

**Evaluation Report**  
**Terminal Evaluation for the “Enhancing Capacity to  
Develop Global Environment Projects in the Pacific”  
(CCCCD)**

UNDP PIMS 5160, GEF PMIS 6982



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**SPREP**  
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional  
Environment Programme



Cover photo: SPREP Headquarters, Apia, Samoa. Photo: Trond Norheim

# Terminal Evaluation for the “Enhancing Capacity to Develop Global Environment Projects in the Pacific” (CCCD)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 Purpose of the evaluation .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2 Scope and methodology .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1.2. General considerations based on UNDP, GEF and OECD-DAC quality standards.....	1
1.1.3. Methodology for the TE implementation .....	2
<b>1.3 Structure of the evaluation report .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.1. Project start and duration .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.2. Problems that the project sought to address.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.3. Project objectives .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.4. Baseline indicators established.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.5. Main stakeholders .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.6. Expected results .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3.1. Project design/Formulation.....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1.1. Analysis of Results Framework/Logframe.....	7
3.1.2. Assumptions and risks .....	8
3.1.3. Lessons from other relevant projects incorporated into project design .....	9
3.1.4. Planned stakeholder participation .....	10
3.1.5. Replication approach .....	10
3.1.6. UNDP comparative advantage.....	11
3.1.7. Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector .....	11
3.1.8. Management arrangements .....	11
<b>3.2. Project implementation .....</b>	<b>11</b>
3.2.1. Management structure .....	11
3.2.2. Adaptive management .....	12
3.2.3. Partnership arrangements.....	14
3.2.4. Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management.....	14
3.2.5. Project Finance .....	14
3.2.6. Monitoring and evaluation: design at entry and implementation.....	16
3.2.7. UNDP and Implementing Partner implementation / execution.....	16
<b>3.3. Project Results.....</b>	<b>16</b>
3.3.1. Overall results.....	16
3.3.2. Relevance .....	17
3.3.3. Effectiveness & Efficiency.....	18
3.3.4. Country ownership .....	27
3.3.5. Mainstreaming.....	28
3.3.6. Sustainability .....	28
3.3.7. Impact .....	32
<b>4. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>4.1. Conclusions .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>4.2. Recommendations .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>4.3. Lessons learned.....</b>	<b>35</b>

**LIST OF ANNEXES\***

1. Terms of Reference
2. Mission itinerary with institutions/persons
3. Persons interviewed and Designations
4. Evaluation questions
5. Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form
6. Clearance Form

\*(i) There is no annex of field visits since the project had no field activities; (ii) List of documents revised is included in the document text, table 1.

## ABREVIATIONS

ACM	Adaptive Collaborative Management
AF	Adaptation Fund
BD	Biodiversity
CC	Climate Change
CCCD	Cross-Cutting Capacity Development
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COP	Convention of the Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of OECD)
EOI	Expression of Interest
E&S	Environmental and Social
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of United Nations
FMIS	Financial Management Information System
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEFSEC	Secretariat of the Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
HR	Human Resources
IA	Implementing Agency
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IIA	Institute of Internal Auditors
IT	Information Technology
IPPF	International Standards for the Professional Practice Framework
LDC	Least Developed Countries
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCO	Multi-country office (of UNDP)
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MSP	Medium Size Project
NCSA	National Capacity Self Assessment
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAC	Programme Advisory Committee
PCU	Project Coordination Unit (of SPREP)
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIMS	Project Information Management System
PMIS	Project Management Information System
PMU	Project Management Unit
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor
SIDS	Small Islands Development States
SPREP	Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
STAP	Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TM	Task Manager
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
US	United States (of America)

## Executive Summary

### PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE

Project Title:	Enhancing Capacity to Develop Global and Regional Environmental Projects in the Pacific, or Cross-Cutting Capacity Development (CCCD) <sup>1</sup>			
GEF Project ID:	6982		<i>at endorsement (Million US\$)</i>	<i>at completion (Million US\$)</i>
UNDP Project ID:	5160	GEF financing:	1,000,000	978,202
Country:	Regional	IA/EA own:	1,584,502.60	2,022,549
Region:	South Pacific	Government:	0	0
Focal Area:	Multi-focal	Other:	330,000	330,000
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):	CD-2: Generate, access and use of information and knowledge CD-3: Strengthened capacities for policy and legislation development for achieving global benefits	Total co-financing:	1,914,502.60	2,352,549
Executing Agency:	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)	Total Project Cost:	2,914,502.60	3,330,751
Other Partners involved:	Cook islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu	ProDoc Signature (date project began):		02.12.2014
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: 31.12.2015	Actual: 30.06.2017

<sup>1</sup> The project is known in SPREP and the region as MSP, since it is a GEF Medium Size Project. However, since there are other MSPs in the region, and SPREP might execute other MSPs in the future, the evaluation document is using CCCD or simply “the Project”.

## Project Description

The Project “Enhancing Capacity to Develop Global and Regional Environmental Projects in the Pacific”, or Cross-Cutting Capacity Development (CCCD) was a Project implemented by UNDP and executed by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The Project’s Objectives were to strengthen SPREP’s capacity to assist Pacific Island Countries’ implementation of the three Rio Conventions; and to enable Pacific island countries to expedite access to GEF resources through SPREP. It was therefore a project to strengthen SPREP so the organization would be better fit to support the countries once the project outcomes have been achieved.

The goal of the project was to build national capacities of 14 Pacific Island Countries to access GEF resources through strengthening of SPREP. The project focused on strengthening SPREP’s capacity to obtain GEF accreditation and assist Pacific Island Countries to meet their international obligations to the Rio Convention.

The project aimed to strengthen internal control frameworks of SPREP to perform fiduciary functions expected of a GEF Project Agency and enhance SPREP’s policies through integration of environmental and social safeguards, including a gender mainstreaming strategy for the organization. Management systems and procedures should be revised and improved at organizational level to deliver GEF projects in accordance with GEF policies. The project approach was “learning-by-doing”, with the active participation of national GEF Operational Focal Points and SPREP Focal Points from all 14 Pacific Island Countries in the full project life cycle.]

<b>Evaluation Ratings*:</b>			
<b>1. Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>2. IA&amp; EA Execution</b>	<b>Rating</b>
M&E design at entry	3	Quality of Implementation – Implementing Agency (IA, UNDP)	5
M&E Plan Implementation	5	Quality of Execution - Executing Agency (EA, SPREP)	5
Overall quality of M&E	4	Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	5
<b>3. Assessment of Outcomes</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>4. Sustainability</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Relevance	2(R)	Financial resources	4
Effectiveness	6	Socio-political	4
Efficiency	4	Institutional framework and governance	4
Overall Project Outcome Rating	5 (S)	Environmental	4
		Overall likelihood of sustainability	4

\*Relevance has two criteria: 2=Relevant (R), 1=Not Relevant (NR); Sustainability has a rating from 1 (unlikely) to 4 (likely), and the other criteria have a rating from 1 (highly unsatisfactory) to 6 (highly satisfactory)

## Summary of conclusions, recommendations and lessons

The project design was very logical and concentrated on institutional strengthening; however with the weakness to be a one-year project when the activities should require at least two. The delays in project execution, resulting in a period of 2 ½ years is therefore not only due to procurement problems, but also weakness in design. Only one high risk is defined in the Project document, associated with meeting the GEF’ council deadline for the GEF 5 Pilot on Accrediting GEF Project Agencies in Dec. 2014. The Consultant considers that this was not a risk, it was a fact that the project would not be able to finalize in time, and it became even clearer when the project was approved the same month as the mentioned deadline.

The Consultant found that the outcomes and outputs of the project have been relevant and adequate, considering the regional and national contexts. SPREP was instructed by its Governing Council to seek GEF accreditation already in 2011. All 14 Pacific Island Countries eligible for GEF funding have endorsed the project and continue to support the secretariat’s

efforts. Most of the countries are small and with few resources, depending on SPREP for service and as a prolonged arm to the international community. The project was also highly relevant for GEF's Multi-Focal Area because it dealt with institutional strengthening of an organization that is working on multiple areas, with the long-term goal of strengthening SPREP's ability to give support to the member countries on compliance with the Rio conventions, which is corresponding with 3 of GEF's Focal areas.

Regarding Development Effectiveness, CCCD is one of the few projects where the results and impacts of the project are clearly felt already during implementation. The effectiveness was low in the beginning especially due to slow procurement processes, but there has been a gradual trend towards improved effectiveness and efficiency throughout the project implementation as a result of initial use of the new policies and procedures, which is recognized internally and by UNDP. The financing has therefore been justified both from a SPREP's and donor/IA's perspective.

Regarding participatory processes, there has been great activity from SPREP's staff during the development of the new systems and their introduction, and that commitment has been key for the positive results. All products seem to be of high quality, and there is also satisfaction from the users' side. SPREP now has the policies, mechanisms, procedures and standards in place to perform GEF fiduciary functions and also to comply with the requirements of other international agencies.

The main outputs of the project were (i) strengthened financial management and controls, adequate and in compliance with financial regulations & procedures; (ii) strengthened financial disclosure capacity meeting international financial reporting standards; (iii) strengthened Code of Ethics; (iv) strengthened internal audit functions; (v) strengthened project management through results-based management; (vi) improved performance and accountability by integrating M&E information system policy, guideline, framework and plan into SPREP's project management; (vii) strengthened investigative capacity; and (viii) strengthened whistle-blower protection.

SPREP's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy and Guideline is now being applied and managed in both the corporate and programme divisions, accompanied by a social and environmental screening checklist and report, including risk assessment, categorization of projects, and type of social and environmental assessment required. The new SPREP gender policy is accompanied by an action plan to strengthen SPREP's environmental governance while supporting and encouraging gender mainstreaming. It also supports integration of gender into SPREP's current programs and the project lifespan cycle.

SPREP's ICT systems have been upgraded to support a web-based project management and regional repository for lessons learned on project implementation and management. Key components of the ICT have been developed, including the Project Management Information System (PMIS), and strengthening of the Financial Management Information System (FMIS).

This project was presented to GEF for funding under the GEF-5 "Cross-Cutting Capacity Development" (CCCD). The Pacific regional project was in line with the programme's objective to strengthen capacities for developing policy and legislative frameworks to meet Rio Convention Objectives. SPREP's capacity today matches the GEF accredited standards and the organization is ready for its reapplication to the GEF accreditation scheme. There is a reasonable expectation that the GEF may wish for SPREP to re-apply if the GEF council reopen its accreditation pilot. However, through the project SPREP has acquired upgrades to its overall capacity to deliver projects for multiple donors across the region. Results and lessons learned from the CCCD project should be promoted through South-South collaboration in the South Pacific Region and for regional agencies in other regions.

The Consultant would like to thank the UNDP Multi-Country Office and SPREP for excellent support and collaboration during the evaluation.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose of the evaluation

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP supported GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. The GEF Implementing Agency (IA) for this project was the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through its Multi-Country Office (MCO) in Samoa and the Implementing Partner the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).

*The objectives of the evaluation were to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming (from the TOR).*

The Terminal Evaluation (TE) should provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned within UNDP, SPREP and main project partners. The evaluation has been carried out in line with UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2016); UNDP and GEF Evaluation Policies and Guidelines.

This Terminal Evaluation Report is based on the TOR for the Consultant (Annex 1). The Consultant considers the TOR as adequate for the tasks to be carried out, even though it would have been an advantage to be able to visit more than one pilot country.

The conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned from the evaluation would be useful especially for UNDP, SPREP, GEF, and the governments that participated in the project, and probably for the UNEG member organizations UN Environment and FAO; for knowledge sharing, design and implementation of similar or related projects in the future.

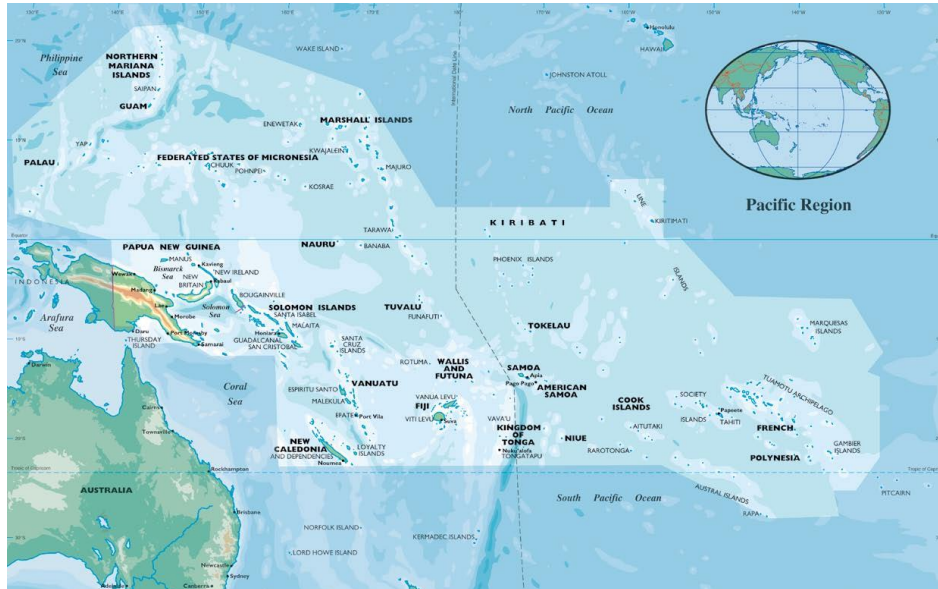
### 1.2 Scope and methodology

#### 1.1.1. *General considerations based on UNDP, GEF and OECD-DAC quality standards*

The Consultant applied the following considerations throughout the evaluation:

- a) Free and open evaluation process**, transparent and independent from Project management and policy-making, to enhance credibility;
- b) Evaluation ethics** that abides by relevant professional and ethical guidelines and codes of conduct, while the evaluation was undertaken with integrity and honesty;
- c) Partnership approach**, to build development ownership and mutual accountability for results. A participatory approach was used on all levels (governments, institutions, implementing agencies);
- d) Co-ordination and alignment**, to consider regional, national and local evaluations and help strengthen country systems in the region, as well as plans, activities and policies;
- e) Capacity development of partners** by improving evaluation knowledge and skills, stimulating demand for and use of evaluation findings, and supporting accountability and learning; and
- f) Quality control** throughout the evaluation process.

Fig. 1. Map of the Pacific Region (source: SPREP Annual Report 2005)



### 1.1.2. Methodology for the TE implementation

#### 1.1.2.1. Understanding of the Project and the assignment

The Consultant understands the evaluation as an analysis of two main elements with a logic sequence:

- 1) *Project performance*, with emphasis on effectiveness of outputs and outcomes, as well as efficiency, impact, sustainability and relevance;
- 2) *Lessons learned*, including what has worked well and what has not; giving inputs to other UNDP and GEF projects, and especially other SPREP projects and other GEF financed projects in the same region

The Consultant reviewed the implementation progress, results, and effects/impacts, especially regarding the participating Pacific islands capacity to access MEA funding and the strengthening of SPREP's policies and capacity to meet GEF's accreditation standards.

#### 1.1.2.2. Assessment of the Project design and implementation structure

The Consultant reviewed the quality of the Project design and quality of the logical framework based on the Theory of Change (TOC); as well as the organizational structure of PMU and the project in general.

#### 1.1.2.3. Planning process of the evaluation mission

##### a) Ethical guidelines

The Consultant maintained clear impartiality and independence at all stages of the evaluation process, applicable towards any activity related to planning, gathering, organization, processing and assessment of information; as well as facilitation of the evaluation results according to the TOR and rules agreed with UNDP.

##### b) Evaluation plan

The Consultant planned the evaluation in detail, and the draft evaluation plan was presented to UNDP and SPREP (see Annex 2-3). The Consultant initiated the consultancy from the date of signing of the contract (July 12<sup>th</sup>), and initiated the evaluation mission from August 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### 1.1.2.4. Information and data collection

Documents were recollected in advance through contacts with UNDP and SPREP, and reviewed to extract relevant information for the evaluation.

