Context

46. Invasive Alien Species (IAS) have long been considered a serious threat to the biodiversity and ecological systems of the small island States of the Pacific Islands region. Pacific island ecosystems make up one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, with high numbers of endemic species that are particularly vulnerable to extinction due to their limited habitat and isolation. The maintenance of the ecosystem services of the islands is fundamental to their social and economic viability and with economies based on natural production, the impacts of introduced pests and weeds on the critically important sector of agriculture can be catastrophic (e.g. the spread of the taro beetle and creeping vines such as *Merremia peltata* across

the region). Indirect economic impacts can also arise if regional or international trade barriers preventing access to lucrative markets for island produce are imposed by countries without these pests.

47. The environmental vulnerabilities and the fragility of the biodiversity of small islands require specialised and urgent attention from their inhabitants and the world community. Populations of island fauna and flora tend to be naturally small, and species often become concentrated in small areas of habitat where they are subject to various natural and anthropogenic pressures that endanger their survival. Further, species that have evolved on islands have done so free from competition, without large numbers of other species and are, therefore, highly susceptible to invasions by alien species. As a result, islands including those of the Pacific have the highest proportion of recorded species extinctions and continue to be significantly threatened by invasive alien species, climate change and variability, natural and environmental disasters, land degradation and land based sources of marine pollution (UNEP 2005).

48. Despite knowledge of the ecological impacts and potential economic damage of uncontrolled IAS, governments in the Pacific region have in the past tended to place, at best, only moderate priority on IAS management and control. There remains a general lack of awareness of the risks and costs associated with their introduction and spread, from community to government level. Those involved in IAS management in Pacific countries are typically isolated in their efforts. There is often a lack of coordination between environmental and economic sectors, leading to missed opportunities for the management of invasive species and the deliberate introduction of new species which become invasive. New crops, biofuels, forestry species, ornamental species or biological control agents, introduced with limited or no research or consultation, can have enormous impacts on biodiversity as well as unforeseen impacts on production and livelihoods.

49. It is only in recent years that the seriousness of the economic, environmental, social and cultural impacts of IAS have begun to be recognised by the governments of the region, most notably in the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPS) which have been developed by all Pacific countries. All Pacific NBSAPs call for action on IAS but the ability of the countries to implement their plans has been severely constrained by insufficient financial resources, weak capacity, lack of technical expertise and experience and the low priority accorded IAS (and biodiversity conservation in general) in the face of pressing social and economic priorities such as health, education and infrastructure.

50. In recognition of the difficulties facing the Pacific countries to implement IAS solutions nationally, a number of regional initiatives have been developed in recent years to provide technical support and strengthen in-country IAS implementation capacity. These have arisen from the efforts of the Secretariat of Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and its regional partners including its sister regional organisation, the Pacific Community (SPC) and concerned non-profit conservation organisations like The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Birdlife International, WWF and Conservation International.

51. The regional IAS initiatives which have been established over the past decade include the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN), the Pacific Invasives Initiative (PII), the Pacific Invasive Partnership (PIP) and the Invasive Species Working Group of the Roundtable for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Islands. These institutional initiatives are linked through SPREP which as the regional mandate for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development, including IAS and plays an important coordination role.

52. In 2008, working with its Pacific government members, the SPC and the regional IAS partner network, SPREP completed the Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific – a Pacific Strategy for managing pests, weeds and other invasive species (Tye 2009) (hereafter the Guidelines) which constitutes the Pacific regional IAS strategic framework. The Guidelines identified nine main lines of action in three thematic areas, and provided a much needed framework for a comprehensive and integrated approach for the management of pests, weeds and other invasive species across the Pacific.

53. Produced at the specific request of the Pacific countries and territories that are members of the SPREP, the *Guidelines* were endorsed by all 22 Pacific island member countries and territories of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and SPREP, and by the 24 member organisations of the Pacific Invasives Partnership (PIP) at the 19th meeting of the SPREP Council in September 2008 and the meeting of SPC Heads of Agriculture and Forestry, that same month. The Guidelines became, and remain, the overriding regional strategy for IAS management. Given the strong endorsement of the regional governments, it was logical that the GEF-GPAS IAS project would be harmonised with the Guidelines to ensure it supported their implementation. The subsequent boost in funding and support for IAS activities in the 10 participating project countries provided by the IAS project was both timely and important in ensuring the

momentum generated by the region -wide endorsement of the Guidelines was maintained and a long term and sustainable regional foundation of IAS prevention, control and management was built.

2.2 Project Objectives and Components

2.2.1 Objectives

54. The project **Goal** (the Development Objective) is "To conserve ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity in the Pacific region". This broad aspirational Goal is supplemented and supported by the project **Objective** which is "To reduce the environmental, economic and human health impacts of invasive alien species in both terrestrial and marine habitats in the Pacific region".

2.2.2 Components

55. The project consist of five components, three of which can be described as core components which relate to the three major areas of work and nine thematic directions.

Component 1 Foundations: Generating Support

56. This component addresses the limited understanding of the threats posed by invasive species to the environment, economies, human health and cultural values of decision makers, the private sector and the general public. It aims to raise awareness across all sectors of society of the importance of invasive species risks and impacts, and of the benefits of invasive species management for biodiversity, the economy and human health, and actively support invasive species management. With raised awareness it is expected that sufficient resources will become available to enable all national and regional invasive species priorities to be addressed and most importantly, enable capacity building efforts to flourish and the development of supportive policy and legislation.

57. The three thematic directions addressed by Component 1 are:

- *Generating Support* — Raising awareness of the impacts of invasive species on biodiversity, the economy, human health and socio-cultural values, and generating support for action to manage and reduce them.
- *Building Capacity* — Developing the institutions, skills, infrastructure, technical support, information management, linkages, networks and exchanges required to manage invasive species effectively.
- *Legislation, Policy and Protocols* — Ensuring that appropriate legislation, protocols, policies and procedures are in place and operating, to underpin the effective management of invasive species.

Component 2 Problem Definition, Prioritization and Decision-making: Baseline & Monitoring

58. This component aims at addressing the chronic lack of information and data on IAS within the region which impacts on the ability of governments to define priorities, develop national strategies and establish supportive policies and legislation. It aims to ensure that information and data on invasive species, their distribution and status is readily available to support informed decision making, strategic planning and effective management. Importantly, the component also aims to address the potential bio-security and economic impacts of IAS through improved knowledge of trans-boundary movement and regional status of critical invasive species.

59. The three thematic directions addressed by this Component are:

- *Baseline & Monitoring* — Establishing a baseline of information on the status and distribution of invasive species and a programme for detecting change, including range changes and emerging impacts.
- *Prioritization* — Establishing effective systems for assessing risk and prioritising invasive species for management.
- *Research on priorities* — Understanding priority invasives, including species biology and impacts, and developing effective management techniques.

Component 3 Management Action (Pilot projects): Biosecurity — Preventing the spread of invasive species across international or internal borders.

60. This component addresses the practical requirements of preventing the trans-boundary movement of IAS in the region by encouraging the establishment of cost effective bio-security measures (e.g. rapid response protocols) aimed at reducing the need of costly post invasion control measures. It aims to assist the establishment of effective systems throughout the Pacific to regulate intentional introductions and to detect and manage unauthorised or accidental introductions across borders. The three thematic directions addressed by this Component are:

    - *Biosecurity* — Preventing the spread of invasive species across international or internal borders.
    - *Management of established invasives* — Reducing or eliminating the impacts of established invasive species, by eradication, containment, exclusion, or population reduction by physical, chemical or biological control.
    - *Restoration* — Restoring native biodiversity or ensuring recovery of other values, after invasive species management.

61. Each of the above three components dovetails directly with the priority thematic areas of the Guidelines which were developed as a result of an extensive regional stakeholder consultation process in 2007/2008. As such they reinforce the rationale and justification for the IAS project and its legitimacy in the eyes of the regional IAS stakeholders and their international partners and networks. Together, the three components also address the IAS management weaknesses identified in the Guidelines.

Components 4 (Project Management) and 5 (Monitoring and Evaluation)

62. These management related components establish SPREP as the designated project Executing Agency and support a Project Facilitator and half time Financial Manager for this purpose. SPREP co-finance covered the costs of the Project Manager. SPREP also had designated responsibility to ensure an effective Monitoring and Evaluation framework is established at inception. This role is consistent with SPREP's regional mandate and role to foster national and Pacific-wide strategies consistent with international best practices. SPREP is also able to engage the member organisations of the umbrella coordinating body the Pacific Invasives Partnership to further the goals of the project through provision of advice and the PIP member's own IAS management and capacity building interventions. The proposed activities will strengthen capacity by improving IAS outreach, policies, laws, prevention and management. The project should help participating countries and others in the Pacific region to address existing and future biological invasions. The project's logical framework (Components, Outcomes and Outputs) is presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Project Logical Framework

Components	Outcome(s)	Output(s)
1. Foundations – Generating Support	1.1The impact of invasive species on biodiversity, economies, livelihoods and health are widely understood and actions to manage and reduce them are supported.	1.1.1 Project activities maximize community involvement in planning, implementation and monitoring as appropriate. Cook Islands and Samoa will implement at least one primarily outreach focused project. 1.1.2 80% of management projects will implement outreach to ensure that the importance of IAS environmental, social and economic impacts is more widely understood.
	1.2 The institutions, skills, infrastructure, technical support, information management, networks and exchanges required to manage invasive species effectively are developed.	1.2.1National invasive Species Coordinators are appointed and multi-sectoral national invasive species committees are formed for seven participating countries and carryout regular meetings 2 or more times per year. 1.2.2 Seven participating countries update or write National Invasive Species Strategies and Action Plans to ensure a high quality & that they are harmonized with the regional Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific. 1.2.3 Training/capacity needs are identified and training programs for key invasives management issues are developed and implemented in Kiribati, Niue, PNG and Samoa.

	1.3 Appropriate legislation, policies, protocols and procedures are in place and operating, to underpin the effective management of invasive species.	1.2.4 National invasive species management facilities and equipment are reviewed, and development plans produced, facilities improved in Niue and Kiribati. 1.2.5 Niue contributes to the improvement of and/or learn to use national and regional identification, management and information tools for invasives e.g. PESTLIST, GISIN, GISD. 1.2.6 Kiribati uses regional invasives services to strengthen its capacity for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating its invasive species activities. 1.3.1 Invasive species legislation, regulations or protocols are consolidated, harmonized and rationalized to improve IAS management effectiveness in at least four countries.
2. Problem Definition, Prioritization and Decision-making	2.1 Systems are in place to generate baseline information on the status and distribution of invasive species, detect changes, including range changes and emerging impacts. 2.2 Effective systems are established and implemented to assess risk and prioritise invasive species for management. 2.3 Research is completed for priority invasives, including species biology and impacts, and development effective control techniques.	2.1.1Surveys or monitoring systems are implemented in 5 countries to document the status and/or impact of invasives and native biodiversity in marine and terrestrial sites (including protected areas), include in local or regional databases. All countries will implement monitoring as part of management under component. 2.2.1 Establish risk assessment systems for Niue. 2.3.1 Investigate the biology, ecology and control methods of priority invasives in order to support effective management in Samoa and Vanuatu as detailed in the deliverables.
3. Management Action (Pilot projects)	3.1 Mechanisms are established to prevent the spread of invasive species across international or internal borders and quickly detect and respond to those that arrive. 3.2 The impacts of established invasive species are reduced or eliminated by eradication, biological control, containment or physical chemical control. 3.3. Following invasive species management the best methods are determined and implemented to facilitate effective restoration of native biodiversity or recovery of other values.	3.1.1 Inspection and treatment procedures are improved to ensure that invasives are not transferred from one country to another or between islands of the same country. 3.1.2. Early detection and rapid response (EDRR) procedures are established for priority potential invaders (e.g. snakes, ants, mongoose, plants etc.) for the 5 countries identified in Appendix 6 of the Project document. 3. 2.1 Best practices are determined and implemented for invasive species management of priority species and sites identified in Appendix 6 of the Project Document. 3.2.2 Priority invasive species are eradicated (completely removed) from islands where feasible (7 projects in 5 countries identified in Appendix 6 of the Project Document). 3.2.3 Bio-control agents are developed and released for appropriate target invasives for targets in 3 or more countries. 3.2.4 Invasive species are contained within limited areas or controlled at high biodiversity sites (two sites identified apriori) but more may be identified in the course of the project. See link with 3.3.1. 3.3.1 Restore two forest sites and biodiversity in Samoa after invasive species management is carried out.
4. Project Management	4.1 Effective project management and coordination, monitoring and	4.1.1 Project deliverables produced 90% on time and 100% reporting and monitoring and evaluation requirements

	evaluation systems in place for the GEFPAS project	met.
5. Monitoring and Evaluation	5.1 Project integrity and accounting for deliverables is maintained.	5.1.1 UNEP standards of transparency accountability and success metrics are objectively assessed for all participating countries.

2.3 Target areas/groups

63. The IAS project is a complex, multi-country (9) project which delivers multiple and diverse activities according to the priorities identified by the participating countries. A particular and important target of the project was building national awareness and capacity in IAS management through improved public awareness, national policy and human and institutional capacity. As such, the project targeted both the development and improvement of IAS awareness and policy frameworks in all countries and importantly, capacity strengthening in IAS project management and coordination. The former through the development and updating of NISSAPs and biosecurity laws and regulations and the latter through the training and mentoring of the in-country project coordinators who were linked to the national environmental management agencies, together with staff from agencies with responsibilities for biosecurity management such as quarantine divisions of Primary industry and Agriculture ministries.

64. Project activities in most countries directly targeted the need to manage invasive plant species, rodents and in several cases, bird species. Forest restorations following invasive weed eradications were a feature of projects in Samoa as at Mt Vaea in Samoa and Tonga. Mammalian invasive species (rat eradications) were undertaken to protect vulnerable bird populations (Tonga, and the Cook Islands) and in others invasive species impacting on human well-being such as the little fire ants in Vanuatu, feral pigs in Niue and sand flies in the Cook Islands were targeted. In the course of implementing these activities, the project engaged with a diverse range of stakeholder groups within each of the countries. These often involved the participation of civil society groups including local environment NGO's, school and youth groups and village communities, depending on the nature of the project and country involved (Annex IX).

2.4 Milestones in Project Design and Implementation

65. Table 5 below presents the milestones and key dates in project design and implementation:

Table 5: Milestones and key dates in project design and implementation

Milestones	Completion dates
Project Identification Form (PIF) developed under GEF4 (note this was for an original project budget of approximately US$ 15 million rather than the US$7 million finally approved)	21 January 2008
Project Preparation Grant (PPG) developed under GEF4	July 2008
PPG and PIF re-submitted for approval	17 October 2008
PIF Approved	6 November 2008
PPG commenced Nov 2008 and effort made to harmonise project outputs with newly endorsed Regional IAS Guidelines	June 2009
GEFSEC Review of ProDoc completed	October 2010
Request for CEO Endorsement/ Approval	01 December 2010
GEF CEO Approval (as per PCA)	21 March 2011
UNEP PAG Approval (as per PCA)	6 July 2011
Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between UNEP and SPREP signed	22 August 2011
Date of first project disbursement	12 September 2011
Project commencement date (delays due to difficulties hiring project staff)	April 2012

Mid Term Review completed	July 2014
Project completion	30 September 2016
Terminal Evaluation Completed	December 2016

2.5 Implementation Arrangements and Project Partners

66. As the implementation agency, UNEP was responsible for ensuring that GEF policies and criteria were adhered to and that the project met its objectives and achieved expected outcomes in an efficient and effective manner. The UNEP project Task Manager was based in the UNEP Pacific Regional Office in Apia, Samoa and was responsible for project supervision on behalf of the GEF Executive Coordinator - Director, Division of Global Environment Facility Coordination, UNEP[1]. UNEP was expected to ensure timelines, quality and fiduciary standards in project delivery were met at all times.

67. The Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) was designated the Executing Agency for the project under the terms of a Project Cooperation Agreement between UNEP and SPREP signed on 22 August 2011. The choice of SPREP as the Executing Agency was endorsed by the original 10 participating countries, all of which are SPREP member countries. SPREP also has the Pacific regional mandate for biodiversity conservation including the development of regional strategies and approaches for the prevention, control and management of invasive alien species and the implementation of the *Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific – a Pacific Strategy for managing pest, weeds and other invasive species (Tye 2009).* SPREP designated its overall project management role to a permanent staff member as Project Manager assisted by a Project Facilitator whose role was to facilitate project implementation across the nine participating countries and provide support to the national Project Coordinators and a Financial Officer. These SPREP staff together with the UNEP Task Manager formed the core of the Project Support Unit. The shared interest and commitment to invasive species management of the TM and PM together with the close proximity of their offices ensured high level cooperation and coordination between the IA and EA on project oversight and implementation.

68. Project implementation was undertaken in the participating countries through the appointment of National Project Coordinators who were responsible to the EA Project Manager and their own head of agency for all project activities in their country. National Project Coordinators were well positioned to benefit professionally from the support they received from the EA and through their involvement with external IAS professionals engaged to assist with in-country project implementation. Most National Coordinators had other responsibilities delegated by the lead government agency although those in Tonga, Niue, Vanuatu and Samoa were dedicated solely to the project. It is noticeable that those participating countries which were able to dedicate a National Coordinator and maintain that person in their position from the commencement to the conclusion of the project , demonstrated the most effective results and efficient delivery of outputs and outcomes e.g. Tonga, Niue, Samoa and the Cook Islands.

69. The IAS project demonstrated that the achievement of effective project outcomes is strongly influenced by the personal qualities (motivation, commitment), qualifications and experience of the national project coordinators. This is especially so in multi-year projects where having the same coordinator engaged throughout the project ensures continuity of effort, commitment to results, and the accumulation of institutional knowledge. Therefore, the selection of the best candidates as National Coordinators must be a priority for both the IA and EA working in close collaboration with the lead national government agency.

70. The choice of SPREP as the project Executing Agency was also logical in that SPREP has in-house technical capability in invasive species management which it was able to apply in support of project implementation and which became an important contributing factor to the eventual successful outcomes of the project. Further, through its regional mandate and role in invasive alien species management, SPREP is responsible for convening meetings and helping support key regional partners like the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN) and the Invasive Species Working Group of the Pacific Island Round Table for Nature Conservation. SPREP invasive species staff also have access to personal networks of invasive species professionals with expertise in working in the Pacific. As the project gathered momentum, these individuals played an important role supporting project implementation in the participating countries.

[1] Note that as of 2013, this was under the Division of Ecosystem Policy Implementation (DEPI) now renamed the Ecosystem Division.

71. The project Implementation arrangements also provided for the establishment of a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) comprising 5 - 7 technical experts and additional stakeholders as needed. The TAG was meant to provide an external perspective to help the PSU evaluate progress, identify project implementation issues and recommend solutions, and assist with project reviews. In reality the TAG was not formally constituted, did not meet as was originally anticipated (5 - 10 working days per year) and did not formally engage in review processes. This was primarily due to the lack of budgeted funds to support the TAG operations and other regional technical assistance services. However the role of the TAG was partially met through the expertise represented within the PSU which included the UNEP Task Manager and the SPREP Project Manager. As noted above, these individuals were both IAS management experts by profession and together with the skills and knowledge available within SPREP, and ad hoc access to other experts where needed, were able to provide the required technical guidance for the project.

72. The PSU also called on the advice of the regional Pacific Invasive Partnership (PIP) which is the umbrella regional coordinating body for agencies working on invasive in more than one country of the Pacific. The PIP was considered a suitable surrogate for the TAG and the project reported to its annual meeting and consulted members on an as required basis. Working partnerships with existing professional and thematic organisations or agencies such as the PIP (which also acts as the Invasive Species Working Group of the Round Table for Nature Conservation in the Pacific) was a cost effective means of strengthening project advisory and technical services while at the same time promoting broader regional "ownership" of the project and its objectives through a participatory and inclusive working relationship with numerous regional stakeholders.

2.6 Project Financing

73. When first formulated in 2008, the PIF was based on an anticipated project funding of US$15 million including co-financing and in kind commitments from the 10 eligible countries. However, following review of the original PIF and the introduction of the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (GEFPAS) concept under GEF4 and the associated Regional Allocation Framework (RAF), the actual project budget was scaled down to US$ 7,010,890. This was much less than originally expected and required a reassessment of the expectations of the 10 eligible countries that GEF would be contributing significantly more to the project than was the case. The GEF funds finally approved were US$ 3,031,818 (43.2% of total project funds together with anticipated co-financing of US$1,090,000 (15.5%) and in-kind commitments of US$ 2,889,072 (41.2%). Mid-way through the project a significant management decision was taken to re-programme funds originally allocated for activities in Papua New Guinea (US$ 324,040) following consultations and agreement from that country. The funds were transferred to support additional capacity building and project activities, particularly the provision of regional support to these focal areas through improved networking, multi-country training and additional eradication and biosecurity activities.

Table 6: Project budget summary

Particulars	Amount (USD)	
Cost to GEF	3,031,818	43.2%
Counterpart Cash Contribution		
FSM	120,000	1.7%
SPREP	970,000	13.8%
	1,090,000	15.5%
Counterpart In- kind Co-financing		
Cook Islands	337,472	4.8%
FSM	5,120	0.1%
Kiribati	360,525	5.1%
Niue	350,000	5.0%
Palau	117,000	1.7%
Papua New Guinea	416,000	5.9%
Marshall Islands	86,000	1.2%
Samoa	400,000	5.7%
Tonga	337,000	4.8%
Vanuatu	360,000	5.1%
SPREP	120,000	1.7%

	2,889,072	41.2%
Total Cost of the Project	7,010,890	

2.7 Changes in design during implementation

74. As is evident in 2.4 above the IAS project design process was lengthy and punctuated by changes to policy and anticipated budgeted funds. The original PIF formulated in 2008 was based on the anticipated US$15 million budget. It incorporated a broad, all-encompassing regional approach to support strengthened IAS management in which the 10 eligible countries would all be supported to a similar extent and significant funding would be available for regional coordination and technical support activities. However, two events conspired to significantly affect the design process. Firstly, the decrease in the anticipated funding had a significant impact on the scope of the project, with the scope of activities and some outputs identified in the PIF being considered too ambitious at the national level for the available funding. This led to the caveat that only incremental progress would be possible in some countries on some of the anticipated outputs and outcomes and not all countries would benefit from the project equally. The result led to the ProDoc outputs/outcomes originally identified in the PIF being modified so that: not all countries would:

    - be expected to conduct surveys at a national level to document IAS
    - be expected to improve cost recovery mechanisms
    - have workable and effective biosecurity systems in place for priority species
    - have operating social marketing/communication strategies in place.

75. Secondly, before the PIF was finalised a regional invasive species strategy *the Guidelines for invasive species management in the Pacific (Tye 2009)* was published and endorsed by the SPREP member countries. This was intended to be an output of the project under the original PIF as it provided a comprehensive and integrated approach to management of invasive species across the region but was finalised independently of the project.

76. These two events required a revision of the PIF and the project logical framework to ensure harmonisation with the Guidelines and to realign activities and outputs to those selected by countries to address specific priorities and national gaps in IAS management. The project re-design process resulted in a large number of specific national activities being included by the participating countries which were unrealistic for the relatively small size of the budgets and the capacity limitations of national implementation. This lack of realistic assessment of in-country capacity (staff, skills, experience, knowledge) should have been more rigorously addressed in the project formulation/design stage and more forceful efforts made to strike a better balance between projects, budget and capacity. It should be noted that contributing to this issue was the strong desire of the participating countries to ensure national project budgets and activities unique to their countries were "locked in" during project design. This was despite the advice of the project designers that collective project-wide activities tackling common IAS themes would be more efficient because the sub projects could have been managed more effectively by the EA. This became a focus of the MTR which formulated a number of recommendations aimed at rationalising the country project activities and improving the chances of successful project implementation.

77. Compounding this issue was a reported reluctance by the participating countries to see GEFPAS (GEF4) funding which was allocated nationally under the RAF process, made available to support critical regional coordination, management and technical support, and capacity strengthening programmes. The lack of adequate project budget for these activities hampered the effective implementation of the project in the initial period leading up to the Mid Term Review (MTR). However, in the most significant design change during implementation, this situation was addressed through a decision taken in consultation with Papua New Guinea to reallocate the PNG funding in support of regionally funded technical assistance and capacity building in the other countries. This recommendation was based on PNG's lack of readiness for the project and in recognition of the potential benefits from reallocating those funds to better support the well performing countries. The outcome was improved regional coordination and delivery of capacity building activities through learning and training exchanges, improved support for regional IAS networks especially PILN for which the project was able to provide support for in the form of a large regional meeting in August 2016, and increased provision of technical support for project activities and associated learning opportunities for local stakeholders.

78. Other changes which reflected the strong adaptive management approach adopted by the PSU included the decision to directly fund project activities in RMI and FSM when it became apparent that the payment

of service providers and provision project equipment and supplies could be effected more efficiently through the EA.

2.8 Reconstructed Theory of Change of the Project

79. Progress made towards achievement of project objectives and impacts is examined using a Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) analysis developed by the GEF. This methodology has three distinct stages: (i) identifying the project's intended impacts, (ii) review of the project's logical framework and (iii) analysis and modelling of the project's outcomes-impact pathways.

80. Stage 1 - Referring to the "objectives" statement in the project document, the ultimate impact of the project is to reduce the environmental, economic and human health impacts arising from invasive alien species infestations in the vulnerable terrestrial and marine habitats across the Pacific. The project aims to achieve this state by helping the participating Pacific countries to establish a sound institutional foundation (policy, capacity and community and stakeholder awareness), improve the information management systems needed to help prioritise invasive species action and to build practical IAS prevention, control and management experience and capability.

81. Stage 2 – The broader outcomes of the project can be defined from the logical framework and can be verified by assessing the progress made by the participating governments in establishing, operationalising and sustaining the foundational IAS institutional elements established with project support (national IAS action strategies, national coordinating committees, public awareness programmes) and their ability to prioritise and undertake new invasive species projects independent of external assistance. Further, monitoring government commitment to ongoing IAS management through the inclusion of IAS components in future donor funding proposals as well as through core budget funding allocations, will indicate progress towards the achievement of the project's desired impact.

82. Stage 3- The assessment of the theory of change led to the identification of the impact pathways and specification of the impact drivers and assumptions, as summarized below:

83. In the application of ToC, analysing the progress/causal pathway from activities to impacts also requires identification of external factors which will influence the change process. These include "assumptions" (external circumstances which can influence results and are presumed to be present), and "drivers" (external factors which can be influenced to enhance the project outcomes). The Reconstructed ToC is depicted in diagrammatic form (see Figure 2 below) and accompanied by a narrative. It has particular value in an evaluation as it helps with the assessment of many if not all the evaluation criteria and as a discussion guide for interviews, particularly group interviews with project management.

2.9 IAS Theory of Change

84. The IAS project document does not include a ToC as it appears this was not a UNEP requirement for GEF 4 derived interventions. However, the ProDoc has a well-developed Results (Logical) Framework which provides information on anticipated outputs and outcomes including mid-term and end of project targets which have guided the rationale behind project design. Re-constructing the ToC from the information in the ProDoc proved challenging given the regional scope of the project, the number of participating countries (originally ten but eventually nine) and the design methodology which resulted in five components and a considerable number and variety of activities and anticipated outputs and outcomes. Further, the descriptions of outputs and outcomes did not always harmonise with the definitions used in the UNEP evaluation process and adhered by the OECD DAC terminology for evaluation and results based management. There was also both replication and duplication across the stated outputs requiring editing and some extrapolation of the causal pathway to arrive at a reasonable definition of key project outcomes. The resulting reconstructed ToC was used to guide interviews and group discussions and which in turn may be further modified as additional information is forthcoming. Table (ii) below describes the way in which ProDoc Outcomes have been consolidated.

