

Biennial Evaluation Synthesis Report 2018-2019

Summary

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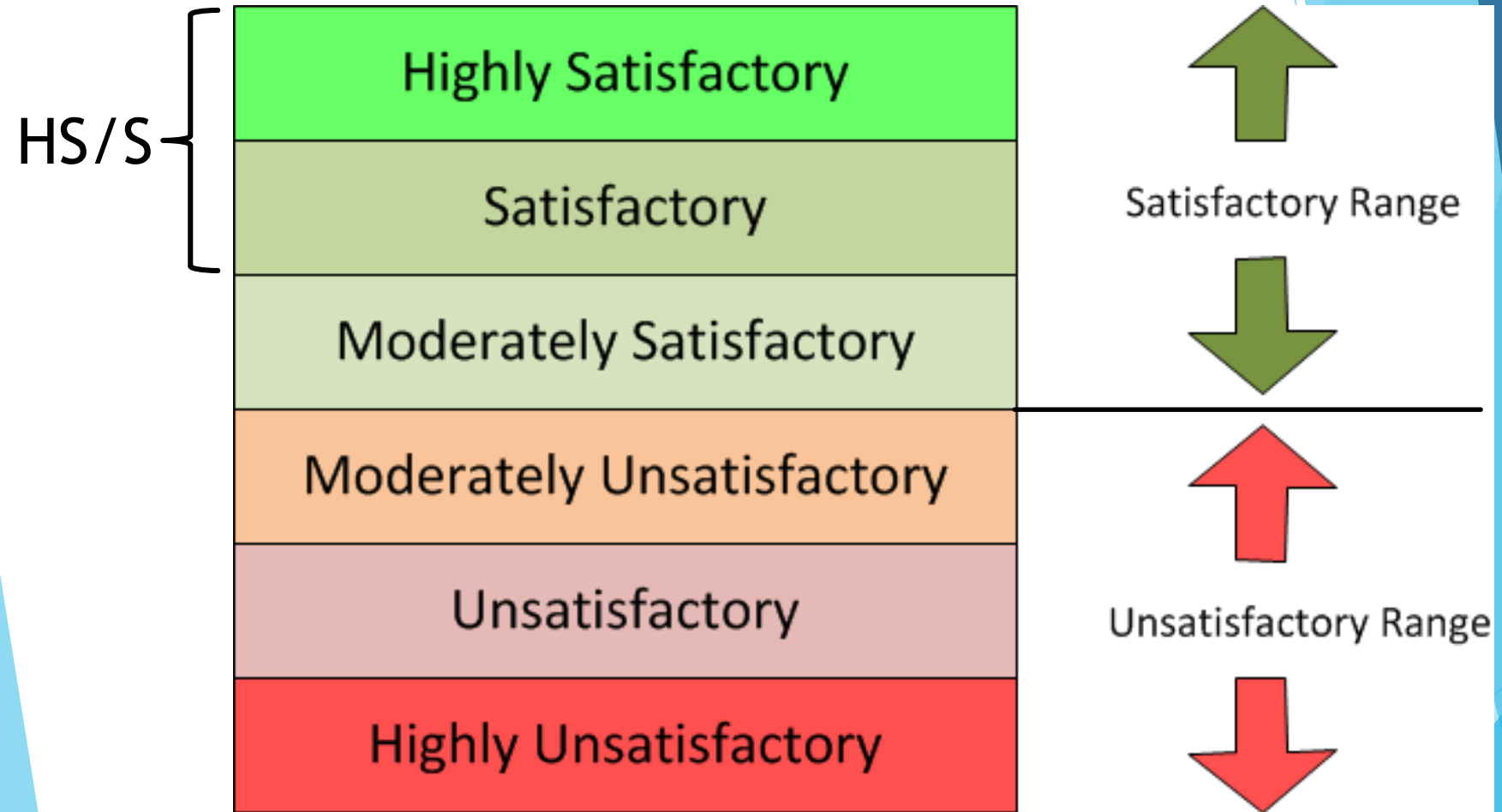
Evaluation Office of UNEP

- Adheres to UN Norms and Standards for evaluation
- Is independent of management (reporting line to the ED)
- Conducts evaluations (no monitoring)
- Mandate: **All projects and programmes within Programme of Work**
- All evaluations are publicly disclosed