The Consultant reviewed all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project plans, project budgets with revisions, progress reports, project files, contracts with service providers, project audit document, samples of project products (including software), and any other information considered useful for evidence-based assessment.

The mission activities and evaluation in general used a participatory and consultative approach for data collection, ensuring strong engagement with UNDP, SPREP, PMU and national government counterparts. Key persons of information were national GEF focal points and the UNDP-GEF Technical Advisor (Project Coordinator) based in SPREP.

During the visit to Samoa, meetings were carried out with UNDP Deputy Resident Representative and Project Task Manager, SPREP Director General and Deputy Director General, SPREP staff, MNRE (GEF CEO), and UN Environment Advisor established in SPREP. Skype meetings were held with Marshall Islands and Cook Islands. Information from documents reviewed, workshops and interviews were organized and processed to give reliable data for the evaluation report.

Table 1. Sources of information for the terminal evaluation

<b>Written and digital information</b>
Project Identification Form (PIF)
Project Document with all appendixes
Project inception report
Project budget and any adapted versions of it
Results Framework
M&E system and tracking tools
SPREP Human resources regulations
Risk matrix (with possible mitigation decisions taken)
UNDP Environment Policies, Strategies and Work programs
UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) with Samoa Country Matrix
GEF policies and strategies with Focal Area strategic programme objectives
GEF CEO Endorsement documents
GEF STAP Reviews
Baseline study
Project Quarterly Work Plans with budgets
Financial reports with audits
Meeting Minutes for Project Steering Committee/Board
Memos from workshops and seminars
Environmental screening tools
Consultancy products: Reports, technical studies, software (PMIS, FMIS)
Project information material and PowerPoint presentations
SPREP website and websites for national governments
Pilot country statistics (Internet)
Maps of participating countries
Information about other projects in the same geographic or thematic area (UNDP/GEF/Internet)
Signed agreements with partner countries
Signed contracts with service providers

The Consultant used a set of evaluation questions covering each of the main criteria covered, see Evaluation Question Matrix (Annex 4).

Table 2. Persons interviewed

Organization	Persons interviewed
SPREP	Director General
	Deputy Director General
	Director Environmental Monitoring & Governance
	Climate change Adviser
	HR Advisor
	Finance & Adm. Advisor
	Legal Advisor
	GEF Support Advisor
	MSP Financial Consultant
	IT Manager
	Internal Auditor
UNDP	Deputy Resident Representative
	Programme Manager – Environment & CC
	Programme Associate – Environment & Climate Change
Country Representatives	Samoa – GEF Focal Point
	Cook Islands – GEF Focal Point
	Marshall Islands – GEF Focal Point
UN Environment	UN Environment advisor in charge of SPREP

The evaluation paid special attention to the compliance with expected Project outputs, outcomes and impacts, and the influence and integration of experiences and lessons learned. The evaluation also considered actions, strategies, policies and other factors that have influenced the execution positively and negatively, in the region, the participating countries and particularly the intervention areas, considering policies and contexts, and the relations with governments, partners and UNDP/GEF.

Based on review of the results, the Consultant analysed if they have given or are expected to give the intended impacts (possible ex-post impacts), according with the Project objectives.

### 1.3 Structure of the evaluation report

The main body of the Terminal Evaluation report is structured in four sections: (i) Introduction; (ii) Project description and development context; (iii) Findings; and (iv) Conclusions, recommendations and lessons.

## 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

### 2.1. Project start and duration

The project initiated March 23, 2015, and was expected to last until June 30, 2016. This was later changed to June 30, 2017, within the same budget.

### 2.2. Problems that the project sought to address

The Pacific Islands consist of many small island countries with few financial resources and low capacity to address the serious environmental issues that the region is confronting. The project was therefore designed to (i) strengthen SPREP's capacity to assist Pacific Island Countries' implementation of the three Rio Conventions; and (ii) enable Pacific island countries to expedite access to GEF resources through SPREP.

### 2.3. Project objectives

The Project's abbreviation CCCD was due to the funding source "Cross-Cutting Capacity Development", which is a GEF Programme. The long-term objective of the project was to *enable SPREP to support 14 Pacific Island Countries to more effectively achieve global environmental benefits by strengthening their key institutional and*

*individual capacities*. The support given by SPREP to its member countries that are eligible for GEF funding included technical and policy support and facilitating access to funding to strengthen the design, adoption and implementation of environmental policies and programs.

The goal of the project was to *strengthen SPREP's capacity to assist Pacific Island Countries' implementation of the three Rio Conventions*. To strengthen SPREP's capacity the project has focused on enhancing 3 key areas: internal control framework, environmental and social safeguard policy, and a gender mainstreaming policy and guidelines.

At the end of the project, activities should have resulted in a set of improved capacities within SPREP to meet GEF minimum accreditation standards. This project should have strengthened and helped institutionalize commitments required to meet SPREP's Stage II application for accreditation. Indirectly, it should also have helped Pacific Island Countries efforts to meet their obligations under the Rio Conventions in the long run.

**The project's Objectives** were to strengthen SPREP's capacity to assist Pacific Island Countries' implementation of the three Rio Conventions; and to enable Pacific island countries to expedite access to GEF resources through SPREP.

The project was structured into four interrelated components with their respective expected outcomes (Table 1). Figure 1 shows the practical implementation logic of the project (from Project document).

#### **2.4. Baseline indicators established**

The baseline for the project was that SPREP's fiduciary capacity was limited, and that its policies and procedures were not aligned to GEF's social & environmental safeguard. The project baseline also included that the Pacific island countries were slow in accessing funding through Multilateral Environmental Agreements. The complete baseline values on Outcome and output level are included in Table 5.

#### **2.5. Main stakeholders**

The main stakeholders related with the project were, additional to SPREP itself, the 14 national GEF operational focal points as collaborators in the implementation of project activities. The SPREP Governing Council Chairpersons provided the overall voice and input of the 14 Pacific Island member countries throughout the lifespan of the project.

The first set of government stakeholders was the 14 ministries/departments of the Pacific island countries accessing GEF funding to which the project focused its efforts. These are the national frontline for delivering future GEF projects. The heads of these ministries and departments are also their respective countries' national GEF operational focal points. These include:

- Cook Islands: National Environment Service
- Federated States of Micronesia: Office of Environment and Emergency Management
- Fiji: Department of Environment
- Kiribati: Environment and Conservation Division
- Marshall Islands: Office of Environmental Planning and Policy Coordination (OEPPC)
- Nauru: Department of Commerce, Industry Environment
- Niue: Department of Environment
- Palau: Office of Environmental Response and Coordination (OERC)
- Papua New Guinea: Department of Environment and Conservation
- Samoa: Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment
- Solomon Islands: Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology

- Tonga: Ministry of Lands, Environment, Climate Change & Natural Resources
- Tuvalu: Department of Environment
- Vanuatu: Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation

In addition to the above, another key group was the stakeholders that form the SPREP GEF Advisory Group. Other stakeholders were participants in regional trainings and workshops that SPREP was involved in (see 3.1.4).

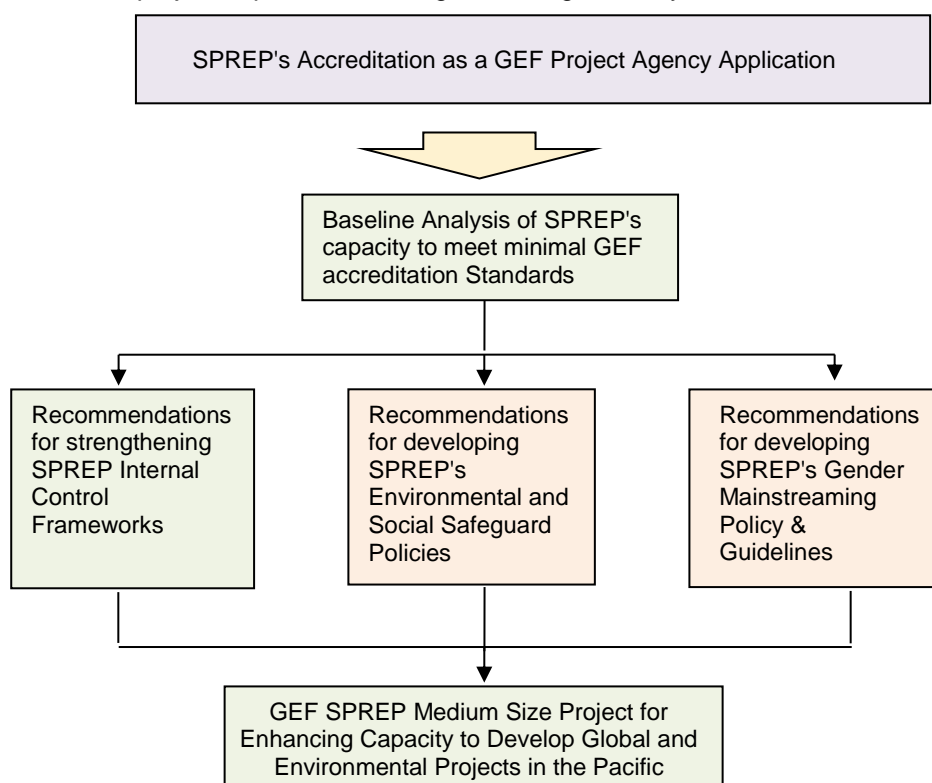
## 2.6. Expected results

The project's expected end results were that by the end of the project the 14 Pacific countries should successfully be able to implement the three Rio Conventions; that SPREP should have been accredited as a GEF Project Agency, and that all of the 14 Pacific island countries would have fast track access to MEA funding such as the GEF. The expected end results on Outcome and Output level are included in Table 5.

Table 3. Project components and expected outcomes

Components	Outcomes
Enhancing Internal Control Frameworks to meet GEF Minimum Fiduciary Standards	MEA funding access fast-tracked
	SPREP Fiduciary Capacity strengthened and GEF's accreditation standards met
Development of Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy	SPREP's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy and Guideline Developed
Development of Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Guidelines	SPREP's Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Guideline Developed
Strengthening Information, Communication and Technology Systems	SPREP's Information, Communication and Technology Systems Enhanced

Fig. 2. Outline of the project implementation logic focusing on 3 key areas



### 3. FINDINGS

#### 3.1. Project design/Formulation

##### 3.1.1. Analysis of Results Framework/Logframe

The Consultant has undertaken a critical analysis of the project's logframe ("framework"), including the outputs, indicators and targets mentioned in the Project Results Framework. The conclusion is that it is a logical design, and no alternative would therefore be presented.

The only thing to comment on is that many of the outputs and even some of the outcomes had been presented as activities. In the framework presented under effectiveness (table 5), the Consultant has updated the text to standard logframe wording. This is however not only a grammatical issue. It is important that the staff think about the project's outputs as "products" where it is necessary to carry out activities to achieve these products. That is also important when filling in information in the new Project Management Information System (PMIS).

The Consultant reviewed the quality of the Project designed to reach its goal, based on the Project Document and Logical framework. Some information for this review was also drawn from Project performance and difficulties encountered during the implementation. An analysis of the quality of the logical framework and/or results framework took effect based on the Theory of Change.

Based on the project *title* "Enhancing Capacity to Develop Global and Regional Environmental Projects in the Pacific" it is easy to get the impression that it is a regional program supporting individual projects spread around in the Pacific region. Digging into the subject, it comes clear very fast that the project has a completely different design.

The Project's long-term goal according to the logical framework is to "enable SPREP to support 14 Pacific Island Countries to more effectively achieve global environmental benefits by strengthening their key institutional and individual capacities". Also this statement could give the impression that it is a project for SPREP to support the 14 countries, and in fact it is, however the question is "during or after implementation"?

Reviewing all documentation, including discussions among the countries and between SPREP and UNDP/GEF during the design phase, it becomes clear that it is a project to **strengthen SPREP so the organization would be better fit to support the countries once the project outcomes have been achieved**. The fact that the original design was for only one year also emphasize that it wouldn't have been possible to give much support to 14 countries during such a short period.

However, interviews with individual member countries show that some of them might have expected increased direct support even during implementation, maybe based on sentences in the project document like "the aim of this application is to more effectively implement the SPREP Strategic Plan 2011-15, to support the priorities of Pacific Island Countries and Territories". The project objective could also add to such confusion, since it is formulated as a) "To strengthen SPREP's capacity to assist Pacific Island Countries' *implementation of the three Rio Conventions*, and b) To enable Pacific island countries to expedite access to GEF resources through SPREP. According to both parts of the objective, and comparing it with the actual project activities, it becomes clear that the objectives would be fulfilled *after project implementation*.

That discussion will in the continuation of the evaluation document not be part of the review, which is based on the interpretation that the goal of the project is to **strengthen SPREP** so it can give a better service to the member countries when the project outcomes have been reached. Based on this goal, the project outcomes, outputs and activities have a very clear logical and coherent relation. In fact, it is one of the most



logical designs the Consultant has reviewed, maybe because it is small and concentrate on one core subject, which is *institutional strengthening*. Other larger projects often have the tendency to put different components under the same umbrella without much common goals.

Another positive aspect of the project document is that it is short and clear, probably prepared by a small group of people, instead of (what often is the case) a large document prepared by different consultants not thinking the same way. A related issue is that the project was designed and implemented “in-house”, and even though external consultants were efficiently used, the organization was always in control through a small internal PMU. The project design is relevant as lessons learned for other regional agencies in the world, especially if they pursue GEF or GCF accreditation.

### 3.1.2. Assumptions and risks

The Project document makes the assumption that the commitment of the GEF Council and GEFSEC to the project would not be in wane during its formulation, implementation or beyond, jeopardizing the institutional sustainability, and for that reason the project took an Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM) approach to implementation. The Consultant considers that to be a good assumption and approach. First of all, GEF would not have financed the project if it didn't think it was money well spent, and second of all, an institutional strengthening of SPREP would be important for the organization with or without GEF accreditation.

The Project document Annex 5 included UNDP's risk log defining four risks, where only one of them (first round of GEF Accreditation ends on 31.12.2014) was considered as a high risk.

Table 4. Part of UNDP risk log (comments and mitigation not included)

No.	Key risks	Level of risk
1	The “learning by doing approach” cannot be implemented because SPREP staff do not have time to engage in this capacity building project	Low to moderate
2	First Round of GEF Accreditation ends on the 31st December 2014	<b>High</b>
3	Regional Participation in the Project Board	Low to Moderate
4	Limited Consultancy Pool in the Pacific Region	Low
	<b>Overall risk</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

Among these risks, the discussion in the Project document text only deals with the high risk, because all the rest were considered manageable. During implementation all the other issues appeared to certain extent, but the SPREP team was able to handle them. The Project document looked into three aspects of the high risk:

1. The risk associated with meeting the GEF' council deadline for the GEF 5 Pilot on Accrediting GEF Project Agencies, that was decided to be completed in December 2014. The project document defined it as a *significant risk* that the project would not be able to be completed by December 2014 unless the GEF Council extended the deadline or approved a second round of accreditation. In the Consultant's opinion *this was not a risk, it was a fact* that the project would not be able to finalize before December 2014. It became gradually even clearer during the design phase, which ended with GEF approval December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014.

2. This is a management project as opposed to the traditional development type project that would require a longer time period for results to be achieved. This is directly related with the first risk, but it makes it even worse. Not only wouldn't the project be able to meet the GEF deadline, but it would also probably *not be able to implement the activities in the one-year period that was planned* (even though the project document didn't express that so clearly). The Consultant considers it as an error with the design that it was defined for only one year, when even in good circumstances without any bottlenecks it should require more time. However, it might



have been considered a good strategy to plan it only for one year to be able to reach the GEF deadline (or any extension of it).

3. Capacity building activities of the project might not be adequate or sufficient to meet the expectations of the accreditation panel. The Project document mentioned limited guidance on exactly what needed to be done with the exception of identifying three key areas of capacity where SPREP had not received a pass mark. It was clearly a risk, but with such uncertainties it was a risk with a high potential of coming through, adding to the mentioned accreditation problems.

