United Nations Environment Programme

Terminal Evaluation
South-South Network of GEO Collaborating Centres for Integrated Environmental Assessment and Reporting to Support Policy Formulation and Informed Decision-Making Processes at National, Regional and Global Levels

DA/9999-06-02 (1566)

(FINAL REPORT)

Tony Barbour

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This project, *South-South Network of GEO Collaborating Centres for Integrated Environmental Assessment and Reporting to Support Policy Formulation and Informed Decision-Making Processes at National, Regional and Global Levels*, is meant to support policy formulation and informed decision-making processes at national, regional and global levels through innovative use of information and communication technology for networking and knowledge access and management.

The overall project objective was to improve environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels. The specific objectives of the project were:

- To make relevant integrated environmental assessment information, data, tools, methodologies and approaches available and accessible;
- Establish a mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking;
- Enhanced use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for information and knowledge management and networking;
- Enhanced capacities of GEO Collaborating Centres to undertake Integrated Environmental Assessments (IEAs).

RESULTS OF THE REVIEW

This terminal evaluation covers the three-year implementation period for the South South Network of GEO Collaborating Centres for Integrated Environmental Assessment and Reporting to Support Policy Formulation and Informed Decision-making at National, Regional and Global Levels (ROA 1566). The project ended in December 2009 and an internal survey was conducted by UNEP in February 2010. Due to the relatively short timeframe between the completion of the project and the evaluation it has not been possible to determine whether the project impacts have been achieved. The focus of the evaluation has therefore been on the project outcomes and the potential for the establishment of intermediate states. The assessment of the eleven evaluation categories are summarised below.

A: Attainment of project objectives and results

The project has created a set of conditions that are likely to support the ability of the project achieving its stated objective of improving environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels. However, the assumption that environmental decision and policy making at National, Regional and Global level will be improved by the provision of improved environmental data and assessment tools ignores the potential impact of political decision-making and politics on environmental decision and policy-making.

Given the relatively small budget the project was found to be cost effective and efficient. The project activities and outcomes are consistent with and support the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building and UNEPs Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013.

Rating: Overall 'Satisfactory' (Effectiveness - Satisfactory; Relevance – Highly Satisfactory; Efficiency – Satisfactory)

B: Sustainability of project outcomes

No provision had been made for future funding once the project ended. However, the lack of secured funding is not likely to pose a significant threat to the sustenance of project outcomes and onward progress towards impact.

In terms of risks, there do not appear to be any significant risks (socio-political, institutional and governance) that are likely to jeopardise the project outcomes and impacts. However, it is recognised that a number of countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, West Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean do not have well-established democratic structures, and, as such, the conditions for social and political instability do exist. In addition, the level of commitment of non-democratic governments to environmental issues and sustainable development could be questionable. The role of civil society in decision-making in non-democratic countries is also by definition limited. The ability of the project to improve environmental decision and policy-making at national and regional in such countries is therefore likely to be reduced.

However, these risks are likely to be localised and, as such, will not impact on the ability of the project to improve environmental decision and policy making at National, Regional and Global levels.

Rating: Overall 'Moderately Likely' (Financial - 'Moderately Likely'; Socio-Political – 'Moderately Likely'; Institutional and Governance – 'Moderately Likely; Environmental – Not Applicable)

C: Catalytic Role

The project is suitable for replication. This is due to two key factors. Firstly, the project utilised and strengthened a well established network of South-South GEO Collaborating Centres (CC). Secondly, the key outputs of the project, such as the Integrated Environmental Assessment (IEA) Customised Training Manual, Guidelines for Ecosystem Based Assessments, the GEO for Health Methodology etc. will, in all likelihood, continue to be used to inform decision-making in the SS countries.

These organisations are also familiar with and have established relationships with potential funding organisations. This is likely to enhance their ability to secure future funding. The project is, therefore, well placed to qualify for catalytic funding.

Rating: Satisfactory

D: Stakeholder involvement

The project activities and outputs were specifically aimed at involving and raising the awareness levels of existing GEO CCs and their members. However, it is reasonable to assume that certain members of the public would have been made aware of the project and its objectives via feedback and interaction with the participants who attended the numerous training workshops held during the project.

Rating: Satisfactory

E: Country ownership / driven-ness

The project was driven by South-South GEO CCs linked to regions, as opposed to individual countries within the regions. Each of the SS GEO CCs involved in project showed strong commitment to the project and its objectives.

Rating: Satisfactory

F: Achievement of outputs and activities

The majority of the project activities and outputs were undertaken and delivered within the revised timeframe for the project. The evaluation also found that the quality of the outputs was of a good standard.

Rating: Satisfactory

G: Preparation and readiness

The project did not only work with established institutions and/or counterparts, there was also a strong component of capacity building for weaker institutions and counterparts. The partnership arrangements were therefore properly identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project implementation. In addition, the GEO CCs involved with the project have an established professional relationship with UNEP, and, as a result, they have interacted with each other on other projects. The capacities of the executing institutions and counterparts were therefore properly considered in the project design.

Rating: Satisfactory

H: Monitoring and evaluation

The progress of the project was monitored against the indicators of success for the projects four expected accomplishments as reflected in the logical framework document for the project. In this regard the Annual Development Account Progress Reports produced by UNEP provided a detailed description of the activities undertaken in each region and the quantitative performance indicators associated with each of the EAs as set out in the logical framework. The evaluation found that the indicators were relevant, quantifiable and adequate.

The costs associated with M&E were included in the budget allocated to the regions. However, the regions were not informed that these costs were incorporated into the budget. In addition, no provision was made in the budget for the implementation of a formal M&E plan and M&E related training. Despite this, the M&E programme for the project was effectively managed and implemented by head office. The overall rating is therefore Satisfactory.

Rating: Satisfactory

I: Implementation

The activities outlined in the project document as reflected in the logical framework and result based workplan have been followed. The key activity upon which the overall success of the project was ultimately dependent, namely the establishment of the South-South Network (SSN) of GEO CCs, was accomplished at the outset of the project. Start-up meetings were organized in July 2006 with the respective GEO CCs.

The roles of the various CCs and associated activities were clearly defined and discussed at the start-up meetings (with the exception of M&E requirements and the associated budgets). All of the GEO CCs agreed with the timelines and detailed plans.

Rating: Satisfactory

J: Financial Planning

There was a delay in the release of funds at the outset of the project. However, this did not impact significantly on the projects outcomes and path to impacts. The required UNEP internal financial controls were implemented and met. These controls include annual audits of projects and the allocation of funds as per the approved project budget.

Rating: Satisfactory

K: UNEP Supervision and Backstopping

Despite the initial delay in the release of funding the regional coordinators indicated that UNEP provided adequate supervision and support throughout the project. However, the evaluation did not find any evidence of a supervision plan or documentation detailing how supervision was undertaken or achieved.

Rating: Satisfactory

L: Complimentarity with UNEP Mid Term Strategy (2010-2013)

The Climate Change, Disaster and Conflicts, Ecosystem Management, and Environmental Governance themes are regarded as the most significant themes in terms of complementarity with the project. The support of the project for each of these four themes is provided via the projects commitment to improving interaction between and capacity of GEO CCs in developing countries and their access to IEA reporting tools and methodologies.

CONCLUSION

The project has succeeded in establishing an SSN of GEO CCs and enhancing their capacity to undertake IEAs. In addition a range of relevant integrated environmental tools, methods and data were also made available. However, governments and government departments are responsible for environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels and not CCs. In addition, the timeframe required for the project to have a meaningful impact on environmental decision and policy-making is too short. In this regard it is unrealistic to expect a project that was implemented in mid 2006 to have had a profound bearing on environmental decision and policy making by governments in the affected regions.

However, the project has created an environment and a set of conditions that are conducive to improved environmental decision and policy-making. **The project is therefore awarded an overall rating of Satisfactory.**

LESSONS LEARNT

The lessons learnt from the evaluation are summarised below.

1. Use of existing structures, networks and information

The fact that the project managed to achieve most of its activities and outputs within a relatively short period is to a large extent directly linked to the use of existing structures, networks and information. Had this not been done, it can be doubted whether the project would have achieved what it did within the limited time and budget. For example, the use of existing GEO Collaborating Centres enhanced and supported the implementation and management of the project, which in turn contributed to its overall success. The implementation of projects that involve capacity building and awareness raising can, therefore, be enhanced through the use of existing structures, networks and information without wasting resources on 'reinventing the wheel'.

2. Design of training courses

A number of the trainers involved in the project would have benefited from more capacity building in order to improve their understanding and grasp of technical issues and IEA tools. If the GEO Collaborating Centres had been more involved in the conceptualisation and design of the project it would have been possible for UNEP, in consultation with the CCs, to identify potential capacity and skill challenges facing the successful implementation of the project. Design of training courses must take into account capacity of the participants to understand the concepts and principles that are being presented. Course presenters should familiarise themselves with the participants and their needs prior to the course and design the course accordingly.

3. Promoting face-to-face training

While the majority of representatives from the various South-South GEO Collaborating Centres are likely to be computer literate, there still appears to be a reluctance to use web and internet based learning and communication systems. The lesson from this is that value of face-to-face training should not be underestimated. Training workshops provide an opportunity for delegates from different countries and regions to interact on a personal level and share experiences. Web-based training approaches do not provide this opportunity.

4. Improving environmental decision and policy making

Training and capacity building together with the provision of relevant data do not necessarily guarantee improved decision and policy-making. In order to positively impact on environmental decision and policy making there is a need to understand policy and decision making processes, specifically the institutional structures, key role players, timing (at what stage in the policy making process should information be introduced) and capacity (capacity to understand technical information). Without this information and an understanding of the process one cannot assume that good information will result in improved decision making. In addition, improved decision-making requires politicians and high-ranking government officials (directors and managers) to be aware of the key environmental issues and challenges. However, the majority of politicians and high-ranking government officials do not have the time to attend 5-day training workshops. Therefore, there is a need to consider developing a shorter, more concise course aimed specifically at politicians and high-ranking government officials.

5. Improving future project evaluations

The lack of face-to-face interviews with key stakeholders involved in the project restricted the ability of the Evaluator to gain a detailed personal insight into the project and its activities. However, it would be essential for the evaluator to interact face-to-face with the people involved in the project on a day-to-day basis to ensure an informed evaluation of the eleven evaluation parameters. Sufficient funding should be allocated for evaluations and provisions should be made in the most cost effective way to enable face-to-face interviews with key people involved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given that project activities have been completed there are no project specific recommendations. However, as indicated above, the project involved an established and recognised network of SS GEO CCs. UNEP should take the necessary steps to ensure continued interaction and strengthening of the SS GEO CCs. In addition, UNEP, in collaboration with the SS GEO CCs, should ensure that the methodologies, approaches and guidelines utilised and developed during the project are reviewed and up-dated on a regular basis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACRONYMS

ACSAD	Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Drylands
ADIE	Association Internationale pour le Development de l'Information Environnementale
AEIN	Africa Environment Information Network
AEO	Africa Environment Outlook
AGU	Arabian Gulf University
AIT	Asian Institute of Technology
BCAS	Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies
CC	Collaborating Centre
CEDARE	Centre for Environment and Development in the Arab Region and Europe
CLAES	Latin American Centre for Social Ecology
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DEWA	Division of Early Warning and Assessment
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
IBAMA	Brazilian Institute of the Environment and Natural Renewable Resources
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IEA	Integrated Environmental Assessment
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MA	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
NESDA	Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa
SARDC-IMERCSA	Southern African Research and Documentation Centre - Musokotwane Environment Resource Centre for Southern Africa
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SIC	Scientific Information Centre of Interstate Sustainable Development Commission
SOE	State of Environment
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
SS	South South
SSN	South South Network
SSN GEO CCs	South South Network Global Environment Outlook Collaborating Centres
TEI	Thailand Environment Institute
TERI	The Energy and Resources Institute
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UWICED	University of the West Indies Centre for Environment and Development

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1   PROJECT INFORMATION AND BACKGROUND

1.1   BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

In 1995, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) launched a new approach to environmental assessment called the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) Process led by the UNEP Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA). As an Integrated Environmental Assessment (IEA), GEO looks beyond traditional state of the environment reports, to provide answers to the following five questions: What is happening to the environment and why; what are the consequences for the environment and humanity; what is being done and how effective it is; where are we heading and; what actions could be taken for a more sustainable future. Since the inception of the GEO process an increasing number of countries have adopted the GEO approach to conduct their environmental assessment and reporting activities. Governments request UNEP to provide assistance in organizing and supporting national and sub-national level environment outlook assessment processes, which results in production of national and local scale GEO reports, e.g. *GEO Brazil, GEO Cities*.