Overview

- ▶ **Evaluations completed in 2018-19:** Sixty (60) evaluations of UN Environment interventions – (projects mostly approved 2011-14)
- ▶ **Value of projects evaluated in 2018-19:** excess of USD 265 million of expenditure
- ▶ **Overall objective:** To generate evidence on ‘what works’ and ‘what doesn’t’ and provide feedback for improving planning and management processes
- ▶ **Evaluation criteria:** standardized (OECD-DAC), consistent with international good practice, and rated on a six-point scale from ‘Highly Unsatisfactory’ through to ‘Highly Satisfactory’
- ▶ **Comparison between biennia 2010 - 2019:** Performance against the evaluation criteria in the biennia from 2010 to 2019 produced consistent patterns despite the diversity of the interventions evaluated.

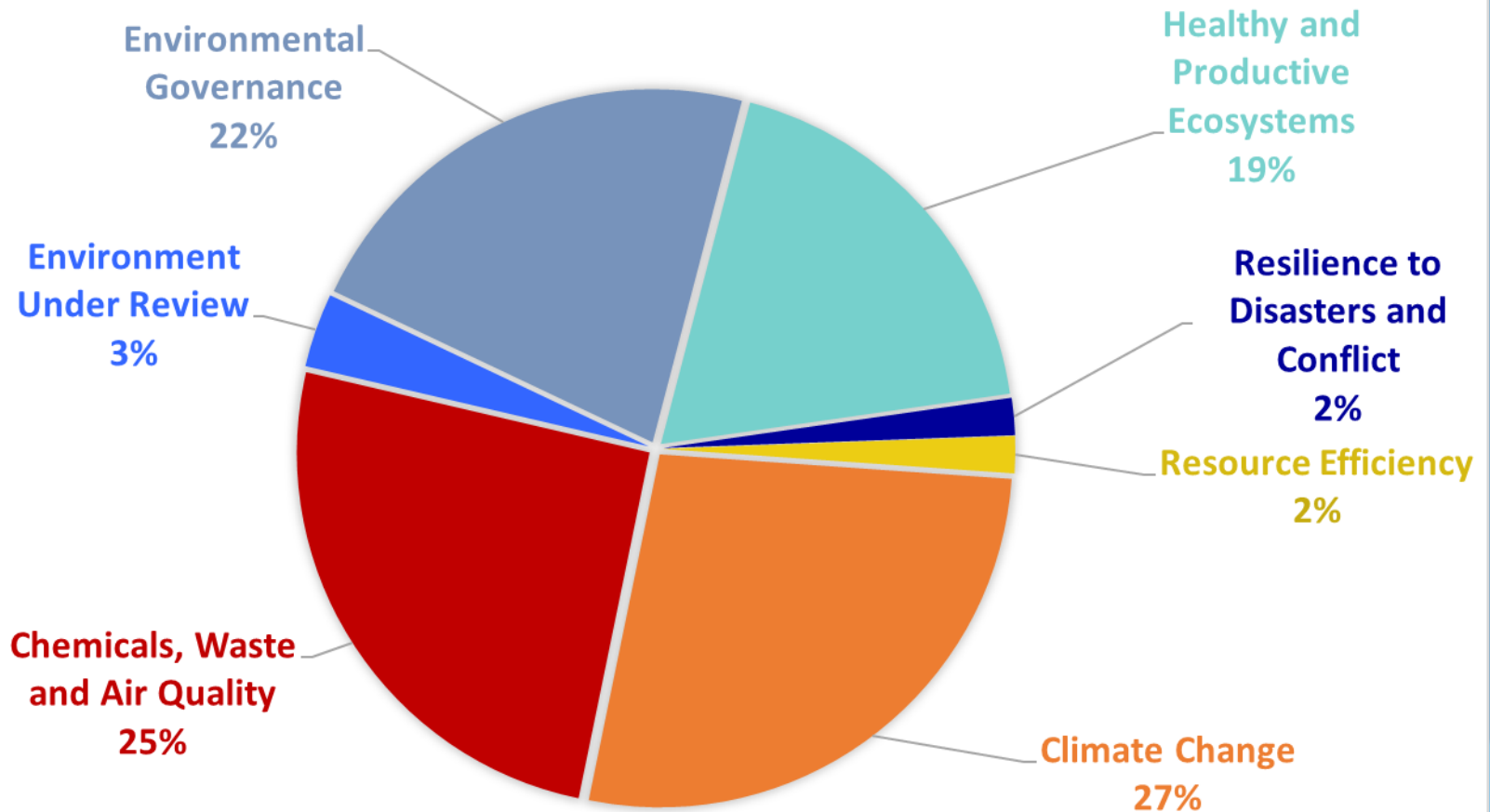
Evaluation Rating Scales



UNEP Evaluation Office project performance ratings are annually benchmarked against UNDP and World Bank by the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF

Evaluations by Sub-programme

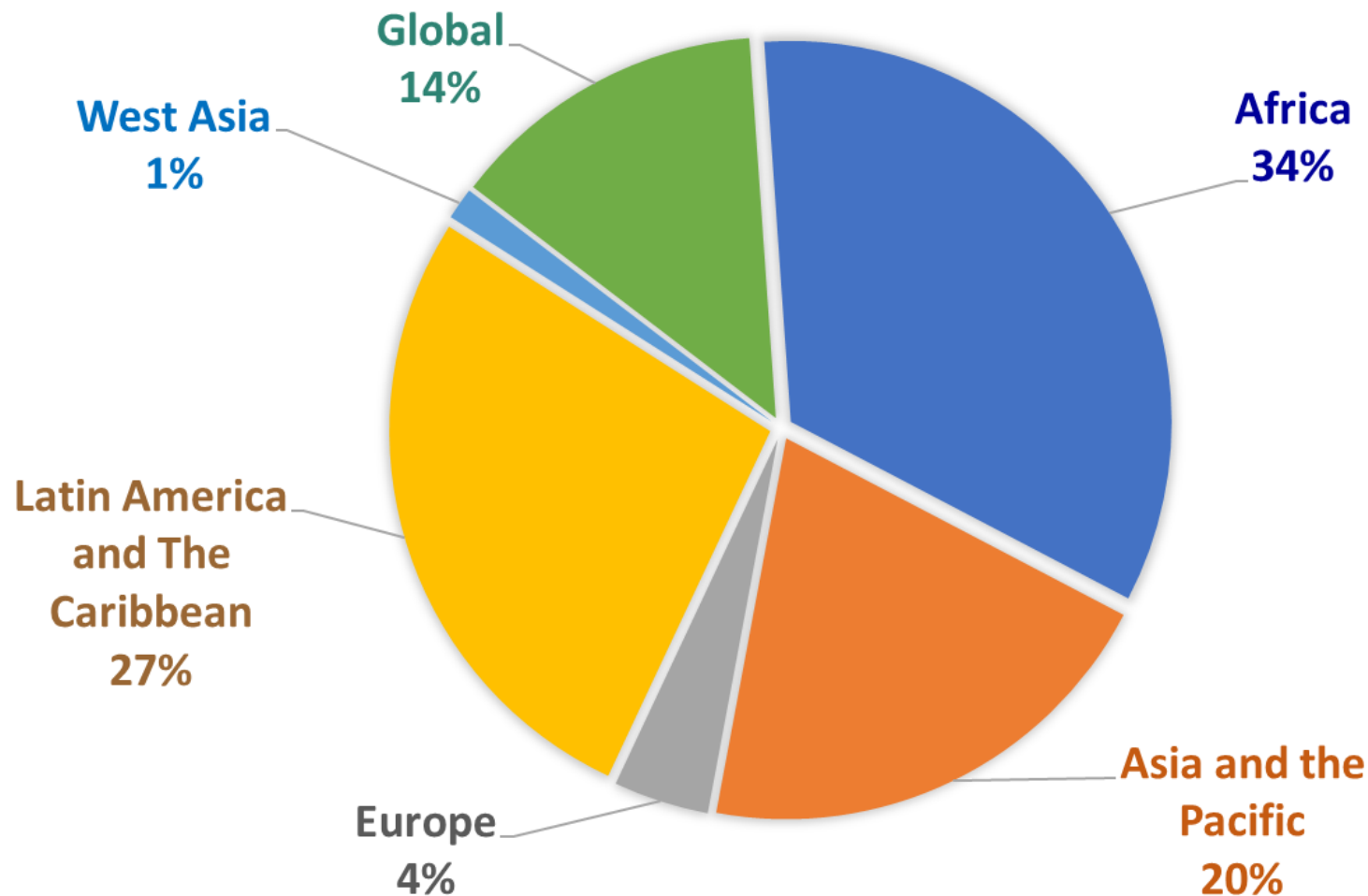
Projects Evaluated in 2018-2019 by UNEP Sub-programme



The evaluations undertaken by the Evaluation Office are strongly influenced by project life-cycles. Evaluations are scheduled and initiated as projects approach, or reach, their operational completion.