The Project Document mentions as a mitigation measure to receive guidance from UNDP due to UNDP's extensive experience working with the GEF. In this regard, the Project Document didn't consider it a risk relying on support from UNDP even though UNDP through this project would be "strengthening the competition" and could be reduced in the Pacific development market if SPREP become GEF certified. This shows the degree of confidence that has been built up between UNDP and SPREP during the years, and UNDP's compliance with real development goals, even when the organization could get reduced "market share".

An additional risk appeared during implementation that was not considered during design, mentioned in Quarterly Reports up to the end as an *Operational High Risk*:

"Operational Learning on the new policies, manuals and tools and the PMIS requires further training after the project closes. The success of carrying out functions prescribed by new policies depends on an on-going training programme for relevant staff well into 2017 and beyond". The proposed risk reduction strategy is a training programme to guide staff learning during 2017, and a possible extension for any remaining balance to support travel of the consulting teams Nataij (policies, etc.) and Eighty-Options (PMIS) to continue training in 2017. The Consultant considers it a good strategy to continue investing in staff learning based on the newly introduced tools, and this should be an institutional priority even after the GEF project budget has closed.

### **3.1.3. Lessons from other relevant projects incorporated into project design**

The project document does not specify other projects that have provided lessons learned for the project design, however all 14 Pacific Island Countries eligible for GEF funding have completed their National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment Exercises that have provided lessons considered in the design. Their National Action Plans have highlighted capacity constraints commonly shared in the region. The analysis identified as major shortfalls: (i) lack of awareness amongst the ministries and/or departments and other state bodies on the international conventions and of the opportunities they provide, as well as of the steps required from national governments to fulfil its commitments; (ii) weak institutional arrangements for the implementation of the conventions; (iii) poor financing and lack of appropriate human resources in governmental institutions; (iv) lack of consistency and insufficient sharing of information between key stakeholders, and little communication across agencies responsible for the conventions with individual Pacific island governments. This is linked to the low commitment to follow up on identified priorities, and to lack of a strong policy framework and political commitment to implementation; and (v) weak capacity of the governments to carry out strategic planning that reflects an integration of international objectives into local and national action plans. This is primarily related to the lack of up-to-date social, economic and environmental data to support the strategic planning process; and lack of communication and coherent regulations establishing the framework for preparing and implementing integrated sustainable planning.

The following lessons learned can be extracted from this analysis:

- For stakeholder engagement, a sense of readiness is necessary from all parties involved, including at the political level, in order to achieve and sustain global environmental objectives
- Achieving environmental sustainability require the engagement of all stakeholders, which in turn is predicated on their level of awareness and understanding, as well as having the skills to take action
- Best Practice methodologies are needed to engage stakeholders
- Environmental information exists (although not complete), however, the capacities to access and manage this information including coordination with other management information systems remain weak
- There is a need to incorporate traditional/indigenous knowledge into the environmental management information system
- Many countries lack clarity in their organizational arrangements to adequately finance environmental management
- Many countries continue to lack comprehensive and adequate set of environmental policies, with missing or unenforced legislative and regulatory instruments that further hinder environmental management
- Regulatory instruments for M&E further hinder environmental management.

#### **3.1.4. *Planned stakeholder participation***

The project was developed and endorsed on the basis of consultations with the SPREP member countries through the SPREP Governing Council Annual Meetings. The letter of endorsement required from all 14 Pacific Island Countries eligible for GEF funding was sourced from the chair of the 22 SPREP Governing Council Meeting and accepted by the GEF.

The SPREP GEF Advisory Group was also designed to participate during the implementation through oversight and advisory supervision. The role of the group was to work within the secretariat to effectively coordinate and streamline GEF support services to its member countries and act as an additional advisory organ to the project management unit.

The project had also planned for information about the project's progress and results to be shared with the member countries through regional trainings and workshops that SPREP was involved in, including networks such as the Asia Pacific Adaptation Network, Pacific Climate Change Roundtable Resource (Finance) Working Group, Pacific Invasive Learning Network, and the Pacific Island Roundtable for Nature Conservation.

The project concentrated on institutional strengthening of SPREP, and there was no planned local stakeholder participation beyond the mentioned national governments, networks and roundtables.

#### **3.1.5. *Replication approach***

The project was designed to ensure that its actions could be widely replicated within any organization seeking GEF accreditation. The cost effectiveness, as well as institutional, social and environmental sustainability were expected to contribute to the replication of the project's approaches. The project design also planned development of a clear communication strategy to ensure that project activities, impacts and lessons learned were recorded and disseminated widely among the SPREP member countries eligible for GEF funding.

The replication approach included an adaptive learning and knowledge management webpage to be introduced and built upon existing virtual mechanisms within SPREP's website. The purpose was to store lessons learned and best practices generated from

the project including all other projects executed by SPREP, to be publicly accessible. The project also had the goal that all lessons and best practices generated from every project executed by SPREP should be incorporated into project designs of all future projects and programmes.

### **3.1.6. *UNDP comparative advantage***

UNDP has a broad experience working in the Pacific region, including many GEF co-funded projects. Throughout the years UNDP has supported national governments and regional efforts like SPREP.

UNDP's comparative advantage for this project lies in the possibility of transferring international UNDP-GEF experience from other regions of the world to SPREP, especially regarding institutional strengthening on environmental project management.

### **3.1.7. *Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector***

The project is directly linked to the Pacific island countries' efforts to implement their National Sustainable Development Plans, which are supporting the global Sustainable Development Goals. SPREP's ability to support the national capacities is important for sustainable outcomes of environmental protection and conservation in Pacific member countries. The strengthening of SPREP through the project is therefore a key contribution to building national capacities in the 14 Pacific Island Countries that reinforces the linkages between the national sectorial policies and global environmental objectives.

The project is consistent with the programmatic objectives of the three GEF thematic focal areas of biodiversity, climate change and land degradation, which is dependent on the critical development of capacities (individual, organizational and systemic) of Pacific Island Countries through SPREP. This would support National Sustainable Development policies, as well as regional and national programmes and projects that reflect the Rio Convention principles and obligations.

### **3.1.8. *Management arrangements***

UNDP, as the Implementing Agency of the project, has been in charge of implementation through its Multi-Country Office in Samoa, with responsibilities for support to and monitoring of the executing agency (SPREP), including planning, reporting and audit of project results in accordance with the project document and results framework. The Implementing Partner (Executing Agency) has been the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), which assigned a Project Director and provided its staff and network of experts to support the Project Management Unit.

The project was implemented under the agreement reached between GEF, UNDP and SPREP, to strengthen SPREP's capacity to obtain GEF accreditation and thus allowing the Pacific Island Countries expedite access to GEF funds. In the project design SPREP was considered as an extension of national ministries/departments of environment and thereby as part of national capacities of the 14 Pacific Island Countries eligible for GEF funding, to access MEA resources and meet their international obligations under the Rio Conventions.

## **3.2. *Project implementation***

### **3.2.1. *Management structure***

SPREP's highest authority is its Governing Council, consisting of representatives from the 14 member countries and territories in the Pacific region. The SPREP Secretariat with Headquarters in Apia, Samoa, is responsible to the Governing Council. For the moment SPREP has more than hundred staff members, the majority established in Samoa, but a few in other countries. Improving the secretariat's capacity, role and

function is important for SPREP's service to the members, and as an extension of SPREP in the member countries. The project has given SPREP a huge leap forward to improve its effectiveness and efficiency as an important regional player.

### **3.2.2. Adaptive management**

The project endured significant challenges, like certain incompatibility between the approved work-plan and budget to accommodate for important activities to support the direction that the SPREP management had identified for the project.

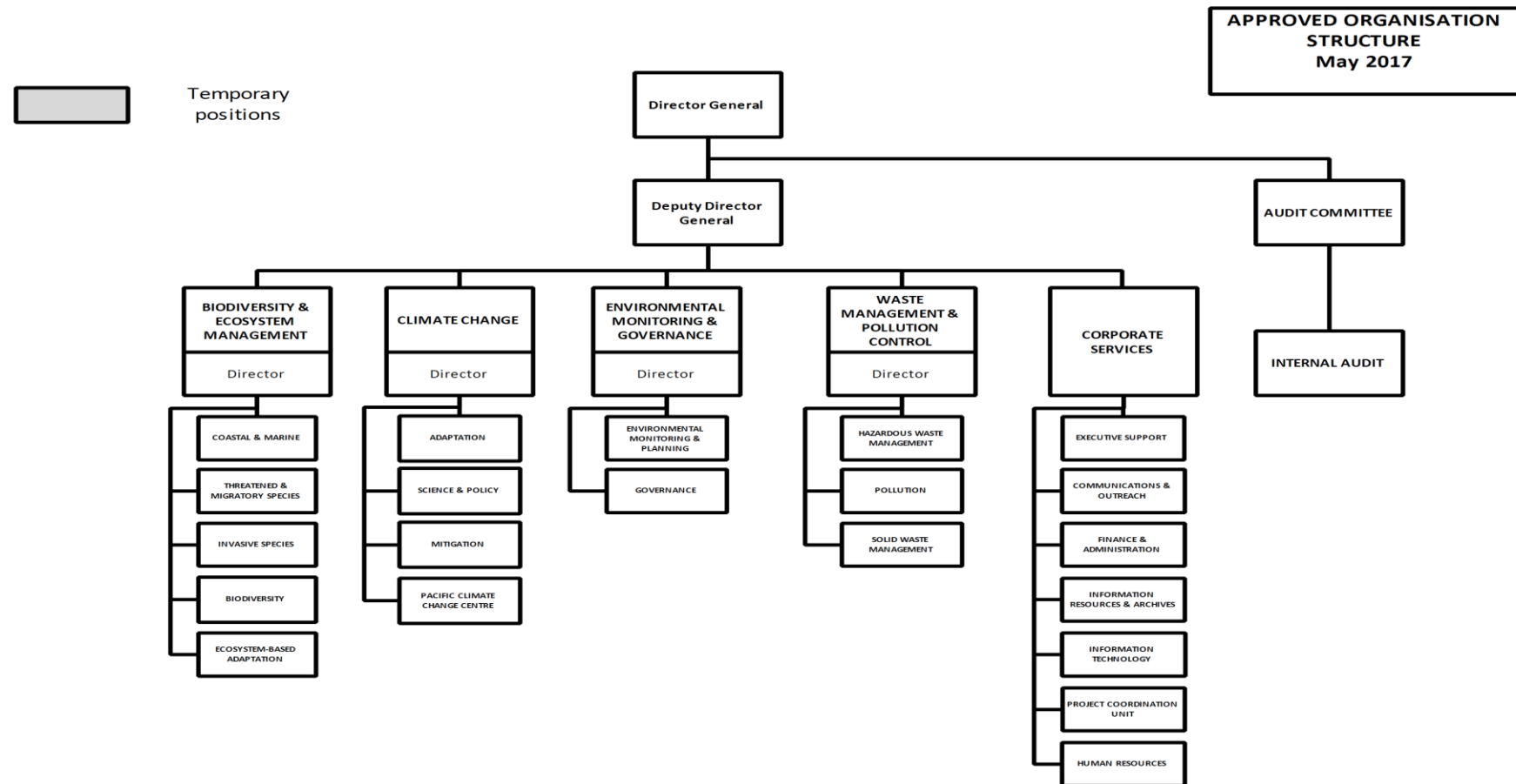
A clear example of adaptive management occurred in 2015 when PMU was abandoning the idea of individual consultants for institutional strengthening of SPREP in favour of a company or companies, with the expectation to create budget savings and at the same time alleviate the burden to PMU of managing multiple consultants. In the same year PMU considered that the project delivery would increase significantly and that a budget revision should be undertaken to determine revised budget ceiling for the following period. At the same time it was decided to identify areas that required an increase in funding such as the ICT component.

The adaptive management that required budget adjustments included: (i) The heavy cost of the ICT component as a direct result of high equipment costs achieved through tenders; (ii) Absence of a travel budget for the project coordinator to brief all 14 Pacific Island Countries on the project progress during the GEF Pacific constituency meetings; (iii) The need for the project to support the project coordinator's salary in commensurate with SPREP adviser salary level.

The new 2016 annual work-plan and budget proposed significant changes to the original budget lines for ICT, travel and project staff salary as per the ATLAS total budget and work-plan in the project document. Approval thresholds in accordance with UNDP financial rules determined the new 2016 budget including approval for budget increases above 5% directly from the GEF secretariat.

The project had endured delays in financial reporting at the end of every quarter. Therefore a financial consultant was recruited from July 2016 to assist with the project financial management and reporting to UNDP Samoa. This significantly improved financial management within the PMU and timely reporting.

Fig. 3. SPREP Institutional structure



### **3.2.3. Partnership arrangements**

The project's strategy for implementation was to take a partnership approach between SPREP and UNDP. The Inception Report mentioned that the project strategy continues to rely on the partnership between UNDP and SPREP insofar as the guidance that is needed for the project to be successfully.

Sub chapter 2.5 mentions the partnerships established for implementation of the project. Additionally, SPREP has a huge number of partners that are relevant for the institution but not for implementation of this specific project.

A source of SPREP partner information established is the central People and Organisation database, which captures all contact information on partners, donors and other agencies. Integration to the PMIS was developed and contact information is shared between PMIS and FMIS.

### **3.2.4. Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management**

All the examples of adaptive management mentioned in 3.2.1 were the results of monitoring activities included in the project's quarterly reports. Most of these reports highlighted issues to be resolved and proposed solutions, whereby the following reports commented on the results of the changes that took place.

### **3.2.5. Project Finance**

The project showed very slow activity rate and related disbursements in the beginning (2015). The project has supported improvements on the Financial Information Management System (FMIS), and additional modalities on FMIS were introduced gradually while the project was progressing. An important issue is to assure a better connection between the two systems PMIS and FMIS, or even better convert them to one system only.

SPREP has for the moment 8 financial staff members. The Chief Financial Advisor joined the organization in July 2016 when the draft new policies were being reviewed. That turned out to be a good coincidence, because she was able to work directly with the consultants on issues like policy changes, proper financial management, risk management, etc.

**Audit:** The firm BDO on contract with UNDP has prepared a "Report on Factual Findings" for the project up to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2016, presented in letter to UNDP August 7<sup>th</sup> 2017, with the following recommendations:

1. The firm noted that the financial management procedures manual does include a requirement for the preparation and review of bank reconciliations. They therefore deferred to UNDP and SPREP to discuss further on whether a separate bank account is required or not for this project.

SPREP responded that it manages separate bank accounts for projects where there are significant amounts of funding involved or where there are specific conditions under the agreement to hold a separate bank account and in some cases, where funds are to be held in trust for a future specified purpose and not currently required. Otherwise, all other project funds are held in SPREP's main USD bank account currently with BSP Bank. This affords more control as well as ease in the management and monitoring of the one account, or if more, at least a few accounts to ensure that they are consistently reconciled and monitored. With this current practice, financial management is critical particularly around bank reconciliations to ensure that they are done on a regular basis and that it is aligned to financial systems representing the separate ledger accounts for the various projects.

2. The firm observed that 30% of their sample of payment processes to consultants and contractors did not occur within 2 weeks (or 10 work days) and recommended

improvement on this issue.

SPREP responded that the recommendation is duly noted. This issue was mainly prevalent in 2016 but was improved on since the last quarter of the 2016 financial year and no longer problematic for the current financial year 2017. Reconciliations as per the current practice is done on a weekly basis (electronically), although attempted daily by Finance as a control measure with respect to properly managing its cash position relative to the various project funds to which is held under the Main SPREP USD account. Strict monitoring and adherence to timely reconciliation is one of the internal objectives currently practiced and shall be continued by the Secretariat which is also in compliance with its revised Financial Procedural Manual in effect since the beginning of this year.

**Risk rating:** The firm BDO assessed the risk for SPREP as being in the LOW risk category. Low risk indicates a well-developed financial management system and functioning control framework with a low likelihood of negative impact on the ability to execute the programme in accordance with the work plan.