85. As noted in 2.6 above, significant reduction in originally anticipated project funding (from circa US$15 million to US$7 million) led to a project design revision which meant that not all countries would participate in, or benefit from the planned project activities and outputs. Subsequently, at the PPG stage participating countries identified their priorities within the project's broad component framework, with some forgoing engagement in some areas due to financial resource limitations. Priorities to be addressed

by the project would depend on national gaps in IAS management and funding and perceptions of their relative importance. Thus, while it was expected that the project would achieve important progress on outcomes at the regional level, it is also implicitly recognised that progress at the national level would be uneven across the countries and incremental as not all participating countries would be able to achieve key outputs.

86. The key assumption underlying the project rationale is that despite these realignments, the array of project activities will produce outputs/outcomes still sufficient to influence the institutional, policy and human capacity foundations for on-going IAS management in the participating countries. This, in turn, would provide the momentum (awareness, knowledge, capacity, skills and experience) needed to ensure that IAS management across the region continues to improve and leads to sustained progress towards the broad **Goal "**to conserve ecosystems, species and genetic diversity in the Pacific region" and the primary **Development Objective** "to reduce the environmental, economic, and human health impacts of invasive alien species in both terrestrial and marine habitats in the Pacific region".

87. Both the project goal and objective can perhaps be described as aspirational in a region as vast as the Pacific with its multitude of small islands and associated marine and terrestrial ecosystem and habitats, diversity of cultures, and variety of government and socio-economic conditions. In this context, the project aspires to achieving incremental progress towards the goal and objective by stimulating national governments to focus on IAS and by establishing systems which support IAS management and control in the selected countries. At the regional level, it is expected the project will contribute through continued support of national initiatives and the establishment of regional biosecurity measures, undertaking research and control of priority ubiquitous species, coordinating IAS partnerships and managing data and information including monitoring systems.

2.9.1 Immediate and Medium Term Outcomes

88. To achieve the goal and project objective the project design identifies five Components, three of which are action and outcome focused; 1. Building foundations, 2. Problem definition, prioritisation and decision-making and 3. Management Action and two, (Components 4, Project Management and Coordination and 5, Evaluation and Monitoring) are project management "enablers".

89. **Components 1, 2 and 3** are at the heart of the project's aim to build the foundation and capacity for improved IAS management in the Pacific region. The project design process has assessed the weaknesses in the overall IAS management approaches in the region at national and regional levels and has focussed on supporting key interventions progressing from generating awareness and support, building institutional capacity and improving policies and laws (Component 1), through generating baseline information, prioritizing IAS action, carrying out risk assessments, and doing basic research (Component 2) to a range of "hands on" IAS prevention (biosecurity) , management, eradication and restoration related projects (Component 3).

90. **Component 1** recognises that significant progress with IAS management will be best achieved through addressing foundational weaknesses in a holistic way with the cumulative results leading to incremental progress in both the participating countries and across the region. The project design recognises the importance of public/community support for IAS management. A significant amount of the project resources (37%) are directed at activities aimed at improving general public and community awareness and understanding of the seriousness of the IAS issue, including ensuring decision makers and government agencies are aware of their roles and responsibilities in dealing with this ubiquitous problem.

91. The underlying **assumption** behind the foundation building outcomes supported by activities in Component 1 is that informed, engaged communities (and government agencies) will be more inclined to support and engage in IAS management activities including eradication and control. This is particularly important in the Pacific context where traditional ownership and control of land and coastal marine resources is vested in communities and access rights are rigorously enforced. It also recognises that in the small island environments of the Pacific, communities are still reliant on healthy marine and terrestrial ecosystems for their often semi-subsistence livelihoods and are the most likely social groups to be impacted by IAS and equally, the most likely to benefit from effective management and control. As an observer of the evolution of environmental management in the Pacific over 3 decades, the Evaluator has noted significant and positive changes in the social and political awareness of the importance of healthy environments, ecosystem integrity and biodiversity conservation which lends weight to the veracity of this assumption.

92. The focus of Component 1 on strengthening foundations also seeks to improve the national institutional mechanisms and capacity for IAS management by addressing the need to develop improved institutional structures, skills, information management, networks and exchanges and access to technical support. The project's main focus in this respect is to help establish national IAS Coordination Committees and Coordinator positions. This is based on the **assumption** that without dedicated internal advocates for IAS reforms and coordinating mechanisms to ensure a cooperative interagency response to IAS issues, project investments will only ever achieve ad hoc outputs which will have no lasting impact. It is assumed that in the long term, building national IAS focused institutional structures (and human capacity) will assist with mainstreaming IAS through the development of IAS strategies and policy input, and the more effective mobilisation of national and regional resources in support of national IAS management.

93. Fundamental to the strengthening of national IAS capacity and the foundations of effective IAS management is the project's support for the development of national policy, legislation and or regulations which is harmonised with the regional level frameworks such as the Pacific IAS Guidelines. The project correctly assumes that improved laws and enforcement capacity, especially relating to biosecurity, will lessen the risk of new introductions and the establishment and spread of IAS. However, this is based on the **assumption** that governments will be sufficiently committed to support and invest in strengthening IAS management structures and human capacity and willing to pass legislation to this effect. This is not a given as governments have many competing priorities for limited revenue. So in this regard, political perceptions of community concern over ecosystem degradation, the loss of iconic species and the impact of IAS on incomes and natural resources critical to subsistence, will be necessary to encourage government investment in IAS management. This will be helped by evidence of positive results from IAS activities, especially where these are undertaken in partnership with communities and the public.

94. Taken together, the planned activities, outputs and outcomes under Component 1 (See Table 4) seek to achieve an **intermediate state** whereby the importance of managing IAS for improving biodiversity and supporting sustainable development in the Pacific is widely understood and recognised by governments, communities and the private sector and is being addressed through strengthened capacity and the mainstreaming of IAS including the implementation of IAS policy, strategies and legislation.

95. **Component 2** of the project addresses the need for greater knowledge of the status of IAS in the participating countries to help identify the scope of the problem and prioritise management action where the risk posed by IAS is greatest. The rationale behind this component is that improved knowledge, data, the use of IAS risk analysis and the results of targeted research will provide a knowledge base that can be utilised to make informed management decisions leading to cost efficient and effective control and management of priority IAS species. It also **assumes** that the project would be successful in sourcing the additional external financial, technical and scientific resources needed to support these highly technical interventions and to mentor local IAS staff. In this regard, the project was successful in tapping into the expertise of the regional IAS partner organisations and professional networks of the TM and PM to secure IAS expertise with Pacific and small island experience.

96. It has long been known that information on the true scale of the invasive alien species problem and associated impacts in the Pacific is not well understood either at the national or regional level, making decisions on appropriate priorities and targeted investment in management action difficult. Component 2 aims to address this deficiency by supporting investment in surveys and monitoring systems in five selected countries. This is aimed at generating baseline information on status and distribution of IAS and providing the data to detect changes over time through monitoring systems. By feeding the information generated at the national level into regional and international IAS data bases, national IAS management agencies will be contributing to an improved understanding of the regional IAS problem.

97. Coupled with the generation of national level IAS information and data, the project aims to trial the use of risk assessment methodology in at least one country (Niue). This **assumes** that a successful example which demonstrates how a biosecurity risk model which focuses on high risk IAS can be developed may also be replicable in other countries. This may be possible but would need to recognise that each Pacific island country has unique environmental qualities, issues and needs and different government structures. External expertise and assistance will inevitably also be required to assist with developing Pacific centric species risk data bases and training national staff in accessing and analysing the information. In a similar vein the project identifies the need for targeted research on high priority invasive species of high regional priority e.g. African Tulip, Fire Ants, *Miconia clavescens*, in order to develop and refine replicable control methods, especially biological controls.

98. Component 2 outputs and outcomes (see Table 4.) entail a coordinated regional/national approach as the capacity to undertake surveys, build information and data bases, undertake risk assessments and carry out the research to the level needed to identify appropriate control measures, does not exist within the participating countries. The long term impact of these activities will be highly dependent on the availability of externally sourced scientific, technical and financial expertise and resources.

99. To a large degree this component of the project has been driven not so much by the participating countries but by the regional institutions and organisations which form the IAS management community in the Pacific. These include the SPREP, PII, PILN and supportive organisations such as the New Zealand Department of Conservation and Landcare Research and NGO's such as The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Conservation International. The interest and concern of these regional organisations in combating the impact of invasive species, primarily on biodiversity and ecosystems, is reflected in their commitment to supporting IAS management initiatives in the region and in helping drive community awareness and recognition of the seriousness of IAS impacts on island environments.

100. **Component 3** of the project is focused on the project outcomes and outputs aimed at establishing pragmatic and realistic IAS biosecurity response mechanisms appropriate for small islands, utilising and demonstrating best practices for reducing or eliminating the impacts of established IAS through pilot projects involving physical, chemical or biological control, and restoring or assisting the recovery of biodiversity following IAS management initiatives. In theory, the successful outcomes of this component represent tangible and immediate impact in terms of the project Objective "To reduce the environmental, economic, and human health impacts of invasive alien species in both terrestrial and marine habitats in the Pacific region". Under the project, eradication feasibility studies and eradications on selected populations of known IAS were undertaken in the Cook Islands, Tonga, Niue and Vanuatu. In addition, Samoa addressed forest restoration through IAS management in a protected area on Upolu Island.

101. Achieving the outputs and outcomes of Component 3 depends largely on the extent that project management is able to coordinate and harness the combination of funding and specialist skills needed to work with the participating countries to develop and implement bio-control projects, and to guide effective site based restoration interventions. Another influencing factor is the extent to which these quite complex and technical activities can be accomplished in the relatively narrow timeframe of a four to five year project. Experience with project implementation in the Pacific has shown repeatedly that in-country capacity and over-ambitious goals are major constraints limiting the successful implementation of all large development projects. Despite the fact that the IAS project was scaled back from its ambitious original design, the challenges of capacity, communication and logistics have and will have significant impact on the achievement of project outcomes and intermediate and long term impact.

2.9.2 Intermediate States and Impact

102. The reconstructed ToC anticipates the project will lead to the generation of two **interrelated intermediate states** which when will each contribute as "parts of the whole" to the overall project goal and objective, assuming the momentum created by the project can be sustained and strengthened over time. The project activities, outputs and outcomes arising from Component 1 (Foundation building) are anticipated to give rise to an **intermediate state** in which "IAS strategies, regulations and capacity for improving biodiversity conservation and supporting sustainable development in the Pacific is being mainstreamed by an increasing number of Pacific governments". The key elements for determining the success of the project in this regard are the degree of public, government and external stakeholder support which has been generated, the success of efforts to establish the national coordination mechanisms, and the degree by which IAS management has been "mainstreamed" into public policy and government decision making.

103. Similarly, the outcomes of Components 2 and 3 are aimed at generating an **Intermediate state** in which "improved information systems, research and monitoring of status of IAS together with bio security measures, management action and site restoration is resulting in the effective management of national IAS priorities and development of regional responses to Pacific wide IAS priorities". Achieving this state assumes that despite social and economic issues such as health, education and jobs being their highest priority, Pacific governments will still commit to supporting and mainstreaming IAS management and placing priority on seeking additional funding from international donors to help sustain national IAS efforts. It will also require ongoing improvement of national IAS capacity and capability in bio-security measures and IAS eradication and control best practices, including site restoration, and demonstrated results in terms of the reduction of priority IAS populations, improvements to island biodiversity and reduction of threats to health and risks to important economic sectors such as agriculture. Regional and international

agencies like SPREP and UNEP have a critical role in assisting the countries to identify and access potential funding sources. SPREP and its regional IAS partners (PII, PILN and research institutions and scientists with experience in the Pacific) also need to prioritise technical support to the countries to ensure the limited resources available for IAS management are carefully targeted to the highest priorities. In this regard building and strengthening effective regional IAS networks and partnerships capable of delivering capacity building support and technical assistance will be essential.

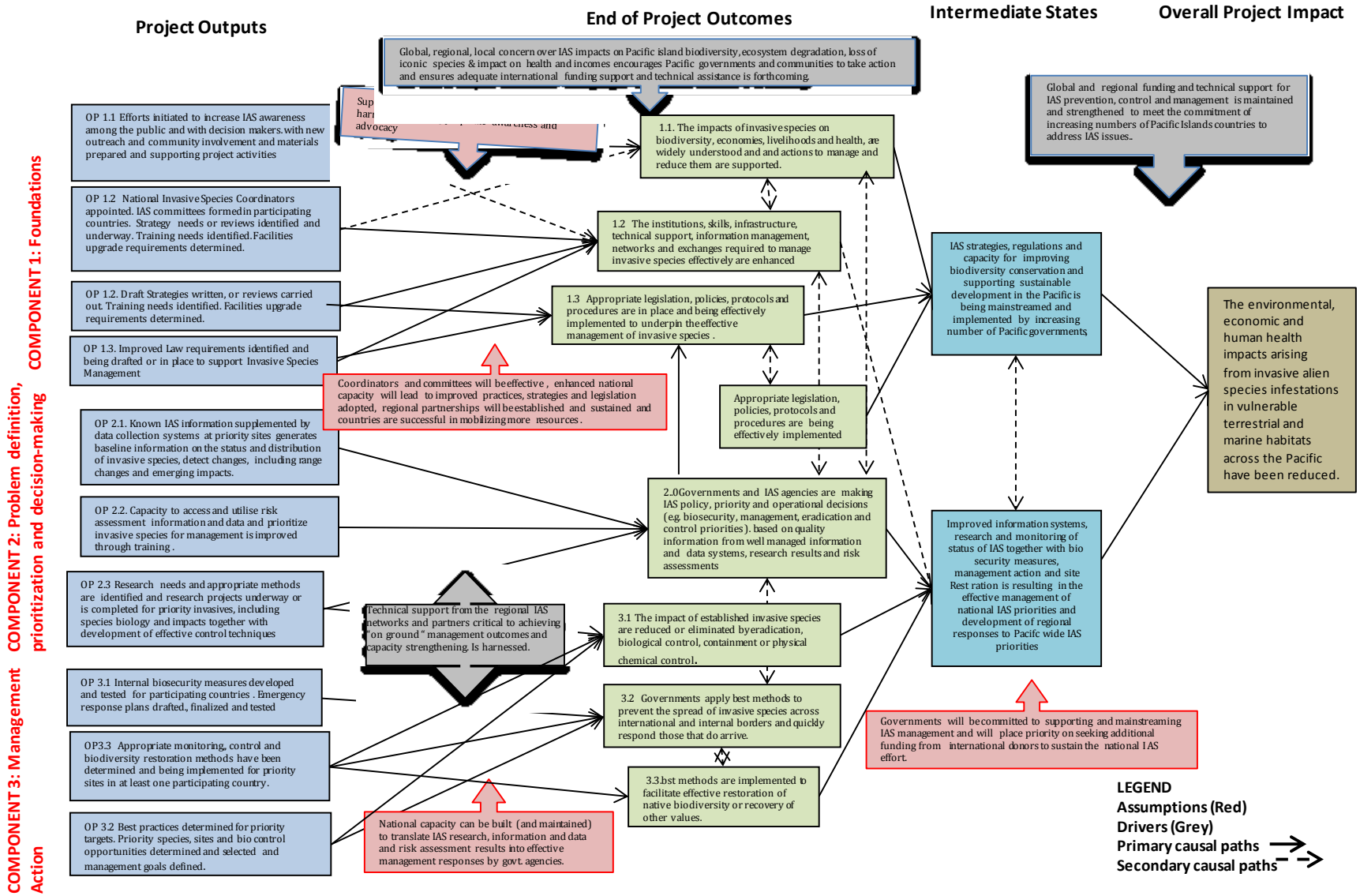
104. Moving from these states towards the scale of impact required by the project Goal and Development Objective which can be summarised for purposes of the Reconstructed ToC as "**the environmental, economic and human health impacts arising from invasive alien species infestations in vulnerable terrestrial and marine habitats across the Pacific have been reduced"** will require the a long term strategy for securing funding and sustaining and strengthening IAS capacity development and technical assistance across the region, ideally expanding the scope of the project to embrace the non-participating countries and strengthening regional technical assistance and learning networks. Governments will need to commit to supporting and mainstreaming IAS management, place priority on seeking additional funding from international donors to sustain the national IAS effort and both maintain and build on the IAS management foundations established under this project. Public IAS awareness and engagement will need to be further strengthened and coupled with stronger government understanding of the environmental, economic and social impacts of IAS.

105. A **key driver** for achieving long term impact in a region comprising many Small Island Developing States and heavily dependent on international donor funding, will be the maintenance and strengthening of global and regional funding and technical support for IAS prevention, control and management in order to meet the commitment of increasing numbers of Pacific Islands countries to address IAS issues. This in turn relies on continuing global and regional concern at the loss of Pacific biodiversity through the impact of IAS tempered by an encouraging perception that the countries are committed to taking action and investing in IAS management. Further this will need to be reflected in an ongoing international commitment by global and regional organisations and the Pacific IAS stakeholder community (including the private sector), to building national IAS capacity and the implementation of the regional Guidelines, especially establishing structures and systems to enhance bio-security, manage information and data to achieve integrated IAS management at the regional level.

Table 7. Reformulation of Project Document Outcomes for reconstructed ToC

	Original ProDoc Outcome	Reformulated End of Project Outcome (ToC)	
		Lower	**Higher**
Component 1 Building Foundations	OC 1.1 The impacts of invasive species on biodiversity, economies, livelihoods and health are widely understood and actions to manage and reduce them are supported.	The impacts of invasive species on biodiversity, economies, livelihoods and health are widely understood and actions to manage and reduce them are supported.	
	OC 1.2 The institutions, skills, infrastructure, technical support, information management, networks and exchanges required to manage invasive species effectively are developed.	The institutions, skills, infrastructure, technical support, information management, networks and exchanges required to manage invasive species effectively are enhanced.	
	OC 1.3 Appropriate legislation, policies, protocols, and procedures are in place and operating to underpin the effective management of invasive species.	Appropriate legislation, policies, protocols, and procedures are in place to underpin the effective management of invasive species.	Appropriate legislation, policies, protocols, and procedures are being implemented to underpin the effective management of invasive species
Component 2. Problem Definition, Decision Making	OC 2.1 Systems are in place to generate baseline information on the status and distribution of invasive species, detect changes, including range changes and emerging impacts.		Since the outcomes as defined in the project document are rather outputs (deliverables and services provided by the project), the outcome resulting from these outputs is formulated as: Governments and IAS agencies are making IAS policy, priority and operational decisions (e.g. biosecurity, management, eradication and control priorities) based on quality information from well managed information and data systems, research results and risk assessments
	OC 2.2 Effective systems are established and implemented to assess risk and prioritize invasive species for management.		
	OC 2.3 Research is completed for biology and impacts and development of priority invasives, including species effective control techniques.		
Component 3. Management Action	OC 3.1 Mechanisms are established to prevent the spread of invasive species across international and internal borders and quickly detect and respond to those that do arrive.	Governments have improved capacity and mechanisms to implement Best Practices in control and eradication projects, establish internal bio-security and emergency response plans bio-control options are being fully explored and cost sharing opportunities determined.	Governments apply best methods to prevent the spread of invasive species across international and internal borders and quickly respond to those that do arrive.
	OC 3.2 The impact of established invasive species are reduced or eliminated by eradication, biological control, containment or physical -chemical control.		Impact: The impact of established invasive species are reduced or eliminated by eradication, biological control, containment or physical - chemical control
	OC3.3 Following invasive species management the best methods are determined and implemented to facilitate effective restoration of native biodiversity or recovery of other values.		Best methods are implemented to facilitate effective restoration of native biodiversity or recovery of other values

Figure 2: Theory of Change (TOC) – Outputs to Impact Analysis



3 EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.1 Strategic Relevance

3.1.1 Alignment with UNEP's strategy, policies and mandate

106. The project was designed to provide momentum to the implementation of a regional strategy for IAS management and control in the Pacific. The design clearly states the environmental, social and economic importance of IAS interventions in the fight to conserve biodiversity and ecosystem functions in island settings. Its three main components are designed to help build the regional and national capacity, skills, experience and institutional framework at national level. The engagement of the participating countries and non-government stakeholders in the design process ensured the project activities outputs and anticipated outcomes reflected their priorities.

107. The Pacific IAS project is also highly relevant to the priorities of UNEP and the GEF at the time of design. Specifically, the project aligns well with the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) 2010- 2013. This identifies six cross cutting thematic priorities (climate change, disasters and conflicts, ecosystem management, environmental governance, harmful substances and hazardous waste and resource efficiency -sustainable consumption and production. The project is of particular strategic relevance to the themes of ecosystem management and environmental governance. All of its components work towards assisting the participating countries to address degradation of selected priority ecosystems and services and the loss of biodiversity caused by the impact of invasive alien species. In particular, the project works to achieve this objective through its focus on building IAS management capacity and capability through a range of pilot projects aimed at providing direct experience in IAS control and prevention projects.

108. The project specifically influences environmental governance through Component 1, Building Foundations, which is designed to help countries to mainstream ecosystem management structures and supporting policy in the form of National Invasive Species Strategic Action Plans, national invasive species Coordinating Committees and associated coordinator positions. This is an important step towards integrating an ecosystem management approach into development and other planning processes and potentially contributing towards greater resource efficiency - sustainable consumption and production, especially in terms of safeguarding food supplies and agricultural production which are so important to the semi subsistent lifestyles prevalent in many small Pacific island countries.

109. The project is also in alignment with the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building (BSP)[2]. The BSP was introduced to provide a global focus on the need to strengthen international environmental governance in developing countries through strategies for the provision of technology support and capacity building. In this regard the Pacific IAS project is strongly aligned with the BSP in that its components address many of the cross cutting and thematic areas of the Plan. For example, under Component 1 Building Foundations, it works to build national environment related institutions and bio-security regulations while at the same time seeking to strengthen awareness and encourage cooperation between government and civil society, including NGO's and communities. At the regional level the project aims to strengthen regional IAS approaches through its alignment with the regional Guidelines and coordination with key regional IAS partners. Implementation of Components 2 and 3 have specifically resulted in technology exchanges in the form of training in animal and plant eradication techniques, support for research and introduction of biological control agents and the introduction and training in the use of bio-security technology and approaches. These all directly address the BSP priority thematic area of biological diversity, including bio-safety and the issue of invasive species.

110. Another aspect of the BSP with which the Pacific IAS project is aligned is the focus on South-South exchanges and cooperation, including the institutional capacity building through the exchange of expertise, experiences information and documentation. This approach to developing human resources is supported by the Pacific IAS project through training activities such as the rat eradication training in Tonga which included participants from Kiribati, Tonga, RMI and Wallis and Futuna. Another example is the

[2] http://www.unep.org/GC/GC23/documents/GC23-6-add-1.pdf

project's support for the Pacific regional IAS networks, particularly the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PLIN) which brings together IAS volunteers and practitioners from many of the Pacific countries, including some not involved in the project, to share experiences and learn from one another. The highly successful one week meeting held in Samoa in August 2016 which was attended by IAS groups and individuals from at least 10 Pacific countries was a prime example of the effectiveness of this support.

111. ***Gender balance/ equity***: The project document records UNEP's commitment to the integration of gender equality and equity in all its policies, programmes and projects and within its institutional structures. In doing so it implies that the Pacific IAS project will seek to ensure that this commitment is reflected in the management and implementation of the project at regional, national and community levels and will work to ensure gender-sensitive strategies and make special efforts to provide opportunities to encourage the involvement of women in all project activities. Some examples of this positive integration include the training of village women (and youth) in community fire ant management and prevention in Espirito Santo in Vanuatu where the impact of the ants on human well-being was severe, and the training of women members of the Vava'u Environmental Protection Association to undertake rat eradication at key sties in Vava'u province in Tonga.

112. ***Human rights based approach (HRBA)***: Although the project design is not specific in its approach to UN Common Understanding on Human Rights Based Approach of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, it does provide guidance on the environmental and social safeguards which guided its development and has influenced its implementation. These indicate that the fundamental issues of Human Rights and the rights of Indigenous people have been duly considered by the project designers and in subsequent project management as the project has at its core the achievement of positive and sustained changes in the lives of people necessary for the full enjoyment of their human rights including human well-being.

113. ***Environmental safeguards and human well-being***: The project was developed in line with the environmental and social priorities of the participating countries captured in NBSAPs and with significant stakeholder consultation. In-country inception workshops which allowed broader national level stakeholder participation than would normally be achieved at a regional inception workshop helped to negate any untoward and negative impacts on environment and human and indigenous rights. Overall, the project was designed to provide safeguards against the environmental and social impacts of invasive species on biodiversity and importantly, human welfare and livelihoods. In fact it was anticipated the project would have a positive effect on livelihoods and human welfare in the Pacific by contributing to the protection of the Pacific way of life. In this regard, project support for fire ant and sand fly eradications in villages in Vanuatu and the Cook Islands respectively has helped positive changes in people's lives while preventing harm to local communities.

3.1.2 Alignment with GEF focal areas and strategic priorities

114. The GEF provides grants for projects in focal areas of biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer, and persistent organic pollutants. The Pacific IAS project delivered outcomes specifically relevant to the GEF 4 (GEF 2007) Biodiversity Strategic long term Objectives. Specifically the project addresses Objective 3 " To safeguard biodiversity" by implementing measures under Strategic Programme 6 "Building capacity for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety" and under Strategic Programme 7 "Prevention, control and management of invasive alien species" as they relate to the small island developing countries of the Pacific region.

115. In addition to the obvious alignment with Objective 3, the project addresses Biodiversity Object 2 "To mainstream biodiversity in production landscapes/seascapes and sectors and particularly Strategic Programme 4."Strengthening the policy and regulatory framework for mainstreaming biodiversity through its efforts to ensure all participating countries have improved invasive alien species management structures and national action plans. These are aimed at ensuring that biodiversity is protected from the impacts of invasive alien species and their prevention, management and control is mainstreamed into government planning, development and regulatory systems.

3.1.3 Relevance to global, regional and national environmental issues and needs

116. Invasive alien species represent a specific and critical threat to the natural environments of Small Island States of the Pacific and the social and economic well-being of the people of these countries. Like many

other island environments those of the Pacific have exceptionally high levels of endemic species which due to limited land areas and isolation, are highly vulnerable to the impacts of invasive alien species. Indeed, the Pacific island ecosystems are recognised as one of the world's biodiversity hotspots requiring special attention and support from the global community as well as their own governments if the trend towards species extinctions, often as a result of invasive alien species, is to be turned around. The special environmental and economic development needs of Small Island Developing States include the maintenance of healthy ecosystems and biodiversity and has been recognised in global action frameworks such as Agenda 21 (Chapter 17 Section G Sustainable development of small islands) and the Barbados Programme of Action and the World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation.

117. Regionally the critical importance of effective prevention, control and management of invasive alien species to the environmental, social and economic well-being of Pacific island countries has been long recognised by regional forums including the long running sequence of Pacific Conferences on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas and their associated five yearly Action Strategies for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the region. These recognised the trans-boundary nature of invasive species and the need for a Regional Invasive Species Strategy for IAS management across the Pacific bringing national governments and regional agencies together to work under an agreed framework. This gave rise to the Guidelines for invasive species management in the Pacific (Tye 2009) which has been endorsed by all 22 Pacific island members of SPREP and has provides the framework for the components of the Pacific IAS Project.