The GEO process is highly collaborative and participatory with a number of expert groups and institutions supporting the process. GEO Collaborating Centres (CCs) are a selected group of institutions with a mandate to undertake IEA reporting at national or regional levels. In so doing the GEO CCs not only contribute to the global GEO process, but are also at the core of UNEP's provision of support to governments. This support is achieved through hands-on capacity building, which provides the experience, skills and tools to CCs and other developing country institutions involved in IEA reporting. GEO capacity building allows CCs and partners from developing countries to participate fully in the GEO report process as well as in national and regional environmental assessment processes. Through North-South cooperation, significant capacity building support is provided to developing country CCs by those from developed countries such as the International Institute for Sustainable Development (Canada), National Institute of Public Health and the Environment (The Netherlands) and the Stockholm Environmental Institute.

While such cooperation provides insights, tools and approaches the main challenge is the effective practical application in the specific context of a developing region or country and the ability to use assessment data and information to support policy and decision-making processes. There is very limited scope for drawing on experiences and approaches of regions with similar environmental concerns because of the lack of a cooperation mechanism and financial resources.

Through the development of a standing forum[1] GEO CCs in developing countries and countries with economies in transition can learn from each other's experiences, benefit from methodological resources developed in different regions and help each other to find appropriate practical solutions to their environmental challenges. Through the use of information and communication technology as an efficient tool for networking and knowledge management, the CCs have access to opportunities for identifying, analyzing and documenting good and innovative practices, exchanging ideas and experiences, discussing adaptive approaches applicable to their contexts, and reviewing and seeking solutions to problems encountered.

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[1] The forum is intended, but not restricted, to GEO CCs. Other relevant organizations and individuals may participate as per the rules adopted by the network steering committee.

The GEO SSN 1566 project takes into account the lessons learnt from different UNEP environmental information networks and the experience gained from various GEO capacity building activities implemented between developed and developing country CCs. Innovative aspects of the project are that the activities are focused on strengthening "South-South cooperation" among recognized developing country institutions through the intensive use of information and communication technologies.

The project was implemented in four developing regions: Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and West Asia. The South-South Network (SSN) of Global Environment Outlook (GEO) Collaborating Centres (CCs) for integrated environmental assessment and reporting established by the project is aimed at supporting policy formulation and informed decision-making processes at national, regional and global levels through the innovative use of information and communication technology for networking, knowledge access and management. In this regard the project seeks to address the lack of adequate information, knowledge and skills for carrying out quality IEAs in developing countries and countries in transition. In so doing the project utilises the GEO Process approach.

The project was implemented in the context of the UNEP-wide Bali Plan and is also expected to contribute to Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 7 (by increasing the capacities of governments and their partners to improve environmental policy formulation and informed decision-making processes). The Bali Plan aims to strengthen Technology Support and Capacity Building in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, with the goal of enhancing national and international environmental governance and management in support of sustainable development and poverty reduction. A key component of the Bali Plan is South-South Cooperation which encompasses: capacity building, research and technology, application of south-south solutions, gender, information and knowledge exchange, training, advisory support and services. While the concept of south-south cooperation is not new in UNEP and particularly in the GEO process, it has not been undertaken in a regular, comprehensive and coherent way. The project aims to address this shortfall.

1.2   PROJECT DETAILS

Project title: South-South Network of GEO Collaborating Centres for Integrated Environmental Assessment and Reporting to Support Policy Formulation and Informed Decision-Making Processes at National, Regional and Global Levels

Project number: DA/9999-06-02
Project Identity: 1566
Implementing Division: UNEP Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA)
Duration: Initial duration was 2 years (June 2006-June 2008). However, due to initial delays, the project was extended to December 2009
Project budget: US$ 560 000.00

1.3   EXECUTING ARRANGEMENTS

The implementing agency for this project was UNEP through the Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA). The national and executing agencies were the participating GEO CCs from the four participating regions, namely Africa; Asia Pacific; Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and; West Asia. The lead regional/national agencies that executed the project activities were drawn from the four focal geographic regions as follows:

Africa
- Association Internationale pour le Development de l'Information Environnementale (ADIE), Gabon
- Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), Egypt
- Southern African Research and Documentation Centre - Musokotwane Environment Resource Centre for Southern Africa (SARDC- IMERCSA), Zimbabwe
- Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), Mauritius
- National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Uganda
- Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa (NESDA), Côte d'Ivoire

Asia and the Pacific
- Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Thailand
- Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS), Bangladesh
- State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA), China
- Scientific Information Centre of Interstate Sustainable Development Commission (SIC), Turkmenistan
- South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Samoa
- Thailand Environment Institute (TEI), Thailand
- The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), India

Latin America and the Caribbean
- Brazilian Institute of the Environment and Natural Renewable Resources (IBAMA), Brazil
- Latin American Centre for Social Ecology (CLAES), Uruguay
- University of Chile, Chile
- University of Costa Rica, Costa Rica
- University of Pacific, Peru
- University of the West Indies Centre for Environment and Development (UWICED), Jamaica and Trinidad

West Asia
- Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Drylands (ACSAD), Syria
- Arabian Gulf University (AGU), Bahrain

1.4   PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall project objective was to improve environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels. The specific objectives of the project were:

- Establish a mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking;
- To make relevant integrated environmental assessment information, data, tools, methodologies and approaches available and accessible;
- To enhance the capacities of GEO Collaborating Centres to undertake IEAs;
- To enhance the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for information and knowledge management and networking.

2 OVERVIEW OF THE EVALUATION

2.1 SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The focus of the evaluation is on five key questions:

- Did the project improve environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels?
- Did the project make available and accessible relevant integrated environmental assessment information, data, tools, methodologies and approaches?
- To what extent did the project establish a mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking?
- To what extent did the project enhance capacities of GEO South-South Network Collaborating Centres to undertake Integrated Environmental Assessments (IEAs)?
- To what extent did the project enhance the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)?

The full Terms of Reference (ToR) for the project is included in Annexure A.

2.2 APPROACH TO THE EVALUATION

The approach to the evaluation included:

- A desktop review of relevant project documents and reports (Annexure B);
- Interviews with DEWA project managers during a trip to Nairobi from 14 – 19 February 2010. A list of people interviewed is contained in Annexure B;
- Development and circulation of a questionnaire to the regional coordinators and key CC representatives in all four regions involved in the project, namely Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and West Asia. The questions contained in the questionnaire were informed by the key evaluation categories contained in the ToR for the evaluation[2]; Annexure C contains a copy of the questionnaire;
- Analysis of the responses to the questions contained in the questionnaire;
- Preparation of the Draft Evaluation Report for comment;
- Incorporation of comments into Final Evaluation Report.

2.3 POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS TO THE EVALUATION

As indicated above, the original ToR for the evaluation made reference to the need for site visits to the various regions in order to conduct in depth interviews with regional coordinators and representatives for the local SS CCs. However, due to time and budget constraints this component of the evaluation was dropped. The only people directly involved in the project who were interviewed face-to-face were Nalini Sharma (Project Manager) Ivy Kinuthia (Assistant Project Manager), Christopher Ambala (Regional coordinator for Africa Region) and Gregory Patilis (UNEP Financial Control Officer, Nairobi). The information on the project has therefore been largely gained from review of project related documents, including various guideline documents, Annual Development Account Progress Reports and the questionnaires.

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[2] It was felt that a questionnaire approach was more appropriate than telephonic interviews.

The evaluation therefore adopted a desk-based approach to the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) evaluation methodology.

In addition, following discussions with the UNEP Evaluation Office it was decided that the original questionnaire needed to be shortened in order to improve the likelihood of respondents completing the document. This resulting in the omission of certain evaluation related criteria from the final questionnaire. This, combined with the lack of face-to-face interviews with key stakeholders involved in the project, impacted on the ability of the author to get a detailed personal insight into the project and it activities.

In addition, a second trip to Nairobi was proposed for the end of March 2010 to coincide with a visit by the regional coordinators. The main objective of the second trip was to hold one-on-one interviews with the regional coordinators. However, the additional funds for the trip could not be secured. The UNEP DEWA project managers did however discuss the project with the regional coordinators with the objective of discussing the overall success of the project and key success, weaknesses and learning points. The comments from the discussion were included in the Final Draft Terminal Report (March, 2010), which was forwarded to the reviewer.

Finally, the project was completed in December 2009. The evaluation was therefore undertaken within a few months of the project's completion. This combined with the relatively short duration of the project (2 extended to 3 years) made it difficult for the evaluation to comment with accuracy on the intermediate steps required for the overall project impact to be achieved.

3   PROJECT PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT

3.1   INTRODUCTION

This section provides the main findings of the evaluation, with specific focus on the outcomes and impacts. As indicated above the majority of the analysis is based on a desk top review of relevant documentation, including Annual Development Account Terminal Reports, and questionnaire feedback from the regional coordinators in each of the four regions involved in the study, namely Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and West Asia.

The methodology followed is based on the ROtI approach, which seeks to assess the projects performance and impact based on the eleven evaluation aspects (A-K). The section below provides an overview of the projects performance and impact based on the eleven evaluation aspects (A-K) listed in the terms of reference for the evaluation (Annexure A).

3.2   ATTAINMENT OF OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED RESULTS

This section of the evaluation assesses the extent to which the projects key objectives were effectively and efficiently achieved.

3.2.1   Effectiveness

The overall objective of the project was to improve environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels. Four key outcomes are linked to this objective, namely:

- Make relevant integrated environmental assessment information, data, tools, methodologies and approaches available and accessible;
- Establish a mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking;
- Enhance the capacities of GEO Collaborating Centres to undertake Integrated Environmental Assessments (IEAs);
- Enhance the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for information and knowledge management and networking.

The ROtI method was used to assess the effectiveness of the Project in terms of achieving its intended outcomes, intermediate states[3], and emerging impacts. This includes two main outputs (i) an impact pathway analysis (Figure 1) and (ii) a quantitative rating of the achievement towards the outcomes and progress towards "intermediate states" (Table 1). An evaluation of the effectiveness of the project in terms of achieving the overall objective and the associated outcomes is provided below.

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[3] Intermediate states are defined as the transitional conditions between the projects immediate outcomes and the intended impact.

To improve environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels

The findings of the evaluation indicate that the project has created a set of conditions that are likely to support the ability of the project in achieving its stated objective of improving environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels. These conditions include improved awareness of and access to relevant environmental assessment data, tools and methodologies, enhanced capacity of GEO CCs to undertake IEA's and the establishment of a network to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and interaction between environmental practitioners and decision makers.

However, the assumption that environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels will be improved by the provision of improved environmental data and assessment tools ignores the potential impact of political decision-making and how political priorities may impact on environmental decision and policy-making. It is also important to note that the majority of the project target audience were CCs whose main mission was to assist in producing State of the Environment (SoE) and IEA reports. Policy and decision making is the domain of governments and government departments, not CCs. In this regard the findings of the evaluation indicate that the project did not appear to have any explicit activities linked to assessing and understanding government decision and policy-making process, specifically with regard to the conditions in each of the four regions involved in the project. However, having said this, the issue of linking IEA findings and policy processes and how to strengthen the link between science and policy was discussed at a series of regional workshops held in the Asia Pacific Region. In addition, the experience of the evaluator is that politicians and high-ranking government officials seldom have the time to attend 5-day training courses. The government officials that do attend such training courses are for the most part more junior officials who do not have a significant role to play when it comes to policy and decision-making.