The Consultant considers that SPREP now has what it needs for efficient and transparent financial management. It is important to highlight that the improvements in financial management (and management in general) are not limited to GEF projects. SPREP has the tools and capacity to work better on all aspects, for instance to assure cost recovery and sufficient programme management fees. It has also intentions of going paperless. A very important subject for improvement is to give more advice to member governments on financial management and governance.

Some financial challenges during the project implementation were the extension of deadlines for EOI due to few interested firms (already commented on). It was also discovered very early that the budget threshold for IT was too low. The 2016 annual work-plan and budget proposed significant changes to the original budget lines for ICT, travel and project staff salary compared with the ATLAS total budget and work-plan in the project document.

Another challenge involved to certain degree the incompatibility of the approved work-plan and budget to accommodate for important activities that would support the direction that SPREP management had identified for the CCCD project. This included heavy costs for the ICT component as a result of high equipment costs for the project based on open tenders. A challenge was also the absence of a travel budget for the project coordinator to brief all 14 Pacific Island Countries on the project progress during the GEF Pacific constituency meetings, and supporting the pacific representative to engage with the GEF council regarding the future of the accreditation process.

Table 5. GEF financing and co-financing by source

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP own financing (US\$)		Partner Agency (SPREP) (US\$)		Total (US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants (GEF)	1,000,000	978,202	0	0	1,000,000	978,202
Loans/Concessions	0	0	0	0	0	0
In-kind support	100,000	100,000	1,484,502	1,922,549	1,584,502	2,022,549
Grant Australia					180,000	180,000
Grant China					150,000	150,000
Totals	1,100,000	1,078,202	1,484,502	1,922,549	2,914,502	<b>3,330,751</b>

Regarding co-financing, the largest part came from SPREP itself (in-kind), and due to the institutional enthusiasm for the project it has resulted in a larger actual co-financing than what was originally committed. The following table shows the disbursements from the account in SPREP for each quarter, based on the quarterly reports.

Table 6. Project disbursements of GEF grant funding (data from SPREP quarterly reports)

Period	Disbursements (US\$)	% of GEF project budget
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2015	0	0
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2015	117,016.36	11.7
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2015	84,081.59	8.4
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter 2015	3,624.93	0.4
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2016	58,001.86	5.8
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2016	130,284.48	13.0
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2016	330,339.52	33.0
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter 2016	62,466.76	6.3
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2017	76,995.90	7.7
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2017	108,266.28	10.8
<b>Total disbursed</b>	<b>971,077.68</b>	<b>97.1</b>

### **3.2.6. Monitoring and evaluation: design at entry and implementation**

The project monitoring tools and tracking system used by SPREP when the project initiated were different from those used today, due to incorporation of the results of the same project. Based on only the CCCD project, which did not have any field activities, it is difficult for the Consultant to draw any conclusions on the efficiency of the M&E system used from 2015. However, SPREP's current project M&E system (part of the PMIS) is an efficient tool for project design, monitoring of implementation, and evaluation.

Training of SPREP staff has including monitoring and evaluation to assure effectiveness and efficiency of SPREP's new and enhanced capacity. However, any system is not more efficient than its weakest link. Since many of SPREP's projects would be implemented in the member countries, it is necessary to train local staff in the countries on several aspects of M&E, e.g. how to establish a proper baseline and how to monitor the projects with the same and relevant tools and indicators. This could be a next phase of the CCCD project, but if the majority of the 14 countries should be included it would require a much larger budget than for the project that just finished.

### **3.2.7. UNDP and Implementing Partner implementation / execution**

As concluding remarks of the chapter on Project Implementation, the Consultant would comment that both the Implementing Agency UNDP and the Executing Agency SPREP have carried out a good project implementation and execution. The delay of more than a year in project implementation has not been due to low effectiveness and efficiency (see 3.3.3), but due to an overly optimistic project design (see 3.1).

The coordination and interaction between UNDP and SPREP has worked well, however it is necessary to underline that it did not work efficiently from the start due to SPREP's institutional weaknesses at that moment. Based on UNDP's support and incorporation of the project outputs during implementation, the project has gradually improved its performance, and SPREP can now at the end of the project period be regarded an excellent executing agency.

## **3.3. Project Results**

### **3.3.1. Overall results**

According to the Project Document, by the end of the project implementation it was expected that SPREP would have been accredited as a GEF Project Agency; that the 14 Pacific countries successfully could implement the three Rio Conventions; and that all of these countries would have fast track access to MEA funding such as the GEF.

The overall results of the project should however be seen in the light of the fact that the pilot project for accrediting new GEF Project Agencies ended in December 2014, the same month as the CCCD project initiated.

Despite this, SPREP has carried out the project activities with excellent results, with



outputs and outcomes making SPREP ready to be a GEF Project Agency if that opportunity would arise. The strengthening of SPREP through the project has made the institution able to provide a much better support to the 14 countries, for compliance with the Rio Conventions and to represent the countries towards international agencies, like GCF where SPREP recently was accredited. There has been a gradual trend towards improved effectiveness and efficiency throughout the implementation as a result of initial use of the project results.

### **3.3.2. Relevance**

***Relevance:** The extent to which the objectives of the project are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and UNDP/GEFs' priorities*

The Consultant found that the Outcomes and outputs of the project have been relevant and adequate, considering the regional and national contexts. SPREP was instructed by its Governing Council to seek GEF accreditation already in 2011. All 14 Pacific Island Countries eligible for GEF funding have endorsed the project and continue to support the secretariat's efforts to achieve the goal of obtaining GEF accreditation. Most of the 14 countries are small and with few human and financial resources. They therefore depend on SPREP for service and as a prolonged arm from their governments to the international community.

The 26<sup>th</sup> SPREP Governing Council held in Samoa 2015 noted a progress report and presentation about the project and gave its full support. This is in-line with the stakeholder engagement strategy of the project in addition to maintaining inclusiveness and the participatory nature of connecting the Pacific Island Countries political and operational GEF focal points – which are well aware of the project goals.

Two of the pillars of the Pacific Plan, on sustainable development and good governance, are directly relevant to the outcomes of the Project, and regional agencies like SPREP have a strong mandate to provide technical support for sustainable environmental management in the region. The Plan is the overarching strategy for regional integration and coordination in the Pacific.

The project was highly relevant for GEF's Multi-Focal Area because it dealt with institutional strengthening of an organization that is working on multiple areas. It had also the long-term goal of strengthening SPREP's ability to give support to the member countries on compliance with the Rio conventions, which correspond with 3 different GEF Focal areas. All the three Rio Conventions (FCCC, CBD and CCD) mention the importance of organization's capacities in favor of the environment, including stakeholder engagement, organizational capacities and environmental governance. The outcomes and outputs of the Project are very relevant for GEF, because it strengthen a regional environmental organizations aligned directly to the GEF Policy Paper on Recommended Standards for GEF Implementing and Executing Agencies.

The project is further relevant in light of SPREP's Regional "National Capacity Self Assessment" (NCSA) analysis from 10 Pacific Island Countries. NCSA action plans have identified capacity needs for supporting policy coordination, expert networks, citizen science programmes and no regrets policies. It conforms with UNDP's global NCSA analysis where countries' needs fall under five thematic areas for targeted capacity development support: stakeholder engagement, information management and knowledge, organization capacities, environmental governance, and monitoring and evaluation.

### **3.3.3. Effectiveness & Efficiency**

a) Development effectiveness: *The extent to which the Project's purpose was achieved, or is expected to be achieved*

#### **3.3.3.1. Results achieved**

In Table 5 the Consultant has assessed the end results of the project and commented on the compliance with the specific objectives, and expected outcomes and outputs. In the following, factors that defined success or affected achievements would also be reviewed. The information is based on nine quarterly reports and other documents, PMIS and interviews, complemented by the Consultant's observations and opinions.

CCCD is one of the few projects where the results and impacts of the project are clearly felt already during implementation. UNDP noted lower efficiency from SPREP's side before the project started and during initial implementation, e.g. for procurement processes. However, there has been a gradual trend towards improved effectiveness and efficiency throughout the project implementation as a result of initial use of the new policies and procedures, which is recognized internally and by UNDP. The financing has therefore been justified both from a SPREP and donor/IA perspective.

The project effectiveness was low in the beginning especially due to slow procurement processes. The deadline for Expression of Interest (EOI) for the consultancy services was extended twice in 2015 because too few submissions were received, and money had to be repatriated to UNDP twice the same year due to low % disbursement of the rotational fund. The project implementation period has also been extended twice within the same budget limits during the project's lifetime.

Regarding participatory processes, there has been great activity from SPREP's staff during the development of the new systems and their introduction, and that commitment has been key for the positive results. One limitation has been the frequent travel of SPREP staff in the region, resulting in that some staff members lose parts of their training modules. Participating processes from the 14 member countries' side have been more limited. Some member countries had expected more direct benefits such as seminars, workshops and training already during project implementation. However, they have been informed and the most active countries have also had some influence on the process.

Table 7. Summary of the Project's end results compared with baseline and target values

Project Strategy	Objectively verifiable indicators			End results	Comments
	Indicator	Baseline value	Target value		
Long-term goal: Enable SPREP to support 14 Pacific Island Countries to more effectively achieve global environmental benefits by strengthening their key institutional and individual capacities					
<b>Project objectives:</b> A. To strengthen SPREP's capacity to assist Pacific Island Countries' implementation of the three Rio Conventions. B. To enable Pacific island countries to expedite access to GEF resources through SPREP.	<b>Outcome indicators:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of Pacific Island countries enabled to implement the three Rio Conventions</li><li>Extent to which SPREP's policies, procedures &amp; core functions pertaining direct access to GEF resources (including fiduciary capacity, social &amp; environmental safeguard policy, gender mainstreaming...) have, etc.) have been met.</li><li>Number of Pacific Island countries strengthened their relevant Government functions that expedite access to GEF resources through SPREP</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>SPREP's fiduciary capacity is limited, and its policies and procedures are not aligned to GEF's social (including gender mainstreaming)&amp; environmental safeguard</li><li>All Pacific island countries are slow in accessing MEAs funding.</li></ul>	<b>By the end of the project:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>14 Pacific countries successfully implemented the three Rio Conventions</li><li>SPREP accredited as a GEF Project Agency by the end of the project.</li><li>All of the 14 Pacific island countries will have fast track access to MEA funding such as the GEF.</li></ul>	Pending, dependent on issues not related to project outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The pilot project for accrediting GEF Project Agency ended Dec 2014;</li><li>Discussions on the future of the accreditation processes at GEF Council meeting June, 2016;</li><li>Pilot project for accrediting national institutions followed by the importance of regional balance with a preference to SIDS and LDCs;</li><li>No regional or national institutions from the Pacific region accredited to GEF.</li></ul>
Outcome 1: MEA funding access fast tracked.					
<b>Output 1.1</b> Stage I & II application for GEF accreditation completed and submitted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Status of accreditation of Stage II applications</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>SPREP Stage I application submitted, while stage II has not been submitted yet.</li><li>Stage I Value-Added Review: 3 areas need strengthening: (1) Demonstration of Environmental or Climate Change Adaptation Results; (2) Institutional Efficiency; and (3) Network and contacts.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Stage II applications finalized and received by the GEF Secretariat by 31 December 2014.</li></ul>	Completed	See comments above
Outcome 2: SPREP Fiduciary Capacity strengthened and GEF's accreditation standards met					
<b>Output 2.1:</b> SPREP's financial management/ controls (including external audit function) strengthened and adequate/ in compliance with financial regulation & procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Appointment/ contracting an External Auditor firm.</li><li>Financial control mechanisms/types of audit</li><li>Number of external audits of audits financial control</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Existing SPREP Independent Audit Committee.</li><li>Audit committee to oversee management of issues raised by the internal auditor.</li><li>Limited SPREP fiduciary capacity.</li><li>EU audit in 2008, 2011, and end of 2014.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Adequate financial control (including external audit) in place and operational</li><li>External Audit Firms recruited biennial under the financial regulations</li></ul>	Completed	The new fiduciary policies will allow SPREP to align its operations with GEF requirements and international best practices on financial management, procurement, audit, risk, fraud prevention, etc.; Staff training.

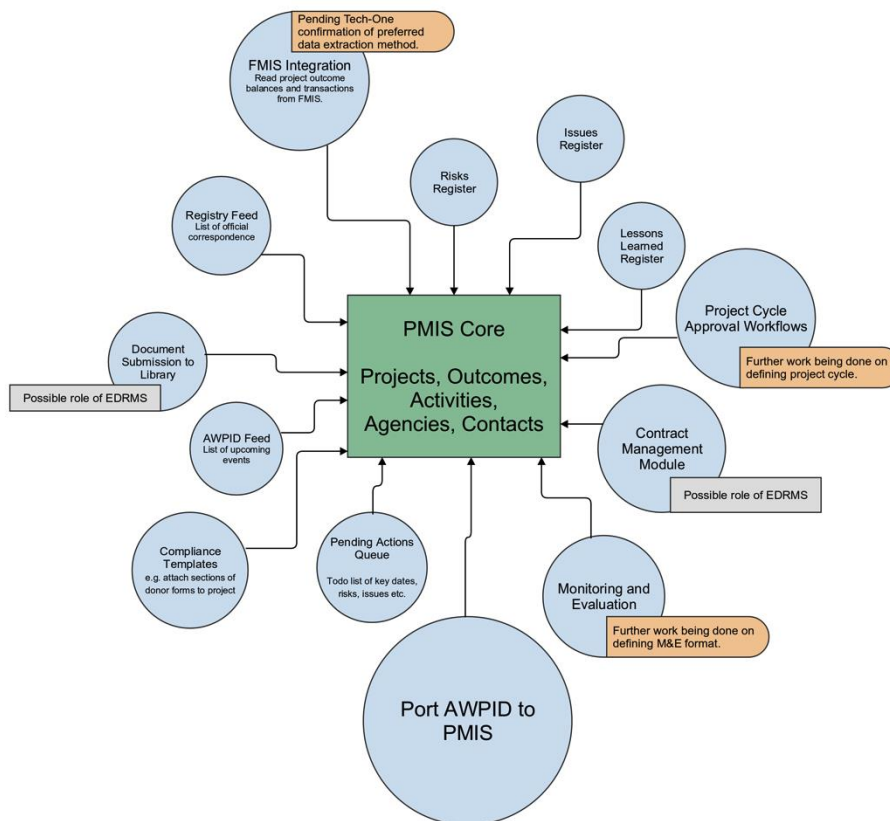
Project Strategy	Objectively verifiable indicators				
	Indicator	Baseline value	Target value		
<b>Output 2.2:</b> Financial Management and Control Frameworks strengthened and meeting GEF's accreditation standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent to which SPREP has functioning internal control framework</li> <li>Extent to which Roles and responsibilities pertaining to accountability of fiscal agents and fiduciary trustees are functioning at SPREP.</li> <li>Available procedures for identifying internal controls and assessing control details annually for core financing mgmt.</li> <li>Incompatible duties segregated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited internal control framework. SPREP Financial Regulations.</li> <li>Procurement Manual.</li> <li>Financial Manual of Procedures.</li> <li>Travel Policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP's internal control framework and procedures are revised/ developed and meet GEF Minimum accreditation standards.</li> <li>Strong ICF achieved through the efficient and effective use of resources; the safeguard of assets; the reliability of financial and other information, the compliance with regulations, rules and established policies; the effectiveness of risk management; and the adequacy of organizational structures, systems and processes.</li> </ul>	Completed	See above
<b>Output 2.3:</b> SPREP's Financial Disclosure Capacity strengthened and meeting international Financial Reporting Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability of Policy and procedures for financial disclosure.</li> <li>Extent to which SPREP's financial reporting meets international standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial disclosure policy not available. SPREP's financial reporting does not meet international standards or not compliant to World Bank.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP's Financial Disclosure Policy and Procedures Approved.</li> <li>Procedures for financial disclosure in place and operational.</li> <li>Financial reporting meets international standards (is World Bank compliant)</li> </ul>	Completed	SPREP's Financial disclosure capacity has been strengthened enough to comply with international standards; Staff training.
<b>Output 2.4:</b> SPREP's Code of Ethics strengthened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Status of documentation and functionality of SPREP's internal control framework addressing ethics.</li> <li>Approval and application status SPREP's Code of Ethics.</li> <li>Availability of Procedures for administering the Code of Ethics.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal Control Framework not documented.</li> <li>SPREP's Code of Conduct and Organizational Value Pamphlet.</li> <li>SPREP Staff Regulations Booklet.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal control framework that includes ethics available and functional</li> <li>SPREP's Code of Ethics approved and applied.</li> <li>Procedures for administering the Code of Ethics prepared and applied.</li> </ul>	Completed	SPREP's Code of Ethics has been significantly strengthened, including procedures for procurement, and ethics in the work place, and staff workshops