The overall rating for project relevance is "Highly Satisfactory"

3.2 Achievement of outputs

118. Examination of the status of completion of the 22 project outputs was undertaken by the evaluator through input from the Project Manager and questions asked of interviewees, verification through sighting of physical outputs (e.g. NISSAP's technical reports, education and awareness materials) and field inspection of some sites in Samoa, Tonga and the Cook Islands. The evaluator's findings were then co-related with those of the Project Manager and the draft final project report. Explanatory notes and the Completion Rate for each Output identified in the ProDoc Results Framework was scored out of 100%. Scoring was based on assessment of completion against end of project targets. The results are captured in Table (iii) below and summarised by component in the following sections.

119. It should also be noted that the considerable delay in starting the project resulted in implementation being behind schedule at the mid-term point. This prompted recommendations in the mid-term review for consideration to be given to the closure of project in the Marshall Islands and FSM in addition to PNG. It also led to the assumption that not all outputs would be achieved so it is commendable that as Table 8 shows, not only did the project persevere with the Marshall Islands and FSM, but a very high proportion of the outputs were actually achieved in the second half of the project. However, this raises the question of the quality of those outputs.

120. Although it is not possible to personally assess all outputs and deliverables, those which the evaluator saw in the course of the field visits, which included the results of eradication and restoration projects, awareness materials and events, policy and strategic planning documents and a variety of reports, were of a high standard. It is therefore, reasonable to presume that this standard would be maintained across the project. Similarly, although some activities were delivered late in terms of the original project work plan, (e.g. establishing the Melanesia Invasive Species Council) sufficient progress was made to ensure these would be useful and development would be sustained beyond the term of the project.

3.2.1 Component 1. Foundations

121. Component 1 of the Project is focused on strengthening the institutional foundations for more effective invasive species management in the participating countries through the achievement of three key outcomes which can be summarised as:

- building broad community and stakeholder awareness, support and understanding and of the impacts of invasive alien species and how they can be managed;

- strengthening capacity by building national institutions and capacity for invasive species management through the establishment of National Invasive Species Coordinators (NISC's), multi-sectoral national invasive species committees, training programmes, the development of National Invasive Species Strategic Action Plans (NISSAP's) and,
- improving and harmonising invasive species legislation, policies and protocols in support for more effective invasive species management.

122. As previously noted, due to budgetary constraints and differing national priorities, not all of the nine participating countries engaged equally in activities identified under this component and components 2 and 3. For example, only the Cook Islands and Samoa were identified as proponents of at least one primary invasive species outreach focussed project although commendably, the national awareness programmes undertaken in Niue, Tonga and Kiribati with their focus on radio outreach to the island communities could be included in this classification. The requirement that 80% of the management projects were expected to include outreach activities was also met successfully.

123. There is a recurring trend across all three Components whereby the Project has undertaken additional activities beyond the strict requirements of the Results Framework. For example, only seven of the eventual nine participating countries were expected to establish NISC positions and Committees and complete NISSAP's but this target was met successfully for all countries with some utilising existing biodiversity management and coordinating mechanisms for this purpose. Only Niue and Kiribati were identified for invasive species management equipment reviews and updates but the project was extended to include reviews for the Cook Islands which received assistance to establish a bio-control laboratory.

124. Only Niue was slated for assistance in improving its capacity to use international information tools for invasive species management but this work contributed to the development of the "Battler Series of guides for best practices available to all Pacific countries via the SPREP IAS Resources internet portal. Kiribati was identified as a priority for utilising regional IAS services to strengthen capacity and on-site training and mentoring was provided to a limited number of key staff by regional experts. Ideally the cadre of IAS management trained personnel in Kiribati would have been larger except for the severe limitations on human resources available for this work not just in Kiribati but also all Pacific island countries.

125. What the project has demonstrated is that, overall, with expert regional assistance and support the Pacific island countries can develop the capacity to manage their invasive species threats effectively. Meeting this need and expanding the regional support services and networks built up by the project is critical to maintaining the momentum generated by the project and ensuring the full achievement of project outcomes. It is also an essential prerequisite for the success of the proposed GEF 6 funded project second phase. The onus is on SPREP and the SPC (through its biosecurity mandate) to collaborate with regional IAS partners to firmly and permanently institutionalise the support networks.

The overall rating of the achievement of Component 1 Outputs is "Highly Satisfactory" (HS).

Recommendation 1. *Recommendation 1: That UNEP strongly encourages SPREP and other regional (CROP) organisations with IAS mandates such as SPC with its Biosecurity mandate, to collaborate with regional IAS partners such as the Pacific Invasives Partnership and the Pacific Islands Invasive Learning Network to undertake a review of the current regional IAS support network with a view to designing and institutionalising a coordinated support service within the core operations of SPREP and SPC. The service will encourage participation by key regional IAS partners and the review should include options for sustainable funding mechanisms for both the support services and long term regional IAS functions.*

3.2.2 Component 2. Problem Definition, Prioritisation and Decision Making

126. Component 2 focuses on information gathering to improve baseline knowledge of the status and distribution of invasive species in the participating countries and the Pacific and using existing information sources to support management, control and prevention measures. The Component includes Outputs related to information surveys and the identification of high value sites, infestation pathways and related risk assessments for prioritising invasives in selected countries. It supports the establishment of monitoring systems at high value sites and for priority species in selected countries and the development of the regional invasive alien species database at SPREP. Importantly, it also provides support for research

on priority invasive species in support of effective management through and appropriate control measures including bio-control.

127. The Project strategy called for outputs related to invasive species surveys and monitoring systems being implemented in 5 countries. Desk top surveys of available information on known species, pathways and high value sites were completed for six countries (Kiribati, Niue, Tonga, Vanuatu, FSM and the RMI). Monitoring systems were established for priority sites in Tonga, Cook Islands and Kiribati and for species in Vanuatu, Samoa, Niue and Cook Islands. A regional IAS database was established by SPREP aimed at monitoring progress against the regional Guidelines and weed databases and information systems were established in Niue, Tonga and Samoa. While a risk assessment system in Niue was identified as an output under this component the Project can also be credited with some level of risk assessment in all participating countries being achieved through the desk top surveys under Output 2.1.1 which provided information on invasive species and pathway linkages to other countries. However, the capacity (staff and funding) to fully utilise these processes in the management of IAS remains generally weak in most countries and requires on-going training and mentoring beyond the life of the project. The role of regional networks and organisations in providing these services, and the countries in seeking to access them will be vital to long term national invasive species management efforts. The achievement of this goal has been assisted by the publication of the "Battler Series" guide "Find answers online to common invasive species questions"[3].

128. The final Output under Component 2 calls for research into the biology, ecology and control methods for priority invasive species nominally in Vanuatu and Samoa. The Project supported research into the Myna bird in Samoa leading to a large scale control programme waged by the government and into Little fire ants control methods and bio-controls for the African tulip tree in Vanuatu. The African tulip tree bio-control research was also relevant to the Cook Islands where control agents for Mikania were the subject of investigation. In Niue research on best practice for controlling feral pigs and several plant species was supported. At the regional level several countries are participating in a regional research project on *Merremia peltata* which has been supported by the project.

129. As with Component 1, it is clear the Project has met and in several instances, exceeded the Outputs originally identified in the ProDoc resulting in an **overall rating of the achievement of Component 2 Outputs as "Highly Satisfactory" (HS).**

3.2.3 Component 3. Management Action

130. Component 3 of the Project is aimed at strengthening national capacity in invasive alien species management through the establishment of sound management practices which help prevent the spread of invasive species and quickly detect and eradicate those that arrive in new locations. This "on the ground" action orientated component included Outputs relating to developing bio-security capacity, Early Detection and Rapid Response planning and training, best management practices for priority species, developing and implementing eradication plans for incipient populations on known invasive species , using known bio-control agents in specific countries and undertaking forest restoration through invasive species management.

131. Kiribati was chosen as the country most suitable to trial general strategies for improving bio-security inspection and treatment procedures to prevent the transfer of invasive species from one country to another and between islands which is important in the Pacific where countries often comprise several outer island states. Training of 2-3 key staff in ship inspections and rat baiting was completed for inter-island shipping as was EDRR training including simulation exercises. The project purchased an airport scanner and associated training for border quarantine officers was undertaken.

132. EDRR plans were also developed and training undertaken in Cook Islands and Samoa. The success of the EDRR planning and training was illustrated by two emergencies during the latter stages of the project. These involved investigation of possible cane toad arrival in Samoa which was eventually unverified and the arrival of 5 mongoose into Tonga by shipping container from Fiji. The EDRR plan and response (which reflected the training provided by the project) was triggered in both cases and in Tonga the mongooses

[3] http://www.sprep.org/attachments/Publications/BEM/find-answers-online-common-invasive-species-questions.pdf

have subsequently been eradicated. The project is directly responsible for building the capability of both countries to undertake these activities, one of many successful benefits and outcomes which would not have been possible without the GEF/UNEP investment in the project.

133. The 100% completion rates for Outputs associated with best practices for the management of priority species and sites and for the eradication (complete removal) of other priority invasive species represent an outstanding level of project achievement for a complex multi-country, low budget project such as this. Best practices and management plans were determined and implemented in the Cook Islands (sand flies, Cuscuta and beach burr) Myna birds (Samoa, Cook Islands and Kiribati) feral pigs and weed species (Niue) crown of thorns starfish, weed control and forest restoration (Samoa), Little Fire ant (Vanuatu) and rats (Tonga). Similarly plant eradication and biological control projects ranged from eradication of red passion fruit in the Cook Islands, biological control of *Mikania micrantha* in the Cook Islands, Palau and FSM and *Merremia peltata* in Vanuatu and on Majuro in the Marshall Islands, Little fire ant containment in Vanuatu, myna birds in Tarawa, Kiribati and the eradication of rats from four islands in Tonga. While these projects exceed the requirements of the Project, it is noted that the expansion of weed control work and rat eradication to the outer islands in the Marshall Islands and Kiribati has been hampered by the remoteness of the sites involved and the high cost of access.

134. The development and release of bio-control agents was focused on host specific testing of agents for African tulip tree control in the Cook Islands and Vanuatu and for *Mikania micrantha* in Palau and FSM. The release of the agent for the African tulip tree has still to occur at the time of writing as the management agencies were still awaiting importation permits. While both agents are expected to be successful the project duration is not sufficient to fully complete the Output and monitor the results leading to a lower completion rate ranking of 80%. Two potential sites for the elimination of species within a contained area were identified in the original ProDoc as being Jaluit Atoll in the Marshall Islands (ants) and Vatthe Conservation Area in Vanuatu. Both projects ran into difficulties with the presence of the ants on Jaluit Atoll being disputed locally and the plans for Vatthe CA being shelved due to community issues. The latter have now been resolved and the project is being resurrected. It is noteworthy that in addition to these sites the project can lay claim to containing, excluding or controlling invasive species at 6 discrete high biodiversity sites or islands.

135. Component 3 also requires the Project to support the restoration of two forest sites and biodiversity in Samoa following invasive species management. The two sites chosen were Mt. Vaea National Park on the outskirts of the capital Apia and Ole Pupu Pu'e National Park also on Upolo Island. An on-going and long term programme is being implemented at both sites with the Mt. Vaea site achieving remarkable results not just in terms of the weed eradication and forest restoration efforts, but in terms of the demonstration and community engagement benefits arising from the project which has been largely undertaken by volunteer groups including a local conservation society – the Samoa Conservation Society (SCS) "Fa'asao Samoa". The ProDoc also includes a target of 80 ha of restored forest for the Samoa projects which in hindsight is excessively ambitious given the field work involved and resources available. In fact to date only a total of 15 ha has been achieved which is 20% of the original target which should have been set more realistically at the outset.[4]

136. The overall completion rate for Outputs under Component 3 is 83% or 93% not including the anomaly of the Samoa restoration target.

137. Accordingly the overall rating for the achievement of Component 3 Outputs is rated as "Highly Satisfactory" (HS).

Table 8: Summary of the Project's success in producing programmed outputs

Project Strategy	Indicator	End Of Project Output Status and Completion Rating %
OUTPUTS		
1.1.1 Project activities maximize community	Number of project activities in which there is adequate	*All national IAS project activities with the exception of the Marshall Islands and FSM have programmes to raise IAS*

[4] In ssubsequent discussion with the Task Manager it was explained that the intention here was to establish a long term eradication programme on Mt Vaea and in hindsight the stipulated 80Has was over optimistic.

Project Strategy	Indicator	End Of Project Output Status and Completion Rating %
involvement in planning, implementation and monitoring as appropriate. Cook Islands and Samoa will implement at least one primarily outreach focused project.	community involvement. Outreach and media materials produced, and numbers of people reached.	*awareness across the broader community and with project stakeholders.* *Both the Cook Islands and Samoa have undertaken the required primary outreach programme, with Samoa focusing on village community consultations, schools and in the Cook islands on communities, radio programmes social media and schools.* **Completion Rating 100%**
1.1.2 80% of management projects will implement outreach to ensure that the importance of IAS environmental, social and economic impacts is more widely understood.		*See above comment for Output 1.1.1. Countries where the results are noteworthy are Tonga, Niue, Samoa, Cook Islands and Vanuatu. Gauging increased levels of political and public support as a measure of the project's success in communicating the importance of IAS impacts is difficult but it is notable that Niue, RMI, Tonga are seeking GEF6 funding to further support continued IAS management focused activities and several others plan to have invasive species components within larger broader projects.* *Palau, FSM and RMI contributed to the Micronesian Regional Invasive Species Council Meetings followed by submissions to the Micronesian Chiefs Executive Summit's gaining recognition in the Communiques in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015.* **Completion Rating 100%**
OUTPUTS		
1.2.1 National invasive Species Coordinators are appointed and multi-sectoral national invasive species committees are formed for seven participating countries and carry out regular meetings 2 or more times per year	Staffing levels. Committee activities.	*All participating countries have a NISC and a National Invasives Coordinating mechanism for coordinating and addressing national invasive species management issues. Some utilise existing biodiversity management and coordinating committees for this purpose.* **Completion Rating 100%**
1.2.2. Seven participating countries update or write National Invasive Species Strategies and Action Plans to ensure a high quality & that they are harmonized with the regional Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific.	Updated and new National Invasive Species Action Plans.	*Palau, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Niue, Tonga, Vanuatu, RMI and FSM have revised, updated or newly completed National Invasive Species Strategies and Action Plans based on the Guidelines for invasive species management in the Pacific with external project support.* **Completion Rating 100%**
1.2.3 Training/capacity needs are identified and training programs for key invasives management issues are developed and implemented in Kiribati, Niue, PNG and Samoa.	New and improved training initiatives are implemented, addressing gaps in capacity.	*Training /capacity needs assessments and training programmes were undertaken in Kiribati, Niue, Samoa, Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Tonga for key government agency and NGO partner staff. This resulted in a range of training and mentoring being undertaken usually linked to the implementation of project activities. These included: weed management in Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Niue, FSM RMI and Palau; Myna bird control in Samoa and Kiribati; Pig and weed management in Niue; rat eradication/control in Tonga, Cook Islands; weed control and restoration in Samoa and Tonga and little fire ant management in Vanuatu.* *Note that by mid project, PNG was removed as a participating country.* *Rat eradication on small island training was undertaken as a multi-country (South -South style) training exercise involving*

Project Strategy	Indicator	End Of Project Output Status and Completion Rating %
		Tonga, Kiribati and RMI as was forest restoration training for Niue, Samoa and Tonga. *Other relevant activities included a Pacific Invasive Capacity Development Strategy endorsed by all SPREP member countries and the PILN peer learning meeting held in August 2016.* *Activities under this Output were highly commended by interviewees during the Evaluation.* **Completion Rating 100%**
1.2.4 National invasive species management facilities and equipment are reviewed, and development plans produced, facilities improved in Niue and Kiribati.	Plans made, costs identified and facilities built.	*Management facilities and equipment needs were reviewed for Kiribati resulting in improved facilities in the form of bio-security decommissioning equipment and storage facilities and an airport scanner with training. In addition, the project improved facilities in Cook Islands (biocontrol lab. facility). Agrichemical management and storage facilities in Niue were reviewed and implemented with facilities now meeting the New Zealand Standard 8409: Management of Agrichemicals. Recommendations for a quarantine facility are being taken up by government during refurbishment of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing.* **Completion Rating 100%.**
1.2.5 Niue contributes to the improvement of and or learn to use national and regional identification, management and information tools for invasives e.g. PESTLIST, GISIN, GISD.	IAS management and identification resources used and contributions to their content.	*Training was provided to key staff in Niue on accessing invasive species identification management and information tools as a precursor to helping undertake invasive species risk management and prioritise species for management. The online tools used were published in a volume of the "Battler Series" guides "Find answers online to common invasive species questions" for use around the Pacific and beyond. Niue also completed a desktop study on available information and data including invasive species recorded on Niue and other relevant information to prioritise management action with stakeholders. Niue is also using a priority weed database management system to record, analyse and retrieve data in relation to the management of the priority weed sites around the island. This geo-database, one of several around the region has the capacity to synchronize with the regional database and others in further countries around the region to determine best practice methods for controlling particular species.* **Completion Rating 100%**
1.2.6 Kiribati uses regional invasives services to strengthen its capacity for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating its invasive species activities.	Capacity building initiatives implemented. Numbers of people participating	*Project/SPREP provided IAS management experts to work with Kiribati IAS management agencies on rat eradication on small islands and improving inter-island bio-security between Tarawa, Kiritimati and Phoenix islands. The eradication training resulted in two "Battler Series" guides being published for regional and global use, these were "Use anticoagulant bait safely" and "Removing rodents from small tropical islands with success".* *Other regional initiatives which Kiribati participated in were an Inter-island Biosecurity Workshop, the 9th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas, the 4th PILN Meeting and the CBD/SPREP Achieving Aichi Target 9 Workshop.* *Other training and mentoring was limited to 2-3 key staff and also included EDRR training. Sufficient capacity was built for Kiribati IAS staff to undertake an independent monitoring project on introduced Asian Tree Sparrow.* *The successful eradication of myna from Tarawa contributed*

Project Strategy	Indicator	End Of Project Output Status and Completion Rating %
		significantly to the "Battler Series" guide "Manage myna birds in the Pacific". *Overall, there remains a need to strengthen the utilisation of regional technical assistance networks and organisations by a broader range of Pacific countries. Although This has increased during the project and several initiatives have been established to promote this, the momentum needs to be sustained and increased. It should also be noted that this Project did not include all the eligible GEF Pacific countries (neither does the GEF6 Project) and while it would be desirable to see all such countries participating, ultimately to do so or not is a country decision.* **Completion Rating 90%** *(ideally the cadre of IAS management capable personnel in Kiribati would have been larger however, given the severe HR limitations in Kiribati (and all Pacific countries) the project achievements under this output are satisfactory)*
OUTPUTS		
1.3.1. Invasive species legislation, regulations or protocols are consolidated, harmonized and rationalized to improve IAS management effectiveness in at least four countries.	Number of bills introduced to participating country governments for consideration. Number of bills passed into law.	**Note**: this is more correctly an Outcome and is assessed under section 3.3
OUTCOME 2.1 Systems are in place to generate baseline information on the status and distribution of invasive species, detect changes, including range changes and emerging impacts.	Although identified as an Outcome in the Results framework this is more correctly a project Output. Information and data for known IAS were collected through the desk top reviews undertaken in all countries and some baseline data were collected in Niue, Samoa, Tonga and Cook Islands. The project contributed to a significant upgrade of the Cook Islands natural heritage database and the development of the regional IAS database.	
OUTPUTS		
2.1.1. Surveys or monitoring systems are implemented in 5 countries to document the status and/or impact of invasives and native biodiversity in marine and terrestrial sites (including protected areas), include in local or regional databases All countries will implement monitoring as part of management under component 3.	Checklists, register of impacts for known IAS, maps of distribution and abundance of IAS and or impacted species and sites.	*Desk top surveys identifying known invasive species, pathways, high value sites and other relevant data have been undertaken through a common process in Kiribati, Niue, Tonga, Vanuatu, FSM and RMI.* *Monitoring systems have been established for priority sites in Tonga (Mt Talau and Toloa rainforest) Niue (Huvalu Conservation Area) Samoa (Mt Vaea, Aliepata islands, O Le Pupu Pue National Park), Cook Islands (Suwarrow Island) and Kiribati (Phoenix Islands Protected Area.* *Monitoring systems have been established for priority species in Vanuatu (little fire ants in villages on Espirto Santo), Kiribati (tree sparrows on outer islands), Samoa (two invasive seaweeds and crown of thorns starfish and rattan palm), and Niue (priority weeds), and Cook Islands (red passion fruit).* *SPREP has established a regional IAS data base to monitor national and regional progress against the regional Guidelines. SPREP has also established a geo-referenced priority weed database information system operating in Niue and Samoa for monitoring priority weeds, a site led restoration database operating in Samoa and Tonga, and a rat bait-take database for ongoing rodent control in priority areas operating in Tonga. These databases are available for use throughout the Pacific.*

Project Strategy	Indicator	End Of Project Output Status and Completion Rating %
		Completion Rating 100%
OUTCOME 2.2 Effective systems are established and implemented to assess risk and prioritize invasive species for management.	Species and pathway risk assessments	Note: This Outcome is more correctly a project Output which was delivered through the establishment of a risk assessment system in Niue (and associated training). *In addition to Niue, the Project has extended this work to additional countries with desktop surveys for most countries providing information on invasive species linked to their country through known pathways (see also related outcome 2.1.1 above).* *All participating countries have some form of risk assessment processes in place but the capacity and human and financial resources to fully utilise these processes in the management of IAS is generally weak and requires on-going training and mentoring beyond the life of the project.* *This Output has been assisted by the publication of the "Battler Series" guide "Find answers online to common invasive species questions".*
OUTPUTS		
2.2.1 Establish risk assessment systems for Niue.	Number of species assessed. Pathway risk assessments made.	Desk survey of known IAS information and data completed and information used to develop risk assessment for priority invasives including identification of pathways. Training provided in use of assessment tool. **Completion Rating 100 %**
OUTCOME 2.3. Research is completed for priority invasives, including species biology and impacts, and development of effective control techniques.	Invasive species research supports IAS management of priority species.	This "Outcome" as identified in the Results framework is more correctly an Output of the Project . See comments related to 2.3.1 below for assessment of completion.
OUTPUTS		
2.3.1. Investigate the biology, ecology and control methods of priority invasives in order to support effective management in Samoa and Vanuatu as detailed in the deliverables.	Invasive species research supports is management of priority species.	*Research on priority invasive species has been undertaken in Samoa (myna bird management) Vanuatu (African tulip biocontrol agents, little fire ants). Cook Islands has undertaken research into bio-control agents for Mikania and African tulip. Research on best practice was implemented in Niue for priority species; pigs, Singapore daisy, Schindapsus vine bronze-leaved clerodendrim and Honolulu rose.* *Several countries are participating in the regional research project to determine the origin of Merremia peltata.* **Completion Rating 100%**
OUTPUTS		
3.1.1. Inspection and treatment procedures are improved to ensure that invasives are not transferred from one country to another or between islands of the same country. The general strategy will be tried in Kiribati but specific measures for high risk taxa identified apriori are under 3.1.2	Numbers of staff working in border protection. Inspections and treatments of high risk commodities increased. Increase in the number of interceptions. Increased emphasis on biosecurity between islands within a country.	*Assessment and training of 1 - 2 staff has been undertaken in Kiribati where the focus is on improving inter-island bio-security through inspection and rat baiting on ships. These staff are also involved with the PIPA project and the subsequent Oceans 5 project illustrating how IAS built capacity is contributing to other similar projects. However, the high cost of purchasing baits is an issue affecting this activity beyond the life of this project as is the need for more trained staff to implement bio-security plans on other than high risk routes e.g. Kiritimati and the Phoenix Islands.* *The purchase of an airport scanner and associated training of quarantine staff in its use will lead to more staff involved in biosecurity activities and strengthened quarantine efforts at the*

Project Strategy	Indicator	End Of Project Output Status and Completion Rating %
		border. **Completion Rating 85%**
3.1.2. Early detection and rapid response (EDRR) procedures are established for priority potential invaders (e.g. snakes, ants, mongoose, plants etc) for the 5 countries identified in Appendix 6 of the Project document.	Numbers of staff operating prevention, early detection and response measures. Number of EDRR plans in place for early detection and response.	*EDDR plans were created and training was undertaken in the established protocols in Kiribati, Cook Islands and Samoa with simulation exercises undertaken as part of the training.* *A ship rat EDRR system has been established and is in operation on Suwarrow Atoll (Cook Islands).* *During the life of the project EDRR emergencies were enabled in Tonga and Samoa. Tonga has subsequently eradicated a group of 5 mongoose and Samoa has responded to a cane toad report where no indications of the species were found. These responses are a direct reflection of the benefits of the Project and its capacity building.* *Note that with the withdrawal of PNG only three countries were targeted.* **Completion Rate 100%**
OUTPUTS		
3.2.1. Best practices are determined and implemented for invasive species management of priority species and sites identified in Appendix 6 of the Project Document .	Best practices identified and applied to management of priority IAS.	*Best practices and management plans have been determined and implemented for several species in Cook Islands (sand flies, Cuscuta and Beach Burr), Kiribati (Myna birds), Niue (feral pig control, four priority weeds), Samoa (Myna birds, crown of thorns starfish, weed control and restoration), Vanuatu (little fire ant and Tonga (rat eradication, weed control and restoration). The technical experts used and supported by the Project for these activities were highly experienced in IAS in the Pacific and were very committed to their mentoring and training roles. Many of these projects are now on-going or maintenance programmes.* *In addition to the site specific activities described above, the Project developed an innovative approach to helping countries identify and apply Best Practices in IAS management in the form of a series of publications and information notes entitled the "Pacific invasive Battler Series" covering topical IAS issues and management issues and available via the SPREP and PILN websites as well as in hard copy.* **Completion Rate 100%**
3.2.2 Priority invasive species are eradicated (completely removed) from islands where feasible (7 projects in 5 countries identified in Appendix 6 of the Project Document).	Numbers of species eradicated from islands. Number of islands protected from IAS impacts via eradication.	*Eradication of red passion fruit in the Cook Islands is successfully being maintained by controlling the seed bank as it emerges. Feasibility studies for eradications were completed for Malden Island (priority site) in the Line Islands (Kiribati) but implementation has been hampered by a lack of funds. A programme has been devised and is underway for eradicable priority species in Niue. In RMI, Mikania and Merremia are now at zero density on Majuro, but eradication of these plants on Bikini and Kili islands will take longer due to remoteness. A Little fire ant containment programme is underway on Efate island in Vanuatu. In addition to these projects, myna birds were eradicated from Tarawa in Kiribati and in Tonga, rats were eradicated from four islands.* *These ambitious eradication projects exceed the objectives of the Project despite funding being an issue, especially in relation to activities on the more remote sites.* **Completion rate 100%**
3.2.3. Biocontrol agents are developed and released for	Numbers of target populations selected for biocontrol. Number	*Following host-specificity testing Bio-control agents are ready (targeting African tulip) for importation into the Cook Islands and*

Project Strategy	Indicator	End Of Project Output Status and Completion Rating %
appropriate target invasives for targets in 3 or more countries.	of agents tested. Number of agents released. Measures of population response to biocontrol agents.	*Vanuatu once importation permits are provided. Note that these were not known prior to the project which has been a catalyst for their identification. A biocontrol agent for Mikania micrantha was imported into Palau but despite the introduction being made under ideal conditions with mentoring by a biocontrol expert, this was unsuccessful. Efforts are being made to discover why this is so with a suggestion there is a different biotype of Mikania in Palau from that in the South Pacific. This has important implications for Mikania biocontrol in the rest of Micronesia as an introduction of the same biocontrol agent from Fiji into Guam last year also failed to establish.* **Completion Rate 80%**
3.2.4. Invasive species are contained within limited areas or controlled at high biodiversity sites (two sites identified apriori) but more may be identified in the course of the project. See link with 3.3.1.	Number of sites protected or species selected for containment or control.	*Project activities included ant control on Jaluit Atoll in RMI and Merremia control in Vatthe Conservation area in Vanuatu. Both these projects ran into difficulties- the presence of the reported ants on Jaluit was disputed and the Vatthe CA project was shelved mid-way due to community issues related to the Conservation Area. These have now been resolved and although the original funds for both activities were transferred to other activities under the restructured Project Document following the MTR, materials have been provided for the communities to continue this project.* *In addition to the two sites identified the Project was successful in containing, excluding or controlling invasive species at 6 high biodiversity sites within the project. In effect only one out of the seven sites has been unsuccessful (Jaluit) and largely for reasons beyond the Project's control.* **Completion Rate 85%**
OUTCOME 3.3. following invasive species management the best methods are determined and implemented to facilitate effective restoration of native biodiversity or recovery of other values.	Best management practices are identified and used in each of the countries at priority sites to remove, invasive species and restore native biodiversity with measurable change by the end of the project.	Note that this Outcome also embraces a summary Output in the form of the determination of "best methods for effective restoration of ecosystems and habitats. Two sites were chosen in Samoa, both on the basis as having protected area status and high recreational use. A further two sites were chosen in Tonga (on the same criteria).Best method for restoration were determined by technical experts in consultation with local staff with knowledge of the forest composition and written up in restoration plans for each area. See also assessments for 3.3.1 below.
OUTPUTS		
3.3.1. Restore two forest sites and biodiversity in Samoa after invasive species management is carried out.	Number of individuals of impacted native spp. populations increased	*Ongoing long term restoration underway on Mt Vaea and O Le Pupu Pu'e National Parks in Samoa with strong demonstration results at Mt Vaea.* *The Project took advantage of an opportunity to undertake additional restoration work in Tonga and established ongoing long-term restoration programmes for Toloa Rainforest and Mt.Talau in Tonga.* **Completion Rate 100%**
Samoa	0	*IAS control is demonstrated to be an integral part of forest restoration at Mt Vaea. NP. However total restoration area to date (15 ha) is short of the target. 28,000 trees planted largely by volunteer groups including villages. Programme is on-going, long-term and fully supported by the Government.* **Completion Rate 20%**

Project Strategy	Indicator	End Of Project Output Status and Completion Rating %
Note: Project Components 4 and 5 (Management and Coordination and Monitoring and Evaluation) are internal project management functions and do not contribute to project results. Hence they are not included in the above table but are commented on in Paragraph 17 and sections 3.6.2 and 3.6.8.		