Evaluations by Region

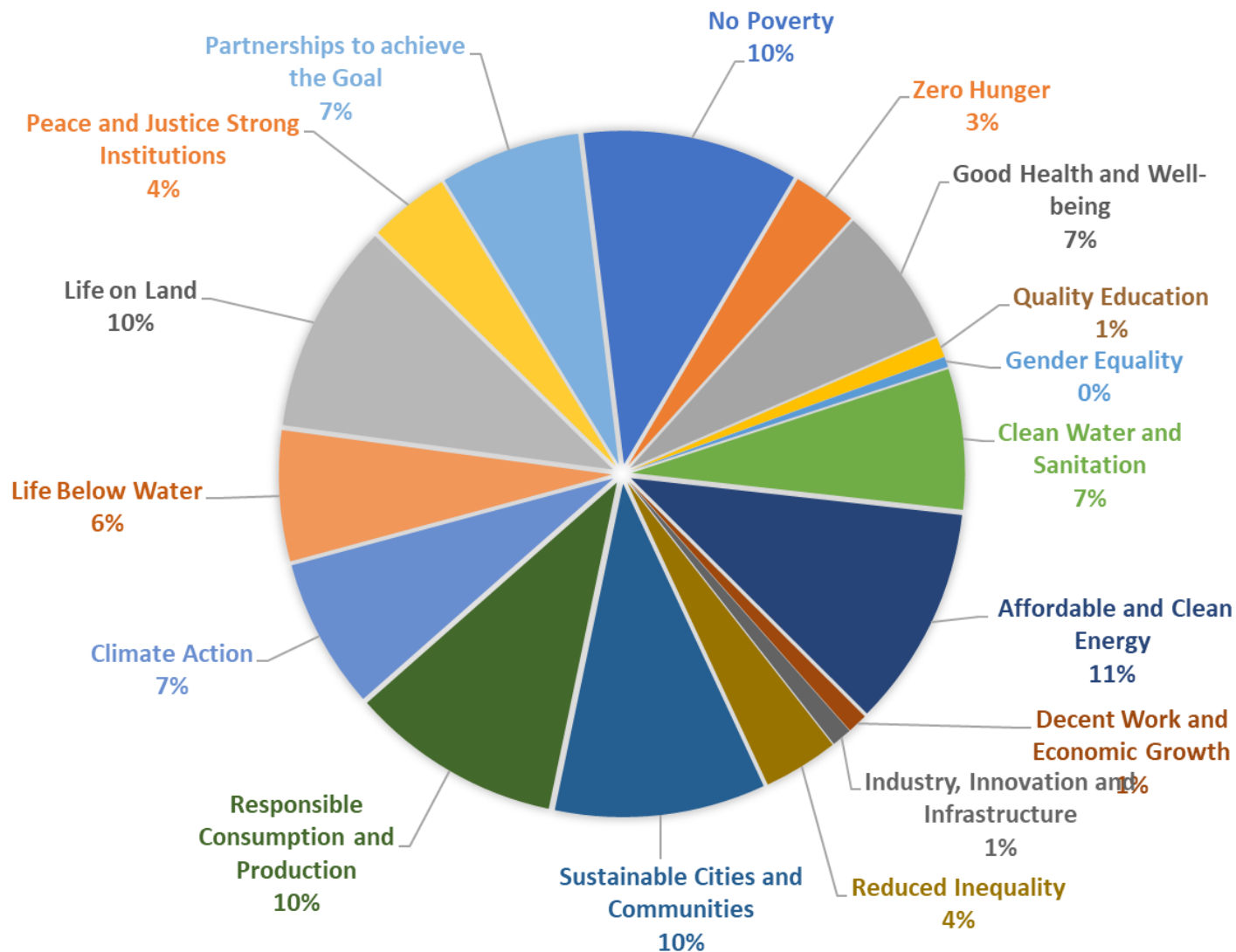
Projects Evaluated in 2018-2019 by Region



The evaluations undertaken by the Evaluation Office are strongly influenced by project life-cycles. Evaluations are scheduled and initiated as projects approach, or reach, their operational completion.