Project Strategy	Objectively verifiable indicators			End results	Comments
	Indicator	Baseline value	Target value		
<b>Output 2.5:</b> SPREP's internal audit functions strengthened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP's internal control framework documented.</li> <li>IIA standards applied.</li> <li>TOR revised</li> <li>Audit Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal Auditor post established and filled since July 2012.</li> <li>Terms of Reference.</li> <li>Audit Committee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised Terms of Reference</li> <li>IIA compliance.</li> </ul>	Completed	New approved Governance policy; Internal audit charter; Audit committee charter; "External Board" (no SPREP member)
<b>Output 2.6:</b> SPREP Project Management strengthened through Results-Based Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent which SPREP's Project and activity appraisal process fulfills GEF guideline.</li> <li>SPREP's Project Management Guideline in place.</li> <li>SPREP's Risk Management Plan in place.</li> <li>SPREP's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy and Procedures in place.</li> <li>SPREP's Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Procedures in place.</li> <li>SPREP's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines in place.</li> <li>Enterprise Risk Management Framework adopted in SPREP.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No SPREP Project Management Guidelines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP's Project Management Guideline.</li> <li>SPREP Risk Management Plan.</li> <li>SPREP's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy.</li> <li>SPREP's Gender Mainstreaming Policy.</li> <li>Enterprise Risk Management</li> </ul>	Completed	SPREP initiated a new Project Coordination Unit PCU and project management information system PMIS. It has new policies on project cycle, Gender, Social & Environmental Management System, Risk Management Manual Implementing vs. Executing Agency Guidance, etc. Broad training of all staff on these issues.
<b>Output 2.7:</b> Performance and accountability improved by integrating M&E information system policy, guideline, framework and plan into SPREP project/program management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability and functionality of SPREP's internal control framework</li> <li>Availability of SPREP's M&amp;E Policy and Guidelines.</li> <li>Adoption of Enterprise Risk Management Framework in SPREP.</li> <li>No. of Evaluation Reports produced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No functional internal control framework</li> <li>No M&amp;E policy and guideline</li> <li>No enterprise risk management</li> <li>A risk management policy existed since 2011</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines prepared and operational.</li> <li>Enterprise Risk Management Framework available and used.</li> <li>Evaluation Reports.</li> </ul>	Completed	M&E part of Project Cycle and PMIS, prepared and operational; Internal Control Guidance, Revised Risk Management Manual, Audit Committee Charter, Internal Audit Charter, etc.; Staff training.
<b>Output 2.8:</b> SPREP's Investigative capacity strengthened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP's Fraud Prevention Policy Updated.</li> <li>SPREP's investigation guidelines, procedures and TOR approved.</li> <li>SPREP's M&amp;E Policy and Guidelines in place.</li> <li>Enterprise Risk Management Framework adopted in SPREP.</li> <li>Case Trends Reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP's Fraud Prevention Policy.</li> <li>Staff Regulation.</li> <li>Financial Regulation.</li> <li>Risk Management Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP's Updated Fraud Prevention Policy.</li> <li>SPREP's investigation guidelines, procedures and TOR.</li> <li>SPREP's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines.</li> <li>Enterprise Risk Management Framework adopted in SPREP.</li> <li>Case Trends</li> </ul>	Completed	Governance Policy, Internal Control Guidance, Fraud Prevention and Whistle-blower Protection Manual Risk Management Manual Procurement Manual Audit Committee Charter Internal Audit Charter Child Protection Policy, etc.; Staff training

Project Strategy	Objectively verifiable indicators			End results	Comments
	Indicator	Baseline value	Target value		
			Reports.		
<b>Output 2.9:</b> SPREP's Whistleblower Protection function strengthened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Status of SPREP's Fraud Prevention Policy and Procedures.</li> <li>Status of SPREP's Whistleblower Policy and Procedures</li> <li>Availability of Telephone Hotline.</li> <li>Status of SPREP webpage dedicated for reporting fraud</li> <li>Availability of Periodical Reports of intake information available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP's Fraud Prevention Policy outdated.</li> <li>SPREP's Whistleblower Policy and Procedure not available</li> <li>No telephone hotline</li> <li>Risk Management Plan not available.</li> <li>Email address for public complaints not available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP's Fraud Prevention Policy and Procedures updated.</li> <li>SPREP's Whistleblower Policy and Procedures approved.</li> <li>Hotline Number available and operational.</li> <li>SPREP Website includes whistle-blowing/report of operational fraud</li> <li>Periodical Reports of intake info available and used</li> </ul>	Completed	SPREP's Whistleblower Protection function strengthened through new Fraud Prevention and Whistle-blower Protection Manual, telephone hotline, and protection for Whistle-blowers.
<b>Outcome 3: SPREP's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy and Guideline Developed</b>					
<b>Output 3.1:</b> Development of SPREP's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy and Guideline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment of Environmental Specialist/Expert.</li> <li>Recruitment of Social Scientist.</li> <li>Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy and Guideline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP does not have an Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy and Guideline per se.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental Specialist/Expert</li> <li>Social Scientist.</li> <li>SPREP Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy and Guideline.</li> </ul>	Completed	New Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy, Management System and Guideline will improve project design & implem.
<b>Outcome 4: SPREP's Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Guideline Developed</b>					
<b>Output 4.1:</b> Development of SPREP's Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Guideline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender Specialist recruited</li> <li>SPREP's Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Guideline approved.</li> <li>SPREP Procedures and Tools for gender mainstreaming in place in Secretariat and for project designs.</li> <li>Gender mainstreaming training undertaken for key staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender mainstreaming considered at project levels but no such policy exists for the organizations as a whole.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP's Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Guideline.</li> <li>SPREP Procedures and Tools.</li> <li>Gender mainstreaming training.</li> </ul>	Completed	Gender policy and Guideline will improve gender equality in project management; 3 Gender focal points; Gender mainstreaming training. Recommended to employ high-level gender specialist and to implement gender mainstreaming on all levels.
<b>Outcome 5: SPREP's Information, Communication and Technology Systems Enhanced</b>					
<b>Output 5.1:</b> Strengthening of SPREP's Information, Communication and Technology Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP Intranet upgraded including new functions and features to support policy implementation</li> <li>SPREP Financial Management Information (FMIS) and Human Resource Information(HRIS)</li> <li>Systems upgraded with project management interface functions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP Intranet.</li> <li>CC Portal</li> <li>Pacific Environment Information Network (PEIN).</li> <li>SPREP's FMIS and HRIS systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPREP web-based project management information system.</li> <li>Ethics/Fraud/Whistle-blowing web-page.</li> <li>SPREP's FMIS and HRIS systems upgraded.</li> </ul>	In progress	PMIS core platform + 13 modules Completed: 5 collective trainings 2016-17 Project managers would be able to track project progress and expenses under one common database.

The Consultant had the opportunity to review some of the new policies and manuals that have been approved during the project period, as well as the new Project Management Information System (PMIS). All products seem to be of high quality, and there is also satisfaction from the users' side. The satisfactory outputs are of course result of institutional commitment combined with good and high-level consultants. However, PMIS has to be completed, and it is important to achieve a better connection between PMIS and FMIS. They already can communicate, but it should preferably function as one completely integrated system.

Fig. 4. PMIS Modules identified 2016



### 3.3.3.2. MEA funding access fast tracked

SPREP's Stage II application for GEF accreditation was presented May 21<sup>st</sup> 2012. Unfortunately, while SPREP was preparing the PIF and project document for CCCD, the GEF accreditation panel took the decision that SPREP should submit both its Stage I and II application after the project had upgraded many of SPREP's policies, procedures, systems and tools, to enable it to meet the GEF's minimum accreditation standards. The first round of the accreditation process ended December 2014, the same month the project was approved by GEF. SPREP would have to wait for a potential new round of applications. There are different opinions about that issue in the GEF Council, however it is possible that it would be done as a limited opening for agencies that are already in compliance with GEF requirements. In the mean time, partly based on the positive results of the project, SPREP has achieved accreditation as a regional entity towards another MEA, the Green Climate Fund (GCF).



### 3.3.3.3. SPREP Fiduciary Capacity strengthened and GEF's accreditation standards met

SPREP now has the policies, mechanisms, procedures and standards in place to perform GEF fiduciary functions.

#### **Output 2.1. SPREP's financial management/controls strengthened, adequate and in compliance with financial regulations & procedures:**

The new SPREP Governance Policy defines the policy for the Audit Committee, the Internal Audit Function, fraud prevention, and risk management. This policy serves as the basis for the Audit Committee Charter, Internal Audit Charter, Fraud Prevention Manual, Whistle-blower Policy, Risk Management Manual and Enterprise Risk Management Plan. The Policy is also strongly related with the approved Financial Regulations, Procurement Manual, SPREP's Organizational Values and Code of Conduct. It applies to all SPREP's Activities in the areas of Finance and Administration, Human Resources, and Programme Delivery.

#### **Output 2.2. Financial Management and Control Frameworks strengthened and meeting GEF's accreditation standards:**

The SPREP risk management manual covers enterprise, corporate and project level risks. The foreign exchange policy attempts to provide options for managing SPREP foreign currency accounts and reduce losses as a result of foreign exchange. The SPREP cost recovery policy is a new and important aspect of the organization's management, setting in place measures to recover costs in accordance with SPREP's approved price structure. It will determine the levels of management fees and implementation support service fees that SPREP may charge in its role as either an executing or implementing agency. The SPREP procurement manual guides all procurement that SPREP undertakes as an executing or implementing agency.

#### **Output 2.3. SPREP's Financial Disclosure Capacity strengthened and meeting international Financial Reporting Standards:**

This is an important aspect for SPREP to be able to continue its strengthening through financing from international agencies. It is addressed in SPREP's internal control framework and related financial regulations.

#### **Output 2.4. SPREP's Code of Ethics strengthened:**

The new approved SPREP fraud manual defines SPREP's policy and procedures on fraud, specifying the internal measures taken for implementation, investigation, and review. It is done within the context of the Organizational Values, the Code of Conduct and Ethics, and the 2012 Risk Management Plan. It is a direct response to the issue of implementing internal controls on fraud identified in the Risk Management Plan, and provides a mechanism so anyone can report allegations of fraud. The manual contains procedural guidelines based on the International Financial Institutions Principles and Guidelines for Investigations, which is the internationally recognised standard in multilateral organizations. It has been adjusted based on SPREP's individual circumstances, policies and procedures.

#### **Output 2.5. SPREP's internal audit functions strengthened:**

The Internal Audit Charter elaborates on the "SPREP Governance Policy" and provides a comprehensive statement of the purpose, authority, responsibilities and reporting relationship of the Internal Audit Function. In accordance with the charter, the SPREP Internal Audit office should be conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice Framework (IPPF) of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), which includes definition of Internal Audit, Code of Ethics and Standards.

#### **Output 2.6. SPREP Project Management strengthened through Results-Based Management:**

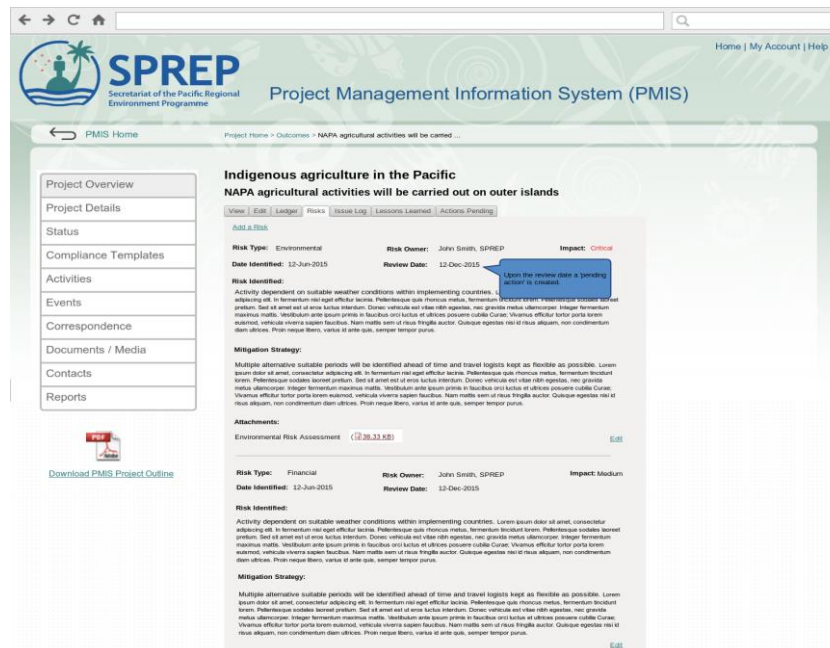
The project cycle policy introduces a systematic approach to developing projects within an approved lifespan cycle, also in accordance with GEF's project cycle. Appropriate



tools are included for management approvals within SPREP, from project concept document to full-scale project documents.

A newly established Project Coordination Unit (PCU) is in charge of the whole project cycle, and will give stronger focus to *how* to manage projects. Most important would be to deliver on the policies regarding the project cycle, including, PMIS, safeguards and gender. The unit is still very small (4 people), and for the moment the work will concentrate on GEF, GCF and AF, but the newly appointed Unit Manager expects the portfolio to grow with funding from different sources. The PCU should be strengthened with more staff, integrating projects that currently are managed by other divisions.

Fig. 5. Example of PMIS data screen



### Output 2.7. Performance and accountability improved by integrating M&E information system policy, guideline, framework and plan into SPREP project/program management:

Project evaluations are seen as an integrated part of the project cycle, to provide information on results, and also lessons learned for further improvement of new projects. Training of staff is including monitoring and evaluation to assure effectiveness and efficiency of SPREP's new and enhanced capacity.

### Output 2.8. SPREP's Investigative capacity strengthened:

SPREP's investigation function is addressed in the risk management manual, financial regulations and the whistle-blower protection policy (see output 2.9).

### Output 2.9. SPREP's Whistle-blower Protection function strengthened:

A hotline for Whistle-blowers has been set up as part of SPREP's anti-corruption effort, but could be used for other purposes. The whistle-blower protection policy is approved.

#### 3.3.3.4. SPREP's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy and Guideline Developed

SPREP's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy and Guideline is applied and managed in both the corporate and programme divisions of SPREP. The Policy is accompanied by a social and environmental screening checklist and report, including risk assessment, categorization of project, and type of social and environmental assessment required. A clearance form is provided for checking that the environmental and social assessment has been appropriately carried out.

### 3.3.3.5. SPREP's Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Guideline Developed

The new SPREP Gender Mainstreaming Policy is accompanied by an Action Plan to strengthen SPREP's environmental governance while supporting and encouraging gender mainstreaming. It also supports integration of gender into SPREP's current programs and the project lifespan cycle. SPREP's staff has received training on the gender mainstreaming policy, in particular on the gender project and program screening checklist and the gender analysis and mainstreaming template. Area of work relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women is contributing to support implementation of measures to increase women's participation in decision-making.