3.3 Effectiveness: Attainment of objectives and planned results

3.3.1 Achievement of direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed ToC

138. Section 2.9 describes the rationale and progressive pathway towards the achievement of the project's overall objective and desired long term impact. As discussed in Section 3 above, the highly satisfactory rate of completion of the main outputs associated with Components 1, 2 and 3 has laid a strong foundation for the attainment of the project's outcomes as defined in the Reconstructed ToC in Section 2.9. These are defined at two levels as (i) end of project outcomes which lead to (ii) intermediate states (outcomes) and ultimately determine the contribution of the project's overall impact on reducing "the environmental, economic and human health impacts arising from invasive alien species infestations in vulnerable terrestrial and marine habitats across the Pacific." Evaluation of the project's contribution to the level of achievement of the two intermediate states can best be supported by closer examination of the end of project outcomes which constitute the key elements of each of the states. These are discussed below.

139. **Intermediate State 1:** "IAS strategies, regulations and capacity for improving biodiversity conservation and supporting sustainable development in the Pacific is being mainstreamed and implemented by an increasing number of Pacific governments"

140. Several end of project outcomes contribute to this state. First is the improved level of community understanding of the impacts of invasive species and government support for IAS management and strategies. In this regard the project has directly contributed to increased awareness through its support of national and local IAS awareness activities and programmes in a majority of the participating countries, especially in Tonga, Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa and Kiribati. In these countries community, including schools and youth groups have been actively engaged in working voluntarily on project supported IAS activities. This voluntary support has included replanting at restoration sites, active engagement in eradication activities such as the community efforts to eradicate Little Fire Ants in Vanuatu which was captured in a promotional video and voluntary reporting by the public of potential invasive species as has occurred in Samoa, Tonga and the Cook Islands. Reinforcing this view that the project has significantly improved public understanding of the impacts IAS was the universally positive by interviewees when asked if the project had improved public awareness significantly.

141. Second, the project has successfully progressed and enhanced the institutions, skills and infrastructure, technical support, information management networks and exchanges required to effectively manage invasive species in the participating countries. This is evidenced by the establishment of invasive species management coordination mechanisms and the development, updating / and endorsement of NISSAP's in all participating countries. It is noted that in some countries, the NISSAP endorsement process has taken longer than expected but is underway and will be completed. Both these milestones represent a significant improvement over the project baseline state. A third end of project outcome is the development and endorsement appropriate legislation, policies, protocols and procedures which underpin effective invasive species management. In addition to the NISSAP's there are numerous examples of the project supporting the establishment of new invasive species management procedures such as the EDRR protocols in several countries, improved or new biosecurity legislation and regulations, improved information management and the capacity to access and use invasive species information for management purposes. Several countries (Niue, Tonga, Vanuatu, FSM) have moved to strengthen and revise biosecurity legislation with proposed legislation drafted. With the exception of Niue, all are experiencing delays which are most frequently associated with the need to get endorsement from other affected government agencies. Project management is confident the legislation will eventually be

appropriately endorsed. This and the NISSAP situation reflects an under-estimation of the time it takes to complete legislative changes in the Pacific.

142. Overall, when assessed against the project baseline, it is clear that through the diligent pursuit of its outputs the project has significantly advanced the level of understanding of invasive species issues both within the community and at government level, which has enhanced mainstreaming of invasive species management. It is however, important to note that due to funding disparities, capacity issues and varying levels of government commitment, these positive results are not consistent across all the participating countries.

The rating for overall achievement of Outcomes supporting Intermediate State 1 is "Satisfactory"

143. **Intermediate State 2:** "Improved information systems, research and monitoring of IAS status, together with biosecurity measures and site restoration is resulting in the effective management of national IAS priorities and the development of regional responses to Pacific wide IAS priorities".

144. The end of project outcomes which most directly contribute to the achievement of this state are those arising from project outputs of Components 1 and 2. These include the capacity of government and IAS management agencies to make policy, priority and operational decisions e.g. on biosecurity, management, eradication and control priorities. Also relevant are the outcomes relating to governments applying best methods to prevent the spread of invasive species across international and internal borders to facilitate the effective restoration of native biodiversity and recovery of other environmental values. In regard to the latter, the project undertook restoration activities in two sites in Samoa which were required under the original Prodoc results framework and two additional sites in Tonga which were added following the mid-term project revision. All four sites were assessed and restoration plans were developed and implemented using best practices determined for each site by technical experts in consultation with knowledgeable local staff. Although restoration in terms of area restored has not reached the ambitious targets set, the results to date have laid a good foundation for continuation beyond the project's life. They have also been very effective at engaging local communities and volunteers in this important aspect of IAS management.

145. As is described in section 2.9 and Table 6, the project has performed strongly across the broad range of activities/outputs contributing to the end of project outcomes and the intermediate state. All participating countries have improved invasive species baseline information through the desk top reviews of known information and some have established monitoring systems at priority sites. Capacity to access and use information to make management decisions has been enhanced and bio-security procedures established or enhanced to improve protection against unwanted invasions in several of the countries. Project supported research has assisted the development of bio-control agents for priority species, especially those having regional or multi-country impact e.g. Mikania and the African tulip. There are multiple examples (e.g. rat, myna birds, little fire ant and feral pig control) where best practices have been used to achieve management objectives and the demonstration sites for forest restoration in Samoa and Tonga showcase the benefits of following up invasive plant eradication with restoration. The development of the regional Best Practices in IAS management in the form of an Invasive Species Battler Resource Base[5] which makes available publications, reports, case-studies and information in an easy to navigate portal and contains the first nine of the series "Pacific invasive Battler" (simple guides to common Pacific topical IAS management issues which have arisen from the project) is an important contribution to achieving the outcome. It is notable that although the project is targeted at invasive species management, control and prevention in both terrestrial and marine ecosystems, with one exception (crown of thorns control in Samoa), the focus of the prioritisation and management outcomes of the project were on the former.

The rating for overall achievement of the Outcomes supporting Intermediate State 2 is "Satisfactory"

[5] http://piln.sprep.org/)

146. As has been noted elsewhere, not all nine participating countries engaged in all project activities equally due primarily to the countries committing varying levels of GEFPAS funding (see Table 6) and capacity constraints. This resulted in the attainment of end of project outcomes (and the Intermediate States) at a national level being variable across the countries. This disparity of results makes evaluating overall achievement of project outcomes difficult as individual countries can only be assessed in terms of their activities, outputs and outcomes (relevant) to their project inputs. For example, while all countries can point to wider understanding of, and government support for the impacts of invasive species on biodiversity, economies, livelihoods and health (Outcome 1.1) this a particularly strong outcome in Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, Niue, and the Cook Islands where national awareness programmes have been implemented. This would lead to a Highly Satisfactory rating for those five countries tempered by a moderately satisfactory rating for the remaining countries. Thus the rating for overall achievement of this end of project outcome is "Satisfactory". It should be noted that throughout the evaluation the consultant has strived to present the overall picture of project attainment and effectiveness and has used examples to emphasise particularly successful achievements.

The rating for overall achievement of Outcomes is "Satisfactory"

3.3.2 Likelihood of impact

147. The ROtI approach is used to assess the likelihood of impact by building upon the concepts of Theory of Change (Section 2.9). The ROtI approach requires ratings to be determined for the outcomes achieved by the project and the progress made towards the 'intermediate states' at the time of the evaluation. The rating system is presented in the Table below and the assessment of the project's progress towards achieving its intended impacts is presented in Table 10.

Table 9: Rating Scale for Outcomes and Progress towards Intermediate States

Outcome Rating	Rating on progress toward Intermediate States
D: The project's intended outcomes were not delivered	D: No measures taken to move towards intermediate states.
C: The project's intended outcomes were delivered, but were not designed to feed into a continuing process after project funding	C: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started, but have not produced results.
B: The project's intended outcomes were delivered, and were designed to feed into a continuing process, but with no prior allocation of responsibilities after project funding	B: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and have produced results, which give no indication that they can progress towards the intended long term impact.
A: The project's intended outcomes were delivered, and were designed to feed into a continuing process, with specific allocation of responsibilities after project funding.	A: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and have produced results, which clearly indicate that they can progress towards the intended long term impact.

Table 10: Overall Likelihood of Achieving Impact

Results rating of project entitled: Prevention, control and management of invasive alien species in the Pacific Islands							
Outputs (as consolidated for TOC (see also Table 6 assessment of completion of all specific project Outputs	Outcomes (as consolidated for TOC see Table 4)	Rating (D – A)	Intermediate states	Rating (D – A)	Impact (GEB)	Rating (+)	Overall
Efforts initiated to increase IAS awareness amongst public and decision makers with new outreach and community	The impacts of invasive species on biodiversity, economies, livelihoods and	B	IAS strategies, regulations, and capacity for improving biodiversity	B	The environmental, economic and human health impacts arising	+	BB+

involvement and materials prepared and supporting project activities. National invasive Species Coordinators appointed, IAS committees formed. Strategy needs or reviews identified and underway. Training needs identified. Facilities upgrade requirements determined and completed. Draft Strategies written, or reviews carried out. Training needs identified. Facilities upgrade requirements determined. Improved Law requirements identified and being drafted or in place to support Invasive Species Management. Known IAS information supplemented by data collection systems at priority sites generates baseline information on the status and distribution of invasive species, detect changes, including range changes and emerging impacts. Capacity to access and utilise risk assessment information and data and prioritize invasive species for management is improved through training. Capacity to access and utilise risk assessment information and data and prioritize invasive species for management is improved through training. Research needs and appropriate methods are identified and research projects underway or is completed for priority invasives, including species biology and impacts together with development of effective control techniques. Internal biosecurity measures developed and tested for participating	health, are widely understood and actions to manage and reduce them are supported. The institutions, skills, infrastructure, technical support, information management, networks and exchanges required to manage invasive species effectively are developed. Appropriate legislation, policies, protocols and procedures are in place and operating, to underpin the effective management of invasive species. Governments and IAS agencies are making IAS policy, priority and operational decisions (e.g. biosecurity, management, eradication and control priorities) based on quality information from well managed information and data systems, research results and risk assessments. The impact of established invasive species are reduced or eliminated by eradication, biological control, containment or physical chemical control. Governments apply best methods to prevent the spread of invasive species across international and internal borders and quickly respond those that do arrive.		conservation and supporting sustainable development in the Pacific is being mainstreamed and implemented by increasing number of Pacific governments. Improved information systems, research and monitoring of status of IAS together with biosecurity measures, management action, and site restoration is resulting in the effective management of national IAS priorities and development of regional responses to Pacific wide IAS priorities.		from invasive alien species infestations in vulnerable terrestrial and marine habitats across the Pacific have been reduced.		

countries. Emergency response plans drafted, finalized and tested. Appropriate monitoring, control and biodiversity restoration methods have been determined and being implemented for priority sites in at least one participating country. Best practices determined for priority targets. Priority species, sites and bio control opportunities determined and selected and management goals defined.	Best methods are being implemented to facilitate effective restoration of native biodiversity or recovery of other values.						
	Justification for rating:		Justification for rating:		Justification for rating:		
	To the extent project resource allocations to each participating country allowed, the project's intended outcomes were for the most part achieved through project management's diligent commitment to achieving a high degree of completion of the Project outputs. All of the resulting outcomes were designed to feed into a feed into a continuing process after project funding through their focus on strengthening national technical and institutional capacity, capability and structures in support of mainstreaming IAS management.		The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and have produced results, which clearly indicate that they can progress towards the intended long term impact.		Project has achieved documented changes in environmental status during its lifetime primarily through the positive results arising from monitoring of invasive species eradications on islands and other priority sites.		

148. ***Outcomes Rating***. While not all the outcomes were fully achieved and despite not all countries participating in all activities, overall, this project has delivered on its outcomes. The project got off to a slow start in its first two years and the Executing Agency (SPREP) together with the IA, had to overcome considerable management obstacles. Project management has exhibited commendable adaptability, initiative and drive to get progress back on track through the second half. Measured against the project baseline, and viewed in terms of the difficulties of implementing large multi country multi-functional projects in the Pacific, the outcomes that have been achieved are outstanding. From project outset, but particularly in the latter stages, management has endeavoured to ensure the outcomes are the building

blocks to strengthened national and regional mainstreaming of IAS management and the long term achievement of the intermediate states and impact. Rating of progress towards Outcomes is "B".

149. ***Intermediate States Rating***. There is clear evidence that the measures designed to move progress towards intermediate states have started and have produced results, which indicates that they will support progress towards the intended long term impact. All participating countries have new or updated National Invasive Species Strategies and Action Plans and these have been endorsed at national Executive level. Bio-security regulations have been developed and are established in several countries and EDRR for invasive species are in place in all countries and have been triggered in Samoa, Tonga and Kiribati. Dedicated National IAS Coordinator positions have been mainstreamed in several countries including Tonga, Cook Islands, Niue, Vanuatu, Palau and Samoa. There are several examples where governments have included IAS activities in national budgetary provisions. The commitment of the Pacific countries to the regional invasive species Guidelines and the regional IAS leadership of SPREP through its stewardship of the regional Guidelines and IAS programme should ensure progress will be maintained.

150. Similarly, there is strong evidence that measures designed to move progress towards the second intermediate state are in place and working. The project has resulted in all countries having improved information on invasive species and pathways critical to informed decision making and targeted IAS management investments. A range of research, especially on bio-control agents for species of regional importance has and is being undertaken and the regional IAS Battler Resource Base is capturing and making available best practice and information on regionally important issues. Bio-security protocols and procedures have been strengthened or established in most countries, including pilots to test methodology for internal (inter-island) controls. The project has also demonstrated how human health can be enhanced through the successful control and management of species tormenting communities such as the Little fire ant in Vanuatu and sand flies in Cook Islands. Bio-security is critical to the protection of the agriculture, forestry and aquaculture sectors critical to the fragile economies of small Pacific island countries. In this regard, the project has worked hard with considerable success to strengthen bio-security legislation, protocols, capability and capacity in most participating countries.

151. Rating of progress towards the Intermediate States is "B".

152. According to this methodology, the rating obtained is translated onto the usual 6-point rating scale used in UNEP project evaluations, as shown in Table below.

Table11: Overall likelihood of impact achievement' on a six point scale

Highly Likely	Likely	Moderately Likely	Moderately Unlikely	Unlikely	Highly Unlikely
AA AB BA CA BB+ CB+ DA+ DB+	BB CB DA DB AC+ BC+	AC BC CC+ DC+	CC DC AD+ BD+	AD BD CD+ DD+	CD DD

NB: projects that achieve documented changes in environmental status during the project's lifetime receive a positive impact rating, indicated by a "+". The project has resulted in positive environmental change due to rodent and other invasive species eradication at numerous priority sites.

153. Under this methodology, the rating for the overall likelihood of impact achievement is BB with the notation + attributed on the basis of documented results arising from invasive species eradication and control projects leading to changes in the environmental state because of and during the term of the project. The Project, with an aggregated rating of BB+ as described in the Table above, can therefore be rated as "Highly Likely" to achieve the expected Impact.

The evaluation rating for the likelihood of impact is "Highly Likely"

3.4 Sustainability of Outcomes

154. Sustainability is understood to be the probability of continued long-term (15 - 20 years) project-derived results and impacts after the project funding and assistance has ended. As such there are a number of critical factors which influence the sustainability of the outcomes of the IAS project. These include the overall capacity of countries to maintain the momentum generated by the project, socio-political support,

the availability of internal budgetary funding and the continuing level of regional and international funding, and regional support for and leadership for invasive species through SPREP and its partner's commitment to implementation of the Guidelines for invasive species management in the Pacific. Another important factor given the limited human resources capacity of most of the participating countries is the ability to retain trained and experienced staff who have benefitted from their engagement with the project. This is a risk to project sustainability unless retraining options are available for new staff which lends further weight to the recommendation that SPREP be supported in developing a regional IAS support network. However, even when understanding and taking into account the constraints of national capacity and funding facing Pacific island countries, the support the project has generated at multiple levels (community, government and regionally) point to the project outcomes being sustained and indeed, built upon into the future. This is further reinforced by the knowledge that SPREP (and SPC in relation to bio-security) has a leadership role and responsibility to address invasive species issues through its regional biodiversity mandate and stewardship of the Guidelines and an increasing regional awareness of the economic impact that invasive species can wreak on small vulnerable island economies.

155. The project has also contributed to strengthening the supporting network for invasive species management in the region, particularly the PILN and its volunteer ("Battler") teams. Having attended the recent regional meeting of PILN (Samoa August 2016) where representatives of 14 national invasive species "Battler" groups came together to share experiences, the evaluator can attest to a noticeable sense of camaderie and pride in the work being undertaken across the region. This together with the obvious commitment of these teams and ongoing strategic and technical support available to countries and individuals through SPREP and its technical partners, adds to the case for optimism for the sustainability of the project's outcomes.

156. At the national level, despite the aforementioned constraints, the IAS project has also done well to ensure that there is an invasive species management structure in each of the participating countries which is supported by at least one individual responsible for invasive species management. This level of national institutional commitment is crucial to sustainable outcomes and while in most countries the invasive species individual has shared responsibilities, several (Tonga, Niue, Samoa, Vanuatu) have established or intend to establish dedicated IAS positions. This is a clear indicator of the success of the project to elevate invasive species as a priority within government and an important marker of sustainability in the Pacific context.

157. In order to further assess the sustainability of the project and its potential for replication, the four parameters below will be utilized.

The overall rating for Sustainability of Outcomes is "Likely"

3.4.1 Socio-political sustainability

158. The success of the project in building a solid foundation of awareness and support for invasive species management both within government and across the wider community is fundamental to sustaining its outcomes. In this regard the project has, to varying degrees, been highly successful in all the participating countries and in some, Tonga, Niue, Vanuatu, Cook Islands and Samoa in particular, the results have been exceptional. During the course of the project these countries have developed strong invasive awareness programmes utilising media (regular radio talks, facebook, national news and video) school and community visits and participation in projects, awareness materials (posters, video) and presentations to politicians. In many countries this has translated into direct action by volunteer groups willing to assist with project activities as was the case in Vanuatu with community involvement with little fire ant control, school and scout group involvement with weed control in the Cook Islands, community and school group engagement in forest restoration in Samoa and Tonga.

159. The question that often arises following implementation of projects over a fixed time period is whether the awareness generated can be maintained. In the case of the IAS project there are sufficient indicators to suggest this is highly likely, not the least being the commitment of SPREP to the on-going maintenance and development of the regional IAS information and websites and to providing regional support to national IAS programmes and agencies. Perhaps more importantly, at least from a national perspective is the growth of the national PILN teams across the region which has been fostered by the project. These

teams are multi-agency and multi-sector and are usually led by one or two government agencies, with support from the other including communities and volunteer groups keen to engage in field level projects. Across the region there are over 20 PILN teams which are committed to continuing action on invasive species through the identification of strategic and field level projects which generally require network technical support to advance. The importance of PILN to the regional invasive species management effort cannot be understated. Although the IAS project was able to provide funding and has been instrumental in assisting PILN at the regional level, more funding for network management and servicing e.g. for a full time coordinator, is needed to ensure the network continues to function effectively.

160. That there was already a fair measure of political support for the management of invasive species in most countries prior to the project is emphasised by the formal endorsement of the Guidelines as the regional framework for action by all the SPREP member countries. This has clearly been further strengthened by the work of the project over the past 4 year and bodes well for the future of its outcomes. Examination of some of the project's accomplishments by country reveals evidence of healthy high level political support including the public support for Myna bird control in Samoa by the Prime Minister, the personal support for project activities by the Governor of Tonga's Vava'u Province and the readiness of Government Executives to endorse the national NISSAP's. Furthermore, the recent decision by the Melanesian countries of Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea to establish a Melanesia Biosecurity and Invasive Species Committee is a highly auspicious outcome of the project. The Council will be based on the successful model of the Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council and is indicative of the strength of the political support for invasives and an understanding of the benefits of establishing sub-regional groupings to bring home the message of better coordination, collaboration and planning. Plans are now underway to create a similar sub regional council for Polynesia which together with the other sub regional Councils, will provide political momentum for further progress on invasives issues in the future.

The rating for socio-political sustainability is "Highly Likely"

3.4.2 Sustainability of Financial Resources

161. The sustainability of project outcomes and on-going progress towards the intermediate states and long term impact is to a large degree, dependent on the availability of financial resources at both the national level and regionally. At the national level the extent to which governments commit to providing funding support for invasive species management agencies and staff, including those responsible for bio-security, is a pointer to financial sustainability. Similarly, the willingness of a country to advance invasive species and bio-security proposals to international donors in the face of competition from other priorities is an indicator of financial sustainability. At the regional and international level, key agencies like SPREP and UNEP can access international donor funds to support regional strategic planning and policy development and the provision of technical and capacity strengthening assistance for the small island countries.

162. At the national level, the competition for limited budgetary funds in all Pacific countries is intense and traditionally, environmental management sectors have struggled to secure sufficient resources to adequately implement policies (e.g. NBSAP's) or meet international obligations. However, this situation has been gradually changing as awareness of the importance of a healthy environment to social and economic well-being has raised the profile and relative priority of environmental agencies and their work in many of the Pacific countries. This trend has seen modest increases in budgets for environmental management and conservation (including invasive species management and bio-security) and significantly, with the stimulation of the IAS project, some countries have increased both the size of the key agencies and their operating budgets e.g. (Samoa, Cook Islands, Palau).

163. From the perspective of financial sustainability, it is notable that in recent years where countries have committed to environmental policies such as the NISSAP's, there is now government recognition that a concurrent commitment of human resources needs to be made to ensure, at least, modest capacity is provided to address policy implementation. This has been the case with invasive species management and bio-security across the region and the IAS project can take some credit for ensuring that most of the participating countries have either established or increased national budget commitments to support invasive species management. One example is Tonga where in order to ensure that capacity developed under donor funded projects like the IAS project is not lost, a general policy requires the establishment of a full time government position to encourage the project coordinator to transfer to a mainstream

government role. This may not sound like a substantial commitment but in Tonga (and most Pacific countries) any new full time government position is significant. Furthermore, all of the participating countries have given indications that they will be continuing projects which have been started or fostered under the IAS project.

164. Regionally and internationally, sustainability of financial resources for invasive species will rely on the success or otherwise of the efforts by regional and international agencies such as SPREP and UNEP to access funding from international donors to support both regional IAS initiatives and projects addressing national priorities. In this regard, the GEF has been an important source of funds over length of the project and expectations were high that a second substantial tranche of funding could be accessed under either GEF 5 or GEF 6. As it transpired, the late start to the IAS project meant it was still underway when proposals were called for regional GEF 5 funding which was then primarily allocated to a regional "ridges to reef" integrated ecosystem conservation programme to be implemented by UNDP with 14 participating countries including the 9 in the current IAS project. Although not specifically targeted at invasive species, it is noteworthy that several of the ridges to reef projects build on the outcomes of the IAS project by including invasive species components.

165. SPREP and UNEP Pacific Regional Office recognised that with funding timed to flow in 2017, GEF6 represented an important source of potential funding for the continuation of the work of the IAS project under a similar successful project execution format. At least 8 of the IAS participating countries indicated initial support for the allocation of GEF 6 STAR[6] funding to a second phase of the IAS invasive species project. However, the evaluator understands that following active lobbying at the highest government levels by UNDP, 5 of the countries subsequently agreed to commit to a UNDP Implemented regional renewable energy programme. As it stands, Tonga, Niue and the Marshall Islands have remained committed to a GEF 6 funded IAS project and have been joined by Tuvalu which was not in the current IAS project. This serves to illustrate the importance of UN agencies in a region like the Pacific to be committed to collaboration and cooperation in order to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of their programmes and to reduce overlaps and replication.

166. What this example illustrates is that reliance on international funding sources for ongoing invasive species projects is uncertain and subject to the changing priorities of donors and governments. However, the history of donor programmes for environmental management in the Pacific shows that there is global concern for the plight of Pacific biodiversity and new funding opportunities emerge regularly. When considered in tandem with the small but significant budgetary commitments being made by governments and the ongoing potential for further international donor funding in the region, there remain good grounds for optimism around funding sustainability.

167. But the example also touches upon the issue of the regional allocation and use of GEF funds which are a critically important and reliable funding source for environmental and biodiversity conservation (including IAS) management in the region. Despite four countries signing up to the GEF6 funded IAS project it was a source of disappointment to project management to learn that despite indicating intentions to allocate GEF 6 STAR funds to ongoing invasive species projects, several countries opted to apply STAR funding towards a regional renewable energy programme. While it is clear that countries make their own decisions on funding priorities, they can be and are influenced by the views of the UN and Regional agencies working in the region. Worryingly, there is a perception of competition for GEF funds between the UN agencies and that UNEP, which is responsible the global environmental mandate and is a major GEF implementing agency, needs to strengthen its presence and technical capacity in the region to better advocate environmental and ecosystem/biodiversity management programmes and strengthen working partnerships with Pacific countries and regional agencies, especially SPREP. Strengthened UNEP capacity in the region would also ease the project management workload on the Pacific Regional Focal Point.