SDGs targeted by the projects evaluated

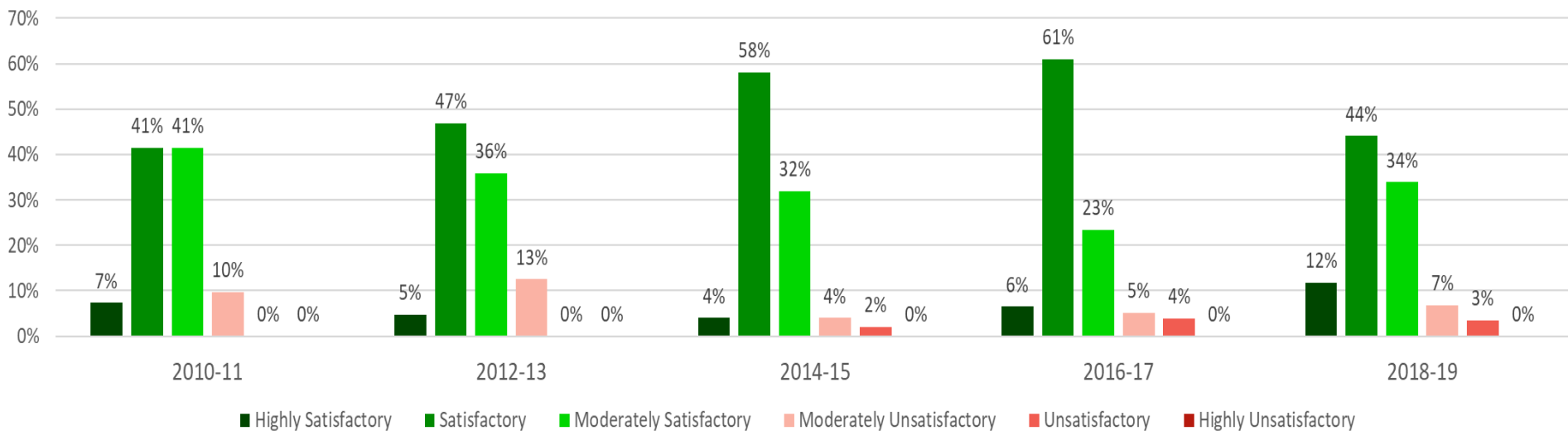
Sustainable Development Goals targeted by projects evaluated in 2018-2019



Project Performance 2018-2019

- ▶ There is a strong pattern of the majority (40 - 60%) of projects reaching the 'Satisfactory' level
- ▶ The proportion of projects in the 'Highly Satisfactory' level have noticeably increased in the current biennium (but not statistically significant)

Overall Project Performance by Biennium



Project Performance 2018-2019

**Overall
Performance
56%**

56% of the projects evaluated achieved a rating of 'Satisfactory' or better S/HS in the assessment of their **overall performance**

**Strategic
Relevance
98%**

The **alignment of the interventions intentionality (strategic relevance)** remains the evaluation criterion that attains the highest ratings, with **98%** rated as S/HS

**Effectiveness
55%**

Up to **55%** of projects were rated S/HS for their **effectiveness** in delivering their programmed outputs and achieving immediate and longer-term outcomes

**Outputs*
57%**

The **delivery of outputs** showed a lower level of project performance from last biennium **57%** S/HS – some of this reduction due to the introduction of the Evaluation Ratings Matrix- 'raising the bar '

**Outcomes
50%**

Performance at project outcome level is a critical indicator for effectiveness, currently **50%** of projects attain a S/HS rating

**Sustainability
36%**

More than one third of projects evaluated are achieving favourable ratings in **sustaining their outcomes i.e. project benefits continue after project completion**

**Impact
46%**

The **likelihood that interventions will influence the change processes** that lead beyond project outputs to higher level results was considered 'Likely' or 'Highly Likely' in **46%** of the projects evaluated in 2018-19

Factors and Processes Affecting Performance

% projects rated S/HS

68%
Stakeholder participation and cooperation

68%
Country ownership and driven-ness

67%
Quality of project management and supervision

55%
Preparation and readiness*

70%
Financial Management*

54%
Communication and public awareness

32%
Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

- **'Stakeholder participation, and cooperation'** showed no significant change from last biennium continued to be an area of relative strength
- Performance in **'country ownership and driven-ness'** also showed no significant change from last biennium and continued to be an area of relative strength 2016-17 61%, 2018-19 68%
- 67% of projects showed favorable results in their **quality of project management and supervision** approaches
- **'Preparation and readiness'** criteria showed an improvement from 35% to 55% S/HS (statistically significant)
- **'Communication and public awareness'** performance against this criterion showed no significant change 2016-17 60%, 2018-19 54%
- **Financial Management 70%** statistically significant improvement, strong performance ratings for communication between project and financial management staff members