### 3.3.3.6. SPREP's Information, Communication and Technology Systems Enhanced

SPREP's ICT systems have been upgraded to support a web-based project management and regional repository for lessons learned on project cycle implementation and management. Key components of the ICT have been developed, including the project life cycle module, the functionality to create the project concept note, and the development of project financial reports. Training workshops have been held over a two week period to familiarise staff with the new features, complemented by technical training for IT staff on the underlying technologies. Additional developments include strengthening the integration between FMIS and PMIS to allow financial data to be queried across multiple years, including budget and commitment figures and period-based financial reports. It also allows staff to capture donor project budget codes against SPREP account codes.

A software functionality and "tour guide" was developed into PMIS for easy reference and guide for staff. Another source of information identified for the PMIS was the central People and Organisation database, which captures all contact information on partners, donors and other agencies, shared between PMIS and FMIS. The staff was already able to start using PMIS to manage their projects with the core modules, while other major features were being developed, tested and rolled out when ready. The project-financed part of PMIS is nearly finished, but there are great opportunities for expanding the system further if financing is available.

IT training modules for staff have included (i) Registry feed; (ii) Risks feed; (iii) Issues feed; (iv) Lessons learned register; (v) Document Submissions to Library module; (vi) AWPID recent and upcoming event feed; (vii) Port of AWPID; (viii) Documents and Media Module; (ix) Compliance templates; (x) Contract management; (xi) Monitoring and evaluation; (xii) Audit Module; and (xiii) Pending Actions Queue

*b) Efficiency: How economically the resources and inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) have been converted to outputs*

### 3.3.3.7. Efficiency of CCCD project implementation

The project was designed to be implemented during only one year, and it took approximately 2 ½. This could give the impression that the project was inefficiently managed, however there are other explanations. As mentioned in the review of project design, one year would not have been enough even with a smooth implementation without any bottlenecks. The Consultant considers that two years would have been a realistic timeframe, giving time for recruitment of the consultants, design and institutional introduction of all the products (policies, strategies, software etc.) and for enough staff training. But even two years would not have given much margin for risks like procurement problems.

The "PMU" basically consisted of one person (Samoan), who started up as a GEF consultant and later was the Project Manager. Only a short period in the end he got support from a national financial consultant. How could the organization leave such an important project to a 1-man team? The explanation is that SPREP took on the project as a collective institutional responsibility. It means that they did not leave the task only

to the consultants, but on the contrary, most of the staff members were involved in one way or the other. All management people were also strongly involved, especially those that had to do with financial management, legal systems, internal audit, and similar aspects that concern the whole organization. To summarize: (i) The project should have been designed with a longer timeframe; (ii) The project was efficiently managed from the moment the procurement issues were resolved, and the consultants came on board; and (iii) Institutional commitment from both management and staff resulted in a highly successful project.

The financial resources seem to have been enough for the activities that were planned, because the budget covered everything. That doesn't mean that there are no additional needs, like more staff training, but that should have been considered in the original budget. Another need mentioned from representatives in the region (Cook Islands, Marshall Islands) was the interest in more seminars and training for the countries. It could have been good with a larger budget allocation for these purposes, not so much for the results of training, but to make it a more participatory process and let the stakeholders in the region really feel that this was a common project.

One challenge for the project was realignment. It was designed to recruit consultants to undertake a rapid assessment of the existing baseline and identify the desired capacity for SPREP to meet the GEF's minimum accredited standards. Some key capacity building activities required by the project had already been initiated by SPREP before GEF funding was available. For example, SPREP has embarked on upgrades in its financial management system and HR system following reviews by the EU and the GEF independent accreditation panel (as part of the fiduciary capacity needs). Realigning the project to pick up on these improvements and expand further on it was an anticipated challenge - given that some of these expenses had incurred prior to the signing of the project document.

Due to the rotational project fund, SPREP had availability of funds for implementation. However, they experienced twice in 2015 that they had to return funds to UNDP because of low disbursements. Once the project "took off" from procurement of the consultants, this was no longer a problem. Progress reports and financial reports presented by SPREP to UNDP have been timely.

Some challenges the project confronted were:

- i. Confirmation of country representatives for the Project Board Meetings: It was difficult to secure country representatives from the 3 sub-regions of Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia. This was attributed to travel of senior delegates to UNFCCC COP 21 in Paris December 2015 and COP 22 in Morocco November 2016 followed by CBD COP 13 in Mexico December 2016. In the first case the project board meeting was postponed until January.
- ii. Project Extension: The project termination date was extended twice, and both times it required a process for approval that the executing agency was not familiar with.

#### **3.3.4. Country ownership**

Country ownership does not seem like a right title for a regional programme, however in this case it is. SPREP is the prolonged arm of the countries' environmental agencies, and the member countries consider SPREP as their organization. The Pacific Regional UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2013-2017 is a five-year strategic programme that outlines the collective response of the UN system to development challenges and national priorities in 14 countries, to promote sustainable development and inclusive economic growth and to ensure human security in the region with focus on the most vulnerable groups.

The Framework is the result of broad consultations identified in a Common Multi-Country Analysis (CMCA) developed by the UN Country Teams (UNCT) based in Fiji, Samoa and Papua New Guinea, in consultation with national and regional stakeholders

and partners. The challenges highlighted were physical isolation, small economies of scale, limited governance structures, small populations and markets, limited natural resources (in most cases), uneven infrastructure, the impact and variability of climate change, natural hazard risks, and the vulnerability to economic shocks. There are significant gaps with regard to service delivery capacity and gender equality, including limited political participation by women.

The UN system in the Pacific has been focusing its programming and advocacy efforts on five inter-related outcomes areas, where one of them is environmental management, climate and disaster risk management, in support of an integrated approach to environmental sustainability and efforts by governments and communities to adapt to climate change and reduce and manage disaster risk. The CCCD project has strengthened the regional efforts in this area.

### **3.3.5. Mainstreaming**

The project was designed in the framework of the GEF-5 Cross-Cutting Capacity Development (CCCD) Strategy, Programme Framework C, which calls for the strengthening of capacities to develop policy and legislative frameworks to meet Rio Convention objectives, and to strengthen capacities for improved management and compliance. This is being achieved in the countries through deeper and meaningful mainstreaming into national planning, policy and budgetary frameworks with the support from SPREP.

While some Pacific Island Countries are advanced in their mainstreaming agenda through the adoption of sector wide approaches, many are still experiencing difficulties of transition to greater mainstreaming at the national and local levels.

Gender mainstreaming within the project is covered in 3.3.6 b.

### **3.3.6. Sustainability**

***Sustainability:** The continuation of benefits from the Project after the development assistance has been completed and the probability of continued long-term benefits*

The Consultant considered several dimensions of sustainability: (i) Technical, (ii) Social & Environmental, (iii) Institutional, and (iv) Economic-Financial.

**a) Technical:** The technology introduced in SPREP through the project consists of hardware and software for upgrading of their institutional systems. An important lesson learned has been the need for ensuring proper planning and budgeting for a project's IT component during the conceptualization phase. This would greatly assist with the understanding of the scale and scope of work that is required to fully complete the PMIS or any other new system to introduce. Another important lesson has been how it is possible to incorporate the benefits of a new system introduced already during project implementation, and thereby get increased project efficiency.

To assure sustainability it is important that all new staff get solid training from the beginning, and that all staff get continuous learning and follow-up. In this introduction period it is especially important to assure that no staff member continue to do things "like we always have done it". That can be assured e.g. through automatic message to supervisor e.g. if a staff member is not updating project information in the system or if he/she passes deadlines. In the continuation it would be important to assure that technological development and benefits come to the 14 member countries as well, first assuring direct access to the systems for SPREP staff stationed in the region, and then assuring benefits like training tools directly on the SPREP website.

**b) Social and Environmental:** The CCCD project was very special, because the design did not include any activities on the ground in the member countries. Social and Environmental Safeguards were treated jointly by the project, which is the reason the Consultant is discussing social and environmental sustainability in the same chapter.

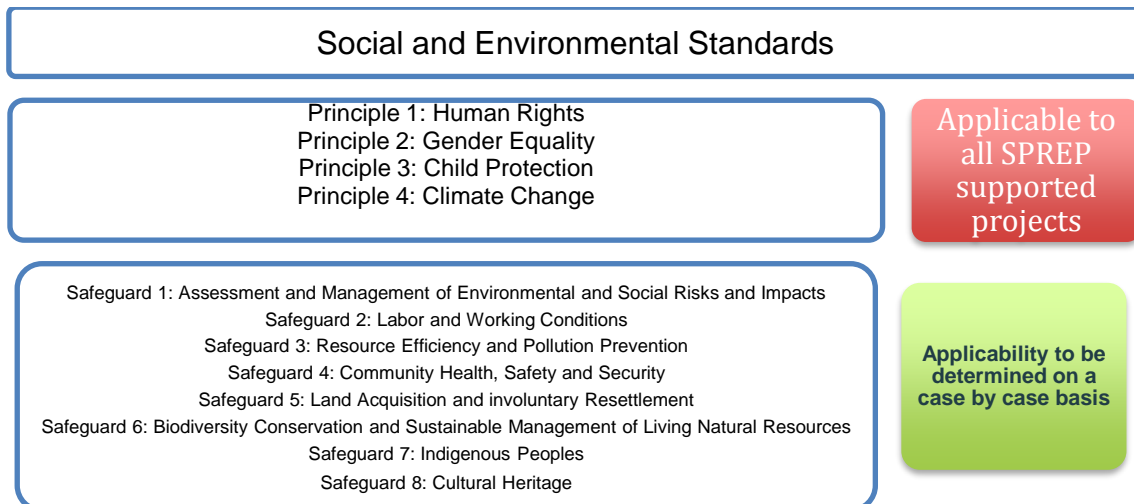
The beneficiaries of what has been established through the project would be first of all the have the governments in the region, and through them the local population through improved SPREP environmental programmes with newly established environmental & social safeguards. These future beneficiaries would be the public and private sector, NGOs/CSOs, indigenous peoples, women and youth that are integrated in project implementation, or as beneficiaries. Two outcomes from the CCCD project are especially related to the social and environmental sustainability: (i) safeguards; and (ii) gender mainstreaming.

SPREP's new **Environmental and Social (E&S) Safeguards Policy** defines that:

1. SPREP projects will apply the E&S Standards in order to:
  - Strengthen E&S outcomes of projects
  - Avoid adverse impacts and apply mitigation hierarchy
  - Strengthen SPREP and executing agencies' capacity for managing E&S risks and impacts
2. SPREP would only support legally compliant projects
3. Grievance mechanism in place on all SPREP supported projects

The Social & Environmental standards define four principles and eight safeguards.

Fig. 6. SPREP's new Social & Environmental Standards.



The safeguards are integrated in the project management systems, especially PMIS. A checklist with screening mechanism for projects will automatically trigger requirements for studies like Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA):

Category A – Projects with the potential to cause significant adverse social and/or environmental impacts that are diverse, irreversible or unprecedented.

Category B – Projects with the potential to cause limited adverse social and/or environmental impacts that are few in number, generally site-specific, largely reversible, and readily addressed through mitigation measures.

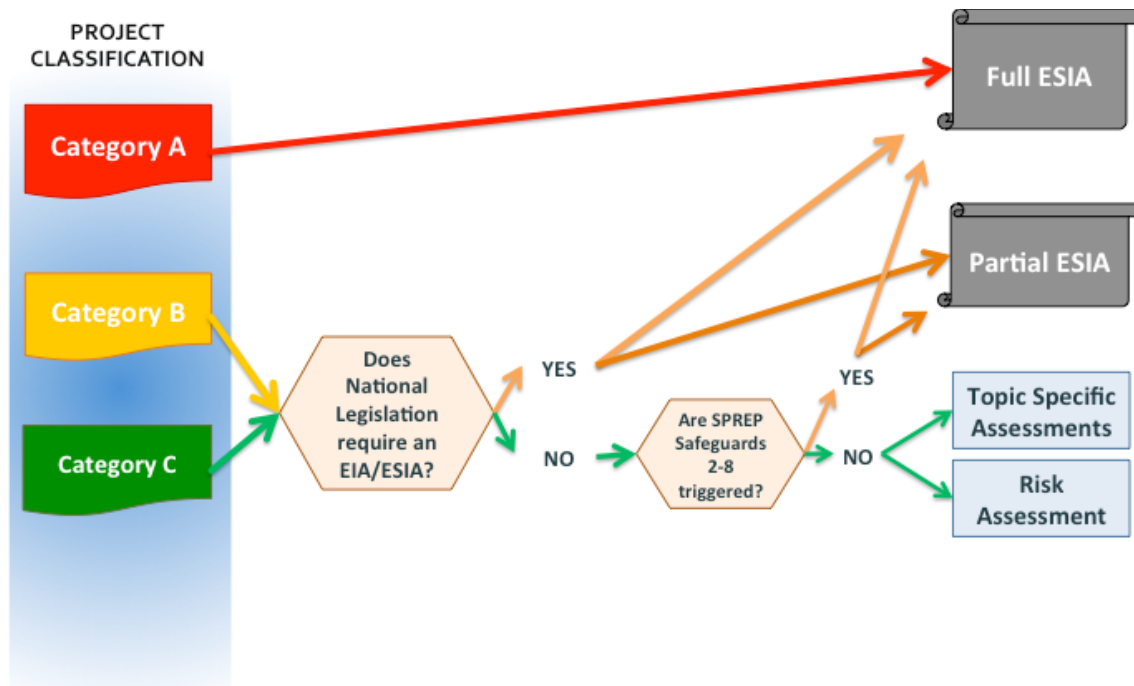
Category C – Projects that include activities with minimal or no risks of adverse social and environmental consequences.

*Category A projects would not be considered for SPREP support.*

To start with the checklist is important because not all Project team leaders are environmental specialists, however an environmental specialist should normally be part of the team. The Safeguard Guideline gives information to all staff members, but must also be followed up through training, which has already been initiated. The new and enhanced focus on safeguards would improve project design and implementation in SPREP.

A special topic in the Pacific region is the issue of indigenous peoples. It is a high priority issue for GEF and UNDP, but when it does not have a high profile in many project documents in the region it can be because the indigenous population is in majority (like in Samoa) and instead of focusing on ethnicity it is more common to mention the social network of the villages. For the people from UNDP and GEF that might be reading this, the message is that it doesn't mean a low priority to indigenous peoples rights.

Fig. 7. Project classification in SPREP according to environmental & social safeguards



SPREP's good new **Gender Policy** and guideline give a whole new dimension to the gender issue in SPREP. It has to do with gender equity and women's empowerment in communities and environments across the South Pacific. The policy goals are:

1. To strengthen and maintain an institutional environment that supports and encourages gender mainstreaming
2. To improve the effectiveness and sustainability of SPREP's projects, and
3. To promote the integration of a gender perspective into the programs and projects of Member countries and cooperating partners

Before gender was something that "had to be mentioned" in the project documents, because the donors like it, but it really wasn't a priority issue. Through the CCCD project a process of gender mainstreaming has started, but it is a long way to go. There are especially two areas of consideration: Gender mainstreaming internally in SPREP and gender mainstreaming in project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Many people in SPREP told the Consultant that they did not really get what the gender issue was all about, at least from the beginning. SPREP is an organization with exactly 50% women and 50% men. There are for the moment 51 men and 51 women, and the senior management team consists of 4 men and 4 women. But gender mainstreaming is much more than headcount. It has to do with what positions the women hold and on empowering women in the workplace. SPREP has named three people as gender focal points, including one man, however they don't have any specialization in this area.

Even though the focal points are a step in the right direction, the consultant recommends employing a gender specialist on a high level in the organization, and that should not be a person in charge of another area, but of “all areas”. The gender specialist should be in charge of overseeing implementation of the new gender policy, to assure that it does not turn out to be only a formality. The gender specialist should also give staff training, follow-up, review of project documents and consent prior to final approval of project documents. Another important area is monitoring of gender relevant indicators during implementation, based on good baselines. Sometimes the gender specialist could also participate in project teams when the gender issue is especially important in the design.