Recommendation 2. *The Evaluator notes the observations of several interviewees, both government and partners, on the relative low level of capacity employed by UNEP in the region and suggests this needs to*

[6] STAR. The System for Transparent Allocation of Resources determines the amount of **GEF** resources that a given country can access in a replenishment period. It replaces the Resource Allocation Framework (RAF).

be strengthened in order to ensure UNEP can engage effectively with regional partners and Pacific island governments in the advocacy of its environmental and ecosystem management programmes and the development of collaborative projects and funding initiatives. To this end it is recommended that UNEP undertake a strategic appraisal of its role in the region and related capacity requirements, including giving consideration to the relocation of technical positions currently located in the Asia Pacific regional office in Bangkok which have direct relevance to high priority issues for Pacific Governments such as climate change, ecosystem management, waste and chemical management and environmental governance.

The rating for the financial sustainability is "Likely"

3.4.3 Sustainability of Institutional Frameworks

168. The institutional frameworks for IAS management which were either established by the IAS project or strengthened through its activities is highly likely to be sustained well beyond the project's term. This is a reflection of the project's focus on building foundations and mainstreaming long term effective IAS management in the participating countries. Key components of the frameworks are the institutional mechanisms, policy and legislation which have been endorsed or enacted namely the IAS Coordinating mechanisms, NISSAP's and legislation for bio security control and protocols. As discussed above, the participating countries have committed to national invasive species co-ordinating mechanisms and have all designated focal points for invasive species and bio-security management. These are important structural advances at the national level and are key steps towards fully mainstreaming invasive species management. At the regional level, the project has strengthened the regional institutional frameworks and networks supporting invasive species management though the development of the regional data base linked to the monitoring of the implementation of the Guidelines, has assisted in maintaining and strengthening the PILN and has assisted in the establishment of the new sub-regional Melanesia Invasive Species Committee. The leadership of SPREP is critical in sustaining this regional institutional framework as is the continued commitment and engagement of the constituent partners in the regional networks. SPREP is certain to continue in this role due to its regional environmental mandate as are the partner institutions.

The rating for the institutional sustainability is "Highly Likely"

3.4.4 Environmental sustainability

169. The rationale behind the project is to help ensure ecosystem stability by building institutions, capacity technical skills and experience needed to combat the destabilising impacts of invasive alien species. Increasing trade and movement of people across borders creates increased potential threat of invasions. In this regard the project's work in helping to strengthen bio-security systems assists in mitigating the environmental threats posed by international and internal movement of Invasive species, thus contributing positively environmental sustainability in the region. The project has also successfully demonstrated best practices for invasive species prevention, control and management in most of the participating countries and has had a direct and positive impact on securing the ecological sustainability of specific priority sites in most of the countries. However, there remains some potential for re-invasion to occur if site monitoring and follow up is not vigilant. Project activities associated with establishing bio-controls, particularly on plant species, have the potential to disrupt environmental sustainability the inadvertent introduction of control agents harmful to native species. However, the project has been diligent in ensuring best practices/protocols and appropriate research is applied in advance of bio-control introductions.

170. Climate Change poses an insidious threat to the marine and terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity of the region and by implication, environmental stability in the Pacific. Because of its pervasiveness and potential effect on fundamental biological processes, climate change will interact with other existing stressors to

affect the distribution, spread, abundance, and impact of invasive species (Gritti et al. 2006)[7]. This will most likely occur at multiple stages along the invasive pathway through altered transport and introduction mechanisms, new establishments, altered impacts and distribution of existing IAS and altered effectiveness of control strategies. There is insufficient Pacific specific research to predict how this will unfold over time and although not specifically considered by the project, these are factors which may negatively influence long term impact. However, invasive species led threats to important economic sectors like tourism and agriculture may also encourage greater government investment in prevention, control and management, or they may be negative if the threats from new invasions etc. overwhelm the small island countries.

171. In short, the project has contributed to environmental sustainability in all the participating countries some of which are now much better equipped to deal with the threat. However, as acknowledged by the project manager at the recent PILN meeting, there remains much to be done and there is a real danger of losing the "battle" in the region especially in the face of unknowns such as the influence of climate change. This suggests an element of uncertainty and a rating of moderately likely.

The rating for the environmental sustainability element is "Moderately Likely"

3.4.5 Catalytic Role and Replication

172. It is noted that the catalytic role of UNEP interventions is embodied in the approach to supporting the creation of an enabling environment and of investing in pilot activities which are innovative and showing how new approaches can work and can be up-scaled. In this regard the project has performed very well though its introduction of best invasive species prevention, control and management practices and associated capacity building through field training involving "hands on" experience. The key categories are addressed below:

173. ***Catalysed behavioural changes***: The project's success in the development and endorsement of National Invasive Species Strategies and Action Plans (NISSAPs) linked to the regional Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific was important in catalysing government awareness and acceptance of the need to invest in invasive species management. The IAS project and the NISSAP process opened the way for range of training /capacity needs assessments leading to training programmes in Kiribati, Niue, Samoa, Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Tonga for key government agency and NGO/partner staff. These helped catalyse important field based training and mentoring linked to the implementation of a significant number of project sponsored pilot projects. These included: weed management projects in Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Niue, FSM RMI and Palau; Myna bird control in Samoa and Kiribati; Pig management in Niue and Tonga; rat eradication and control in Tonga and the Cook Islands site restoration in Samoa and Tonga and little fire ant management in Vanuatu. Another example of the project's catalytic (and replication) role is found in its work to develop bio-controls for species of regional importance. For example, host-specificity testing of bio-control agents was completed for the African tulip leading to importation into the Cook Islands and Vanuatu once importation permits are provided. These were not known prior to the project which has been a catalyst for their identification. Similarly, a bio-control agent for *Mikania micrantha* was imported into Palau but despite the introduction being made under ideal conditions with mentoring by a biocontrol expert, this was unsuccessful. Efforts are being made to discover why this is so. It has been suggested that there is a different biotype of *mikania* in Palau from that in the South Pacific. This has important implications for *mikania* biocontrol in the rest of Micronesia; an introduction of the same biocontrol agent from Fiji into Guam in 2015 also failed to establish. Despite this setback, the breakthroughs identified above have encouraged/catalysed further investment in bio-control research across the region.

174. ***Provided incentives***: In the absence of direct financial incentives, the primary incentive offered through the project to encourage stakeholder engagement and changed behaviour was the promise of learning, training and opportunity to become up-skilled in a critical aspect of environmental management. Capacity strengthening of this nature is welcomed in the Pacific region where education and learning opportunities

[7] In: Five Potential Consequences of Climate Change for Invasive Species Jessica J. Hellmann et.al. Conservation Biology, Volume 22, No. 3, 534–543 C 2008 Society for Conservation Biology.

are highly sought after. In this regard, the evaluator was consistently informed by the participants in project activities that their involvement and the training and mentoring offered had been a valued experience resulting a new appreciation of and commitment to, invasive species management. At more subjective level, another incentive, perhaps of particular relevance in the Pacific context, could be best described by the increased "mana" (pride, self and peer respect) generated by a country through its demonstration of commitment and motivation to care for its environment.

175. ***Institutional changes***: Prior comment has been made on the project's catalytic role in establishing or strengthening national invasive species management coordination mechanisms whereby all participating countries now have some form of a mechanism in place. The project has also resulted in full time invasive species officers in Tonga, Niue and Vanuatu and all countries now have an agency and staff member fulfilling that focal point role. It was noticeable from interviews and during the country visits that there was a good degree of cooperation between government agencies with IAS management responsibilities. These included environmental management agencies (with responsibility for biodiversity conservation), agriculture agencies (agricultural pest management) and customs and ports agencies (point of entry biosecurity). Inter-agency cooperation of this nature is not always the norm in Pacific island countries and interviewees consistently pointed out the role of the project through, for example, NISSAP consultation and EDRR training, in catalysing this improved state. At the regional level, SPREP has strengthened its IAS information and data management capacity with the development of the regional invasives data base and improved regional invasive species web portal.

176. ***Policy changes***: Key policy changes have been described elsewhere and centre on the updating, development and endorsement of NISSAPs to guide national invasive species management in all participating countries. Through their close linkage with the regional Guidelines, the NISSAP's ensure that the respective national invasive species activities contribute to both national policy frameworks for environmental management including for example, NBSAP's, as well as the overall implementation of the regional IAS strategic programme. The Project has been responsible for assisting the participating countries with the implementation of NISSAP identified priorities and by implication the achievement of national invasive species goals and objectives. The project has also supported policy implementation in several countries through assistance with the development of bio-security legislation and identification and introduction of bio-control agents.

177. ***Catalytic financing***: High hopes were held by project management that substantial funding for a nominal Phase II of the project would be secured under GEF 6 STAR funding which would include its expansion to other Pacific countries. However as explained in 3.4.2. above competition for GEF6 funds meant 4 countries (Tonga, Marshall Islands and Niue from the current project and newcomer, Tuvalu) sought to utilise these funds for ongoing invasive species projects. Two other countries, chose not to proceed with plans to join the initiative. Although still not confirmed, it is highly likely this second iteration of the Project will be approved by GEF. It should be noted that many of the country projects under the $91 million GEF 5 Ridges to Reefs regional programme being implemented by UNDP and the Secretariat for the Pacific Community), include follow on invasive species projects which build in the institutional and policy framework and national capacity established under the project. The establishment of permanent IAS positions in at least four countries during the life of the project, together with varying degrees of national budgetary allocations for invasive species management represents sustainable follow on financial contributions by Governments.

178. ***Champions to catalyse change***: Overall, it is fair to say the project has been successful in creating not just one or two "champions" but a small cadre of individuals across the participating countries who have demonstrated leadership and a commendable level of commitment to invasive species management. These people have been instrumental in the facilitation of project implementation and have become key "go to" people on national invasive species issues. At least three of these individuals have worked with the project either from its outset or for a significant period and have benefitted from the training and mentoring offered by the project's regional technical experts. The project has also encouraged and provided critical support to the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN) which connects Pacific conservation professionals to share knowledge, expertise, tools, and ideas on invasive species management. The PILN project teams which are often multi-agency and multi - disciplinary work together on invasive projects often with critical input from other teams and experts, resulting in a common vision and a plan for effective action. These "battlers" (a collective term coined by the IAS Project Manager) are the real "champions" of the invasive species and have played a critical role in the implementation of the

project. Although it is a fine example of an established peer support network which has survived and grown with over 20 national teams established, the PILN suffers from a chronic funding shortage, has not been able to consistently employ a full time co-ordinator and consequently has not been able to fully realise its potential.

179. The project has also benefitted from the patronage of high level politicians in some countries. Notable examples include in Samoa where the Prime Minister created significant public interest in invasive species management through his support for a national myna bird eradication programme and in Tonga where the Governor of Vava'u Province took an active and public role in support of the project activities in that province.

180. Finally, it is appropriate to note here the consistent appreciation of the leadership and pragmatic management approach of the SPREP Project Manager by many of the interviewees, including project partners, who also noted the importance of his contribution to building a Pacific invasives "team" ethos.

Replication

181. Invasive species management is very much context specific and approaches used in one location may not be replicable or transferable elsewhere certainly without rigorous testing. Although replication strategies are not clearly articulated in the project design, the project has sought to identify best invasive species management practices which are appropriate for application in the region. These are included in "how to" guides for future use in the region and are available to the rest of the Pacific through the Invasive Species "Battler" Series of publications. For example, the Samoa project contributed several case studies to the Invasive Species Battler Series which informs and assists Pacific islander invasive species practitioners to deal with issues that others have already addressed. An important and related mechanism for catalysing replication is the PILN which operates as a learning and sharing network for Pacific invasive professionals. This network was supported by the project and is used to encourage both the sharing and use of best practices and experiences.

182. The project has also supported research into bio-controls for priority invasive species such as Mikania (Palau) and African tulip (Vanuatu) and the potential to replicate the release of the control agents in other countries is high. Similarly multi-country training built both capacity and provided the vehicle for replication of techniques and methods across several countries. Examples include rat eradication on small islands (Tonga, Kiribati, RMI) and forest restoration (Niue, Tonga and Samoa).

The project's catalytic role and replicability is rated as "Satisfactory"

3.5 Efficiency

3.5.1 Cost efficiencies

183. Cost-saving measures were frequently implemented and examination of project management reveals frequent examples of adaptive management aimed at either reducing costs or achieving outputs on limited budgets. An early example was the decision to undertake the inception process/meetings in the participating countries rather than call a regional meeting which would have been very expensive due to the high costs of travel in this vast region and for which there was insufficient budget. In-country inception had the advantage of travel costs for only the Task or Project Manager and provided an opportunity to engage with a wider group of relevant national stakeholders than would be the case with a regional meeting. The disadvantage was the lost opportunity to build regional camaraderie between the national coordinators and a consensus understanding of the project goals, objectives and the role and contribution of each country in achieving these. Other examples include accepting that countries should utilise existing biodiversity coordination mechanisms in lieu of establishing separate National Invasive Species Coordinating Committees such as in the Cook Islands where the Cook Islands Biodiversity Committee acts in this capacity. Opportunities to bring national coordinators and other key invasive species stakeholders together when their attendance coincided with large regional events such as the 10th Pacific Conference on Biodiversity (Fiji, 2013) were utilised to review project progress.

3.5.2 Timeliness

184. The early design of this project began in 2008 but was impeded by a series of events including budget reductions necessitating a project re-design which delayed the final GEF approval until November 2010. "Following approval, the project encountered further delays until the signing of the Project Cooperation Agreement between UNEP and SPREP 22 August 2011 which triggered an official start date of 12 September 2011. However, the project encountered further delays in workplan implementation including slow staffing appointments to the key in-country National Coordinator positions and to the key SPREP project management positions of GEFPAS Coordinator and replacement Project Manager. The six monthly Project Progress Report in June 2012 records that 0% progress had been made on any project activities by 30 June of that year and the six monthly progress report for 30 December 2012 records only minimal progress only in activities related to establishing the project management and implementation structure (inception meetings and National Coordinator appointments in two countries). In reality delays meant commencement of substantive project activities relating to work plan implementation were not underway until late in 2012 at the earliest. As a consequence, the project completion date was pushed out to 30 September 2016 from the original planned completion date of 28 February 2015. The difficulties of project management in the Pacific including overburdened national focal points, challenging communications, logistical challenges and high travel costs, also contributed to these delays In the initial stages of project management, the focus was on establishing country institutional structures, aligning NISSAP's with the regional Guidelines and undertaking desk top studies to improve information for better priority setting and decision making. This institutional and policy focus contributed to the perception that the project was slow to start and not meeting country expectations in terms of demonstrated progress on invasive species prevention and control. The appointment of a new Project Manager by SPREP prior to the Mid Term Review saw a new emphasis placed on achieving field based results and completing designated project outputs which together with the nearly 2 year project extension, led to a commendable improvement in project timeliness and results. Despite the second half improvement, the overall project history is one of missed targets and extensions leading the conclusion of an unsatisfactory rating for timeliness.

> Lesson # 5. *Lengthy delays in establishing the project management and implementation structures for GEF (and other donor) projects, especially those involving multiple countries are a common occurrence in the Pacific region. Inevitably, project designers either under estimate the time this requires and/ or the capacity available to meet these needs resulting in projects lagging behind in their early phases as happened with the IAS project. The lesson here is that project design needs to be based on a realistic assessment of these start up factors and allow sufficient time to get partners signed up, staff recruited and trained and funds moved to the correct recipients. All project stakeholders must recognise these realities and be prepared to extend time frames accordingly, even by a year if necessary.*

The overall rating for efficiency is "Satisfactory"

3.6 Factors affecting performance

3.6.1 Preparation and readiness

185. The issues impacting on the project design process are discussed in Section 2.7. These included the reduction in anticipated funding and the need for a redesign or recalibration of the project components, activities and outputs away from the originally planned programmatic approach (4 key program areas delivering common services and technical support to all 9 countries) to one involving 9 separate national projects which met the diverse and disaggregated priorities and demands of the individual countries. The result was a repackaged but complex Logical Framework which although setting out clear objectives, incorporated a large number of outputs and activities resulting in a very ambitious workload given the timeframe, available resources and the relatively poor capacity context in which project implementation would have to take place. Under this scenario, countries would only be focussing on a limited subset of activities and the potential for the project to produce a range of unrelated outputs which would be limited in their overall effectiveness and impact on overall invasive species management was high. The ambitious

nature of the project outputs was noted by the Project Approval Group and again in the MTR. The latter suggested downsizing the project doing fewer activities in fewer countries (closure of PNG and FSM was recommended) with greater capacity for impact. Subsequently only the PNG project was terminated freeing up funding for much needed and intensified regional support and technical services for project activities and coordination.

186. As it has transpired the project has completed its activities and outputs and has been also been relatively successful in blending these into a regional IAS narrative and stimulating IAS support and strengthening capacity in the participating countries. However, this has come at a cost in terms of significant delays to the project timeframe. In hindsight, retention of the original concept of a limited thematic based project delivering to all 9 countries under a less ambitious scenario would in all likelihood have led to more efficient and timely project delivery. However, it has to be acknowledged that this approach was rejected by the participating countries which were insistent on project budgets and activities tailored to their priorities at the time.

187. In large multi country projects where project reporting can be a new and confronting experience for national coordinators it is important to properly and accurately assess the capacity of the country and its readiness to effectively manage its project load. An important aspect of project preparedness which was not satisfactorily addressed was the provision of sufficient funding to provide for regional coordination and support activities including regular travel by project management to the countries for mentoring and management assistance, annual meetings for project national coordinators and key partners, regular meetings of the TAG and regional training, networking and workshops. It is understood that countries were also resistant at the PPG phase to allocating funds for what were perceived to be "agency" funding Eventually this situation was addressed with the termination of the PNG project and reallocation of the funding for these and related purposes which led to a significant improvement in the project results and effectiveness. This is a lesson which is often repeated in project evaluation in the Pacific with its challenging communications, logistical difficulties, uncertain and expensive travel, often high country staff turnover and the need to build national project management capacity, often from scratch. In this context the provision of sufficient and realistic project funding for the EA to effect regional support and coordination must be a very high priority. However, it has to be acknowledged that resolution of both issues described above was very difficult to achieve in the funding climate of the day. The advent of the GEFPAS concept and the RAF funding allocation model which led to country insistence on the use of GEF RAFT funds for their priorities and a reluctance to see or allocate these funds for essential EA and other regional coordination and support purposes. (see also related comments under 2.2.5 above and Lesson #5).

Overall, the project preparation and readiness is rated “Unsatisfactory”

3.6.2 Project implementation and management

188. As has been alluded to in previous sections, project implementation and management faced a number of challenges. Despite these, the project has been successful in delivering its outputs and progressing towards achievement of its outcomes in part because of the strong working relationship which developed between the IA (UNEP) Task Manager and the current EA (SPREP) Project Manager working within the framework of the joint UNEP/SPREP Programme Support Unit (PSU) which also included a Project Facilitator, Financial Officer and nominally the National Project Coordinators. The PM and TM provided strong project leadership and successfully fostered the culture of adaptive management which was originally advocated in the ProDoc. Through the PSU they were able to work together to adjust implementation approaches to address changing circumstances and priorities. This highly functional and effective relationship was widely praised at the country level in the interviews with National Project Coordinators and was credited with providing valuable and pragmatic and timely support, particularly in the second half of the project following the mid-term review. It is clear their leadership, professional expertise and dedication was crucial to the overall success of the project.

189. Adaptive decision making was greatly assisted by the Project Managers’ deep understanding of both the Pacific islands working environment and his professional expertise in invasive species management and technical issues and his management capabilities. Comments emphasised the responsiveness and timeliness of assistance, consistency of support and communication, practical help with reporting issues

and logistics, the depth of understanding of the capacity constraints national teams were working under as being features of project supervision, and guidance and technical support. Several comments suggested the project would not have achieved the results it has without the dedication, commitment and flexibility of the current Project Manager.

190. The adaptive management approach adopted by project management was also evident in the decisions taken at mid-project to revise and restructure the project. These resulted in a pragmatic review of the needs of the participating countries and the range of activities which could be realistically achieved in the time remaining. The revision confirmed that contrary to the recommendations of the MTR, the project could still achieve its objectives in FSM and the Marshall islands and with the additional funding available from the closure of the PNG project, could expand some activities such as the provision of invasive species management facilities in the Cook Islands beyond those originally identified in the Prodoc.

191. Interviewees were also very impressed with the technical assistance they received from the professional experts contracted through the program who assisted with the NISSAPs and other policy initiatives and, those who oversaw the field projects such as the rat eradications at multiple sites, little fire ant control in Vanuatu, EDRR strategic planning and training forest restorations in Samoa and Tonga, to name a few.

192. It is fair to say some interviewees were less forthcoming about the early levels of support from the EA and commented on early difficulties relating to new compliance requirements, reporting and the alignment of financial management systems. These were exacerbated by a perceived lack of understanding of the national systems and capacity constraints newly minted national project coordinators were working under. However, it is clear once these were sorted out with a mid-project change of personnel in the EA management team, project oversight proceeded without further issues leading to much improved and the project and the accolades referred to above.

193. The role of the Project Facilitator position has come under critical scrutiny in the interviews. This position was established by the EA to work closely with the National Coordinators to ensure all planning, financial management and reporting was carried out to the highest standards of efficiency and to provide support for the implementation of project activities. However, in the initial stages of the project the focus on reporting and compliance with deadlines increased pressure on country and SPREP project and financial management staff new to GEF and UNEP reporting and financial management processes. The MTR noted a call for the relationship to be focused more on support and capacity building and assistance with in-country project logistics. The evaluator subsequently noted consistent appreciation from interviewees that these views had been heeded by Project management leading to noticeable improvements in support, in the second half, of project implementation, helped no doubt by supplementary funding for regional support made available from the termination of the PNG project.

194. The project implementation framework also called for the establishment of a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) consisting of selected individuals with IAS professional and technical experience in the region. It is noted by the Evaluator that the TAG was not formally constituted partly because of a lack of funding for convening TAG meetings and partly because the IAS expertise of the TM and that of the PM was deemed sufficient to address most technical issues. Where this was not the case, then advice was sought from appropriate experts known to the PSU on a case by case basis. While this is an example of "adaptive management" and programme efficiency, it is also a lost opportunity to engage key partners and experts and ensure an external perspective is applied to help evaluate progress and advise on issues which might arise and again highlights the need to ensure adequate financial provision is made to support all aspects of project coordination and management.

The project's overall performance in implementation and management is rated "Satisfactory"

3.6.3 Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships

195. The project design included extensive identification of major stakeholders by country and with a focus on lead government agencies, relevant national NGOs and important regional and international institutions and programs, although it did not identify potential academic institutions or private sector partners. No formal stakeholder "analysis" was attempted which would have helped identify those stakeholders best positioned to most significantly influence and impact the project and provide a basis to developing a clearer strategy for their engagement. As it transpired, over the course of the project many organisations

contributed to its success. Several international, regional and local organisations, many of them members of the Pacific Invasives Partnership (PIP) and working specifically on IAS projects, awareness and capacity issues, were strong partners with the project. These included the PIP members Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN), Islands Conservation, and, Landcare Research (NZ), National NGO's such as Te Ipukerea Society of the Cook Islands the Vava'u Environment Protection Association of Tonga and schools such as Tupou College, Tonga. The private sector also contributed some strong support including Educhem. Other members of PIP including the Pacific Invasives Initiative (PII) and Conservation International also helped review and contributed to aspects of the project.

196. The project also called for strong community involvement and there is evidence that this was successfully achieved particularly in Vanuatu, Niue, Tonga, Samoa and the Cook Islands In these countries communities, including schools and youth groups have been actively engaged in working voluntarily on project supported IAS activities. This voluntary support has included replanting at restoration sites, active engagement in eradication activities such as the community efforts to eradicate Little fire ants in Vanuatu which was captured in promotional video and voluntary reporting by the public of potential invasive species as has occurred in Samoa, Tonga and the Cook Islands. Reinforcing this view that the project has significantly improved public understanding of the impacts IAS was the universally positive by interviewees when asked if the project had improved public awareness significantly.

197. As mentioned above one potentially important stakeholder group which was not adequately addressed or engaged was the private sector. Given the importance of trade and transport in invasive pathways the strategies for effective engagement on prevention measures would have benefitted the project. Although there was no specific project strategy for encouraging gender and youth engagement, at the national level the Evaluator identified numerous projects where communities, women and youth (schools) were engaged effectively and undertook productive roles in project activities.

198. Overall the project was considered successful in terms of its stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships.

Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships is rated "Satisfactory"

3.6.4 Communication and public awareness

199. Project Component 1 Foundations, seeks an outcome whereby the "impacts of invasive species on biodiversity, economies, livelihoods and health and actions to manage and reduce them are widely understood". The project planned to achieve this through community involvement in activities and wider outreach and awareness programmes. In the course of country visits to Tonga, Samoa, Cook Islands and Kiribati, the Evaluator was able to see first-hand the impressive array of information products generated by the awareness programmes. These were supplemented by media events such as regular radio broadcasts, social media (facebook, twitter) school visits and community consultations all of which culminated in vastly improved community and public awareness of invasive species. Interviews with national project coordinators from other participating countries indicated similar outreach programmes were successful. Of particular note were the media campaigns on myna birds in Samoa and little fire ants in Vanuatu, the latter spearheaded by a highly informative video which aired on national television.

200. At regional and international level, the project has been highly successful in communicating results and lessons through the SPREP website which hosts the GEFPAS Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Project website (http://www.sprep.org/ias) which contains news and updates on the project and a help desk for operational guidelines and instructions for aspects of GEF-PAS IAS project administration. It also provides access to the Invasive Battler Resource Base and links to the sites of PILN, PIP and other partners. These sites combine to provide an outstanding web based IAS communication and knowledge management site easily accessed by regional and international stakeholders and the project management is to be commended on the investment to update these platforms.

The project's performance in ensuring communication and public awareness is rated "Highly Satisfactory"

3.6.5 Country ownership and driven-ness

201. As alluded to in previous sections the strong desire of the countries to see GEF RAF allocations applied to national IAS priorities during the project design phase ensured an early measure of country ownership and driven-ness. The Project delivered support for a diverse range of IAS activities which were successfully implemented by national government agencies, NGO's and community teams with support from project funded IAS management experts. When linked to national awareness programmes, the projects have undoubtedly raised the in-country profile of IAS and with it the sense of country ownership. At a higher level, the project has been responsible for engaging high level political and government interest in IAS leading to elevated policy and budgetary priority in several countries represented by the endorsement of updated or newly developed NISSAP's and the establishment of IAS Coordinating mechanisms. However, as is to be expected in a nine country project, the degree of ownership and drive-ness varies between countries and some still lag behind in terms of high level government and political backing and long term funding commitments. It is notable that those countries where ownership is strongest are those where individuals have been engaged with the project from its earliest days and their leadership, dedication and commitment has helped drive high level political interest. These countries are often those where ownership can also be measured by higher than normal government funded commitments to IAS management, including through dedicated IAS positions, support for follow up activities and NISSAP implementation and a willingness to seek additional external funding for IAS.

Country ownership and driven-ness is rated "Satisfactory"

3.6.6 Financial planning and management

202. The estimated and actual GEF costs as well as the expenditure ratio (actual/planned) of the project are summarized in Table 10 below. The figures for co-financing are found in table 13. . However, as can observed in the table, the actual project cost less co-financing contributions, i.e. GEF cash, was remarkably close to the estimated cost at design. This signifies commendable financial management on behalf of the EA.