Also given the relatively short timeframe of the project, namely 3 years, it is not possible to comment with any degree of confidence as to whether or not the project has resulted in an improvement in environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional level in the respective regions. What the project has done is initiate a process and created an intermediate state that is conducive to and likely improve the probability of improved environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels. However, while this is likely to improve the likelihood of improved environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels, it cannot guarantee that this will happen. Therefore, at this stage of the evaluation all that one can say is that the requirements and measures for improving environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels have been put in place, and the likelihood of them resulting in the anticipated impact appear to be reasonable.

Establish a mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking

The findings of the evaluation indicate that this outcome was achieved by the project. This was achieved by holding a series of start up workshops in each of the four regions involved in the Project, namely Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and West Asia. The objective of the workshops was to inform the participating CCs of the projects objectives and their expected roles in terms of achieving the outcomes. In so doing the regional workshops resulted in the establishment of an interregional network of SS GEO CCs, which in turn, provided an opportunity for representatives from the CCs and experts from different disciplines to

interact and collaborate in discussing and developing new analytical approaches and methods for identifying and assessing environmental challenges and impacts.

The feedback from the regional coordinators indicated that the global, regional meetings and workshops provided an effective mechanism for interacting and exchanging ideas. In this regard the UNEP[4] survey found that 66% of the respondents indicated that the approach adopted by the project facilitated and promoted exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking.

However, in some instances CCs staff who received training in IEA process as part of the project resigned or changed jobs and as a result valuable capacity in these centres was lost. However, the loss of key staff is a common challenge facing all institutions and is not unique to this project or CCs.

The establishment of an effective mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking was also enhanced by the use of an established network of existing GEO CCs to form the GEO-SSN for each of the four regions. The project did not therefore have to identify and establish new CCs, but instead utilised and built upon an existing and well-established system that were familiar with GEO concepts and UNEPs operational procedures and systems. Therefore, the project did not necessarily establish a new mechanism to facilitate and promote the exchange of ideas and expertise, but rather used of an existing network of GEO CCs to establish a SS network and improve interaction and enhance the achievement of this outcome. The success of this outcome of the project would have been compromised by the absence of the existing GEO CCs, specifically given the projects relatively short timeframe (initially two years and later extended to three years due to delays in project initiation an release of funds) and limited budget (US$ 560 000).

To make relevant integrated environmental assessment information, data, tools, methodologies and approaches available and accessible
The findings of the evaluation and feedback from the participants involved in the workshops in the various regions indicated that the relevant integrated environmental assessment data, tools and methodologies were made available to the participating SS GEO CCs. This was achieved through the development and publication of various guidelines and best practice documents, including guidelines for thematic-based assessments and eco-region and watershed assessments based on the GEO IEA methodology, (LAC Region), review of best practices in IEA and Reporting in developing regions, (All selected regions), and development of a web-based training version of the GEO IEA Training Manual customised for each region with local case studies and examples. This project outcome was therefore attained.

The evaluation also found that the tools and methods were well received by governments and partners in each of the four regions. The attainment of this outcome was also strongly supported and enhanced by the activities associated with outcome 1, namely the establishment of a mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking.

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[4] UNEP head office in Nairobi conducted an internal review of the project which involved circulating a questionnaire to regional CCs involved in the project. This review was undertaken in February 2010.

Enhance capacities of GEO Collaborating Centres to undertake Integrated Environmental Assessments (IEAs)

The findings of the evaluation and feedback from the participants involved in the workshops in the various regions indicate that the capacity of the GEO CCs to undertake IEAs was enhanced. This was achieved by making the relevant information available (outcome 2) and through the numerous workshops conducted in each of the four regions.

The feedback from the regional coordinators indicated that the capacity on IEA in the region has expanded and deepened with more experts and institutions having been trained and/or engaged in IEA. Better access to IEA tools and materials had also helped in this process. The findings of the UNEP HQ survey conducted in February 2010 found that 73% of the respondents indicated that their capacity to undertake integrated environmental assessments was enhanced, while 75% noted that participation in regional workshops has lead to an increase in capacity of the GEO CCs. In addition, 80% of the respondents felt that the project sufficiently satisfied their needs and requirements.

The findings of the evaluation indicate that the CCs and environmental practitioners in the targeted regions have been exposed to improved tools and their capacity to undertake IEA's enhanced.

Enhance the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for information and knowledge management and networking

The attainment of this outcome was enhanced by a number of the key associated activities, specifically the establishment of a database of IEA practitioners, leading scientists and institutions and an interactive internet-based communication and information facilities (the IEA Community Learning Platform).

The feedback from regional coordinators indicated that establishment of the Community Learning Platform enhanced the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for information and knowledge management and networking. In this regard the regional coordinators indicated that the Platform assisted users to share experiences, helped to enhance global assessment, and generated information in a consistent format. In addition, having all the key information in one place was viewed as a major benefit. However, feedback from the regional coordinators also indicated that the level of interest in the internet-based web platform was not as high as expected. Regional coordinators attributed this to the need for dedicated staff resources, which were not always available. In the case of Africa, the high costs associated with accessing the internet was also cited as reason for the low levels of interest in ICT as a tool. In this regard the findings of the UNEP survey indicated that only 47% of the respondents felt that the ICT for information and knowledge management and networking was enhanced. However, 92% did indicate that ICT solutions, including eLearning, would be useful in the implementation of their current and future work.

The findings of the evaluation indicate that the attainment of EA 4 was not fully met. However, this was not due to a failure in terms of the activities and outputs, but rather a limited level of interest in the internet-based web platform by potential users.

Figure 1: Schematic overview of GEO SSN 1566 "Impact Pathway"

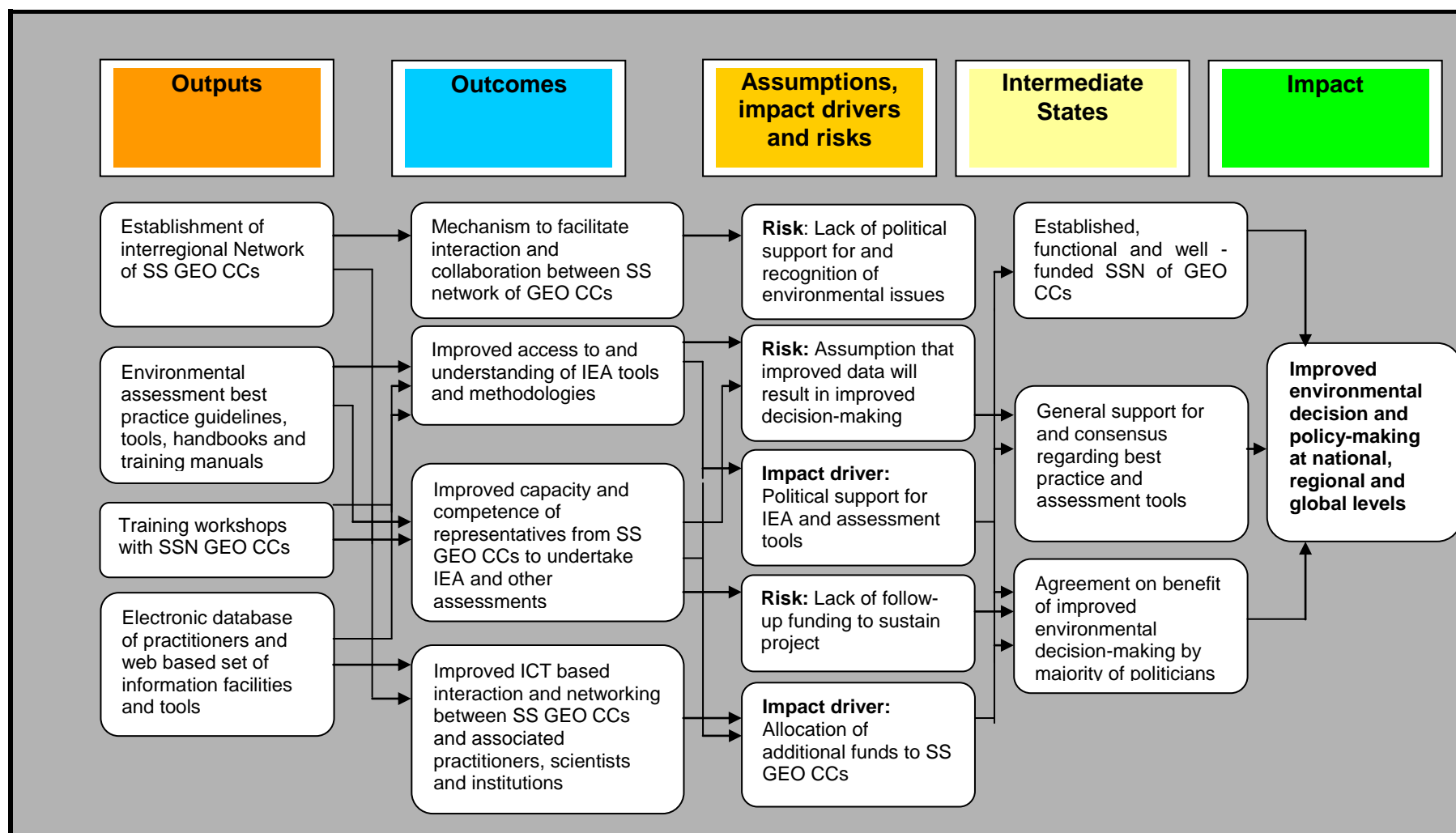| Outputs	Outcomes	Assumptions, impact drivers and risks	Intermediate States	Impact
Establishment of interregional Network of SS GEO CCs	Mechanism to facilitate interaction and collaboration between SS network of GEO CCs	**Risk**: Lack of political support for and recognition of environmental issues	Established, functional and well - funded SSN of GEO CCs	**Improved environmental decision and policy-making at national, regional and global levels**
Environmental assessment best practice guidelines, tools, handbooks and training manuals	Improved access to and understanding of IEA tools and methodologies	**Risk:** Assumption that improved data will result in improved decision-making	General support for and consensus regarding best practice and assessment tools	
Training workshops with SSN GEO CCs	Improved capacity and competence of representatives from SS GEO CCs to undertake IEA and other assessments	**Impact driver:** Political support for IEA and assessment tools		
Electronic database of practitioners and web based set of information facilities and tools	Improved ICT based interaction and networking between SS GEO CCs and associated practitioners, scientists and institutions	**Risk:** Lack of follow-up funding to sustain project	Agreement on benefit of improved environmental decision-making by majority of politicians	
		Impact driver: Allocation of additional funds to SS GEO CCs		

Table 1: Rating result sheet for the outcome and progress towards "intermediate states"

Results of rating for:			South-South Network of GEO Collaborating Centres for Integrated Environmental Assessment and Reporting to Support Policy Formulation and Informed Decision-Making Process at National, Regional and Global Levels				
Outputs	**Outcomes**	**Rating (D-A)**	**Intermediary States**	**Rating (D-A)**	**Impact (GEB's)**	**Rating (+)**	**Overall**
1. Establishment of SS Interregional Network of GEO CCs	1.Mechanism established to facilitate interaction and collaboration between SS network of GEO CCs in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and West Asia	**B**	1.SS Interregional Network of GEO CCs established	**C**	Informed and Improved decision making based on best practice GEO guidelines for IEA and improved networking between SS GEO CCs		**BC**
2. Review of IEA Best Practice and production of various guidelines, reporting tools, handbooks and training manuals etc	2.Improved access to and understanding of IEA reporting tools and methodologies and other assessment techniques		2.Best practice guidelines, tools and training manuals available via the internet				
3. Training workshops with representatives from SS network of GEO CCs and other stakeholders, including professionals and government officials	3.Improved capacity and competence of representatives from GEO CCs and other organisations in developing countries to undertake IEA and other assessments		3.Capacity and competence of representatives from SS GEO CCs to undertake IEAs enhanced and developed				
4. Development of electronic database of professionals/experts and institutions and web-based communication and information facilities and tools.	4.Improved ICT based interaction and networking between GEO CCs and associated practitioners, scientists and institutions		4.Electronic database developed and accessed by SS GEO CCs and institutions				
Rating Justification	All of the outcomes, with the exception of Outcome 4 (Improving ICT based networking and interaction) have been delivered. Outcome 4 was only partially delivered. However, there is no clear evidence of prior allocation of responsibilities once the project is completed.		The measures required to move towards intermediate states have commenced, however it is too early in the project for the evaluation to determine if they can progress towards the intended Global Environmental Benefit.		The project has laid the foundation for supporting and improving policy formulation and decision making at a national and regional level.		