**c) Institutional:** The whole project has been dedicated to institutional strengthening, and the way SPREP has developed through the project implementation has also led to institutional sustainability. The organization has taken on the project activities and outcomes as their own, and it is a real sense of appropriation. Therefore, there is no possibility that the results of the project would end when the project ends. The results are already assimilated and would continue to strengthen the organization. SPREP is in a unique position in the South Pacific region, without similar organizations to compare with. The strengthening that the institution has achieved through support from the CCCD project would probably lead to more project opportunities and a stronger and larger organization in the future. The environmental challenges in the region also signify that the South Pacific would need a stronger SPREP.

But the institutional sustainability depends on the support from the member countries. It is therefore important to strengthen the dialogue with the member base, so all countries feel like SPREP is their organization. Some of the larger countries might be interested in developing more projects on their own, but if they feel real influence on SPREP and are satisfied with the partnership, then these examples would be few.

The experience from the project could be replicated by regional organizations in other regions of the world, and scaled up in the South Pacific through a regional programme with national focus. A next phase of CCCD could be a follow-up with concentration on institutional development for the member governments in the areas of environment, sustainable development and climate change. It does not have to be a GEF project, because there are many opportunities and the institutional strengthening SPREP has gone through means that more financing agencies would be satisfied with SPREP as an executing of implementing agency.

One aspect of institutional sustainability has to do with **UNDP and GEF value added**. UNDP has very successfully worked with GEF projects in the region for many years, with the governments and with SPREP. UNDP/GEF have not only given funding but they have also transferred knowledge and international experience on environmental issues. Both SPREP, national governments and UNDP/GEF seem to be satisfied with the collaboration, however one aspect of international development is the goal to create appropriation and institutional sustainability, making the national and regional organizations less dependent on external services. SPREP and its member countries in the region is an excellent example on South-South collaboration, something UNDP and GEF should be proud of having supported.

It is quite possible that SPREP within a few years would be an implementing agency for GEF, as it now already is for GCF. That means UNDP would have to concentrate on weaker organizations, poorer stakeholder groups and countries with less resources, which goes to the core of the organization's work with the poor, marginalized and disadvantaged stakeholder groups. In any case, SPREP and UNDP would be able to maintain a fruitful collaboration in many years to come.

**d) Economic-financial:** The project is categorized in GEF as a medium-size project based on the funding budget of only 1 million USD. But despite being a relatively small



project, the results and impact are large. The investments from GEF's and SPREP's side would show to be very small compared with the continued results in the organization and the region. The available data does not give the opportunity to do a cost-benefit analysis. The economic costs are clear, nearly 3 million USD including in-kind contribution, but the benefits are more difficult to define, and it also depends on the time perspective.

Without doing this analysis it is still easy to conclude that it has been money well invested, that would give positive impacts for the organization and the region in the years to come. It would be very interesting with an institutional study within a few years, maybe 2020, to compare the situation when the project started (2015) with the situation then. That could give valuable data for similar investments in institutional strengthening of other regional organizations in the world.

One open question is if SPREP in the future could be economically sustainable if it was less dependent on donor financing. It is nothing wrong with this financing, but institutional independence (on behalf of its constituency) would rely on having more own income. For that reason it is important to strengthen cost recovery and sufficient programme management fees. Based on its unique niche and experience, SPREP could also take on certain services for the international community, e.g. in the area of climate change impact monitoring.

### **3.3.7. Impact**

*Development impact: Positive and negative, primary and secondary, long-term effects produced by the Project, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended*

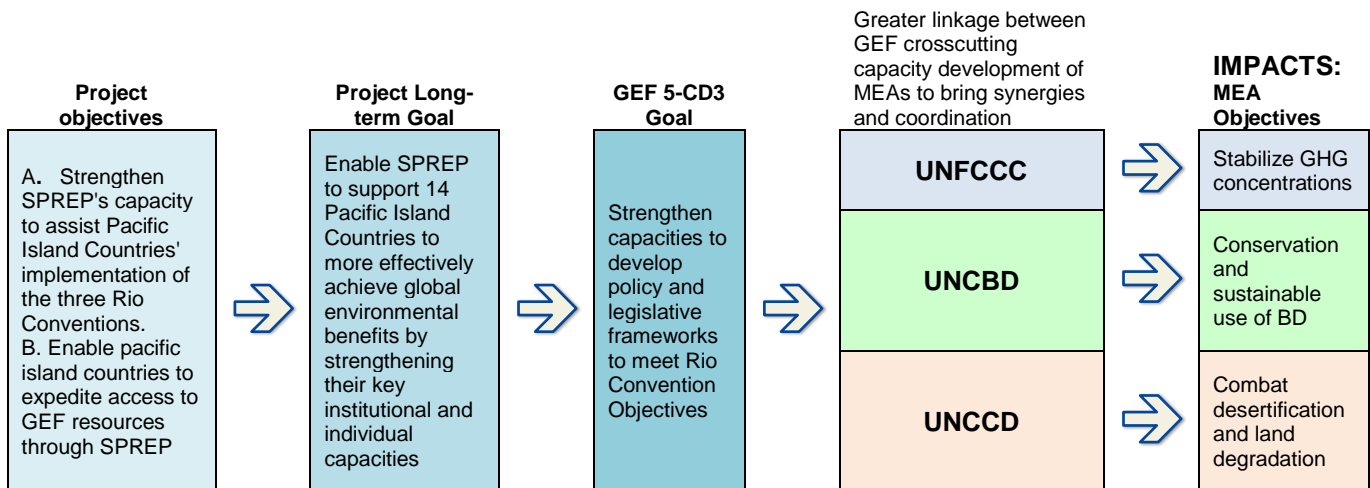
This project was presented to GEF for funding under the GEF-5 "Cross-Cutting Capacity Development" (CCCD) Strategy, Programme Framework C, which called for the strengthening of capacities to develop policy and legislative frameworks to meet the Rio Conventions' objectives. SPREP is designated by the leaders of the Pacific as the regional focal point for the 3 Rio Conventions: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD); and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), so the CCCD funding was a good fit for the organization.

The GEF CCCD strategy serves to provide resources for reducing the institutional bottlenecks and barriers to the synergistic implementation of the Rio Conventions. The Pacific regional project was in line with CCCD Programme Framework C - Objective 3, which calls for countries **to strengthen capacities for developing policy and legislative frameworks to meet Rio Convention Objectives**. Through a learning-by-doing process, the project improved SPREP's policies, plans and programmes, and thereby its capacity to support national and regional capacities. The project was designed to help building SPREP's institutional capacity to support the Pacific Island Countries national efforts to meet their national and international obligations under the three Rio Conventions. A flow diagram from the project's objective to impacts is shown in figure 8.

Even though the project activities did not specifically focus on the Rio Conventions but rather on the institutional strengthening of SPREP, the results of the project makes SPREP able to comply with its responsibility as the Pacific regional organization in charge of the three conventions. Please note that all the stages in the diagram above would happen ex-post, except for compliance with the Project Objectives.



Fig. 8. Process from Project objectives to Impact



Regarding the target groups of the project *during implementation*, the main group was the SPREP management and staff, and to lesser degree the governments in the region through their GEF Focal Points. However, in this case it is a clear distinction between target groups and beneficiaries, because the beneficiaries of an improved environment through a strengthened SPREP would be the whole population of the member countries in the South Pacific region, or a total of 12 million people (not including the 5 developed countries members Australia, New Zealand, France, UK and US). A more direct beneficiary group would be the beneficiaries of new SPREP programmes and projects, through improved and more effective project management and probably increased funding due to improved confidence from the donor community.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS

##### 4.1. Conclusions

1. The CCCD project that was implemented by SPREP in the South Pacific is highly relevant for UNDP, GEF, the Governments in the region, and indirectly for local stakeholders.
2. The project has been money well invested, that would give positive impacts for the organization and the region in the years to come.
3. The design was very logical and concentrated on institutional strengthening; however it had the weakness to be a one-year project when the activities should require at least two. The delays in project execution, resulting in a period of 2 ½ years is not only due to initial procurement problems, but also to the mentioned weakness in design.
4. Only one high risk is defined in the Project document, the risk associated with meeting the GEF' council deadline for the GEF 5 Pilot on Accrediting GEF Project Agencies in December 2014. The Consultant considers that this was not a risk but a fact that the project would not be able to finalize in time, and it became clearer when the project was approved the same month as the mentioned deadline.
5. The outcomes and outputs of the project have been relevant and adequate, considering the regional and national contexts. All 14 Pacific Island Countries eligible for GEF funding have endorsed the project and continue to support the secretariat's efforts. Most of the countries are small and with few resources,

depending on SPREP for service and as a prolonged arm to the international community. All products seem to be of high quality, and there is also satisfaction from the users' side.

6. The project was also highly relevant for GEF's Multi-Focal Area because it dealt with institutional strengthening of an organization that is working on multiple areas, with the long-term goal of strengthening SPREP's ability to give support to the member countries on compliance with the Rio conventions, which is corresponding with 3 of GEF's Focal areas.
7. CCCD is one of the few projects where the results and impacts of the project have been clearly felt already during implementation. There has been a gradual trend towards improved effectiveness and efficiency throughout the project implementation as a result of initial use of the new policies and procedures.
8. There has been great activity from SPREP's staff during the development of the new systems and their introduction, and that commitment has been key for the positive results.
9. SPREP's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy and Guideline is now being applied and managed in both the corporate and programme divisions.
10. The new SPREP gender policy is accompanied by an action plan to strengthen SPREP's environmental governance while supporting and encouraging gender mainstreaming. It also supports integration of gender into SPREP's current programs and the project lifespan cycle. However, three gender focal points are not enough, it requires a gender specialist to follow up the achievements.
11. SPREP's ICT systems have been upgraded to support a web-based project management, with key components the Project Management Information System (PMIS), and a strengthened Financial Management Information System (FMIS).
12. The new Project Coordination Unit (PCU) is very important for an efficient project planning, M&E throughout the project cycle.
13. SPREP now has the policies, mechanisms, procedures and standards in place to perform GEF fiduciary functions and also to comply with the requirements of other international agencies.
14. Results and lessons learned from the CCCD project should be promoted through South-South collaboration in the South Pacific Region and for regional agencies in other regions.

#### **4.2. Recommendations**

1. The SPREP Council and the country members should continue to invest in SPREP, because it is necessary to maintain and improve the results achieved through the CCCD project.
2. All current and new staff should receive and maintain training in compliance with policies and procedures, and use of the new systems. In the short term, the consultants that supported development of new policies and systems could be used for the training.
3. For other regional projects it is recommended to pay more attention to the time required for implementation, including potential bottlenecks.
4. Continued active staff participation should be encouraged for possible adjustment of the systems, to maintain the enthusiasm and assure positive results.
5. To put in practice and follow-up the new SPREP gender policy it is recommended to contract a high-level gender specialist.

6. SPREP's ICT systems should be continually maintained and upgraded, including a stronger integration between PMIS and FMIS, preferably converting them into only one system.
7. The PMIS system should be finalized with additional modules.
8. The Project Coordination Unit (PCU) should be strengthened with more staff and integration of projects that currently are managed by other divisions.
9. The position of GEF Coordinator in SPREP should be maintained even though the CCCD project has finished.
10. Results and lessons learned from the CCCD project should be promoted through South-South collaboration in the South Pacific Region and for regional agencies in other regions.

#### **4.3. Lessons learned**

1. The project shows that it is possible to achieve great results on institutional strengthening with relatively little money, because institutional weaknesses is one of the major problems in developing countries. Such projects make it possible for the institution to integrate the results very fast, even during project implementation.
2. The results achieved through the CCCD project makes SPREP able to comply with the requirements of many different donors, not only GEF, making it a great investment.
3. For project design it is necessary to pay more attention to the time required for implementation, including potential bottlenecks.
4. A good interdisciplinary consultant team could give better results than hiring individual consultants, and also saving time needed for procurement, and sometimes even budget.
5. Small countries with few resources depend on strong regional organizations for support and connection with the international community.
6. Strong commitment from the organization and its staff is key for positive results of institutional development projects.
7. For gender mainstreaming it is necessary with specialist(s) on the topic, and not enough to delegate it to other staff members.
8. Institutional strengthening of regional bodies like SPREP can give very positive effects in benefit of the member countries, so lessons learned from the project should be transmitted to other regional organizations in the world.

## Annex 1 Terms of Reference

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR TERMINAL EVALUATION FOR THE ENHANCING CAPACITY TO DEVELOP GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT PROJECTS IN THE PACIFIC (CCCD)

## BASIC CONTRACT INFORMATION

Location: Samoa

Application Deadline:

Category: Environment and Climate change

Type of Contract: Individual Contract

Assignment Type: International Consultant

Languages Required: English

Starting Date: 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Duration of Initial Contract:

Expected Duration of Assignment

### A. Project Title:

Enhancing Capacity to develop Global and Regional Environmental projects in the Pacific

### B. Project Description or Context and Background:

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. These terms of reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for the Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the medium size project Enhancing Capacity to develop Global and Regional Environmental Projects in the Pacific (PIMS 5160). The GEF Implementing Agency (IA) for this project is the United Nations Development Programme. The Implementing Partner for this project is the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

The essentials of the project to be evaluated are as follows:

### PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE

Project Title:	Enhancing Capacity to Develop Global and Regional Environmental Projects in the Pacific			
GEF Project ID:	6982(GEF PMIS)		<i>at endorsement (Million US\$)</i>	<i>at completion (Million US\$)</i>
UNDP Project ID:	00081135(Atlas Award ID) 5160 (UNDP PIMS)	GEF financing:	USD 1,000,000	USD 862,776.52
Country:	Regional (Cook Islands, Fiji, Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Samoa)	IA/EA own:	USD 100,000 (in-kind)	
Region:	Asia and the Pacific	SPREP:	USD 1,484,502.60 (in-kind)	USD 1,484,502.60
Focal Area:	Multi Focal Area	Other:	USD 180,000.00 (Australian Government) USD \$150,000 (Chinese	USD 180,000.00 (Australian Government) USD \$150,000 (Chinese

			Government)	Government) USD \$100,000 (UNDP (Parallel/ In kind co-financing from other
Focal Area Objectives, (OP/SP):	CD-2: Generate, access and use of information and knowledge; CD-3: Strengthened capacities for policy and legislation development for achieving global benefits	Total co-financing:	USD1,914,502.60	USD1,914,502.60
Executing Agency:	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)	Total Project Cost:	USD 2,914,502.60	USD 2,914,502.60
Other Partners involved:	Cook islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu	ProDoc Signature (date project began):		23 March 2015
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2016	Actual: 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2017

### C. Scope of Work:

The project was designed to strengthen SPREP's capacity to assist Pacific Island Countries' implementation of the three Rio Conventions. To this end, the project has focused on enhancing 3 key areas: internal control framework, environmental and social safeguard policy, and a gender mainstreaming policy and guidelines. At the end of the project, activities should have resulted in a set of improved capacities within SPREP to meet GEF minimum accreditation standards. This project should have strengthened and helped institutionalize commitments required to meet SPREP's Stage II application for accreditation. Indirectly, it should also have helped Pacific Island Countries efforts to meet their obligations under the Rio Conventions in the long run. This project has been implemented in four linked components.

1. **Enhancing Internal Control Frameworks to meet GEF Minimum Fiduciary Standards**
2. **Develop Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy**
3. **Develop Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Guideline; and**
4. **Strengthen information, Communication and Technology Systems.**

The TE will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects.