Table 12: Summary of project expenditures

Component/Sub-component/Output	Estimated cost at design (GEF cash)	Actual cost (GEF cash)	Expenditure ratio actual/planned (%over/under spent)
SPREP PMU	494,998	782,446	1.58 (58% overspent)
Cook Islands	324,040	324,040	1.0 (100% spent)
Federated States of Micronesia	61,180	61,157	1.0 (100% spent)
Kiribati	324,040	324,001	1.0 (100% spent)
Niue	324,040	326,872	1.00 (0.8% overspent)
Palau	61,180	61,180	1.0 (100% spent)
Papua New Guinea	Funding redistributed	mid project	
Marshall Islands	61,180	60,237	1.0 (100% spent)
Samoa	324,040	327,656	1.01 (1.0% overspent)
Tonga	324,040	358,242	1.10 (10% overspent)
Vanuatu	324,040	320,937	0.99(1.0%underspen)
Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation	85,000	85,000 (assumed)	1.0 (100% spent)
Total	3,031,818	3,031,818	1:00 (100% spent)

NB No funding was spent on PNG and the funding allocated to that country was redistributed with the bulk going to SPREP to cover the cost overrun for regional support activities and the remainder to countries for additional activities.

203. ***Project co-financing***: In terms of project co-financing a total of USD 1,090,000 in cash was confirmed as being available from the EA and one participating country (US$ 970,000 from SPREP and US$ 120,000 from FSM) when the project document was signed. It was also anticipated that there would be a further US$ 2,889,072 USD available in in-kind contributions from the participating countries and SPREP (See

Table 13). It should also be noted that while the expenditure budgeted for PNG was reallocated to various activities mid project, the corresponding co-financing commitment was no longer valid. This has resulted in a reduction of the planned co-financing by US$ 416,000 to a total of US$ 3,563,112. The ratio of actual to planned co-financing using the figures in Table 13 a commendable 0.93 or within 7% of the expected co-financing contribution..

204. With regard to in-kind contributions, these primarily consisted of estimates of the time contributed through staff and partner organisations salaries, office space, utilities, communications and in some case vehicle costs. Accurate tracking and accounting for this form of co-financing is often challenging and while it is clear that overall, significant co-financing was forthcoming and some countries were diligent in reporting their contributions, others were less so there is an element of imprecision in co-financing figures.

Table 13: Summary of project co-financing

Co-financing Source	Amount (USD)	
	Planned	Actual
SPREP	1,090,000	1,272,018
Cook Islands	337,427	556,935
Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)	125,120	Not available
Kiribati	360,525	93,453
Niue	350,040	261,964
Palau	117,000	241,594
Papua New Guinea (withdrew from the project)	0	0
Marshall Islands	86,000	1,040
Samoa	400,000	410,633
Tonga	337,000	263,500
Vanuatu	360,000	202,896*
TOTAL	3,563,112	3,314,034 Ratio 0.93

205. The IAS Project was presented with financial challenges, not the least an insufficient budget to provide for effective regional management and technical support and capacity building in the early stages. It was also faced with difficulties harmonising national financial management and reporting standards with the different compliance standards in place for SPREP and UNEP. However, to the credit of the PMU by the mid-point of the project these issues were being successfully addressed. Further, with the freeing up of the PNG funds and the availability of the MTR and its recommendations, the PMU undertook a significant revision of the project activities and budget resulting in a pragmatic reallocation of funds to support the implementation of both outstanding activities and in some cases, additional activities based on the input from the participating countries. The revision provided additional money for expert technical assistance to countries and support for capacity building activities such as the attendance of National Project Coordinators to the regional PILN meeting in 2016. At the same time a reappraisal of national expenditures identified potential surplus funds for additional national activities in some countries such as the invasive species bio-control laboratory in the Cook Islands.

206. The project financial planning, management and reporting was carried out under the EA (SPREP) financial management system and regulations. Some services were procured under country financial management systems with overview by SPREP Financial management. Careful management of cash flows ensured that funding delays or shortfalls did not occur. Revisions to the budget were submitted to and approved by UNEP and expenditure was generally in line with the approved budget items. A concerted effort was made to ensure accurate Quarterly Expenditure Reports were submitted by the participating countries in a reasonably timely manner. Some countries experienced slow recruitment of their national co-ordinators and also required significant assistance with reporting and financial management.

207. It is noted that leveraged resources come in many forms. The IAS project did not leverage significant additional financial resources but was successful in other ways. For example, at the grass roots level communities and NGO's have provided resources to support the implementation and on-going

management of project activities, particularly in Tonga, Samoa, and Niue. In Tonga, the Vava'u Environmental Protection Association have taken up responsibility for ongoing rodent control on Mt Talau and the Tupou College is actively engaged in the restoration of the neighbouring Toloa Forest restoration. Significant in-kind assistance was leveraged from partner organisations active in Pacific IAS management including from Islands Conservation, Educhem, and Landcare Research NZ, to name a few. Additionally, the Conservation International administered Polynesian/Micronesia Critical Ecosystem Pacific Fund Hot Spot programme which ran concurrently with the project over much of its term, provided further in-kind support through the involvement of many of the same technical experts in both projects hence improving the exchange of information and encouraging mutual capacity building efforts.

208. Auditing of the project's financial management was undertaken by independent auditors under the accredited SPREP auditing system.

Overall project financial planning and management is rated "Satisfactory"

3.6.7 Supervision, guidance and technical backstopping

209. The consistent response from interviewees when asked the question "How satisfied are you with the support you or your colleagues have received from SPREP and UNEP as Executing and Implementing Agencies and why is this?" was one of universal appreciation of the efforts of both agencies and in particular the leadership of the UNEP Task Manager and the SPREP Project Manager. The leadership of the UNEP Task Manager was universally rated as excellent or outstanding with particular emphasis on his professional expertise, decision making flexibility and commitment to the region which ensured a truly effective and adaptive project management approach was adopted. Over the course of the project, the Task Manager built an excellent rapport and mutual trust with the Project Manager and the project management team. The UNEP Task Manager was highly regarded by the project management team and his physical location in Apia only served to strengthen this working relationship. Comments also emphasised the Task Manager's depth of understanding of the capacity constraints national teams were working under as being features of project supervision, guidance and technical support. Several comments suggested the project would not have achieved the results it has without the dedication, commitment and flexibility of the Task Manager.

210. However, it was also noted that in addition to the IAS project, the Task Manager was responsible for at least three other regional GEF projects for which UNEP was the IA plus developing four GEF 5 projects and one GEF 6 project. With the added demands of his normal duties as Regional Focal Point and Head of Agency in the Pacific (formal/diplomatic role), this represented a heavy workload for one person. That multiple duties were handled effectively was due to the dedication and commitment of the Task Manager in question but it also raises the issue of UNEP's role and related technical capacity in the region which is addressed in Recommendation #2.

Overall UNEP supervision and backstopping is rated "Highly Satisfactory"

3.6.8 Monitoring and evaluation

211. *M&E design*: The M&E plan was designed according to UNEP's standard monitoring and evaluation procedures as current at the time of ProDoc approval. These call for deliverables of an inception workshop, mid-term review and terminal evaluation, and appropriate audit results. The project log frame included objectively verifiable indicators of achievements, sources and means of verification for the project objective, outcomes and outputs. The indicators used in the log frame, though ambitious for the project timeframe and budget, are measurable and relevant to the objective. However, in some cases the results were not placed at their correct levels which required considerable re-alignment to meet the meet the requirements of the ToC and the formulation of this evaluation.

The M&E design is rated as "Satisfactory"

212. ***M&E plan implementation***: The M&E system was operational and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards project objectives throughout the project implementation period. The project manager

assured the operationalization of the M&E system based on the feedback received from the participating countries. The majority of countries were able to provide six monthly reports in a timely fashion. However, as would be expected in a multi-country project, some countries were inconsistent with their reporting. In some cases this improved after a training visit by the EA Technical Officer, while difficulties persisted with one country in particular. The information provided by the M&E process was used to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs and was especially helpful when undertaking the project revision process. In addition, the Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Tracking Tool developed to help track and monitor progress in the achievement of the primary outcome of Strategic Program seven of the GEF 4 Biodiversity Strategy: "Operational IAS management frameworks that mitigate impact of IAS on biodiversity and ecosystem services" was completed by the Project Manager, in consultation with the evaluator. This indicated that the project had achieved significant progress with such frameworks in most participating countries.

213. One especially notable innovation undertaken by EA Project Technical Officer was the development of a comprehensive financial and reporting tracking tool which includes a Macro Financial Tracking Tool for quarterly and annual expenditure and cash overview of all countries and a Project Register of Reporting. These provided invaluable up to date information on the status of country reporting, finances and cash on hand.

The M&E plan implementation is rated as "Satisfactory"

4 CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS LEARNED

4.1 Conclusions

214. The Evaluator concludes that over the nearly 5 years the project has been running, it has resulted in significantly raising the profile of the threat invasive species pose to the environmental , economic and human well-being of the communities in the participating Pacific island countries and has strengthened the foundations for sustainable IAS management efforts. Through its Foundations component the project has been successful in addressing fundamental and badly needed institutional, policy and capacity issues at the national level in all of the countries. However it is noted that the disparity in available funding and human resources between the participating countries has meant that not all countries have benefitted from the project equally. Those countries which have performed most strongly are those where political support is strongest and staff involved with the project is the most stable. Nevertheless, the project's work to establish or strengthen national invasive species management coordination mechanisms, policy (in the form of NISAPPs, bio security regulations, EDRR protocols) and information management will influence the long term sustainability of its outcomes and have improved the generally weak baselines in place at project inception.

215. However, despite these gains and indications that the mainstreaming of IAS management is progressing, there remains work to be done to consolidate these gains in all countries especially those where the high turnover of staff and lack of a dedicated national level coordinator has conspired to reduce the overall impact of the project's work. There is no doubt that in the face of very poor initial resource levels, particularly funding, the project did very well to achieve the overall improvements in capacity that have enabled the successful achievement of project outputs. The improved institutional skills, access and linkages to networks for national project personnel together with the acquisition of new technical expertise was delivered at two levels; i) project management, including financial and administrative processes and, ii) technical assistance for practical IAS prevention and control field operations. Of critical importance now is the need to continue building the capacity and confidence of key personnel in the participating countries and be prepared to undertake repeat training and mentoring as IAS personnel move on. Much more needs to be done in this area as there remains a very heavy dependence on the regional capacity support mechanisms. It is therefore crucial that SPREP and its IAS regional partners are able to maintain and strengthen the support network which has been built by the project.

216. While much has been achieved in the areas of institutional strengthening and building capacity, it is concluded that the project has also been very successful in its execution of numerous national pilot or demonstration projects. Without doubt the momentum built around these activities has been a major

factor in garnering public and government support for IAS management by demonstrating the tangible results of employing best practices in plant and animal eradication and the restoration of ecosystems and habitats. The sub projects have also been instrumental in engaging other stakeholders and broadening the support base and technical experience available in most of the participating countries. When assessed against the status of IAS management at the inception of the project, the Evaluator concludes that the project has been very successful in progressing IAS prevention, control and management in the participating countries and in strengthening the regional support systems. However, the momentum generated is at risk of stalling unless there is continuing investment in maintaining a regional support network to continue capacity building, maintain the profile of IAS in the region and with it government support, and importantly, continue to stimulate and support priority eradication and control activities.

Table 14: Summary of Evaluation criteria, assessment and ratings

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Ref.	Rating
A. Strategic relevance		3.1	HS
B. Achievement of outputs		3.2	HS
C. Effectiveness: Attainment of objectives and planned results		3.3	S
1. Achievement of direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed TOC		3.3.1	S
2. Likelihood of impact using ROtI approach		3.3.2	HL
3. Achievement of formal project objectives as presented in the Project Document.		3.3.3	S
D. Sustainability of Outcomes			L
1. Socio-political sustainability		3.4.1	HL
2. Financial resources		3.4.2	L
3. Institutional framework		3.4.3	HL
4. Environmental sustainability		3.4.4	ML
5. Catalytic role and replication		3.4.5	S
E. Efficiency		3.5	S
F. Factors affecting project performance			
1. Preparation and readiness		3.6.1	U
2. Project implementation and management		3.6.2	S
3. Stakeholders participation, cooperation and partnerships		3.6.3	S
4. Communication and public awareness		3.6.4	HS
5. Country ownership and driven-ness		3.6.5	S
6. Financial planning and management		3.6.6	S
7. Supervision, guidance and technical backstopping		3.6.7	HS
8. Monitoring and evaluation		3.6.8	S
i. M&E design		3.6.8	S
ii. M&E plan implementation		3.6.8	S
Overall project rating			**S**

4.2 Recommendations

217.The following are the main recommendations that have been generated from the evaluation findings:

Context: (Important)	Maintaining and expanding the regional support services and network built by the project is critical to being able to maintain the momentum generated by the project (and the UNEP/GEF investment) and ensuring the outcomes will be fully achieved over time. (3.2.1) The IAS project got away to a slow start and difficulties were experienced in recruiting suitable individuals as National Project Coordinators. Once recruitment was completed it became clear that a high level of project management and technical support was required to build the capability of these and other national staff involved in project implementation, if the project was to be successful. Once funds became available mid-way through the project, the EA set about developing a regional support network to deliver technical and managerial services and support to the national programmes. The investment in the network and its service delivery boosted project productivity significantly and led to improved capacity and capability across the participating countries.
Recommendation #1	That UNEP strongly encourages SPREP and other regional (CROP) organisations with IAS mandates such as SPC with its bio-security focus, to collaborate with partners such as the Pacific Invasives Partnership and the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN) to undertake a review of the current regional IAS support network with a view to designing and institutionalising a coordinated support service within the core operations of SPREP and SPC. The service will be formally linked with key regional IAS partners and institutions and the design should include options for sustainable funding mechanisms for both the service and long term regional IAS support.
Responsibility:	UNEP Pacific sub-regional office with support from UN Environment Programme, Nairobi.
Time-frame:	Design phase for follow-on project under GEF 6.
Context: (Improvement)	The regional allocation and use of GEF funds are a critically important and reliable funding source for environmental and biodiversity conservation (including IAS) management in the region. While it is clear that countries make their own decisions on funding priorities, they can be and are influenced by the views of the UN and Regional agencies working in the region. As the UN Agency responsible for the global environmental mandate and a major GEF implementing agency, UNEP plays an important role in the region as an advocate for environmental and ecosystem/biodiversity management programmes and a working partner with Pacific countries and regional agencies, especially SPREP. (3.4.2)
Recommendation #2	The Evaluator notes the observations of several interviewees both government and partners on the relative low level of capacity employed by UNEP in the region and suggestions this needs to be strengthened in order to ensure UNEP can engage effectively with regional partners and Pacific island governments in the advocacy of its environmental and ecosystem management programmes and the development of collaborative projects and funding initiatives. To this end it is recommended that UNEP undertake a strategic appraisal of its role in the region and related capacity requirements, including giving consideration to the relocation of technical positions currently located in the Asia Pacific regional office which have direct relevance to high priority issues for Pacific Governments such as climate change, ecosystem management, waste and chemical management and

	environmental governance.
Responsibility:	UNEP Higher management
Time-frame:	Within 12 months.

4.3 Lessons Learned

218. The following is a summary of the main lessons that have been learned from some of the project's successes as well challenges:

Context:	The majority of participating countries required substantial support, mentoring and technical assistance as well as assistance with financial and reporting processes. Assessment of the project indicates that those countries where assistance and support was actively sought and valued have performed the strongest in terms of delivering outputs and contributing to project outcomes. Initially SPREP as the EA struggled to provide the levels of support needed with the very limited resources allocated in the project budget for this crucial role. However, this situation significantly improved around the mid-point of the project when funding ear marked for Papua New Guinea was reallocated to intensified regional support activities. This provided new momentum and was a critical factor in the eventual success of the project and its remarkable achievements in terms of delivery of outputs and outcomes.
Lesson # 1:	It is critical in the design stages of projects of this scope and magnitude in the Pacific region to realistically assess the capacity and capability of the participating countries and understand the likely level of management and technical support which will be needed from the Executing Agency. Negotiation with the participating countries to ensure a realistic budget is allocated for regional support operations is essential to ensure regional back up is available to support and build project management capacity and successful implementation of national level.
Application:	This lesson applies to the development of all regionally executed multi- country projects with a national implementation and capacity building focus and goals.
Context:	Project design emphasises national implementation and was very dependent on the effectiveness and capability and commitment of the national coordinators. Consequently, the selection (non-selection) of suitable candidates had an important influence on the project. The project performed the strongest in those countries where the project coordinator was appointed to a full time position from the outset and exhibited a good understanding of the importance of IAS management, commitment and dedication to the coordination role, a willingness to learn and pass that knowledge on and a great deal of motivation. All too often in the Pacific, government agencies operating on financially constrained budgets have insufficient staff to meet their obligations and consequently load available staff (including contracted project staff) with additional responsibilities at the expense of their primary duties. Several countries that did not dedicate a full time national Coordinator did not perform as well due to these competing duties. A related issue was the high turnover of National Coordinators resulting in a loss of capacity and project knowledge, necessitating retraining.
Lesson # 2:	The selection of the best possible National Project Coordinators is critical to the

	overall success of these projects and has a major bearing on the effective implementation of national project activities. For these reasons project management should strive to work closely with participating countries in the recruitment process to ensure the selection of National Coordinators is carried out as objectively as possible. Careful consideration should be given to whether candidates meet clear selection criteria including qualifications, experience and importantly, an interest in the project's thematic focus and objectives. Ideally all National Coordinators would be appointed in advance of the inception process so they may contribute to, and learn from that important process.
Application:	This lesson applies to the development and management of all regionally executed multi- country projects especially where strong national coordination and management capacity is critical to success.
Context:	The project invested heavily in building the capacity of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) management staff in the participating countries and particularly that of the national coordinators who were crucial to the implementation of the project. The knowledge and experience gained is of great value to governments serious about addressing their IAS issues. It is very important to try to retain these people in permanent government positions and the continued post project involvement of National Coordinators is one measure of the sustainability and national commitment to IAS management. Countries which performed strongly throughout the project recognised that success is dependent on building human capacity over time. Importantly, they were successful retaining the services of the National Coordinator over the life of the project. Further they have expressed the value they place on the individual and having national IAS capacity by arranging for transition to an established a permanent position on the close of the project.
Lesson # 3	Retention of trained staff will always be an important factor in sustaining the capacity gains generated by projects so during the design (PPG) phase of multi country projects efforts should be made by Executing Agencies to negotiate incentives for the post -project retention of national staff trained under the project in permanent positions. Ideally, Government agencies should be encouraged to commit long term to these positions as a matter of policy, even if the decision to do so is reflected as one of "best endeavour". In view of their interest in seeing long term improvements in capacity, these negotiations should be undertaken with the support of Implementing Agencies and donors.
Applicability	The design (PPG) phase of projects with national coordinating and technical application roles embedded in participating countries.
Context	In its initial stages and in several countries, the IAS project struggled to effectively establish the progress and financial reporting processes required to meet UNEP and GEF standards. Adjusting to the requirements of these new reporting systems which required strict adherence to protocols prescribed by the Implementing and Executing Agencies (to meet donor required standards) proved problematic and frustrating for some countries and delayed project implementation. In such situations, adoption of a flexible and adaptive approach by Project Management together with the provision of project management training and support will create goodwill between project management and the countries concerned and lay a cooperative foundation for efficient and effective reporting throughout the project's life. IA's and EA's need to be pragmatic and flexible in assessing the project management training and support needed to ensure that efficient and effective reporting can be achieved throughout the project's life. This needs to be built into the budget and outputs of the project and if linked with the security of tenure issue addressed in recommendation 3 above, could significantly improve the

Lesson# 4	efficiency and effectiveness of project management. If this capacity and capability is not established early, reporting issues will lead to tension between the parties and delays in project implementation. Preferably the extent of project management training and support needed will be identified prior to inception and an appropriate training and support programme will be negotiated with the countries concerned. Open and constructive dialogue greatly assists this process and may also lead to countries which don't initially have the capacity to manage project finances devolving that responsibility to the Executing Agency until such time as the required capacity is in place.
Applicability	Where feedback from participating countries identifies the need for intensive training in project financial and management reporting systems.
Context:	Lengthy delays in establishing the project management and implementation structures for GEF (and other donor) projects, especially those involving multiple countries are a common occurrence in the Pacific region. Inevitably, project designers either under estimate the time this requires and or the capacity available to meet these needs resulting in projects lagging behind in their early phases as happened with the IAS project.
Lesson # 5.	The lesson here is that project design needs to be based on a realistic assessment of these start up factors and allow sufficient time to get partners signed up, staff recruited and trained and funds moved to the correct recipients. All project stakeholders must recognise these realities and be prepared to extend time frames accordingly, even by a year if necessary.
Applicability	The design phase of GRF projects, particularly multi-country projects in the Pacific region.

ANNEXES

I. Evaluation TOR (without annexes)

II. Response to stakeholder comments

III. Evaluation program, containing the names of locations visited and the names (or functions) and contacts (Email) of people met

IV. Bibliography

V. Summary co-finance information and a statement of project expenditure by activity

VI. Evaluation findings and lessons.

VII. Any other communication and outreach tools used to disseminate results, where applicable (e.g. power point presentations, charts, graphs, video links, case studies, etc.)

VIII. Brief summary of the consultant's professional background (0.5 page)

IX. Quality Assessment of the Evaluation Report

X. Stakeholder Analysis.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION

Objective and Scope of the Evaluation

1. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy[8] and the UNEP Programme Manual[9], the Terminal Evaluation is undertaken at completion of the project to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and the main project partners: Pacific Invasive Partnership Members (Invasive Species Specialist Group (IUCN), Pacific Invasive Initiative, Birdlife International, Conservation International, Global Invasive Species Network, Global Invasive Species Programme, Landcare Research, MAF Biosecurity NZ, Pacific Invasive Learning Network, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, The Nature Conservancy, University of the South Pacific, US Forest Service). Therefore, the evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation.

2. It will focus on the following sets of **key questions**, based on the project's intended outcomes, which may be expanded by the consultants as deemed appropriate:

a) Has the project led to increase awareness of the impacts of invasive alien species ?

b) Has the project resulted in the development of new or improved systems for prioritisation, decision making and monitoring?

c) Has the project led to increased support by government and key stakeholders to manage and reduce the effects of IAS.

d) Have institutional skills, linkages, networks and technical capacity been increased by the project?

e) Has the project resulted in the development of revised protocols, policies and procedure which support the effective management of IAS.

f) Have project activities resulted in (or will they lead to the future achievement of) reduced environmental impacts of invasive alien species in both terrestrial and marine habitats?

g) Has the IAS project added value to or complemented other GEF PAS projects in the Pacific

Overall Approach and Methods

3. The Terminal Evaluation of the Project will be conducted by independent consultants under the overall responsibility and management of the UNEP Evaluation Office in consultation with the UNEP Task Manager and the Sub-programme Coordinators of the Ecosystem Management Sub-programme.

4. It will be an in-depth evaluation using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is highly recommended that the consultant(s) maintains close communication with the project team and promotes information exchange throughout the evaluation implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the evaluation findings.

5. The findings of the evaluation will be based on the following:

(a) A **desk review** of:

Relevant background documentation, inter alia Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent,

[8] http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPEvaluationPolicy/tabid/3050/language/en-US/Default.aspx

[9] http://www.unep.org/QAS/Documents/UNEP_Programme_Manual_May_2013.pdf

revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework and its budget; Project reports such as six-monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence etc.; Project outputs: (summary – see project and MTR documents) – NISSAP's, NISC's established/supported, demonstration eradications of IAS, added value to other related projects; MTR or MTE of the project; Evaluations/reviews of similar projects.

(b) **Interviews (individual or in group) with**:
UNEP Task Manager: Project management team; UNEP Fund Management Officers; Project partners (SPREP to provide); Relevant resource persons.

(c) **Surveys**
(d) **Field visits**
(e) **Other data collection tools**

Key Evaluation principles

6. Evaluation findings and judgements should be based on **sound evidence and analysis**, clearly documented in the evaluation report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) to the extent possible, and when verification was not possible, the single source will be mentioned. Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out.

7. The evaluation will assess the project with respect to **a minimum set of evaluation criteria** grouped in six categories: (1) Strategic Relevance; (2) Attainment of objectives and planned result, which comprises the assessment of outputs achieved, effectiveness and likelihood of impact; (3) Sustainability and replication; (4) Efficiency; (5) Factors and processes affecting project performance, including preparation and readiness, implementation and management, stakeholder participation and public awareness, country ownership and driven-ness, financial planning and management, UNEP supervision and backstopping, and project monitoring and evaluation; and (6) Complementarity with the UNEP strategies and programmes. The evaluation consultants can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate.

8. **Ratings.** All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Annex 3 provides guidance on how the different criteria should be rated and how ratings should be aggregated for the different evaluation criterion categories.

9. **Baselines and counterfactuals**. In attempting to attribute any outcomes and impacts to the project intervention, the evaluators should consider the difference between *what has happened with, and what would have happened without, the project*. This implies that there should be consideration of the baseline conditions, trends and counterfactuals in relation to the intended project outcomes and impacts. It also means that there should be plausible evidence to attribute such outcomes and impacts to the actions of the project. Sometimes, adequate information on baseline conditions, trends or counterfactuals is lacking. In such cases this should be clearly highlighted by the evaluators, along with any simplifying assumptions that were taken to enable the evaluator to make informed judgements about project performance.

10. **The "Why?" Question.** As this is a terminal evaluation and a follow-up project is likely [or similar interventions are envisaged for the future], particular attention should be given to learning from the experience. Therefore, the "*Why?*" question should be at the front of the consultants' minds all through the evaluation exercise. This means that the consultants need to go beyond the assessment of "*what*" the project performance was, and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of "*why*" the performance was as it was, i.e. of processes affecting attainment of project results (criteria under category F – see below). This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project. In fact, the usefulness of the evaluation will be determined to a large extent by the capacity of the consultants to explain "*why things happened*" as they happened and are likely to evolve in this or that direction, which goes well beyond the mere review of "*where things stand*" at the time of evaluation.

11. A key aim of the evaluation is to encourage reflection and learning by UNEP staff and key project stakeholders. The consultant should consider how reflection and learning can be promoted, both through the evaluation process and in the communication of evaluation findings and key lessons.

12. Communicating evaluation results. Once the consultant(s) has obtained evaluation findings, lessons and results, the Evaluation Office will share the findings and lessons with the key stakeholders. Evaluation results should be communicated to the key stakeholders in a brief and concise manner that encapsulates the evaluation exercise in its entirety. There may, however, be several intended audiences, each with different interests and preferences regarding the report. The Evaluation Manager will plan with the consultant(s) which audiences to target and the easiest and clearest way to communicate the key evaluation findings and lessons to them. This may include some or all of the following; a webinar, conference calls with relevant stakeholders, the preparation of an evaluation brief or interactive presentation.

Evaluation criteria

Strategic relevance

13. The evaluation will assess, in retrospect, whether the project's objectives and implementation strategies were consistent with global, regional and national environmental issues and needs.

14. The evaluation will assess whether the project was in-line with the GEF Biodiversity focal area's strategic priorities and operational programme(s).

15. The evaluation will also assess the project's relevance in relation to UNEP's mandate and its alignment with UNEP's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. UNEP's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UNEP's programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UNEP's thematic priorities, known as Subprogrammes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes [known as Expected Accomplishments (EAs)] of the SubProgrammes. The evaluation will assess whether the project makes a tangible/plausible contribution to any of the EAs specified in the MTS (2010 – 2013). The magnitude and extent of any contributions and the causal linkages should be fully described.