Table 2: Rating scale for outcomes and progress towards "intermediate states"

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

Summary of project effectiveness

Based on the RotI approach the project outcomes were assessed to have a score of B. This implies that the projects intended outcomes have been achieved and they were designed to feed into and support an existing system, namely the GEO and the SS interregional network of GEO CCs. However, the project does not address the allocation of specific responsibilities after project funding has ended, hence the allocation of a B rating.

With regard to the projects progress towards intermediate states, the project is rated as C. This rating implies that the measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started but have not produced results (yet?) and barriers and/or unmet assumptions may still exist. In addition, it is too early in the project for the evaluation to determine if they can progress towards the intended Global Environmental Benefit. The key potential barrier and/or assumption is linked to the assumption that environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels will be improved by the provision of improved environmental data and assessment tools. This assumption ignores the potential impact of political decision-making and how political priorities may impact on environmental decision and policy-making. As a result the overall likelihood of impact achievement is rated at **Moderately Likely**.

Project Effectiveness. Satisfactory

3.2.2 Relevance

The findings of the evaluation indicate that the project activities and outcomes are consistent with and support the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building and UNEPs Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013.

The introduction to the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building highlights the need for environment-related technology support and capacity-building in developing countries as well as in countries with economies in transition (General Assembly resolutions 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 and 3436 (XXX) of 9 December 1975, as well as in Agenda 21 and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development). The introduction also notes that Decision SS.VII/1 of 15 February 2002 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) concerning the strengthening of international environmental governance recognizes, among other components, the urgent need to develop a strategic plan for the provision of technology support and capacity-building to developing countries as well as to countries with economies in transition.

The objectives listed in the Bali Strategy that are of specific relevance to the project include:

- To use and sustain the capacity or technology obtained through training or other capacity-building efforts after such efforts have been completed;
- To develop national research, monitoring and assessment capacity to support national institutions in data collection, analysis and monitoring of environmental trends and in establishing infrastructure for scientific development and environmental management, in order to ensure sustainability of capacity-building efforts;
- To provide systematic, targeted, long and short-term measures for technology support and capacity-building, taking into account international agreements and based on national or regional priorities and needs;
- To provide a framework for capacity-building to ensure the effective participation of developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition in negotiations concerning multilateral environmental agreements;
- To endeavour to ensure that principles of transparency and accountability built on a participatory approach and with full national ownership are integrated in all activities;
- To integrate specific gender-mainstreaming strategies, as well as education and training for women, in formulating relevant policies, and to promote the participation of women in environmental decision-making.

UNEPs Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013 sets out the next phase in the evolution of UNEP as it becomes a more effective, efficient and results-focused entity, meeting the expectations of Governments and its stakeholders in responding to global environmental challenges and opportunities. The strategic direction contained in the Medium-term Strategy provides a clear, results-based focus for UNEP programmes. Of relevance to the project the Medium-term Strategy places strong and renewed emphasis on UNEP becoming a more effective, efficient and results-focused entity, through significantly enhancing its capacity to deliver on the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building.

The projects overall objective of improving environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels also supports Millennium Development Goal 7, namely, to integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.

Project Relevance: Highly Satisfactory

3.2.3   Project Efficiency

The project budget was US$ 560 000.00. Funding was also provided by the Norwegian and Belgium Governments for the development of the internet based Community Platform and to customise and produce the IEA Training Manual in the Asia and Pacific Region. In terms of building on earlier initiatives, the project made use of an existing network of GEO CCs. In addition, the project utilised existing documents and guidelines. For example the IEA Training Manual was developed by UNEP in 2005. The approach adopted by the project was to use the existing manual and up-date and improve it as part of the study. Likewise the IEA methodology predates the study as does the Policy Analysis Guidelines and Handbook developed by UNEP for the Africa.

Based on feedback from the project managers the project budget was relatively small in terms of UNEP projects. However, despite the relatively small budget a large number of activities were undertaken and likewise an impressive number of outputs delivered. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the project represented the least cost option. In this regard it is highly unlikely that the project would have been able to generate the same number and quality of outputs and associated outcomes with a smaller budget. The project was therefore assessed to be cost effective and efficient. The success of the project in this regard was closely linked to the well established and long standing relationship between UNEP and the existing network of GEO CCs involved in the project and the use of existing scientific and technical information, such as the IEA approach adopted by GEO.

There was a 4-5 months delay at the start of the project due a delay in the release of funds. As a result the project end date was extended to the end of 2009. Despite the initial delay the majority of activities were completed within the revised timeframe and the outputs were of a good quality. The delay did not impact on the original budget allocated to the project.

Project Efficiency: Satisfactory

3.3   Sustainability

3.3.1   Financial Sustainability

The findings of the evaluation indicate that no provision had been made for future funding once the project ended. However, this lack of secured funding does not pose a significant threat to the sustenance of project outcomes and onward progress towards impact. The feedback from the regional coordinators indicated that the ability of the project to achieve its outcomes and eventual impacts is likely to be enhanced by the strong support for the project by the existing, well-established GEO CCs network and the establishment of a SSN GEO CC. In this regard the findings of the UNEP HQ survey found that all of the respondents (100%) wanted to continue participating in the GEO SS Network. In addition the majority of the outputs and tools developed and/or updated during project are likely to be used in future programmes

as they relate to the needs of countries and regions. The use of tools such as the IEA Customised Training Manual, Guidelines for Ecosystem Based Assessments, the GEO for Health Methodology etc. will, in all likelihood, continue to be used by the key stakeholders involved in the project, including decision makers, irrespective of the availability of future funding. In addition, the experts involved in the project are themselves state of the environment practitioners and are key members in their respective countries responsible for providing environmental information to support decision makers. The uptake and acceptance of the tools and methods in each of the relevant regions was identified as a key benefit of the project by the regional coordinators. This combined with the extensive stakeholder engagement process will contribute to the potential long-term sustainability of the project. The outcomes and eventual impacts of the project are, therefore, not dependant upon continued financial support.

However, the regional coordinators did indicate that while cooperation between South-South countries and Collaborating Centres is likely to continue with or without future financial support from UNEP and or other donors, the project would benefit from on-going funding for follow-up activities, including training and capacity building workshops for decision makers and officials who are likely to use the project outputs. The request for additional funding should also be viewed within the context of the finding that the objectives of the project were ambitious given the budget and timeframe. In this regard the additional budget could be used to fine-tune and improve certain outputs and also train trainers. The evaluation was not in a position to assess if such funds were available and or if efforts had been made to secure future funding for the project.

The regional coordinators also recommended that additional funds should be made available to support regular on-going meetings for global, regional and national experts and that a common web site portal for the CCs involved in the project be established. The project would also benefit from funding for the implementation of a formal Monitoring and Evaluation Programme (M&E) (See Section 3.8). Factors that will contribute to the long-term sustainability of project impacts include:

- Legal mandates for environmental assessment at regional, sub-regional, national and city levels;
- Continued access to improved tools and methodologies, data and information, in local languages whenever possible;
- Continuous capacity building and participation of new partners is needed so that IEA and the SS Network is strengthened, expanded, and increasingly recognized in the region.

Financial sustainability: Moderately Likely

3.3.2   Socio-political Sustainability

As indicated in Section 2.3, it was not possible to meet with and interact directly with any of the regional coordinators in the Asia and Pacific Region, West Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean Regions. This, in the opinion of the evaluator, limited the ability of the evaluation to gain a good understanding of and comment with any degree of certainty on the potential social and or political risks that may jeopardise the sustainability of the project outcomes and onward progress towards impacts. The Final UNDA Terminal Report (March 2010) does note that the compilation of data sets for the City of Karachi in 2007 could not proceed due to political instability and

insecurity. The potential for the project impacts to be jeopardised by political risks does, therefore, exist in certain areas. In addition, a number of countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, West Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean do not have well-established democratic structures, and, as such, the conditions for political instability in these countries do exist. In addition, it is also important to recognise the potential impact that political decision-making can have on environmental decision-making and policies. In some instances short-term political priorities may conflict with the longer-term objectives associated with environmental sustainability. Political decisions may therefore have the potential to undermine the sustainability of the project outcomes and onward progress towards impacts. However, based on the overall feedback from the regional coordinators there do not appear to be any significant social or political risks that may jeopardise the project outcomes and impacts. In addition, the potential risks are likely to be localised and, as such, will not impact on the overall ability of the project to improve environmental decision and policy making in other countries and regions.

In terms of participation, the project provided sufficient opportunities for effective stakeholder participation and ownership. In the Africa region approximately 150 government officials, experts and State of the Environment practitioners from Botswana, Rwanda, Mozambique and Tanzania attended IEA training workshops. In the Asia and Pacific Region approximately 25 trainers and at least 200 trainees benefited from various national and city level IEA training workshops. Participants included national and local government officials, academic institutions, the private sector and NGOs. In the Latin America and Caribbean region approximately 200 environmental specialists from government, academic institutions and the NGO sector participated in GEO and IEA training workshops. In West Asia at least 200 experts were introduced to the GEO Cities methodology, while 36 experts met to discuss GEO Cities assessments and were consulted on the GEO Cities Manual. An additional 39 experts attended training of trainers on IEA using the GEO resources book.

The findings of the evaluation therefore indicate that the activities associated with the project created sufficient stakeholder awareness to support the long-term objectives of the project. The results of the UNEP HQ survey conducted in February 2010 indicate that the majority of stakeholders involved in the project felt that the continued flow of the project benefits would be in their interests. In this regard 91% of the respondents positively evaluated the overall impacts of the GEO South-South Network, while all (100%) of the respondents indicated that they wanted to continue participating in the GEO South-South Network.

Socio-political sustainability: Moderately Likely

3.3.3   Sustainability of Institutional Framework/Governance

As indicated in Section 2.3, it was not possible to meet with and interact directly with any of the regional coordinators in the Asia and Pacific Region, West Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean Regions. This, in the opinion of the evaluator, limited the ability of the evaluation to comment with any degree of certainty on the potential risks posed by institutional frameworks and governance structures on the sustainability of the project outcomes and onward progress towards impacts. Similarly, the evaluation was not in a position to comment on the presence of required systems for accountability and transparency and the level of technical know-how required for the project outcomes to be attained.

However, it is reasonable to assume that the institutional and governance frameworks in those countries that do not have well-established democratic systems are not likely to be conducive to improved environmental decision and policy making. The role of and contribution of civil society towards decision-making and governance in those countries that do not have a well-developed democratic system is also by definition likely to be limited. This may in turn impact on the ability of the project to improve environmental decision and policy-making in such countries. These risks are, however, likely to be localised and, as such, will not impact on the overall ability of the project to improve environmental decision and policy making in other countries and regions.