Areas for Improvement

% projects that achieved a 'Satisfactory' or 'Highly Satisfactory' rating

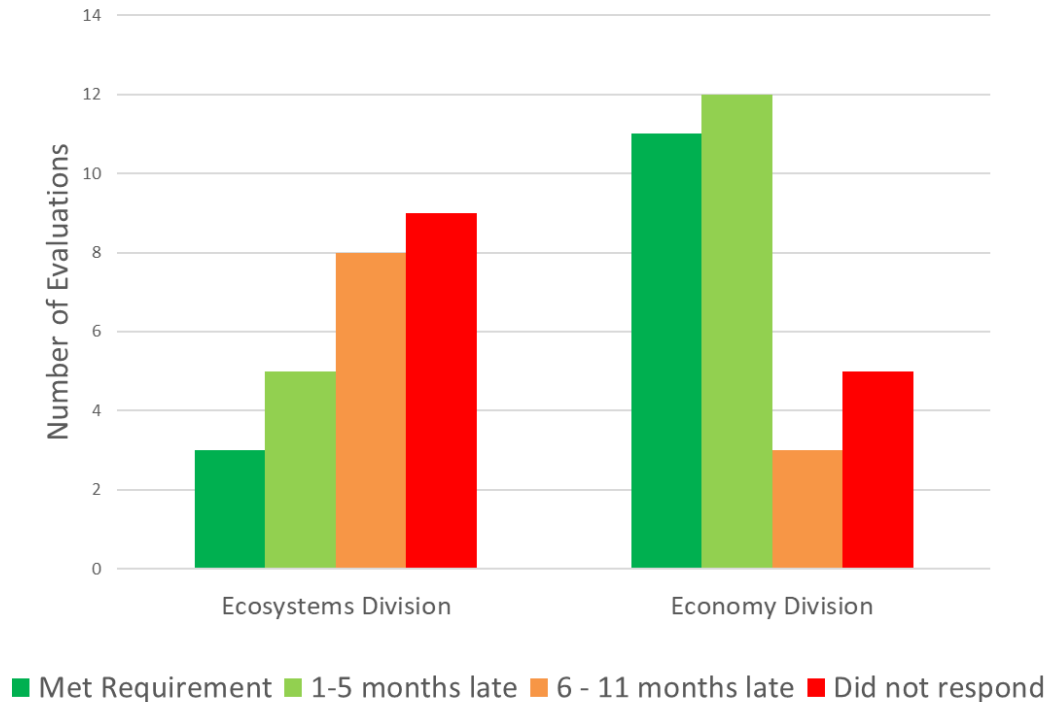
39% Efficiency	46% Likelihood of Impact	36% Sustainability of outcomes	37% Quality of Project Design	41% Monitoring & Reporting	32% H.R & Gender
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- Considering the effect on later implementation, there is clearly a need to continue efforts to **enhance the quality of project designs**
- The need for projects to place **greater emphasis on creating conditions for sustaining their outcomes** is highlighted by the fact that a little over a third of projects achieved a rating S/HS in 2018-19
- To improve likelihood of impact achievement, project designs and implementation actions must **focus on, and invest more in, influencing the change processes** that lead beyond project outputs to higher level results
- **A robust monitoring system is better able to support results-based project implementation** by providing information needed for evidence-based adaptive management. There is a pattern of low performance ratings (2010-19)
- **Efficiency** 2018-19 showed a 10% reduction of projects rated S/HS in **delivering maximum results** using the available resources and within the expected timeframe. Evaluations are capturing the effect of 'no-cost' project extensions.
- **Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity** – inadequately considered in project interventions