16. The evaluation should assess the project's alignment / compliance with UNEP's policies and strategies. The evaluation should provide a brief narrative of the following:

1. *Alignment with the Bali Strategic Plan (BSP)*[10]. The outcomes and achievements of the project should be briefly discussed in relation to the objectives of the UNEP BSP.
2. *Gender balance*. Ascertain to what extent project design, implementation and monitoring have taken into consideration: (i) possible gender inequalities in access to and the control over natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of women and children to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of women in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation. Are the project intended results contributing to the realization of international GE (Gender Equality) norms and agreements as reflected in the UNEP Gender Policy and Strategy, as well as to regional, national and local strategies to advance HR & GE?
3. *Human rights based approach (HRBA) and inclusion of indigenous peoples issues, needs and concerns*. Ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on HRBA. Ascertain if the project is in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, and pursued the concept of free, prior and informed consent.
4. *South-South Cooperation.* This is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology, and knowledge between developing countries. Briefly describe any aspects of the project that could be considered as examples of South-South Cooperation.
5. *Safeguards*. Whether the project has adequately considered environmental, social and economic risks and established whether they were vigilantly monitored. Was the safeguard management instrument completed and were UNEP ESES requirements complied with?

17. Based on an analysis of project stakeholders, the evaluation should assess the relevance of the project intervention to key stakeholder groups.

Achievement of Outputs

18. The evaluation will assess, for each component, the project's success in producing the programmed outputs and milestones as presented in above, both in quantity and quality, as well as their usefulness and timeliness.

[10] http://www.unep.org/GC/GC23/documents/GC23-6-add-1.pdf

19. Briefly explain the reasons behind the success (or failure) of the project in producing its different outputs and meeting expected quality standards, cross-referencing as needed to more detailed explanations provided under Section F (which covers the processes affecting attainment of project results). Were key stakeholders appropriately involved in producing the programmed outputs?

Effectiveness: Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results

20. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project's objectives were effectively achieved or are expected to be achieved.

21. The **Theory of Change** (ToC) of a project depicts the causal pathways from project outputs (goods and services delivered by the project) through outcomes (changes resulting from the use made by key stakeholders of project outputs) towards impact (long term changes in environmental benefits and living conditions). The ToC will also depict any intermediate changes required between project outcomes and impact, called 'intermediate states'. The ToC further defines the external factors that influence change along the major pathways; i.e. factors that affect whether one result can lead to the next. These external factors are either drivers (when the project has a certain level of control) or assumptions (when the project has no control). The ToC also clearly identifies the main stakeholders involved in the change processes.

22. The evaluation will reconstruct the ToC of the project based on a review of project documentation and stakeholder interviews. The evaluator will be expected to discuss the reconstructed TOC with the stakeholders during evaluation missions and/or interviews in order to ascertain the causal pathways identified and the validity of impact drivers and assumptions described in the TOC. This exercise will also enable the consultant to address some of the key evaluation questions and make adjustments to the TOC as appropriate (the ToC of the intervention may have been modified / adapted from the original design during project implementation).

23. The assessment of effectiveness will be structured in three sub-sections:

(a) Evaluation of the **achievement of outcomes as defined in the reconstructed ToC**. These are the first-level outcomes expected to be achieved as an immediate result of project outputs.

(b) Assessment of the **likelihood of impact** using a Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) approach[11]. The evaluation will assess to what extent the project has to date contributed, and is likely in the future to further contribute, to [intermediate states], and the likelihood that those changes in turn to lead to positive changes in the natural resource base, benefits derived from the environment and human well-being. The evaluation will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead to unintended negative effects (project documentation relating to Environmental, Social and Economic. Safeguards)

(c) Evaluation of the **achievement of the formal project overall objective, overall purpose, goals and component outcomes** using the project's own results statements as presented in the Project Document[12]. This sub-section will refer back where applicable to the preceding sub-sections (a) and (b) to avoid repetition in the report. To measure achievement, the evaluation will use as much as appropriate the indicators for achievement proposed in the Logical Framework (Log frame) of the project, adding other relevant indicators as appropriate. Briefly explain what factors affected the project's success in achieving its objectives, cross-referencing as needed to more detailed explanations provided under Section F. Most commonly, the overall objective is a higher level result to which the project is intended to contribute. The section will describe the actual or likely **contribution** of the project to the objective.

(d) The evaluation should, where possible, disaggregate outcomes and impacts for the key project stakeholders. It should also assess the extent to which HR and GE were integrated in the Theory of Change and results framework of the intervention and to what degree participating institutions/organizations changed their policies or practices thereby leading to the fulfilment of HR and GE principles (e.g. new services, greater responsiveness, resource re-allocation, etc.)

Sustainability and replication

[11] Guidance material on Theory of Change and the ROtI approach is available from the Evaluation Office.

[12] Or any subsequent **formally approved** revision of the project document or logical framework.

24. Sustainability is understood as the probability of continued long-term project-derived results and impacts after the external project funding and assistance ends. The evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of benefits. Some of these factors might be direct results of the project while others will include contextual circumstances or developments that are not under control of the project but that may condition the sustainability of benefits. The reconstructed ToC will assist in the evaluation of sustainability, as the drivers and assumptions required to achieve higher-level results are often similar to the factors affecting sustainability of these changes.

25. Four aspects of sustainability will be addressed:

(a) *Socio-political sustainability.* Are there any social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustainability of project results and progress towards impacts? Is the level of ownership by the main stakeholders sufficient to allow for the project results to be sustained? Are there sufficient government and other key stakeholder awareness, interests, commitment and incentives? Did the project conduct 'succession planning' and implement this during the life of the project? Was capacity building conducted for key stakeholders? Did the intervention activities aim to promote (and did they promote) positive sustainable changes in attitudes, behaviours and power relations between the different stakeholders? To what extent has the integration of HR and GE led to an increase in the likelihood of sustainability of project results?

(b) *Financial resources.* To what extent are the continuation of project results and the eventual impact of the project dependent on financial resources? What is the likelihood that adequate financial resources[13] will be or will become available to use capacities built by the project? Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project results and onward progress towards impact?

(c) *Institutional framework.* To what extent is the sustenance of the results and onward progress towards impact dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance? How robust are the institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. required to sustaining project results and to lead those to impact on human behaviour and environmental resources, goods or services?

(d) *Environmental sustainability.* Are there any environmental factors, positive or negative, that can influence the future flow of project benefits? Are there any project outputs or higher level results that are likely to affect the environment, which, in turn, might affect sustainability of project benefits? Are there any foreseeable negative environmental impacts that may occur as the project results are being up-scaled?

Catalytic role and replication

The *catalytic role* of UNEP interventions is embodied in their approach of supporting the creation of an enabling environment and of investing in pilot activities which are innovative and showing how new approaches can work. UNEP also aims to support activities that upscale new approaches to a national, regional or global level, with a view to achieve sustainable global environmental benefits. The evaluation will assess the catalytic role played by this project, namely to what extent the project has:

(a) *catalyzed behavioural changes* in terms of use and application, by the relevant stakeholders, of capacities developed;

(b) provided *incentives* (social, economic, market based, competencies etc.) to contribute to catalyzing changes in stakeholder behaviour;

(c) contributed to *institutional changes*, for instance institutional uptake of project-demonstrated technologies, practices or management approaches;

(d) contributed to *policy changes* (on paper and in implementation of policy);

(e) contributed to sustained follow-on financing (*catalytic financing*) from Governments, private sector, donors etc.;

[13] Those resources can be from multiple sources, such as the national budget, public and private sectors, development assistance etc.

(f) created opportunities for particular individuals or institutions ("*champions*") to catalyze change (without which the project would not have achieved all of its results).

Replication is defined as lessons and experiences coming out of the project that are replicated (experiences are repeated and lessons applied in different geographic areas) or scaled up (experiences are repeated and lessons applied in the same geographic area but on a much larger scale and funded by other sources). The evaluation will assess the approach adopted by the project to promote replication effects and determine to what extent actual replication has already occurred, or is likely to occur in the near future. What are the factors that may influence replication and scaling up of project experiences and lessons?

Efficiency

The evaluation will assess the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution. It will describe any cost- or time-saving measures put in place in attempting to bring the project as far as possible in achieving its results within its (severely constrained) secured budget and (extended) time. It will also analyse how delays, if any, have affected project execution, costs and effectiveness. Wherever possible, costs and time over results ratios of the project will be compared with that of other similar interventions. The evaluation will also assess the extent to which HR and GE were allocated specific and adequate budget in relation to the results achieved.

The evaluation will give special attention to efforts by the project teams to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency. For instance, the Pacific Invasive Species Learning Network (administered by SPREP), the Pacific Invasives Partnership (administered by NISC, Dept of Interior, USA), New Zealand Department of Conservation and others.

Factors and processes affecting project performance

Preparation and readiness. This criterion focuses on the quality of project design and preparation. Were project stakeholders[14] adequately identified and were they sufficiently involved in project development and ground truthing e.g. of proposed timeframe and budget? Were the project's objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its timeframe? Are potentially negative environmental, economic and social impacts of projects identified? Were the capacities of executing agencies properly considered when the project was designed? Was the project document clear and realistic to enable effective and efficient implementation? Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project implementation? Were counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities) and enabling legislation assured? Were adequate project management arrangements in place? Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated in the project design? What factors influenced the quality-at-entry of the project design, choice of partners, allocation of financial resources etc.? Were any design weaknesses mentioned in the Project Review Committee minutes at the time of project approval adequately addressed?

Project implementation and management. This includes an analysis of implementation approaches used by the project, its management framework, the project's adaptation to changing conditions and responses to changing risks including safeguard issues (adaptive management), the performance of the implementation arrangements and partnerships, relevance of changes in project design, and overall performance of project management. The evaluation will:

(a) Ascertain to what extent the project implementation mechanisms outlined in the project document have been followed and were effective in delivering project milestones, outputs and outcomes. Were pertinent adaptations made to the approaches originally proposed?
(b) Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of project management and how well the management was able to adapt to changes during the life of the project.
(c) Assess the role and performance of the teams and working groups established and the project execution arrangements at all levels.

[14] Stakeholders are the individuals, groups, institutions, or other bodies that have an interest or 'stake' in the outcome of the project. The term also applies to those potentially adversely affected by the project.

(d) Assess the extent to which project management responded to direction and guidance provided by the UNEP Task Manager and project steering bodies including the Project Steering Committee and members of the PILN/PIP.

(e) Identify operational and political / institutional problems and constraints that influenced the effective implementation of the project, and how the project tried to overcome these problems.

Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships. The Evaluation will assess the effectiveness of mechanisms for information sharing and cooperation with other UNEP projects and programmes, external stakeholders and partners. The term stakeholder should be considered in the broadest sense, encompassing both project partners and target users (particularly the relevant Government agencies participating in the project) of project products. The TOC and stakeholder analysis should assist the evaluators in identifying the key stakeholders and their respective roles, capabilities and motivations in each step of the causal pathways from activities to achievement of outputs, outcomes and intermediate states towards impact. The assessment will look at three related and often overlapping processes: (1) information dissemination to and between stakeholders, (2) consultation with and between stakeholders, and (3) active engagement of stakeholders in project decision making and activities. The evaluation will specifically assess:

(a) the approach(es) and mechanisms used to identify and engage stakeholders (within and outside UNEP) in project design and at critical stages of project implementation. What were the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches with respect to the project's objectives and the stakeholders' motivations and capacities?

(b) How was the overall collaboration between different functional units of UNEP involved in the project? What coordination mechanisms were in place? Were the incentives for internal collaboration in UNEP adequate?

(c) Was the level of involvement of the Regional, Liaison and Out-posted Offices in project design, planning, decision-making and implementation of activities appropriate?

(d) Has the project made full use of opportunities for collaboration with other projects and programmes including opportunities not mentioned in the Project Document[15]? Have complementarities been sought, synergies been optimized and duplications avoided?

(e) What was the achieved degree and effectiveness of collaboration and interactions between the various project partners and stakeholders during design and implementation of the project? This should be disaggregated for the main stakeholder groups identified in the inception report.

(f) To what extent has the project been able to take up opportunities for joint activities, pooling of resources and mutual learning with other organizations and networks? In particular, how useful are partnership mechanisms and initiatives such as the PILN, PIP and NGO's to build stronger coherence and collaboration between participating organisations?

(g) How did the relationship between the project and the collaborating partners (institutions and individual experts) develop? Which benefits stemmed from their involvement for project performance, for UNEP and for the stakeholders and partners themselves? Do the results of the project (strategic programmes and plans, monitoring and management systems, sub-regional agreements etc.) promote participation of stakeholders, including users, in environmental decision making?

Communication and public awareness. The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of any public awareness activities that were undertaken during the course of implementation of the project to communicate the project's objective, progress, outcomes and lessons. This should be disaggregated for the main stakeholder groups identified in the inception report. Did the project identify and make us of existing communication channels and networks used by key stakeholders? Did the project provide feedback channels?

Country ownership and driven-ness. The evaluation will assess the degree and effectiveness of involvement of government / public sector agencies in the project, in particular those involved in project execution and those participating in the project steering committee and various networks participating in the project (e.g. PILN and PIP).

(a) To what extent have Governments assumed responsibility for the project and provided adequate support to project execution, including the degree of cooperation received from the various public institutions involved in the project?
(b) How and how well did the project stimulate country ownership of project outputs and outcomes?
(c) How well did regional agencies such as SPREP and SPC support and expedite implementation of the project. And similarly, bilateral support from SPREP/Pacific developed countries such as New Zealand and Australia (possibly USA).

Financial planning and management. Evaluation of financial planning requires assessment of the quality and effectiveness of financial planning and control of financial resources throughout the project's lifetime. The assessment will look at actual project costs by activities compared to budget (variances), financial management (including disbursement issues), and co-financing. The evaluation will:

(a) Verify the application of proper standards (clarity, transparency, audit etc.) and timeliness of financial planning, management and reporting to ensure that sufficient and timely financial resources were available to the project and its partners;
(b) Assess other administrative processes such as recruitment of staff, procurement of goods and services (including consultants), preparation and negotiation of cooperation agreements etc. to the extent that these might have influenced project performance;
(c) Present the extent to which co-financing has materialized as expected at project approval (see Table 1). Report country co-financing to the project overall, and to support project activities at the national level in particular. The evaluation will provide a breakdown of final actual costs and co-financing for the different project components (see tables in Annex 4).
(d) Describe the resources the project has leveraged since inception and indicate how these resources are contributing to the project's ultimate objective. Leveraged resources are additional resources—beyond those committed to the project itself at the time of approval—that are mobilized later as a direct result of the project. Leveraged resources can be financial or in-kind and they may be from other donors, NGO's, foundations, governments, communities or the private sector.

Analyse the effects on project performance of any irregularities in procurement, use of financial resources and human resource management, and the measures taken UNEP to prevent such irregularities in the future. Determine whether the measures taken were adequate.

Supervision, guidance and technical backstopping. The purpose of supervision is to verify the quality and timeliness of project execution in terms of finances, administration and achievement of outputs and outcomes, in order to identify and recommend ways to deal with problems which arise during project execution. Such problems may be related to project management but may also involve technical/institutional substantive issues in which UNEP has a major contribution to make.

The evaluators should assess the effectiveness of supervision, guidance and technical support provided by the different supervising/supporting bodies including:

(a) The adequacy of project supervision plans, inputs and processes;
(b) The realism and candour of project reporting and the emphasis given to outcome monitoring (results-based project management);
(c) How well did the different guidance and supporting bodies play their role and how well did the guidance and backstopping mechanisms work? What were the strengths in guidance and backstopping and what were the limiting factors?

Monitoring and evaluation. The evaluation will include an assessment of the quality, application and effectiveness of project monitoring and evaluation plans and tools, including an assessment of risk management based on the assumptions and risks identified in the project document. The evaluation will assess how information generated by the M&E system during project implementation was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensuring sustainability. M&E is assessed on three levels:

(a) *M&E Design*. The evaluators should use the following questions to help assess the M&E design aspects:

Arrangements for monitoring: Did the project have a sound M&E plan to monitor results and track progress towards achieving project objectives? Have the responsibilities for M&E activities been clearly defined? Were the data sources and data collection instruments appropriate? Was the time frame for various M&E activities specified? Was the frequency of various monitoring activities specified and adequate?

How well was the project logical framework (original and possible updates) designed as a planning and monitoring instrument?

SMART-ness of indicators: Are there specific indicators in the log frame for each of the project objectives? Are the indicators measurable, attainable (realistic) and relevant to the objectives? Are the indicators time-bound?

Adequacy of baseline information: To what extent has baseline information on performance indicators been collected and presented in a clear manner? Was the methodology for the baseline data collection explicit and reliable? For instance, was there adequate baseline information on pre-existing accessible information on global and regional environmental status and trends, and on the costs and benefits of different policy options for the different target audiences? Was there sufficient information about the assessment capacity of collaborating institutions and experts etc. to determine their training and technical support needs?

To what extent did the project engage key stakeholders in the design and implementation of monitoring? Which stakeholders (from groups identified in the inception report) were involved? If any stakeholders were excluded, what was the reason for this? Was sufficient information collected on specific indicators to measure progress on HR and GE (including sex-disaggregated data)?

Did the project appropriately plan to monitor risks associated with Environmental Economic and Social Safeguards?

Arrangements for evaluation: Have specific targets been specified for project outputs? Has the desired level of achievement been specified for all indicators of objectives and outcomes? Were there adequate provisions in the legal instruments binding project partners to fully collaborate in evaluations?

Budgeting and funding for M&E activities: Determine whether support for M&E was budgeted adequately and was funded in a timely fashion during implementation.

(b) *M&E Plan Implementation*. The evaluation will verify that:

the M&E system was operational and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period;

PIR reports were prepared (the realism of the Task Manager's assessments will be reviewed)

Half-yearly Progress & Financial Reports were complete and accurate;

Risk monitoring (including safeguard issues) was regularly documented

the information provided by the M&E system was used during the project to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs.

The Consultants' Team

26. For this evaluation, the evaluation team will consist of a Team Leader and one Supporting Consultant. Details about the specific roles and responsibilities of the team members are presented in Annex 1 of these TORs. The Team Leader should have 20 years of technical / evaluation experience, including of evaluation large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; and a broad understanding of large-scale, consultative assessment processes and factors influencing use of assessments and/or scientific research for decision-making. The Supporting Consultant will have a solid environmental education and professional experience; adequate monitoring and evaluation experience; and experience in managing partnerships, knowledge management and communication.

27. The Team Leader will coordinate data collection and analysis, and the preparation of the main report for the evaluation, with substantive contributions by the Supporting Consultant. Both consultants will ensure together that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered.

28. By undersigning the service contract with UNEP/UNON, the consultants certify that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their

independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of the contract) with the project's executing or implementing units.

Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

The evaluation team will prepare an **inception report** (see Annex 2(a) of TORs for Inception Report outline) containing a thorough review of the project context, project design quality, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, the evaluation framework and a tentative evaluation schedule.

It is expected that a large portion of the desk review will be conducted during the inception phase. It will be important to acquire a good understanding of the project context, design and process at this stage. The review of design quality will cover the following aspects (see Annex 7 for the detailed project design assessment matrix):

Strategic relevance of the project
Preparation and readiness;
Financial planning;
M&E design;
Complementarity with UNEP strategies and programmes;
Sustainability considerations and measures planned to promote replication and up-scaling.

The inception report will present a draft, desk-based reconstructed Theory of Change of the project. It is vital to reconstruct the ToC *before* most of the data collection (review of progress reports, in-depth interviews, surveys etc.) is done, because the ToC will define which direct outcomes, drivers and assumptions of the project need to be assessed and measured – based on which indicators – to allow adequate data collection for the evaluation of project effectiveness, likelihood of impact and sustainability.

The inception report will also include a stakeholder analysis identifying key stakeholders, networks and channels of communication. This information should be gathered from the Project document and discussion with the project team. See annex 2 for template.

The evaluation framework will present in further detail the overall evaluation approach. It will specify for each evaluation question under the various criteria what the respective indicators and data sources will be. The evaluation framework should summarize the information available from project documentation against each of the main evaluation parameters. Any gaps in information should be identified and methods for additional data collection, verification and analysis should be specified. Evaluations/reviews of other large assessments can provide ideas about the most appropriate evaluation methods to be used.

Effective communication strategies help stakeholders understand the results and use the information for organisational learning and improvement. While the evaluation is expected to result in a comprehensive document, content is not always best shared in a long and detailed report; this is best presented in a synthesised form using any of a variety of creative and innovative methods. The evaluator is encouraged to make use of multimedia formats in the gathering of information e.g. video, photos, sound recordings. Together with the full report, the evaluator will be expected to produce a 2-page summary of key findings and lessons. A template for this has been provided in Annex?.

The inception report will also present a tentative schedule for the overall evaluation process, including a draft programme for the country visit and tentative list of people/institutions to be interviewed.

The inception report will be submitted for review and approval by the Evaluation Office before the any further data collection and analysis is undertaken.

[Optional] When data collection and analysis has almost been completed, the evaluation team will prepare a short **note on preliminary findings and recommendations** for discussion with the project team and the Evaluation Reference Group. The purpose of the note is to allow the evaluation team to receive guidance on the relevance and validity of the main findings emerging from the evaluation.

The main evaluation report should be brief (no longer than 40 pages – excluding the executive summary and annexes), to the point and written in plain English. The report will follow the annotated Table of Contents outlined in Annex 2. It must explain the purpose of the evaluation, exactly what was evaluated and the methods used (with their limitations). The report will present evidence-based and balanced findings, consequent conclusions, lessons and recommendations, which will be cross-referenced to each other. The

report should be presented in a way that makes the information accessible and comprehensible. Any dissident views in response to evaluation findings will be appended in footnote or annex as appropriate. To avoid repetitions in the report, the authors will use numbered paragraphs and make cross-references where possible.

Review of the draft evaluation report. The evaluation team will submit a zero draft report to the UNEP EO and revise the draft following the comments and suggestions made by the EO. Once a draft of adequate quality has been accepted, the EO will share this first draft report with the Task Manager, who will alert the EO in case the report would contain any blatant factual errors. The Evaluation Office will then forward the first draft report to the other project stakeholders, in particular the Pacific Invasive Partnership Members (Invasive Species Specialist Group (IUCN), Pacific Invasive Initiative, Birdlife International, Conservation International, Global Invasive Species Network, Global Invasive Species Programme, Landcare Research, MAF Biosecurity NZ, Pacific Invasive Learning Network, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, The Nature Conservancy, University of the South Pacific, US Forest Service)for their review and comments. Stakeholders may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions. It is also very important that stakeholders provide feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons. Comments would be expected within two weeks after the draft report has been shared. Any comments or responses to the draft report will be sent to the UNEP EO for collation. The EO will provide the comments to the evaluation team for consideration in preparing the final draft report, along with its own views.

The evaluation team will submit the final draft report no later than 2 weeks after reception of stakeholder comments. The team will prepare a **response to comments**, listing those comments not or only partially accepted by them that could therefore not or only partially be accommodated in the final report. They will explain why those comments have not or only partially been accepted, providing evidence as required. This response to comments will be shared by the EO with the interested stakeholders to ensure full transparency.

Submission of the final evaluation report. The final report shall be submitted by Email to the Head of the Evaluation Office. The Evaluation Office will finalize the report and share it with the interested Divisions and Sub-programme Coordinators in UNEP. The final evaluation report will be published on the UNEP Evaluation Office web-site www.unep.org/eou.

As per usual practice, the UNEP EO will prepare a **quality assessment** of the zero draft and final draft report, which is a tool for providing structured feedback to the evaluation consultants. The quality of the report will be assessed and rated against the criteria specified in Annex 3.

The UNEP Evaluation Office will assess the ratings in the final evaluation report based on a careful review of the evidence collated by the evaluation consultants and the internal consistency of the report. Where there are differences of opinion between the evaluator and UNEP Evaluation Office on project ratings, both viewpoints will be clearly presented in the final report. The UNEP Evaluation Office ratings will be considered the final ratings for the project.

At the end of the evaluation process, the Evaluation Office will prepare a Recommendations Implementation Plan in the format of a table to be completed and updated at regular intervals by the Task Project Manager. After reception of the Recommendations Implementation Plan, the Task Project Manager is expected to complete it and return it to the EO within one month. (S)he is expected to update the plan every six month until the end of the tracking period. As this is a Terminal Evaluation, the tracking period for implementation of recommendations will be 18 months, unless it is agreed to make this period shorter or longer as required for realistic implementation of all evaluation recommendations. Tracking points will be every six months after completion of the implementation plan.

Logistical arrangements

This Terminal Evaluation will be undertaken by two independent evaluation consultants contracted by the UNEP Evaluation Office. The consultants will work under the overall responsibility of the UNEP Evaluation Office and will consult with the EO on any procedural and methodological matters related to the evaluation. It is, however, the consultants' individual responsibility to arrange for their travel, visa, obtain documentary evidence, plan meetings with stakeholders, organize online surveys, and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The UNEP Task Manager and project team will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the evaluation as efficiently and independently as possible.

Schedule of the evaluation

Table 7 below presents the tentative schedule for the evaluation.

Table 7. Tentative schedule for the evaluation

Milestone	**Deadline**
Inception Report	July
Field Visits	August/September
Telephone interviews, surveys etc.	August September
Note on preliminary findings and recommendations	November
Zero draft report	November
Draft Report shared with UNEP Task Manager	November
Draft Report shared with project team	December
Draft Report shared with Evaluation Reference Group	December
Draft Report shared with stakeholders	December - January
Final Report	February 2017

ANNEX II RESPONSE TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

All stakeholder comments have been discussed and an agreement has been reached between the evaluator and key stakeholders.

ANNEX III EVALUATION PROGRAM

This Terminal Evaluation commenced several months in advance of the termination of the IAS project to take advantage of the presence of the UNEP Task Manager in the Pacific Regional Office in Apia, Samoa in the closing months before his retirement from his position as UNEP's Pacific Regional Advisor in July 2016. It was also seen as prudent to commence the evaluation at this time to also take advantage of the attendance of many of the Pacific's IAS volunteers and focal points at the PILN meeting held in Samoa in August 2016. It is to his credit that the TM has continued to make himself available post retirement on and "as required" basis to assist with project queries.

Table 1 provides a chronology of the key milestones of the Evaluation. The schedule for country visits and associated field inspections, information reviews and interviews is outlined in the table below. It should be noted that during the country visits to Tonga, Kiribati and the Cook Islands, the opportunity was also taken to undertake interviews and inspections related to the Evaluator's role in the TE's of the GEFPAS Integrated Island Biodiversity and Phoenix Islands Protected Area projects.

Table 1. Outline of Country Visits and Activities

Date (2016)	Country	Activities
27 July - 4 August	Samoa	Met with TM and PM and project linked SPREP staff. Interviews with National Coordinators from Samoa, Tonga, RMI, Vanuatu, Niue and Kiribati. Attended Opening day of PILN meeting and undertook interviews with partners (Island Conservation, VEPA and PILN teams from around the region. Inspected Mt Vaea Forest Restoration site.
8 - 16 August	Tonga	Interviews with senior government officials, travelled to Vava'u Province and met with VEPA IAS team, Fisheries staff, and inspected Mt Talau and two other priority sites. Returned to Nuku'alofa and inspected Toloa Forest Restoration site.
9 September	Auckland N.Z.	Interviewed Conservation International Pacific Advisor.
11 - 15 September	Cook Islands	Interviews with Cook Island IAS project staff, Ministry of Agriculture (bio-security and quarantine staff) and NGO partners 9Cook Islands National Trust and Te Ipukarea Society. Inspected Takitimu Conservation Area rat eradication programme.
19 - 23 September	Kiribati via Fiji	Undertook staff interviews with Ministry of Agriculture IAS staff and Head of Department.