In addition, the findings of the evaluation indicate that the project was successful in terms of improving the level of technical know-how required to achieve the project outcomes. This was achieved by making relevant IEA information, tools and methodologies available and accessible. The findings of the UNEP survey indicated that 80% of the respondents responded that the relevant integrated environment assessment information, data, tools and methodologies and approaches were made accessible, while 73% of the respondents noted that their capacity to undertake integrated environmental assessments was enhanced.

The project was also successful in establishing a mechanism to facilitate and promote the exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking. To a large extent this mechanism was already in place in the format of the existing network of SS GEO CCs. The project did, however, strengthen this network and, in so doing, would have enhanced the technical know-how of the existing SS GEO CCs.

The principles that underpin environmental assessments, including IEAs, include accountability and transparency (openness). It is therefore reasonable to assume that the project would have created an environment that had the potential to improve existing systems for accountability and transparency. However, it is not possible for the evaluation to comment on the status of the legal frameworks, policies and governance structures in the four regions involved in the project, namely Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and West Asia, and impact of these frameworks and structures on the sustainability of the project outcomes.

Institutional frameworks and governance sustainability: Moderately Likely

3.3.4   Environmental Sustainability

This aspect is not regarded a relevant to the project given the focus on developing assessment tools, capacity building and training.

Environmental sustainability: Not applicable

3.4   Catalytic Role and Replication

The project is suitable for replication. This is due to two key factors. Firstly, the project utilised and strengthened a well established network of SS GEO CCs. Secondly, the key outputs of the project, such as the IEA Customised Training Manual, Guidelines for Ecosystem Based Assessments, the GEO for Health Methodology etc. will, in all likelihood, continue to be used to inform decision making in the SS countries. The project also represents the first UNEP project that involves the establishment and use of an interactive internet-based community platform. This

tool has significant potential in terms of replication and scaling up, specifically given the growing use of the internet as a training tool. In addition, the majority of the outputs and tools developed and/or updated during the project are likely to be used in future programmes as they relate to the needs and requirements of the countries and regions involved in the project. The tools developed and used during the project can also be used in other countries in addition to those in the SS.

The project also provided opportunities for partners to interact and strengthen SS networking and collaboration, enhancing UNEPs efforts to generate scientifically credible and timely information to support environmental decision and policy-making at national and regional levels within the various regions. Most of the lessons were shared between regions and countries within the same region and therefore lend themselves to replication. The project also lends itself to scaling up.

With regard to the specific questions listed in the ToR, the focus of the project activities was on developing guidelines, as well as training and capacity building. However, it could be argued that in order to achieve sustainable behavioural changes of the stakeholders, also implicit socio-economic and or market based incentives would be needed. With regard to institutional and policy changes, the three-year timeframe of the project is regarded as too short to measure any effective change in institutional behaviour and policy. Changes in institutional behaviour and policy are only likely to manifest themselves in the medium (5-10 years) to long term (10 years and above). In addition, an accurate evaluation of the catalytic role of the project on institutional and policy changes would require an M&E programme that specifically targets these issues. Such programme is currently not in place.

With regard to catalytic financing, the feedback from the regional coordinators indicated that there had been no commitment from or arrangement with relevant governments and or other donors for on-going funding. However, this does not imply that such funding will not be available at a later date. As indicated above the project utilises an established and recognised network of GEO CCs who are familiar with the requirements and procedures associated with funding applications. These organisations are also familiar with and have established relationships with potential funding organisations. This is likely to enhance their ability of securing future funding. The project is therefore well placed to qualify for catalytic funding.

Overall rating: Satisfactory

3.5 Stakeholder participation / public awareness

The specific objectives of the project are all linked to capacity building and raising awareness and, as such, involve stakeholder participation. In this regard EA1 involved the establishment of a SS network to facilitate professional interaction among GEO CCs and those involved in inter and intra regional levels in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and West Asia. The key activities associated with EA1 included consultations with the eligible GEO CCs in all selected regions aimed at the development of an institutional framework and implementation plan for the project. Given the projects relatively short timeframe the utilisation of an existing network of GEO CCs represented an effective and efficient mechanism for identifying and engaging stakeholders in each of the four regions. While the project did provide an effective mechanism for identifying stakeholders, a number of regional coordinators indicated that the regions should have been consulted in the design of the project.

EA3, which seeks to enhance the capacity of GEO CCs in developing countries to undertake IEA and reporting at regional and sub-regional levels, involved holding a series of regional workshops with the GEO CCs in all four regions. The feedback from the regional coordinators indicated that the regional workshops and training sessions provided an effective mechanism for engaging stakeholders and raising public awareness. The interaction and collaboration between various project partners during the implementation of the project was also effective and provided a good opportunity to share skills and experience between GEO CCs and the regions.

The ICT also provided an opportunity to promote stakeholder engagement and interaction. However, as indicated above, the ICT component of the study was not as successful as initially hoped.

In terms of public awareness none of the project activities and outputs were specifically aimed at raising the awareness levels of the general public. In this regard the focus of the project was on existing GEO CCs and their members. However, it is reasonable to assume that certain members of the public would have been made aware of the project and its objectives via feedback and interaction with the participants who attended the numerous training workshops held during the project.

Overall rating: Satisfactory

3.6   Country ownership / driven-ness

A key component of the project was the establishment of a SS network of GEO CCs. This was achieved by utilising a well-established network of existing GEO CCs based in the four regions, namely Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and West Asia. As such the project was driven by the CCs linked to regions as opposed to individual countries. These regions in turn interacted at an interregional and international level. The feedback from the regional coordinators from all four regions and the results from the UNEP survey indicated that project provided an effective mechanism for interaction within and between the regions. The project was therefore deemed to have been effective in terms of providing and communicating information on SS networking and collaboration for integrated environmental Assessments and reporting to support policy formulation and informed decision making processes at national and regional levels in the selected regions.

While the ICT did provide an opportunity to share skills and promote stakeholder engagement, the feedback from the regional coordinators indicated that the level of interest in the internet-based web platform was not as high as anticipated or hoped for. The commitment of the CCs in the four regions to the generation and use of ICTs was therefore not as high as originally anticipated by the project.

Overall rating: Satisfactory

3.7   Achievement of activities and outputs

Activities
The key activities associated with EA 1, 2, 3 and 4 were undertaken. These are summarised under each EA.

Expected accomplishment 1: Mechanism established to facilitate professional interaction among GEO CCs and those involved in inter and intra regional levels in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and West Asia

The key activities that were undertaken in order to achieve Expected Accomplishment (EA) 1 were the establishment of a South-South interregional network of GEO Collaborating Centres (GEO-SSN) and the hosting of two virtual review meetings of the network. In terms of establishing the GEO SSN start up workshops were held in each of the four regions. The GEO SSN for Africa was established in Johannesburg, South Africa on 15 June 2006. A Workshop for Southern Africa CCs and State of the Environment Coordinators from focal institutions in Southern African countries was also held in September 2007 in Harare, Zimbabwe. The Asia-Pacific GEO SSN was established at a regional workshop held in July 2006. Six GEO CCs participated in the workshop, representing 4 sub-regions, namely, Central Asia, South Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific. In the Latin America and the Caribbean region the GEO SSN was established in February 2006 in Lima, Peru. Six GEO CCs in LAC attended the meeting. The inception meeting for the West Africa region was held on 21 June 2006 in Manama, Bahrain. The introduction of GEO Cities IEA to the region was also discussed.

Arising out of the regional workshops the relevant CCs in the four regions were informed of the project objectives and their expected roles in terms of achieving the outcomes. The regional workshops also provided an opportunity for experts from different disciplines to collaborate in discussing and developing new analytical approaches and methods for identifying and assessing environmental challenges and impacts.

With regard the two virtual review meetings, the first virtual meeting was held on 28 May 2009 with the aim of discussing the progress of the project and providing feedback from the participants in the GEO SSN. The report of the virtual meeting is available on the IEA Community Platform (www.unep.org/ieacp). The second virtual meting was not conducted due to the short time frame of the project. In this regard a number of regional coordinators indicated that in hindsight the timeframe for the project and the associated activities and outputs was ambitious.

The findings of the evaluation therefore indicate that activities and outputs associated with EA1 were successfully achieved.

Expected accomplishment 2: Improved access to IEA reporting tools and methodologies

The following key activities and outputs were associated with EA2:

- Development of guidelines to carry out thematic-based assessments and eco-region and watershed assessments based on the GEO IEA methodology, (LAC Region);
- Review of Best Practices in IEA and Reporting in developing regions, (All selected regions);
- Translation of various Best Practices in IEA and Reporting in developing regions into Spanish, French and Arabic;
- Electronic publication of the policy analysis guidelines and handbook developed by Africa region with support from UNDP, (Africa region);
- Development of an interactive web-based training version of the integrated environmental assessment and reporting manual for Africa and translated into French and Arabic, (Africa Region);

- Development of customised GEO Cities methodology resource book for Asia Pacific Region and West Asia Region (translated in French and Arabic);
- Customize the GEO Cities methodology resource book for the Asia Pacific region and translate into French and Russian. (Asia and the Pacific Region)
- Compile and develop datasets on 30 major Asia cities with the Asia Pacific GEO CCs and other partners. (Asia and the Pacific Region)

In terms of the regions, training on IEA methods was provided for approximately 150 government officials, experts and State of the Environment practitioners from Botswana, Rwanda, Mozambique and Tanzania. In the Asia and Pacific Region approximately 25 trainers and at least 200 trainees benefited from various national and city level IEA training workshops, including national and local government officials from line ministries, academic institutions, the private sector and NGOs. The IEA Methodology was disseminated to six countries in the Greater Mekong sub-region (Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar and 2 Provinces of China), five countries in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and also to Sri Lanka and Bhutan. At a city level training was provided for officials and stakeholders in Ulaanbaatar and Kathmandu. In the Latin America and Caribbean region (Guatemala, Panama, Brazil and Dominican Republic) 200 environmental specialists from the governmental and academic institutions and NGOs were introduced to the GEO methodology for IEA. At least 50 specialists in urban areas were introduced to the GEO for Cities Methodology in the One UN pilot country in LAC (i.e. Uruguay). In West Asia at least 200 experts were introduced to the GEO Cities methodology, while 36 experts met to discuss GEO Cities assessments and were consulted on the GEO Cities Manual. An additional 39 experts attended training of trainers on IEA using the GEO resources book.

Comments from the regional coordinators did, however, indicate that the quality and consistency of key documents would have been enhanced if additional time and budget had been allocated to the project. In this regard the activities and outputs associated with the project were identified as ambitious. Likewise the volume of material covered in the 5-day, eight module IEA training programme is extensive and a number of regional coordinators indicated that more time and effort should have been allocated to certain modules. In addition, while the training modules do make extensive use of local and international case studies, it appears that no or limited provision was made for site visits.

The feedback from the participants involved in the workshops in the various regions indicated that the GEO IEA and GEO Cities methodologies were well received by governments and partners in each of the four regions. The findings of the evaluation indicate that the activities and outputs associated with EA 2 were achieved.

Expected accomplishment 3: Enhanced capacity of GEO CCs in developing countries to undertake IEA and reporting at regional and sub-regional levels.

A number of workshops and training sessions were held to improve and enhance the capacities of GEO CCs to undertake IEAs. These included regional workshops in eight cities in the Asia Pacific Region that have regular SOE reporting requirements. The workshop in the Asia Pacific Region was held in September 2008, and involved representatives from the cities of Chiang Mai and Bangkok, Thailand, Kathmandu, Nepal, Shenzhen, China, Dhaka, Bangladesh, and Jakarta, Indonesia. Representatives attending the workshop included governments, GEO CCs, regional experts and UNEP. A workshop was also held in the Latin America and Caribbean

Region in March/April 2009 to discuss thematic-based assessments. In addition to these workshops four regional meetings on linking integrated environmental assessment findings to policy processes were held. In Africa two sub-regional review workshops were held. The first was held in Cairo, Egypt (20-22 July 2009) and the second in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire (3-5 August 2009). The workshops reviewed best practices on how to link IEA findings to policy processes. The workshop also reviewed the use of the IEA Africa Training Manual and policy analysis guidelines.