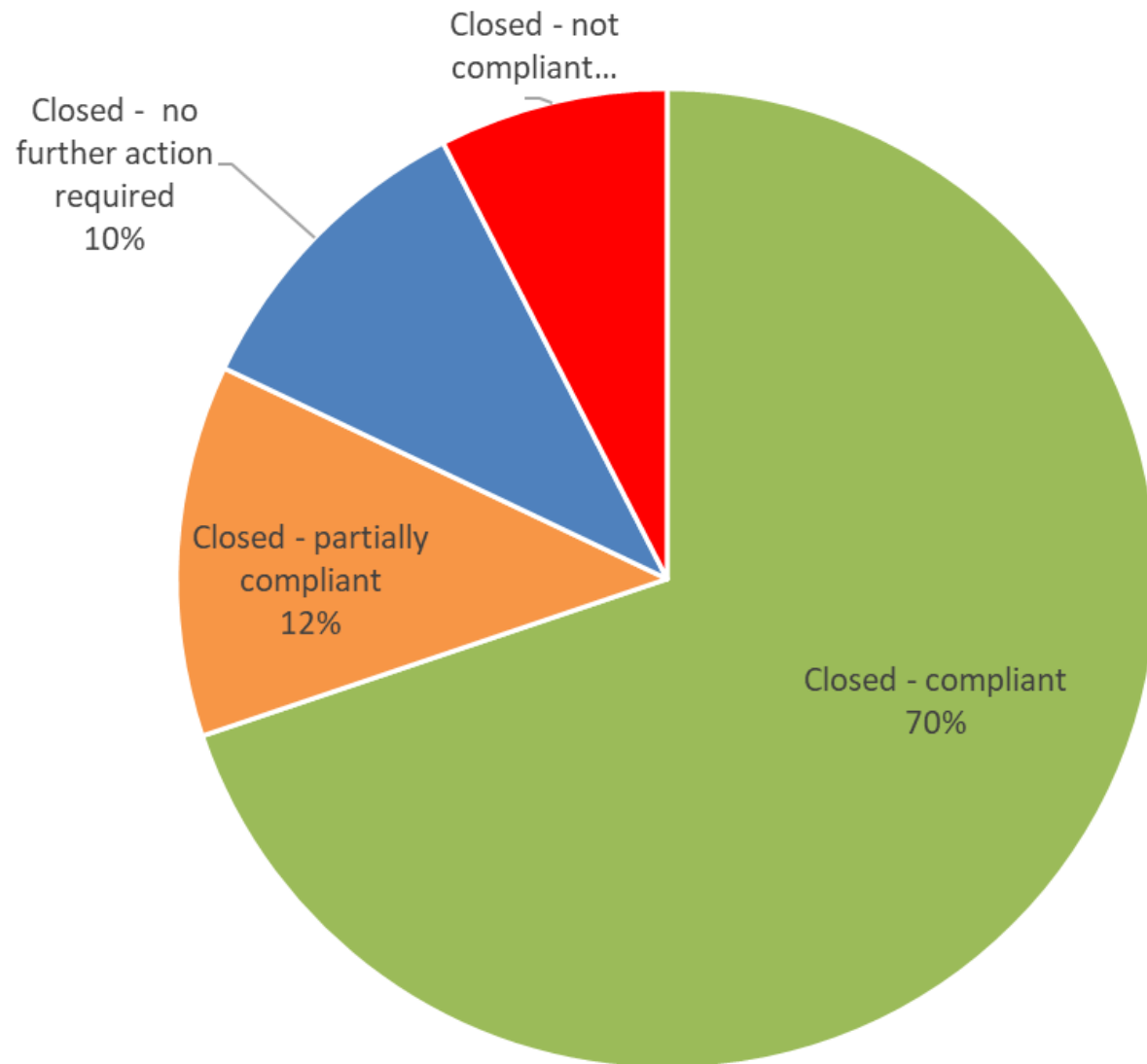
Evaluation Recommendation Compliance by end of 2016-17

- **Evaluations are followed by a recommendation compliance process promote accountability and learning**
- **The formal recommendation compliance system reinforces positive feedback and learning.**
- **It encourages staff, partners and other stakeholders to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of past performance and to feedback good practices into future intervention designs and management actions.**

Compliance for submission of evaluation implementation plans 2018 - 2019 Biennium



Accepted project evaluation recommendations with a completed compliance process 2018-2019



Evaluation Lessons

- ▶ **The Biennial Synthesis Report presents summaries of important evaluations and highlights many lessons of importance for improving UNEP's project design and implementation.**
- ▶ **The Evaluation Office has introduced a qualitative coding of evaluation reports –this aid identification of trends across and lessons evaluations on a variety of issues:**
 - ✓ **Financial management**
 - ✓ **Reporting**
 - ✓ **Monitoring**
 - ✓ **Link between quality of project design and effectiveness**

Project Performance by Criteria (2018 - 2019)