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

### **Evaluation Approach and Method:**

An overall approach and method<sup>2</sup> for conducting project terminal evaluations of UNDP supported GEF financed projects has developed over time. The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact**, as defined and explained in the [UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects](#)<sup>3</sup>. A set of questions covering each of these criteria should be drafted using the Evaluation Question Matrix (see [Annex C](#)). The evaluator is expected to amend, complete and submit this matrix as part of an evaluation inception report, and shall include it as an annex to

<sup>2</sup> For additional information on methods, see the [Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 7, pg. 163

<sup>3</sup> See <<http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/UNDP-GEF-TE-Guide.pdf>>

the final report.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement government counterparts, in particular the GEF focal point, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP GEF Technical Adviser based in the region and key stakeholders. The evaluator is expected to conduct a field mission to Samoa, including the SPREP Premises

Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at a minimum:

- 1) UNDP
  - Resident Representative/ Deputy Resident Representative
  - Programme Manager – Environment & Climate Change
  - Programme Associate – Environment & Climate Change
- 2) Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
  - Director General / Deputy Director General
  - Director Environmental Monitoring & Governance
  - Legal Advisor
  - Human Resources Adviser
  - Finance & Administration Advisor
  - Climate change Adviser
  - GEF Support Adviser
  - MSP Financial Consultant
  - IT Manager
  - Internal Auditor
- 3) Selected representatives from Countries
  - Samoa – GEF Focal Point
  - Fiji– GEF Focal Point
  - Marshall Islands – GEF Focal Point

The evaluator will review all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including Annual PIRs, project budget revisions, midterm review, progress reports, project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the evaluator considers useful for this evidence-based assessment. A list of documents that the project team will provide to the evaluator for review is included in [Annex B](#) of this Terms of Reference.

### **Evaluation Criteria's & Ratings**

An assessment of project performance will be carried out, based against expectations set out in the Project Logical Framework/Results Framework (see [Annex A](#)), which provides performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The evaluation will at a minimum cover the criteria of: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact**. Ratings must be provided on the following performance criteria. The completed table must be included in the evaluation executive summary. The obligatory rating scales are included in [Annex D](#)

<b>Evaluation Ratings:</b>			
<b>1. Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<b>rating</b>	<b>2. IA&amp; EA Execution</b>	<b>rating</b>
M&E design at entry		Quality of Implementation – Implementing Agency (IA, UNDP)	
M&E Plan Implementation		Quality of Execution - Executing Agency (EA, SPREP)	
Overall quality of M&E		Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	
<b>3. Assessment of Outcomes</b>	<b>rating</b>	<b>4. Sustainability</b>	<b>rating</b>
Relevance		Financial resources	
Effectiveness		Socio-political	
Efficiency		Institutional framework and governance	
Overall Project Outcome Rating		Environmental	

		Overall likelihood of sustainability	
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**Project Finance/ Co Finance**

The Evaluation will assess the key financial aspects of the project, including the extent of co-financing planned and realized. Project cost and funding data will be required, including annual expenditures. Variances between planned and actual expenditures will need to be assessed and explained. Results from recent financial audits, as available, should be taken into consideration. The evaluator will receive assistance from the Multi-Country Office (MCO) and Project Team to obtain financial data in order to complete the co-financing table below, which will be included in the terminal evaluation report.

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP own financing (mill. US\$)		Government (mill. US\$)		Partner Agency (mill. US\$)		Total (mill. US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
Grants								
Loans/Concessions								
• In-kind support								
• Other								
Totals								

**Mainstreaming:**

UNDP supported GEF financed projects are key components in UNDP country programming, as well as regional and global programmes. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project was successfully mainstreamed with other UNDP priorities, including poverty alleviation, improved governance, the prevention and recovery from natural disasters, and gender.

**Impact:**

The evaluator will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, and/or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements.<sup>4</sup>

**Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons:**

The evaluation report must include a chapter providing a set of **conclusions, recommendations** and **lessons**.

<sup>4</sup>A useful tool for gauging progress to impact is the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) method developed by the GEF Evaluation Office: [ROtI Handbook 2009](#)

**D: Evaluation Deliverables:**

Deliverable	Content	Timing	Responsibilities
<b>Inception Report</b>	Evaluator provides clarifications on timing and method	No later than 2 weeks before the evaluation mission.	Evaluator submits to UNDP MCO & SPREP
<b>Presentation</b>	Initial Findings	End of evaluation mission	To project management, UNDP MCO & SPREP
<b>Draft Final Report</b>	Full report, (per annexed template) with annexes	Within 3 weeks of the evaluation mission	Sent to MCO, reviewed by RTA, PCU, GEF OFPs & SPREP
<b>Final Report*</b>	Revised report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft	Sent to MCO for uploading to UNDP ERC & final report to SPREP

\*When submitting the final evaluation report, the evaluator is required also to provide an 'audit trail', detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final evaluation report. See [Annex H](#) for an audit trail template

**E : Implementation Arrangements:**

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with the UNDP MCO in Samoa. The UNDP MCO will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the evaluation team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the Evaluator to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits, coordinate with the Government etc.

**F. Evaluation Timeframe:**

The total duration of the evaluation will be 20 days over duration of max 3 months\* according to the following plan:

Activity	Timing	Completion Date
<b>Preparation</b>	2 days	26 <sup>th</sup> June 2017
<b>Evaluation Mission</b>	10 days	3- 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2017
<b>Draft Evaluation Report</b>	6 days	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2017
<b>Final Report</b>	2 days	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2017

\* The indicated max duration takes into account consultant's initial desk review and quality check of the final report from UNDP MCO, as well as potential delays due to unforeseen circumstances, not included as deliverables in the table above

**G. Duty Station:**

Home-based with travel to Apia, Samoa. It is expected that the consultant will spend 10 days in Apia, Samoa. When in Samoa the consultant will be based at the UNDP Office or SPREP.

**H. Competencies :****Corporate Competencies**

- The independent consultant:
  - Demonstrates integrity by complying with the UN's values and ethical standards;
  - Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP;
  - Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

**Functional**

- The independent consultant should possess proven and strong analytical and communication skills, including the ability to produce high quality reports.

**Project & Resource Management**



- The independent consultant should have strong organizational skills;
- The independent consultant should be able to work independently and collectively to produce individual high quality inputs and collectively high quality and TOR-compliant outputs;
- The independent consultant should possess sound judgment, strategic thinking and the ability to manage competing priorities.

### Team Work

- Demonstrated ability of the team to work in a multi-cultural environment.

### **I. Team Composition:**

The evaluation team will be composed of 1 independent evaluator. The consultant shall have prior experience in evaluating GEF or GEF/LDCF projects. The evaluator selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities. The selected candidate must be equipped with his/her own computing equipment.

Evaluation consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct ([Annex E](#)) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the [UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'](#).

The consultant must present the following qualifications:

- Post-graduate degree in environmental management, or other closely related field ((10 points)
- Minimum 7 years of relevant professional experience in providing management or consultancy services to the multi focal area projects; in developing national and regional capacities and enabling conditions for global environmental protection and sustainable development (30 points)
- Previous experience with results-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies (30 points)
- Technical knowledge in the targeted GEF focal areas: Multi Focal Area – Capacity Development(20 points)
- Experience working in the Pacific region (5 points)
- Excellent knowledge of English language (5 points)

Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the technical criteria will be weighted at 70% and the financial offer will be weighted at 30%.

### **EVALUATOR ETHICS**

Evaluation consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct (Annex E) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the [UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'](#)

### **J. Payment modalities and specifications:**

%	Milestone
10%	Upon approval of TE Inception Report
30%	Upon submission of draft TE Report
60%	Upon finalization and approval (by the UNDP-MCO and UNDP RTA) of TE Report

• **Recommended Presentation of Proposal:**

Given below is the recommended format for submitting your proposal. The following headings with the required details are important. Please use the template available (Letter of Offer to complete financial proposal)

CVs with a proposed methodology addressing the elements mentioned under deliverables must be submitted by **Wednesday, June 21, 2016**, electronically via email: [procurement.ws@undp.org](mailto:procurement.ws@undp.org) or apply online attaching all the required documents on <https://jobs.undp.org/>. Incomplete applications will not be considered and only candidates for whom there is further interest will be contacted. Proposals must include:

- **P11 form – template attached**
- **3 professional references (most recent)**
- **Brief Methodology** on how you will approach and conduct the work (no more than 1 page)
- **Financial Proposal** – Professional daily fee (inclusive of per diem and travel costs) or alternatively lump sum amount
- **Letter of interest and availability** summarizing all details required (see template in [ANNEX I](#))

Queries about the consultancy can be directed to [Yvette.kerslake@undp.org](mailto:Yvette.kerslake@undp.org) or [procurement.ws@undp.org](mailto:procurement.ws@undp.org).

UNDP applies a fair and transparent selection process that will take into account the competencies/skills of the applicants as well as their financial proposals. Qualified women and members of social minorities are encouraged to apply.

## ANNEX 2. CCCD TERMINAL EVALUATION - MISSION ITINERARY

**8<sup>th</sup> August – 17<sup>th</sup> August 2017**

Time	8-Aug Tuesday	9-Aug Wednesday	10-Aug Thursday	11-Aug Friday
8:00am				
9:00am		Director of EMG	Director General/DDG	UNDP Project Team
10:00am		GEF Adviser	Internal Auditor	PCU Manager
11:00am		Financial Consultant	Legal Adviser	Cook Islands
12:00pm		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
	14 Aug	15-Aug	16-Aug	17-Aug
9:00am	Report			
10:00am	work	MSP Coordinator	UNDP project team	MSP Coordinator
11:00am	(whole day)			Debrief with DDG
12:00pm			MSP Coordinator	
1:00pm				
2:00pm		IT Manager	UN Environment	Debrief UNDP
3:00pm		HR Adviser	MSP Coordinator	
4:00pm				
5:00pm				

### ANNEX 3. Persons interviewed and Designations

1. UNDP Deputy Resident Representative Mr. Notonegoro (Email: [notonegoro@undp.org](mailto:notonegoro@undp.org))
2. UNDP Task Manager Mrs. Yvette Kerslake (Email: [yvette.kerslake@undp.org](mailto:yvette.kerslake@undp.org))
3. UNDP Project Assistant Mr. Ioane Iosefo (Email: [ioane.iosefo@undp.org](mailto:ioane.iosefo@undp.org))
4. SPREP Director General: Mr. Kosi Latu (Email: [kosil@sprep.org](mailto:kosil@sprep.org))
5. SPREP Deputy Director General/DDG: Mr. Roger Cornforth (Email: [rogerc@sprep.org](mailto:rogerc@sprep.org))
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12. Climate Change Adviser: Mr. Espen Rønneberg (Email: [espenr@sprep.org](mailto:espenr@sprep.org))
13. Finance and Administration Adviser: Ms. Petra Chan Tung (Email: [petrac@sprep.org](mailto:petrac@sprep.org))
14. PCU Manager: Mr. Simon Wilson (Email: [simonw@sprep.org](mailto:simonw@sprep.org))
15. Cook Islands/ Director of National Environment Service/GEF OFP: Mr. Joseph Bridger (Email: [joseph.bridger@cookislands.gov.ck](mailto:joseph.bridger@cookislands.gov.ck))
16. Samoa/ CEO of Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment/GEF OFP: Mr. Ulu Bismarck Crawley (Email: [bismarck.crawley@mnre.gov.ws](mailto:bismarck.crawley@mnre.gov.ws))
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18. SPREP HR Adviser: Ms. Simeamativa Vaai (Email: [simeamativav@sprep.org](mailto:simeamativav@sprep.org))
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## Annex 4. Evaluation questions

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Sources	Short answer*
Relevance: How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF focal area, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national levels?			
Is the project relevant to the GEF Multi Focal Area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevance to the GEF Multi Focal Area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>Results Framework</li> <li>Evaluation of project design</li> <li>GEF policies and strategies</li> <li>CEO Endorsement documents</li> <li>GEF STAP Reviews</li> <li>Interviews with UNDP TM and PMU</li> </ul>	Yes, because it is institutional strengthening of an organization that is working on multiple areas. It was also focusing on strengthening the organization's ability to give support to the countries on compliance with the Rio conventions, which correspond with 3 different GEF Focal areas.
Is the project addressing the needs of target beneficiaries at the regional level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs of regional target beneficiaries compared with project activities and results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>Results Framework</li> <li>Evaluation of project design</li> <li>Interviews with national governments and stakeholders in the region</li> </ul>	Yes, but indirectly, when the project outcomes are achieved and SPREP is able to better address the needs of the beneficiaries in the region
Is the project internally coherent in its design?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coherence of project design with GEF and regional environmental priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>Results Framework</li> <li>Evaluation of project design</li> <li>Interviews with UNDP TM, PMU and staff</li> </ul>	Yes (see chapter on review of project design)
Does the project provide relevant experience and lessons learnt for similar future projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevance for similar future projects of the project's experience and lessons learned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>Results Framework</li> <li>Evaluation of project results and lessons learned</li> <li>Interviews with UNDP TM, UNDP Rep. and SPREP Director</li> </ul>	Yes, but it is not relevant to repeat a similar project in the same region. However, other regions and agencies could learn from it.
Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?			
Has the project been effective in achieving the expected outcomes and objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectiveness in achieving the expected outcomes and objectives (%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>Results Framework</li> <li>AWP</li> <li>M&amp;E system</li> <li>Interviews with UNDP TM and PMU</li> </ul>	Delay from the start, but the project has achieved nearly all expected outcomes within the original budget.
How is the risk and risk mitigation being managed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk mitigation carried out based on defined risks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>Results Framework</li> <li>Risk Matrix</li> <li>Interviews with UNDP TM and PMU</li> </ul>	There is only 1 major risk that it is not much to do with for the moment. For the other risks the risk mitigation has been adequate.

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Sources	Short answer*
What lessons can be drawn regarding the effectiveness for other similar projects in the future?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectiveness for each component and lessons learned of these for future projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>Results Framework</li> <li>AWP</li> <li>M&amp;E system</li> <li>Interviews with UNDP TM, PMU, SPREP and national governments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For institutional changes, the whole organization must be committed to assure effectiveness.</li> <li>It is important to assure good and high-level consultants to achieve satisfactory outputs</li> </ul>
To what extent have/will the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been/be achieved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance with expected outcomes (%) and objectives (Consultant review) during the implementation period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>Results Framework</li> <li>AWP</li> <li>M&amp;E system</li> <li>Project reports</li> <li>Interviews with UNDP TM, PMU, SPREP and national governments</li> </ul>	The outcomes have been achieved, and SPREP is now able to comply with GEF's requirements for accreditation. If that accreditation would be given in the future is a question external to project management
<b>Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards?</b>			
Was project support provided in an efficient way?	Project support provided (TA, funds, etc.), and compliance with work plans and procurement plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>Results Framework</li> <li>AWP</li> <li>Procurement plans and documents</li> <li>M&amp;E system</li> <li>Interviews with UNDP TM, PMU, SPREP and national governments</li> </ul>	Procurement was slow in the beginning, but after the main consultant firms had been recruited the rest was very efficient
Did the project efficiently utilize local capacity in implementation?	Efficiency in use of national and local capacity during project implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>Results Framework</li> <li>AWP</li> <li>M&amp;E system</li> <li>Interviews with UNDP TM, PMU, SPREP and national governments</li> </ul>	Yes, the Project Manager and his financial support consultant were locally recruited. The consultant firms were international, and that was well justified to get high-level results on topics where local recruitment was not possible.
Was the project implemented efficiently, in line with international and regional norms and standards?	Efficiency of project implementation (relation inputs-outputs) as compared with international and regional norms and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>Results Framework</li> <li>AWP</li> <li>M&amp;E system</li> <li>Project reports</li> <li>International norms and standards for project implementation</li> <li>Interviews with UNDP TM, PMU, SPREP and national governments</li> </ul>	Yes, and thanks to the project the executing agency is now able to maintain such efficient implementation based on international norms also for other projects

\*To see more complete answers, please consult the report text.

## ANNEX 5. EVALUATION CONSULTANT CODE OF CONDUCT AND AGREEMENT FORM

### Evaluators:

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

### Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form<sup>5</sup>

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

**Name of Consultant:** Trond Norheim

**Name of Consultancy Organization** (where relevant): N/A

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

Signed at Oslo, Norway on July 6<sup>th</sup> 2017



**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>5</sup>[www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct](http://www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct)

**Annex 6. Signed MTR Report Clearance Form**

(to be completed by the Commissioning Unit and UNDP-GEF RTA and included in the final document)

**Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:****Commissioning Unit**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_