In terms of capacity building, in Africa six partner institutions (CCs -NEMA Uganda, SARDC) and national focal points/ministries in Mozambique, Rwanda, Botswana and Tanzania were trained on the IEA methodology and collaborated in the implementation of IEA related activities. In Asia and the Pacific twenty-four trainers from eight developing country based GEO CCs (DA, BCAS, TERI, TEI, SIC, USP, SEPA/MEP and AIT) were trained on the IEA methodology, including in the Training of Trainers. Many of those trained have been involved in implementing IEA at national or city levels. In the Latin America and the Caribbean Region a total of 65 participants from NGOs, collaborating centres, academia, indigenous and youth and other sectors of the civil society were trained. In West Asia four partner institutions were trained on the IEA methodology and collaborated in the implementation of the IEA related activities. As a result of GEO Cities training, three requests at the national and regional levels have been made for capacity building and technical support on GEO Cities Assessments, including a request from Yemen, Lebanon and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which is to undertake GEO Cities Assessment of the Palestine camps in the region. Training on IEA was also conducted in Oman and the United Arab Emirates in the framework for building capacity to prepare their national environment outlooks.

In the Asia Pacific Region three regional workshops were held in July 2006, July 2007 and September 2008 respectively. The topics covered at the workshops included linking IEA findings and policy processes and how to strengthen the link between science and policy. Three workshops were also held in the Latin America and the Caribbean Region. The workshops were held in Panama in May 2008, Brazil in 25-26 March 2008 and Guatemala, 18-19 June 2008. A key focus of the workshops was Module 3 of the IEA Training Manual (Developing your IEA Impact Strategy). The workshop on Panama in May 2008 also included an expert meeting on IEA and Impact Strategy on policy. The use of virtual conference tools like Elluminate also provided a very useful tool for organising virtual meetings and training sessions in the LAC region.

In the West Asia Region a regional meeting entitled "Integrating Assessment Outcomes into Policies and Decision Making" was held on 27 November 2008, Cairo, Egypt. The meeting also doubled up as Regional Meeting on GEO Cities and Integrating Assessment Outcomes into Policies and Decision Making. In addition the meeting also discussed ways and means to promote and encourage the use of assessment findings in decision-making and policy formulation processes. The meeting was inter-regional including participants from West Asia and Africa.

In addition to the IEA, related training was also provided in the GEO Cities methodology. This training was provided in three of the four regions, namely Africa, Asia and the Pacific and West Asia. In Africa a national capacity building training workshop was held from 15-18 December 2008 in Dar es-Salaam to provide representatives for the city with the skills required to undertake the Dar es-Salaam City Environment Outlook report. In the Asia and the Pacific Region city level training

was only undertaken in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia where the training was provided to 35 experts and city officials. More training is planned subject to demand and funding. In West Asia a Regional Meeting on GEO Cities and Integrating Assessment Outcomes into Policies and Decision Making was held on 25-27 November 2008, in Cairo, Egypt in partnership with Environment Center for the Arab Towns (ECAT), and in collaboration with the British Council and CEDARE. The meeting was also used for consultation on the IEA Training Manual and to introduce the Future Cities Game developed by the British Council to develop the best possible ideas to make peoples' lives better in cities.

An intra regional multi-stakeholders consultation on good practice in IEA reporting and policy linkages in West Asia was also proposed in terms of the project description. However, due to limited resources this meeting did not take place. The findings of the evaluation indicate that the majority of activities and outputs associated with EA 3 were achieved.

Expected accomplishment 4: Improved ICT based networking, knowledge management and information access

Activities associated with EA 4 included:

- Establishment of a database of practitioners and specialists;
- Development of and interactive internet-based communication and information facilities and tools based on the technologies available in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and West Asia.
- Development of an interactive web-based training version of the integrated environmental assessment and reporting manual for Africa and translated into French and Arabic, (Africa Region);

An IEA Community Learning Platform was developed by GRID-Arendal in close cooperation with UNEP/DEWA (www.unep.org/ieacp). The Platform was developed by UNEP HQ using funding from multiple sources, including UNDAC and Norwegian Funds. The aim of the Platform was to bring together practitioners, experts and educators and to encourage them to share and exchange ideas by creating an opportunity for sharing resources and experience on IEAs and other assessment processes across global, regional and national levels. Users can get access to qualified IEA trainers, training materials, as well as a 'case study bank' where examples of best practice have been gathered from around the world. All 8 modules of the IEA Training Manual and related materials have been uploaded on an IEA Community Learning Platform. To date, 54 trainer's profiles, 23 practitioner's profiles and 53 users have been loaded on to the site. Based on the information provided by the project manager the GEO SSN 1566 project represents the first UNEP project that involves the establishment and use of an interactive internet-based community platform. This tool has significant potential in terms of replication. The value of the platform is that it can be used for a wide range of applications and is not only applicable to IEA.

In the Asia and the Pacific Region an internet-based communication and dissemination mechanism for information on regional trainings and meetings, and assessment tools and methodologies are available and can be accessed through the Regional GEO Data Portal, http://geodata.rrcap.unep.org/. In West Asia a web site (http://www.unep.org/dewa/westasia/) for IEA has been developed, which includes a variety of resources and tools related to IEA, ranging from assessments (national to

regional, data and indicators, knowledge bases on IEA by country, networking, and early warning. It also includes specialized tools such as Contacts and Activities Management System, GEO West Asia Data Portal, West Asia Map Server, the web site of the Environment Outlook for the Arab Region (EOAR). A dedicated web site for GEO Cities is under development and will be linked to this main IEA web site. In addition, at least 50 experts and institutions are listed in the database of IEA practitioners, leading scientists and institutions.

The feedback from regional coordinators has confirmed that the establishment of the Community Learning Platform has enhanced the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for information and knowledge management and networking. In this regard the regional coordinators indicated that the Platform assisted users to share experiences, helped to enhance global assessment, and generated information in a consistent format. In addition, having all the key information in one place was viewed as a major benefit. However, feedback from the regional coordinators also indicated that the level of interest in the internet-based web platform was not as high as expected. Regional coordinators attributed this to the need for dedicated staff resources, which were not always available. In the case of Africa, the high costs associated with accessing the internet were also cited as reason for the low levels of interest in ICT as a tool. The findings of the UNEP survey indicated that only 47% of the respondents felt that the ICT for information and knowledge management and networking was enhanced. However, 92% of the respondents did indicate that ICT solutions, including eLearning, would be useful in the implementation of their current and future work.

The findings of the evaluation indicate that the attainment of EA 4 was largely met, however, as indicated above there were some shortfalls.

Summary of activities and outputs

Review of the project information and feedback from the regional coordinators indicates that the majority of the project activities and outputs were undertaken and delivered within the revised timeframe for the project. The activities and associated outputs that were not achieved included:

- Intra regional multi-stakeholders consultations on good practice in IEA reporting and policy linkages in West Asia. Due to limited resources this meeting did not take place.
- Second virtual meting was not conducted due to the short time frame. This activity was merged the UNEP HQ online questionnaire feedback survey that was distributed to collaborating centres for responses. The results of the survey are summarised in Annexure E;
- Translation of GEO Cities Manual into Russian. This manual will be translated into Russian once there is a demand and subject to the availability of resources.

Comments from the regional coordinators did, however, indicate that the quality and consistency of key documents could have been enhanced if additional time and budget had been allocated to the project. In this regard a number of the participants felt that the activities and outputs associated with the project were ambitious given the allocated timeframe and budget. Despite these comments the project did expose the CCs and environmental practitioners in the affected regions to improved tools (The IEA Training Manual, Guidelines for ecosystem-based IEA, etc) and summary reports of best practices in IEA, etc.

While the use of local case studies is recognised, there is a need to ensure that all training manuals make reference to a common set of standard references and best practices procedures. While the substantive differences are not regarded as significant, the lack of consistency in terms of standard references does have potential implications in terms of ensuring that each of the regions adopt the same approach towards undertaking IEA's, which in turn may have implications in terms of achieving the overall objective of the project, namely to improve policy and decision-making process at national, regional and global levels. In this regard the project would benefit from a review of the training material. This would improve consistency and overall product quality of the key outputs.

Overall rating: Satisfactory

3.8   Preparation and readiness

All GEO CCs involved with the project have an established professional relationship with UNEP, and, as a result, they have interacted with each other on other projects. The capacities of the executing institutions and counterparts were therefore properly considered when the project was designed. The project did not only work with established institutions and/or counterparts, there was also a strong component of capacity building for the weaker institutions/counterparts. The partnership arrangements were therefore properly identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project implementation.

In addition to involving a well-established network of existing GEO CCs, the project also built on existing methodologies and assessment tools, such as IEA and SOE, and approaches to capacity building and training. The lessons from other relevant projects were therefore incorporated in the project design. These lessons included the design and approach to training workshops and compilation of project documentation. However, a number of the participants felt that the activities and outputs associated with the project were ambitious given the allocated timeframe and budget.

With regard to partnership arrangements and the identification of roles and responsibilities, the regional coordinator from LAC indicated that the project could have benefited if the CCs had been more involved in the conceptualisation and design of the project. These benefits include input into the timing of the project, design of workshop programmes and identification of local case studies and experts. Input from regional CCs would also have enabled UNEP to identify potential capacity and skills challenges in the participating regions that had the potential to impact on the successful implementation of the project. These challenges could have been addressed in the project design.

For example, feedback form the regional coordinators indicated that a number of the trainers involved in the project would have benefited from more capacity building in order to improve their understanding and grasp of technical issues and IEA tools. Workshops aimed at enhancing the capacity of GEO CCs to undertake IEAs represented a key aspect of the project. Having experienced, articulate presenters who are familiar with and understand the techniques and tools is critical to the success of these workshops. It is therefore critical for projects of this nature to ensure that the trainers are well qualified and experienced and also have the communication skills required to facilitating workshops and interact with the delegates.

Overall rating: Satisfactory

3.9   Monitoring and evaluation systems

Monitoring and Evaluation Design

The logical framework document for the project (Annexure F) lists the indicators of success for each of the projects four expected accomplishments (EAs). The evaluation found that the indicators were relevant, quantifiable and adequate.

The progress of the project in terms of these indicators is reflected in four Annual Development Account Progress Reports produced by UNEP in Nairobi. In this regard the Progress Reports provided a detailed review of the performance indicators and activities as per the logical framework for the project document. The periods covered by the four reports are:

- June-December 2006;
- January-December 2007;
- January-December 2008; and,
- January 2006-December 2009 (Final UNDA Terminal Report).

M&E Plan Implementation

The Annual Development Account Progress Reports provide a detailed description of the activities undertaken in each region and the quantitative performance indicators and activities associated with each of the EAs as set out in the logical framework. As indicated above, the indicators reflected in the framework were found to be quantifiable and relevant to the objectives and outcomes of the project. The Progress Reports also provided detailed statistical data on the number of workshops held, including information on the number of participants and gender, the countries that benefited from interventions and the main partners involved in project implementation. Based on the monitoring information presented in the Annual Development Account Progress Reports no specific changes were made to the original project design and or approach to implementation.

Based on feedback from the UNEP project manager, none of the regional offices submitted M&E reports. However, in addition, to the Annual Development Account Progress Reports, UNEP head office also prepared a timetable and work plan for the remaining activities in 2009. A project summary document and an excel spreadsheet document was also prepared by UNEP head office. These documents were linked to the timetable and work plan document and included information on actions taken to date, date of completion and revised completion dates where applicable. The excel spreadsheet linked the EAs and associated activities to each of the four regions and, in so doing, identified the activities that each region still needed to undertake. The work plan, project summary and excel spreadsheet documents were circulated to the regional coordinators and they, in turn, were required to provide feedback on the current status of activities and outputs linked to each of the EAs. This in effect negated the need for the regional coordinators to prepare and submit M&E reports. The M&E component of the project was therefore largely managed by UNEP head office. The findings of the evaluation therefore indicate that despite limited input from

the regional offices, the M&E programme for the project was effectively managed and implemented by head office.