Table 2. List of Personnel Interviewed or Contacted

Country	**Names**	**Position**
UNEP	Greg Sherley	UNEP Task Manager and regional focal point In the Pacific (retired)
	Mohamed Sessay	Substitute UNEP task Manager for Dr. Sherley's projects
	Tiina Piiroinen	Evaluation Officer, UNEP Evaluation Office
SPREP	Dr David Moverley	IAS Project Manager
	Anna Bertram	GEFPAS IAS Tech. Specialist -
	Natasha Doherty	GEFPAS IAS Tech. Specialist-
Cook Islands	Joseph Brider	Director of Environment
	Louisa Karika	Project manager (Manager - Island Futures Division)
	Elizabeth Munro	Project coordinator
	Gerald McCormack	Director, Cook Islands Natural Heritage Trust

	Ian Karika	Owner, Takitimu Conservation Area
	Dr. Maya Poeschko	Head Scientist, Ministry of Agriculture
	Mr. Brian Tairea	Agriculture Extension Officer
	Mr. Matt Purea	Director of Ministry of Agriculture
	Mr. William Wigmore	Director of Research
	Mr. Ben Maxwell	Compliance Advisory Officer, Ministry for the Environment
	Mr. LIam Kokaua	Volunteer, Te Ipukarea Society
	Ms Alana Smitjh	Manager, Te Ipukarea Society
FSM	John Wichep	Project Manager
Kiribati	Taouea Tetaake-Reiher	Director of Environment
	Marii Marae	Project Manager and Senior Environmental Officer
	George Taoaba	Project coordinator, Acting Head of Biodiversity Conservation Division
	Teaaro Otiuea	Deputy Director Agriculture and Livestock Divison
Nuie	Huggard Tongatule	Project Coordinator
Palau	Dr Joel Miles	Project Coordinator
RMI	Henry Capelle	Head of Quarantine
Samoa	Mr Fuatino Matatumua-Leota	Project Manager (assistant CEO of MNRE)
	Mr Taupau Maturo Paniani	Project Coordinator
	Mr Suemalo Talie	Principal National Parks and Reserves Officer
Tonga	Atelaite Lupe Matoto.	Project Manager (Head of Environment Department)
	Viliami Hakaumotu,	Project coordinator
Vanuatu	Molu Bulu	Project coordinator
	Silvario	Biosecurity Officer Ministry of Agriculture
Conservation International	Sue Taei	Pacific Islands Advisor, Conservation International
Islands Conservation	Dr. Ray Nias	Director of Southwest Pacific Program, Island Conservation
	Dr Richard Griffiths	Project Manager, Southwest Pacific Program
Pacific Invasives Initiative	Dr. Souad Boudjelas	Programme Manager, Pacific Invasives Initiative (PII)

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Project Costs

Component/sub-component/output	Estimated cost at design	Actual Cost	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)
SPREP (including Personnel Component, Publications/ Outreach, Training Component, Equipment and Premises, Annual Audits	Project Costs: $ 494,998 Co-finance: $1,090,000 Total: $ 1,878,678	Project Costs: $782,446 Co-finance: 1,176,188 Total: $1,958,634	1.58 1.07 1.04
COOK ISLANDS	Project Costs: $324,040 Co-finance: $ 337,427 Total: $661,467	Project Costs: $324,090 Co-finance: $566,935 Total: $891,025	1 1.68 1.35
FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA	Project Costs: $61,180 Co-finance:125,120 Total: $186,300	Project Costs: $61,157 Co-finance: N/A Total 61,157	1 0.32
KIRIBATI	Project Costs: $324,040 Co-finance: $360,525 Total: $684,565	Project Costs: $324,001 Co-finance: $93,453 Total: $417,454	1 0.26 0.61
NIUE	Project Costs: $324,040 Co finance: $350,040 Total: $674,000	Project Costs: $326,872 Co-finance: $261,964 Total: $588,836	1.01 0.75 0.87
PALAU	Project Costs: $61,180 Co-finance: $117,000 Total: $178,180	Project Costs: $61,180 Co-finance:$241,594 Total: $302,774	1 1.89 1.70
PAPUA NEW GUINEA PNG withdrawn from project mid-term - project funding re-allocated but co-financing lost)	Project Costs: $324,040 Co-finance: 0 Total: $324,040	Project Costs: $0 Co-finance: $0	
MARSHALL ISLANDS	Project Costs: $61,180 Co-finance: $86,000 Total: $147,180	Project Costs: $60,237 Co-finance: 1.040 Total: $ 61,277	.98 .012 .41
SAMOA	Project Costs: $324,040 Co-finance: $400,000 Total: $724,040	Project Costs: $327,656 Co-finance: $410,633 Total: $738,289	.01 .03 .02
TONGA	Project Costs: $324,040 Co-finance: $337,000 Total: $661,040	Project Costs: $358,242 Co-finance: $263,500 Total: $621,742	1.10 0.78 0.94
VANUATU	Project Costs: $324,040 Co-finance: $360,000 Total: $684,040	Project Costs: $320,937 Co-finance: 202,896 Total$523,833	0.99 0.56 0.76
UNEP Absorbed Costs (Evaluations)	Project Costs: 85,000 Co-finance Total: 85,000	Project Costs 85,000 (Full expenditure assumed) Total$85,000	1.0
Totals	Project Costs: 3,031,818 Co-finance: $3,563,112 Total: $,6,594,930	Project Costs: 3,031,818 Co-finance: $ 3,124,542 Total : $6,156,360	1.0 0.88 0.93

Co-financing

Co financing (Type/Source)	UNEP own Financing (US$1,000)		Government (US$1,000)		Other* (US$1,000)		Total (US$1,000)		Total Disbursed (US$1,000)
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	
– Grants									
– Loans									
– Credits									
– Equity investments									
– In-kind support			3563				3563	3124	3124
– Other (*) -									
Totals			3563				3563	3124	3124

The **Goal** of this important project was "To conserve ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity in the Pacific region". This broad aspirational Goal was supplemented and supported by the project **Objective** which was "To reduce the environmental, economic and human health impacts of invasive alien species in both terrestrial and marine habitats in the Pacific region".

Background

Implementation Dates. The project was originally planned for 2010 - 2014 but due to policy changes requiring redesign of some project components and a slow approval process it did not get underway until 2012 and was extended 30 September 2016.

The Lead Division for the project was the Ecosystem Management Division under the Ecosystem management programme.

The Project was delivered to the Pacific islands region of the Asia Pacific global region. Participating countries were Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea (later withdrawn from the project) Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu.

The original project budget was USD 7,010,890 consisting of USD 3,031,818 in GEF funds and USD 3,979,072 in SPREP and country co-financing.

The Terminal Evaluation zero draft - 30 November 2016.

Relevance

The Pacific IAS project delivered outcomes specifically relevant to the GEF 4 (GEF 2007) Biodiversity Strategic long term Objectives, specifically Objective 3 " To safeguard biodiversity" and by implementing measures under Strategic Programme 6 "Building capacity for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety" and under Strategic Programme 7 "Prevention, control and management of invasive alien species" as they relate to the small island developing countries of the Pacific region. It was also directly aligned with the Pacific regionally endorsed Guidelines for invasive species management in the Pacific: a Pacific strategy for managing pests, weeds and other invasive species" which acts as the regional framework for IAS management in the region.

Performance

A slow start and a number of teething problems associated with poor readiness in some participating countries and the EA, together with a design involving a very large number of in-country projects and activities led to a moderately satisfactory rating at mid-term. To their credit the EA and PMU acted on many of the MTR recommendations and the second half of the project produced remarkable results with the near full completion of all project outputs including additional examples in some areas. The focus on building capacity through on the ground experience, training and mentoring, together with building an in improved institutional and policy basis for IAS management and vastly improved public and government awareness of the IAS threat are outcomes that, if built on will ensure substantive progress towards project impact.

Factors Affecting Performance

Several factors impacted on project performance. The first was the need to redesign the project to accommodate changing GEF policy for funding allocations in the region which led to a budget reduction from 15 to 7 million dollars and a new focus on country nominated priorities. This in turn led to a project with a large number of sub projects which were almost unmanageable given the budget. Secondly, it proved difficult and time consuming to recruit appropriate persons as national co-ordinators and several of these critical people needed significant assistance to learn their role. Thirdly, the project design and budget failed to provide sufficient funding to allow the EA (SPREP) to provide the level of technical and management support needed to ensure effective administration and importantly, effective sub project delivery. This was addressed at mid-term with the reallocation of funds set aside for PNG which withdrew from the project.

Key Lessons Learned.

1. In multi-country projects like this where performance success is highly reliant on providing management and technical support in- country, it is imperative that sufficient funding is budgeted to provide appropriate regional support services.

2. Recruitment of competent National Coordinators is vital to project success and as such the recruitment process should be objective, based clear selection criteria involve the PM and TM as well as the country focal agency.

3. Ideally the National Coordinators should be dedicated to the project only, in place prior to inception and their role should not be diluted by other unrelated government functions.

4. If at all possible, and order to retain the capacity, expertise and experience built during the course of the project the project should negotiate incentives with the focal agency which will result in the establishment of a permanent position for National Coordinators on project completion.

ANNEX VII PRESENTATION

No Formal presentations were made during the Evaluation.

However, at the conclusion of each group interview and country visit, the Evaluator discussed his preliminary assessment of the results with the key individuals involved. For country visits this usually involved a meeting with members of the focal government agency. The Evaluator outlined the strengths and weaknesses of the project performance in the host country and invite comment. Often this process led to further information being forthcoming and allowed for deeper understanding of the local perceptions of the issues being discussed.

The RToC was used was presented to the PMU in SPREP and used to guide discussion and assessment of the likelihood of outcomes being achieved. It proved a very useful tool for this purpose and stimulated enthusiastic debate amongst those present.

ANNEX VIII CONSULTANT(S) RÉSUMÉ

Abbreviated Curriculum Vitae Mr. Peter Thomas

Contact	PO Box 8262, Woolloongabba QLD., AUSTRALIA 4102 Phone: (M)+61 (0) 410 440 377 Email: Peter@tierramar.com.au
Professional Strengths and Interest	• Extensive international management and professional experience in environmental program and project development, management, monitoring, evaluation and improvement with a strong professional background in biodiversity conservation. • Strategic and business planning, organisation design, restructuring and change management. • Capacity analysis, team building, leadership and knowledge management solutions to support learning and mentoring for positive and sustainable natural resource management outcomes in developing countries. • Development, support and analysis of innovative approaches and policy for achieving sustainable environmental and natural resource management outcomes. • Strategic project and programme development at regional, sub regional and national levels.
Profile	• Over 35 years professional experience in government and non-government organisations focussed on natural resource management, biodiversity conservation and protected area management. • 25 years experience in community based engagement in marine and terrestrial conservation area establishment and management, species and habitat protection and conservation policy development, particularly in the Pacific islands. • 25 years experience in strategic planning, development, management and leadership in non profit and international environment and conservation organisations. • 25 years successful experience in fundraising from multi-lateral and bi-lateral sources, private foundations and individuals including the design and establishment of sustainable financing mechanisms. • 10 years experience in government natural resource management agencies engaged in environmental impact assessment, alien species control, national protected area policy development and land use and natural and cultural protected area management planning. • 6 years engagement in negotiation and development of international and regional conservation agreement and forums. • Extensive report, proposal writing and public speaking experience.
Core skills	• Institutional building, strategic and business planning, organisation design and capacity assessment. • Resource management and biodiversity conservation project/programme design, planning and implementation. • Sustainable community based approaches to natural resource management in tropical island countries, particularly in the Pacific. • Project/programme monitoring and evaluation and improvement. • Policy analysis and development. • Knowledge management and learning network development. • People management, including distance management, supervision, mentoring and career development and team building. • Financial management, establishment of standard operating policies and associated compliance. • Fundraising and proposal preparation. • Cross-cultural working relationships and travel in developing countries and workplace adaptability.

International Experience.	Australia; Cook Islands; China; Cambodia, Fiji; Federated States of Micronesia; Indonesia; Jamaica; New Caledonia; Laos, Marshall Islands; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Palau; Samoa; Solomon Islands; Tonga; United States of America; Vanuatu; Malaysia; Philippines; Timor Leste. Regional/Sub-regional experience in: Pacific; Coral Triangle, Greater Mekong and Heart of Boreno.
Qualifications	Master of Science (Resource Management), Canterbury University, Christchurch, NZ. 1981 Bachelor of Commerce and Administration, Victoria University of Wellington, NZ. 1979

ANNEX IX QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

All UNEP evaluations are subject to a quality assessment by the Evaluation Office. The quality assessment is used as a tool for providing structured feedback to the evaluation consultants.

The quality of both the draft and final evaluation report is assessed and rated against the following criteria:

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Draft Report Rating	Final Report Rating
Substantive report quality criteria			
A. Quality of the Executive Summary: Does the executive summary present the main findings of the report for each evaluation criterion and a good summary of recommendations and lessons learned? (Executive Summary not required for zero draft)	Draft report: Executive summary provides an overview of the evaluation, including background, methods, and evaluation findings with lessons and recommendations. Some aspects, particularly effectiveness could be strengthened. In some places, attention needs to be paid so that the executive summary and main body of the report are consistent. Lessons and recommendations should be summarized, instead of repeating in full. The executive summary misses one or two sentences describing the main conclusion of the evaluation. Final report: The Executive Summary is well written.	MS	S
B. Project context and project description: Does the report present an up-to-date description of the socio-economic, political, institutional and environmental context of the project, including the issues that the project is trying to address, their root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being? Are any changes since the time of project design highlighted? Is all essential information about the project clearly presented in the report (objectives, target groups, institutional arrangements, budget, changes in design since approval etc.)?	Draft report: The section includes most required elements, but project stakeholders need to be identified and their role in the project described. Final report: Project context and description are well presented.	S	HS
C. Strategic relevance: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of strategic relevance of the intervention in terms of relevance of the project to global, regional and national environmental issues and needs, and UNEP strategies and programmes?	Draft report: The draft discusses all requested aspects of relevance. Final report: Same as above.	HS	HS
D. Achievement of outputs: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of outputs delivered by the intervention (including their quality)?	Draft report: Achievement of outputs is quite well discussed. However, in places the discussion of the extend some outputs have been achieved could be clarified. Also, some outcomes have been included in the assessment, which thus should be moved to the effectiveness section. Since project delivery was delayed, it would be good to provide the planned and actual delivery times for the outputs and discuss how, if any, this affected their relevance and usefulness. Final report: The report presents a good assessment of the achievement of outputs.	S	HS
E. Presentation of Theory of Change: Is the Theory of Change of the intervention clearly presented? Are causal pathways logical and complete (including drivers, assumptions and key actors)?	Draft report: ToC is presented as a narrative, supported by a figure. The narrative is well presented and describes the different results statements as well as the factors that need to be in place for the project to move from one result level to the next.	HS	HS

		Final report: Same as above.		
F.	Effectiveness - Attainment of project objectives and results: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the achievement of the relevant outcomes and project objectives?	Draft report: Achievement of each of the outcomes could be discussed more clearly (i.e. not combined). This would make the assessment stronger. Drivers and assumptions should be discussed and how they affect the likelihood of impact. Final report: The report provides a good assessment of effectiveness.	MS	S
G.	Sustainability and replication: Does the report present a well-reasoned and evidence-based assessment of sustainability of outcomes and replication / catalytic effects?	Draft report: Sustainability of project outcomes has been well discussed although at times, the discussion is more focused on describing the achieved outcomes, rather than the likelihood they will be sustainable. The project's replication / catalytic effect have been well described in terms of the drivers/factors required for this process. Final report: Same as above.	HS	HS
H.	Efficiency: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of efficiency? Does the report present any comparison with similar interventions?	Draft report: The discussion is concise and outlines the main issues that affected project's efficiency. An assessment of 'value for money' could have been included. Final report: Same as above.	S	S
I.	Factors affecting project performance: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of all factors affecting project performance? In particular, does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used; and an assessment of the quality of the project M&E system and its use for project management?	Draft report: All required aspects are discussed, mostly to adequate depth. The section on financial management could be strengthened (see comments on the report). Sections on project management and on supervision should be more clearly separated in terms of the project's Implementing and Executing Agency roles. Some clarifications are also needed for the M&E section. Final report: The report provides a good assessment of the factors affecting project performance.	S	S
J.	Quality of the conclusions: Do the conclusions highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the project, and connect those in a compelling story line?	Draft report: The conclusions section is concise and highlights the key strengths and weaknesses of the project, as well as outlines aspects critical for sustainability. The section could provide more precise information to strengthen the key points. Final report: The evaluation conclusions have been well presented.	S	S
K.	Quality and utility of the recommendations: Are recommendations based on explicit evaluation findings? Do recommendations specify the actions necessary to correct existing conditions or improve operations ('who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?)'. Can they be implemented?	Draft report: Both recommendations are based on evaluation findings and highlight relevant issues. However, one of the recommendations should be reformulated to target UNEP, instead of the Executing Agency. Final report: Recommendations have been well drafted.	MS	S
L.	Quality and utility of the lessons: Are lessons based on explicit evaluation findings? Do they suggest prescriptive action? Do they specify in which contexts they are applicable?	Draft report: Some lessons should more clearly describe the evaluation finding from which they were derived from. The lesson statements should be more general, and not tied to this particular project subject. The lesson, i.e. solution to a problem, described in some cases should be rethought to ensure that the solutions are feasible. Final report: Lessons have been well drafted.	MS	S
Report structure quality criteria				

M.	Structure and clarity of the report: Does the report structure follow EOU guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included?	Draft report: The draft follows EOU guidelines, Annex on co-financing is missing but due to the project's non-delivery of data. Final report: Same as above.	HS	HS
N.	Evaluation methods and information sources: Are evaluation methods and information sources clearly described? Are data collection methods, the triangulation / verification approach, details of stakeholder consultations provided? Are the limitations of evaluation methods and information sources described?	Draft report: Methods were described to some extent, but more information on demonstration site visits, as well as evaluation methods (clarify what quantitative and qualitative methods were used, describe the use of ToC, RoTI) should be provided. Also selection criteria for the countries visited needs to be provided Final report: Evaluation methods and information sources have been well presented.	MU	S
O.	Quality of writing: Was the report well written? (clear English language and grammar)	Draft report: The report was well written Final report: Same as above.	HS	HS
P.	Report formatting: Does the report follow EOU guidelines using headings, numbered paragraphs etc.	Draft report: Report was mostly well formatted. EOU did some formatting of the report, e.g. included paragraph numbers and formatted some tables Final report: The report was well formatted.	S	HS
		OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING	S	HS

The quality of the <u>evaluation process</u> is assessed at the end of the evaluation and rated against the following criteria:

		UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Rating
Evaluation process quality criteria			
Q.	Preparation: Was the evaluation budget agreed and approved by the EO? Was inception report delivered and approved prior to commencing any travel?	Inception report was delivered prior to travels, but it was finalized after the evaluation mission.	2
R.	Timeliness: Was a TE initiated within the period of six months before or after project completion? Was an MTE initiated within a six month period prior to the project's mid-point? Were all deadlines set in the ToR respected?	TE was initiated in accordance to the requirements.	6
S.	Project's support: Did the project make available all required documents? Was adequate support provided to the evaluator(s) in planning and conducting evaluation missions?	Some delays were experienced in the delivery of financial information.	4
T.	Recommendations: Was an implementation plan for the evaluation recommendations prepared? Was the implementation plan adequately communicated to the project?	Recommendations were discussed with the project prior to the completion of the report. Recommendation implementation plan was shared with the project team.	5
U.	Quality assurance: Was the evaluation peer-reviewed? Was the quality of the draft report checked by the evaluation manager and peer reviewer prior to dissemination to stakeholders for comments? Did EO complete an assessment of the quality of the final report?	The evaluation deliverables were peer-reviewed.	5
V.	Transparency: Were the draft ToR and evaluation report circulated to all key stakeholders for comments? Was the draft evaluation report sent directly to EO? Were all comments to the draft evaluation report sent directly to the EO and did EO share all comments with the commentators? Did the evaluator(s) prepare a response to all comments?	ToR and evaluation deliverables were circulated for comments. Comments were sent directly to the Evaluation Office and a response to the comments was prepared.	6
W.	Participatory approach: Was close communication to the EO and project maintained throughout the evaluation? Were evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations adequately communicated?	Close communication was maintained throughout the evaluation.	6

X.	Independence: Was the final selection of the evaluator(s) made by EO? Were possible conflicts of interest of the selected evaluator(s) appraised?	The selection of the evaluator was made by the Evaluation Office.	6
	OVERALL PROCESS RATING		S

Rating system for quality of evaluation reports

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1

The overall quality of the evaluation report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.

ANNEX X STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

In a large regional scale project with multiple country partners and a strong focus on building awareness, capacity and technical expertise such as the IAS project, understanding the needs, strengths and potential roles of all potential stakeholders is fundamental to the effective project implementation. It is clear that a good effort was made to identify the Government and regional stakeholder landscape for IAS in the Pacific and to analyse the potential relationship of these partners to the project. In this regard, the Project design was satisfactory in identifying the national and regional non-government institutions and partners which would benefit from, or be able to support project implementation.

These stakeholders are identified in Sections 2.4. and 2.5 of the ProDoc within the broader international and regional IAS institutional, sectorial and policy context (see also Figure 1 and Table 2). Under these sections regional and international institutions and programmes and their potential contributions are listed as are key Government institutions and civil society organisations in each of the 10 participating countries. As is to be expected when dealing with 10 countries, this latter comprises a large listing of agencies and organisations which could have been further prioritised to clearly indicate the primary (with which interaction was essential) and secondary (with which interaction would be on as needed basis) stakeholders. Project design would have benefitted from a graphical representation of the stakeholder landscape using one of many available mapping methodologies or matrices indicating the relative degrees of interest and ability to influence the project of each stakeholder. This has been undertaken by the Evaluator based on his knowledge and experience in the region and for the purposes of better understanding the relative status of the many stakeholders identified in Pro Doc see Table 3, Figure 3.

The evaluator notes however, that there is a lack of information on the wider range of potential stakeholders especially those which could support or supply research, data collection, technical expertise and other forms of assistance over the life of the project. One would expect these to include entities such as the regional tertiary institutions, scientific and research organisations with IAS expertise and a history of working in the region e.g. Landcare Research NZ, CSIRO, Australia and the private sector entities with specialist IAS expertise. Several of these were subsequently engaged in project implementation during the course of project. Similarly, private sector entities in sectors of biosecurity importance, such as trade, agriculture and transport are not listed or identified as potential stakeholders.

The degree to which the stakeholders participated in the design of a project after 6 years and numerous changes in project staff can be difficult to determine. However, in discussion with the UNEP Task Manager, it is evident that a significant effort was made to engage stakeholders through a design workshop involving national project focal points and representatives of government agencies involved with invasive species issues from the participating countries. This important design meeting was convened in Fiji on 22 – 26 February 2010. All project outcomes, outputs and activities as well as financial requirements were determined through the workshop, plus phone and email consultations. These were the basis for the consolidated project logframe. The workshop was preceded by in country consultations coordinated through a lead agency and involving relevant agencies and other stakeholders. These consultations were instrumental in identifying national level priorities.

Many of the regional and national IAS community of stakeholders were also engaged in the development of the Guidelines prior to their endorsement by all 22 Pacific island member countries and territories of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and SPREP, and by the 24 member organisations of the Pacific Invasives Partnership (PIP). The formulation process for the Guidelines involved open discussions at Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN) meetings in 2006 and 2007, and at the Conference of the Roundtable for Nature Conservation for the Pacific Islands in October 2007, as well as at numerous regional and national meetings. Drafts were circulated in 2007–8 to an informal advisory group of more than 100 people, including the Roundtable's Invasive Species Working Group and representatives of countries, territories and regional agencies, many of whom contributed comments and suggestions[16]. To the extent that the Guidelines heavily influenced the final formulation of the ProDoc, it is reasonable to assume that the project strongly reflects the inputs of the main regional and national stakeholders.

[16] *Guidelines for Invasive Species Management in the Pacific – a Pacific Strategy for managing pest, weeds and other invasive species (Tye 2009)*

Table 3: Assessment of Stakeholder interest and influence

Institution/Agency	Interest*	Influence*
Regional/International Enabling Institutions		
UNEP/GEF –GPAS	H	H
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)	H	H
Secretariat of the Pacific Community SPC	H	H
Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN)	H	H
IUCN Invasive Species Specialist Group	M	M
PII (Pacific Invasives Initiative)	H	H
Pacific Invasives Partnership (PIP)	H	H
Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP)	M	M
Conservation International (CI)	H	M
The Nature Conservancy (TNC)	H	M
Islands Conservation	H	H
Sectorial Interests		
Forestry, agriculture, fisheries, transportation (shipping) and tourism	L	M
National Government Agencies (Focal Agencies in bold – Community and NGO's in italics)		
Cook Islands		
CI: National Environment Service (NES)	H	H
CI: Ministry of Agriculture	H	M
CI: Island Council	M	L
CI: Natural Heritage Trust	M	M
CI: The House of Ariki- Koutu Nui	M	M
CI: Taporoporoanga a Ipukarea Society	M	M
CI: Takitumu Conservation Area	M	M
FSM		
FSM: FSM Department of Resources and Development	H	H
FSM: FSM State Agriculture and Natural Resources Departments	H	H
FSM: The Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP)	H	H
FSM: The Kosrae Island Resource Management Agency (KIRMA)	H	M
FSM: Chuuk Conservation Society	M	M
FSM: Yap Community Action Program (Yap CAP)	H	M
Kiribati		
K: Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development (MELAD) Environment & Conservation Division,	H	H
K: Wildlife Conservation Unit (stationed at Kiritimati Island),	H	H
K: Agriculture and Livestock Division (ALD),	H	M
K: Phoenix Islands Protected Area Office	H	M
Republic of Marshall Islands		
RMI: The Republic of the Marshall Islands Environment Protection Agency (RMIEPA)	H	M
RMI: The Ministry of Resources & Development (R&D)	H	H
RMI: The Marshall Islands Conservation Society (MICS)	H	M
Niue		
N: Ministry of Natural Resources - Department of Conservation and Environment (DEC)	H	H
N: DAFF Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries	H	H
N: Village councils	M	M
Palau		
P: Office of Environmental Response & Coordination	H	H
P: The Palau National Invasive Species Committee (NISC)	H	H
P: Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment & Tourism	H	H

P: Palau Conservation Society	H	H
Samoa		
S: Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Division of Environment and Conservation (DEC)	H	H
S: Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries	H	M
S: Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure	M	L
S: Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development:	M	L
S: Samoa's National Invasive Task Team (SNITT)	H	H
S: Village Councils, Committees and general public	L	L
Tonga		
T: The Ministry of Environment & Climate Change	H	H
T: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Food and Fisheries: Quarantine and Quality Management Division	H	H
T: Tongan Community Development Trust	L	L
Vanuatu		
V: Department of Environment and Conservation	H	H
V: Department of Livestock & Quarantine	H	H
V: Department of Agriculture	M	M
V: Department of Forestry	M	M
Regional Research and Tertiary Institutions		
Landcare Research (New Zealand)	H	M
CSIRO (Australia)	M	L
Department of Conservation New Zealand	H	M
*** H = High M = Medium L = Low**		

Figure 3: Stakeholder Evaluation