Budgeting and Funding for M&E Activities

In terms of Section 5 of the proposal document (Proposal for United Nations Development Account) the costs associated with Monitoring and Evaluation M&E were included in the budget allocated to the regions. However, feedback from the regional coordinators indicated that they were not informed that costs associated with M&E programme were incorporated into their budgets. In this regard all of the respondents to the questionnaire survey indicated that no provision had been made in the budget for the implementation of a formal M&E programme. As a result it was not possible to ascertain if the amount allocated in the budget to M&E was adequate.

The respondents also indicated that no provision had been made for formal training for M&E related activities. The design and implementation of the M&E programme does not therefore appear to have been adequately addressed in the work plan and the at the start-up meetings.

Overall rating: Satisfactory (M&E design – Satisfactory; M&E plan implementation – Satisfactory; Budgeting and Funding for M&E – Moderately satisfactory)

3.10   Implementation approach

The findings of the desk review indicate that the activities outlined in the project document as reflected in the logical framework and result based work plan have been followed. The key activity upon which the overall success of the project was ultimately dependent, namely the establishment of the SSN of GEO CCs, was accomplished at the outset of the project. Start-up meetings were organized in July 2006 with the respective GEO CCs. The aim of these meetings was to present and clarify the background to the project and its objectives, activities, budget and timeframe. Comments received from the UNEP project manager indicate that the meetings held with GEO CCs represented the key component of the implementation approach for the project. The CCs that participated in the meetings expressed support for the project and the opportunity to interact and disseminate information and improve their IEA skills. The roles of the various CCs and associated activities were clearly identified and discussed at the start-up meetings (with the exception of M&E requirements and the associated budgets) in July 2006. All of the GEO CCs agreed with the timelines and detailed plans.

In terms of timing, there was a 4-5 months delay at the start of the project due to the late release of funds. These delays did have impact on the scheduling of activities and the development of possible synergies with other on-going activities. A delay in filling the senior position in DEWA Asia-Pacific, plus staff changes in DEWA at headquarters in Nairobi also influenced the timing of project implementation. The UNEP project manager initially involved in the project also left the project in the first year and was replaced. As a result of these delays the project timeframe was extended from two to three years. However, despite these challenges the approach to the project and the workplan were not amended and the majority of the activities and outputs were completed and delivered in the revised timetable.

In retrospect a number of the regional coordinators indicated that the overall objectives of the project were ambitious, specifically within the context of the timeframe and project budget. Regional coordinators indicated that the limited funds did impact on the ability of CCs to network more effectively. Some regional coordinators also indicated that it would have been beneficial, in some instances, to hold additional training and capacity building sessions and workshops. However, due to the tight timeframe and budget this was not possible. A number of regional coordinators also indicated that the quality of outputs could have been improved if additional budget had been made available. However, having said this, the majority of key outputs required of the project were delivered within the revised timeframe and within the original budget. The quality of the key outputs was also of a good standard overall. The project therefore achieved significant results within a relatively short timeframe and with a relatively small budget. This success was largely due to the effective project management by UNEP and the design of the project, which recognised the importance of utilising an existing network of established GEO CCs.

Overall rating: Satisfactory

3.11 Financial planning

In terms of budget the project can be regarded as small (US$ 560 000.00). A review of the financial records indicates that the budget was allocated as per the items and activities listed in the ToR for the project. There is no evidence of any variations in the allocations as set out in the original project budget. There were initial delays in the release of the first trance of the budget to the CCs. Feedback from the regional coordinators indicated that there was a 4-5 months delay at the beginning due to the late arrival of funding. However, all activities were organized, completed and delivered in the revised timetable.

The feedback from the UNEP Financial Management Officer indicated that all of the required UNEP internal financial controls were implemented and met. These controls include annual audits of projects and the allocation of funds as per the approved project budget. Based on the comments from the FMO it is assumed that the financial planning for the project was satisfactory. In addition, with the exception of the initial delay in the release of funds, none of the regional co-ordinators identified any problems with the financial planning of the project. Annexure E contains a summary of the expenditure breakdown.

Additional funding was obtained from the Norwegian and Belgian Governments to customise the IEA Training Manual and develop the Climate Change Modules respectively. A total of US$ 10 975 was made available to develop the Climate Change Modules, while US$ 11 000 was allocated to the IEA Training Manual for the Latin America and the Caribbean Region. Funding (US$ 8 000) was also sourced from the UNEP Environment Fund for the Advisory Missions in the Asia and the Pacific Region.

Overall rating: Satisfactory

3.12 UNEP supervision and backstopping

Despite the initial delay in the release of funding the feedback from the regional coordinators indicated that adequate supervision and support was provided by UNEP throughout the project. However, the evaluation did not find any evidence of a

supervision plan or documentation detailing how supervision was undertaken or achieved.

It would therefore appear that supervision took place at a more informal level. In this regard the regional coordinators indicated that they were in direct contact with UNEP throughout the project. In addition the various regional workshops and UNEP events associated with the project provided an opportunity to discuss the project and the associated activities and outputs. However, some coordinators indicated that feedback from UNEP headquarters in Nairobi was not always efficient due to staff constraints and other work commitments. The regional coordinators did not however indicate how or to what extent these delays affected the project.

Regional coordinators also raised concerns regarding the limited human resources, specifically at regional level. This impacted on project management and implementation. However, the project was completed within the revised timeframe and the original budget. In addition the majority of key activities were undertaken and the overall quality of the key outputs was of a high standard.

Overall rating: Satisfactory

3.13 Complementarity with UNEP Medium Term Strategy and Programme of Work

The UNEP *Mid Term Strategy (2010 – 2013)* consists of six themes (UNEP, 2008). Of these themes Climate Change, Disaster and Conflicts, Ecosystem Management, and Environmental Governance are regarded as the most significant themes in terms of complementarity with the project. The relevance of the project terms of each of these four themes is briefly discussed below.

Climate change
The UNEP objective is to strengthen the ability of countries to integrate climate change responses into national development processes. The key UNEP Expected Accomplishment that the project supports is that country policymakers and negotiators, civil society and the private sector have access to relevant climate change science and information for decision-making.

Disasters and conflicts
The UNEP objective is to minimize environmental threats to human well-being arising from the environmental causes and consequences of conflicts and disasters. The UNEP Expected Accomplishments, which the project supports, include that States' environmental management contributes to disaster risk reduction and conflict prevention.

Ecosystem management
The UNEP objective is that countries utilize the ecosystem approach to enhance human well-being. The UNEP Expected Accomplishments, which the project supports, include that countries and regions increasingly integrate an ecosystem management approach into development and planning processes and countries and regions have capacity to utilize ecosystem management tools.

Environmental governance:
The UNEP objective is that environmental governance at country, regional and global levels are strengthened to address agreed environmental priorities. The UNEP

Expected Accomplishment that the project supports includes that national and international stakeholders have access to sound science and policy advice for decision-making.

The support of the project for each of the four themes is provided via the project's commitment to improving interaction between and capacity of GEO CCs in developing countries and their access to IEA reporting tools and methodologies.

4   CONCLUSIONS AND RATING

This terminal evaluation covers the three-year implementation period for the South South Network of GEO Collaborating Centres for Integrated Environmental Assessment and Reporting to Support Policy Formulation and Informed Decision-making at National, Regional and Global Levels (ROA 1566). The project ended in December 2009 and an internal survey was conducted by UNEP in February 2010. Due to the relatively short timeframe between the completion of the project and the evaluation it has not been possible to determine whether the project impacts have been achieved. The focus of the evaluation has therefore been on the project outcomes and the potential for the establishment of intermediate states. The assessment of the eleven evaluation categories are summarised below. Table 3 contains a summary of the overall evaluation ratings for the project.

The objective of the terminal evaluation was to examine the extent and magnitude of any project impacts to date and determine the likelihood of future impacts. The evaluation also assesses the project performance and the implementation of planned project activities and planned outputs against actual results. The evaluation therefore focused on five key questions:

- Did the project improve environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels?
- Did the project make available and accessible relevant integrated environmental assessment information, data, tools, methodologies and approaches?
- To what extent did the project establish a mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking?
- To what extent did the project enhance the use of ICT?
- To what extent did the project enhance capacities of GEO South-South Network Collaborating Centres to undertake Integrated Environmental Assessments (IEAs)?

With regards to these key questions the findings of the assessment indicate that the project was successful in terms of making relevant integrated environmental assessment information, tools and methodologies available and accessible. The project was also successful in establishing a mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking. To a large extent this mechanism was already in place in the format of the existing network of SS GEO CCs. The project did however strengthen this network and in so doing also enhanced the capacities of the CCs to undertake IEAs.

In terms of enhancing the use of ICT, this is one aspect of the project that did not generate the expected outcomes. The reasons listed by regional coordinators included lack of capacity and high costs associated with accessing the internet. The failure of the project to enhance the use of ICT did not however impact on the projects potential to be sustainable and or be replicated.

With regard to the improvement of environmental decision and policy-making at regional and sub-regional levels, the project enhanced the capacity of SS GEO CCs to undertake IEAs and provided access to a range of relevant integrated environmental methods and tools. However, policy and decision-making is the

domain of governments and government departments, not CCs. In this regard the findings of the evaluation indicate that the project did not appear to have any explicit activities linked to assessing and understanding government decision and policy-making process, specifically with regard to the conditions in each of the four regions involved in the project. Also given the relatively short timeframe of the project, namely 3 years, it is not possible to comment with any degree of confidence as to whether or not the project has resulted in an improvement in environmental decision and policy-making at regional and sub-regional level in the respective regions.

However, the project has created an environment and a set of conditions that are conducive to improved environmental decision and policy-making. **The project is therefore awarded an overall rating of Satisfactory.**

Table 3: Summary of project ratings

Criterion	Sub-criteria	Evaluators Summary Comments	Rating	
A. Attainment of project objectives and results (via ROtI)	A.1. Effectiveness-overall likelihood of impact achievement	The project has laid the foundation for supporting and improving policy formulation and decision-making at a national and regional level.	S	**S**
	A.2. Relevance	The project is relevant to the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building and UNEPs Medium-term Strategy 2010–2013. The project also supports MDG 7.	HS	
	A.3.Efficiency	The project represented an effective and efficient utilisation of funds.	S	
B. Sustainability of project outcomes	B.1. Financial	No provision has been made to secure future funding. However, while this represents a barrier it does not pose a significant risk to sustainability.	ML	**ML**
	B.2. Socio-Political	The socio-political risks are localised and do not pose a threat to the overall sustainability of the project.	ML	
	B.3. Institutional Framework & Governance	The institutional framework and governance risks are localised and do not pose a threat to the overall sustainability of the project.	ML	
	B.4. Environmental	Not Applicable	N/A	
C. Catalytic role		The project builds on an established network of SS GEO CCs and uses existing methods and tools. The replication potential of the project is therefore good. The project also lends itself to future funding.		**S**
D. Stakeholder involvement		Stakeholder involvement largely confined to existing GEO CCs. In this regard limited raising of public awareness as a key focus.		**S**
E. Country ownership / driveness		Project driven GEO CCs in the four regions as opposed to individual countries.		**S**
F. Achievement of outputs and activities		The majority of key activities and outputs associated with the project were undertaken and produced respectively. However, not all activities were undertaken.		**S**
G. Preparation and readiness		The partnership arrangements were identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project implementation. The project also built on existing methodologies and assessment tools and approaches to capacity building and training.		**S**
H. Monitoring and Evaluation	E.1. M&E Design	Logical framework and workplan used as a reference for M&E programme.	S	**S**
	E.2. M&E Plan implementation	GEO CCs did not produce M&E plans during the project. Despite this, the M&E programme for the project was effectively managed and implemented by head office.	S	

	E.3.Budgeting and funding for M&E	M&E budget included in total budget but not as a separate line item. As a result GEO CCs indicated that they were not aware that funding had been provided. In addition, no funding provided for M&E training.	MS	
I. Implementation approach		The roles of the various CCs and associated activities were clearly identified and discussed during the start-up meeting in July 2006. All of the GEO CCs agreed with the timelines and detailed plans.		**S**
J. Financial Planning		Initial delay in release of funds, but remainder of project well managed.		**S**
K. UNEP Supervision and backstopping		Following initial delays, good feedback and support provided by UNEP throughout the project.		**S**

Table 4: Table Rating Keys for Table 3

Rating	Project objectives and results (A)	Project M&E (J)
Highly Satisfactory HS)	*No shortcomings* in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency	No shortcomings in the project M&E systems
Satisfactory (S)	*Minor shortcomings* in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency	Minor shortcomings in the project M&E systems
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	*Moderate shortcomings* in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency	Moderate shortcomings in the project M&E systems
Moderately Unsatisfactory MU)	*Significant shortcomings* in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency	Significant shortcomings in the project M&E systems
Unsatisfactory (U)	*Major shortcomings* in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency	Major shortcomings in the project M&E systems
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	*Severe shortcomings* in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency	Severe shortcomings in the project M&E systems

Rating	Sustainability
Likely (L)	No risks affecting this dimension of sustainability
Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability
Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Significant risks that affect this dimension of sustainability
Unlikely (UL)	Severe risks that affect this dimension of sustainability

5   LESSONS LEARNT

The lessons learnt from the evaluation are summarised below.

1. Use of existing structures, networks and information
The fact that the project managed to achieve most of its activities and outputs within a relatively short period is to a large extent directly linked to the use of existing structures, networks and information. Had this not been done, it can be doubted whether the project would have achieved what it did within the limited time and budget. For example, the use of existing GEO Collaborating Centres enhanced and supported the implementation and management of the project, which in turn contributed to its overall success. The implementation of projects that involve capacity building and awareness raising can, therefore, be enhanced through the use of existing structures, networks and information without wasting resources on 'reinventing the wheel'.

2. Design of training courses
A number of the trainers involved in the project would have benefited from more capacity building in order to improve their understanding and grasp of technical issues and IEA tools. If the GEO Collaborating Centres had been more involved in the conceptualisation and design of the project it would have been possible for UNEP, in consultation with the CCs, to identify potential capacity and skill challenges facing the successful implementation of the project. Design of training courses must take into account capacity of the participants to understand the concepts and principles that are being presented. Course presenters should familiarise themselves with the participants and their needs prior to the course and design the course accordingly.

3. Promoting face-to-face training
While the majority of representatives from the various South-South GEO Collaborating Centres are likely to be computer literate, there still appears to be a reluctance to use web and internet based learning and communication systems. The lesson from this is that value of face-to-face training should not be underestimated. Training workshops provide an opportunity for delegates from different countries and regions to interact on a personal level and share experiences. Web-based training approaches do not provide this opportunity.

4. Improving environmental decision and policy making

Training and capacity building together with the provision of relevant data do not necessarily guarantee improved decision and policy-making. In order to positively impact on environmental decision and policy making there is a need to understand policy and decision making processes, specifically the institutional structures, key role players, timing (at what stage in the policy making process should information be introduced) and capacity (capacity to understand technical information). Without this information and an understanding of the process one cannot assume that good information will result in improved decision making. In addition, improved decision-making requires politicians and high-ranking government officials (directors and managers) to be aware of the key environmental issues and challenges. However, the majority of politicians and high-ranking government officials do not have the time to attend 5-day training workshops. Therefore, there is a need to consider developing a shorter, more concise course aimed specifically at politicians and high-ranking government officials.

5. Improving future project evaluations

The lack of face-to-face interviews with key stakeholders involved in the project restricted the ability of the Evaluator to gain a detailed personal insight into the project and its activities. However, it would be essential for the evaluator to interact face-to-face with the people involved in the project on a day-to-day basis to ensure an informed evaluation of the eleven evaluation parameters. Sufficient funding should be allocated for evaluations and provisions should be made in the most cost effective way to enable face-to-face interviews with key people involved.

6   RECOMMENDATIONS

Given that project activities have been completed there are no project specific recommendations. However, as indicated above, the project involved an established and recognised network of SS GEO CCs. UNEP should take the necessary steps to ensure continued interaction and strengthening of the SS GEO CCs. In addition, UNEP, in collaboration with the SS GEO CCs, should ensure that the methodologies, approaches and guidelines utilised and developed during the project are reviewed and up-dated on a regular basis.

ANNEXURE A

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terminal Evaluation Of The South-South Network Of GEO Collaborating Centres For Integrated Environmental Assessment And Reporting To Support Policy Formulation And Informed Decision-Making Processes At National, Regional And Global Levels DA/9999-06-02 (1566)

1. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Project rationale

The South-South Network of GEO Collaborating Centres for integrated environmental assessment and reporting established by this project is meant to support policy formulation and informed decision-making processes at national, regional and global levels through innovative use of information and communication technology for networking and knowledge access and management. The project is a milestone in the efforts to address the lack of adequate information, knowledge and skills for carrying out quality integrated environmental impact assessments in many developing countries and countries in transition. The project uses the Global Environment Outlook Process (GEO) approach.

GEO is a consultative, participatory capacity building process for reporting on the state and trends of the environment and future outlooks. GEO draws upon the expertise of a broad range of individual and institutional expertise to support its main objective of providing access to the best scientific knowledge for international environmental governance and in support of internationally agreed environment goals. A worldwide network of Collaborating Centres with regional or national mandates or with specialized thematic expertise forms a strong assessment partnership at the core of the process. This project was conceptualized, planned and implemented within the GEO operational framework.

The overall project objective was:

To improve environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels

The specific objectives of the project were:
- *To make relevant integrated environmental assessment information, data, tools, methodologies and approaches available and accessible*
- *Establish a mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking*
- *Enhanced use of ICTs for information and knowledge management and networking*
- *Enhanced capacities of GEO Collaborating Centres to undertake Integrated Environmental Assessments (IEAs)*

Relevance to UNEP Programmes

The project was implemented in the context of the UNEP-wide Bali Plan and was also expected to contribute to MDG 7 and will be guided by the World Summit held in New York in September 2005 through networking, facilitating access to tools, methodologies and approaches that contribute to achieving the goal of sustainable development through international cooperation for environmental protection, one of the three pillars of sustainable development. By increasing the capacities of governments and their partners to improve environmental policy formulation and informed decision-making processes, the project will contribute towards assisting countries in achieving MDG 7, Target 9.

The project was within the scope and priorities of the strategic framework for the period 2006-07, under Programme 11 (Environment), Sub-programme 1 (Environmental assessment and early warning). It fully complied with strategy element 11.15(a) "To support environmental governance for sustainable development by strengthening cooperation with and building the capacity of national, sub-regional, regional and international institutions for assessment, monitoring, data management and reporting", and complements relevant activities under Sub-programme 2 (Policy development and law), Sub-programme 3 (Policy implementation) and Sub-programme 5 (Regional cooperation and representation).

The project supported the role of the Commission on Sustainable Development because it:
- Promoted dialogue and built partnerships for sustainable development between the scientific community, NGOs and governments
- Contributed to progress at the international, regional and national levels in the implementation of recommendations and commitments contained in the final documents of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), namely: Agenda 21; and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.
- As the GEO process is the only comprehensive global UN environmental assessment process, the tools and methodologies developed and shared within this project covered most of themes of the CSD sessions and the key topics of sustainable development.

Executing Arrangements

The implementing agency for this project was UNEP through the Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA). The national and executing agencies were the participating GEO Collaborating Centres from the four participating regions, including Africa; Asia Pacific; Latin America and the Caribbean and; West Asia. The lead regional/national agencies that executed the project activities were drawn from the four focal geographic regions as follows:

Africa:
- Association Internationale pour le Development de l'Information Environnementale (ADIE), Gabon
- Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), Egypt
- Southern African Research and Documentation Centre - Musokotwane Environment Resource Centre for Southern Africa (SARDC- IMERCSA), Zimbabwe

- Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), Mauritius
- National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Uganda
- Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa (NESDA), Côte d'Ivoire

Asia and the Pacific:
- Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Thailand
- Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS), Bangladesh
- State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA), China
- Scientific Information Center of Interstate Sustainable Development Commission (SIC), Turkmenistan
- South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Samoa
- Thailand Environment Institute (TEI), Thailand
- The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), India

Latin America and the Caribbean:
- Brazilian Institute of the Environment and Natural Renewable Resources (IBAMA), Brazil
- Latin American Center for Social Ecology (CLAES), Uruguay
- University of Chile, Chile
- University of Costa Rica, Costa Rica
- University of Pacific, Peru
- University of the West Indies Centre for Environment and Development (UWICED), Jamaica and Trinidad

West Asia:
- Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Drylands (ACSAD), Syria
- Arabian Gulf University (AGU), Bahrain

Project Activities

The main project activities were:

Component 1: Mechanism established to facilitate professional interaction among GEO CCs and those involved in IEA at inter and intra regional levels in the Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and West Asia regions.

1. Establish a South-South interregional network of GEO Collaborating Centres (GEO-SSN): (All selected regions)
2. Carry out consultations to develop an institutional framework and implementation plan acceptable to all partners. (All selected regions)
3. Convene an inter-regional start-up meeting of GEO SSN with the eligible CCs (and candidate organizations as appropriate) on the framework, design, working arrangements and modalities, strategy and action plan for inter and intra-regional collaboration. (All selected regions)
4. Convene 2 virtual meetings for users to review the GEO South-South Network
5. Convene a meeting to share and evaluate the impacts of the GEO South-South Network

Component 2: Improved Access to IEA Reporting Tools and Methodologies

1. Develop guidelines to carry out thematic-based assessments and eco-region and watershed assessments based on the GEO IEA methodology. (LAC Region)
2. Research and electronically document Best Practices in IEA and Reporting in developing regions. (All selected regions)
3. Translate the above documented Best Practices in IEA and Reporting in developing regions into Spanish, French and Arabic
4. Electronically publish the policy analysis guidelines and handbook developed by Africa region with support from UNDP (Africa region)
5. Develop an interactive web-based training version of the integrated environmental assessment and reporting manual for Africa and translate into French and Arabic (Africa Region)
6. Develop an interactive web-based training version of the global integrated environmental assessment and reporting manual and customize with relevant regional examples and case studies and translate into Arabic, French, Spanish, Chinese and Russian (All regions)
7. Develop a web version of the GEO Cities IEA methodology resource book and translate into French and Arabic (Africa Region)
8. Customise the GEO Cities methodology resource book for the Asia Pacific and the West Asia regions and translate into French and Russian (Asia and the Pacific Region) and Arabic (West Asia)
9. Develop an electronic resource book on best practices in IEA and reporting based on the GEO approach and best practices in developing regions. (All regions)

Component 3: Enhanced capacity of GEO CCs in developing countries to undertake IEA and reporting at regional and sub-regional level through capacity building workshops

1. Hold a regional workshop with cities that have regular SOE reporting requirements (8 cities) in Asia and the Pacific (Asia and the Pacific Region)
2. Hold workshops on thematic-based assessment (Latin America and the Caribbean Region)
3. Hold workshops based on eco-region and watershed based Assessment (Latin America and the Caribbean)
4. Hold 4 regional training workshops on linking integrated environmental assessment findings to policy processes using the GEO Global IEA and Reporting training modules on *Impact Strategy* and other relevant material. (All Regions)
5. Facilitate on-line capacity building of practitioners on all regions on GEO Integrated Environmental Assessment and Reporting Methodologies.

Component 4: Improved ICT based networking, knowledge management and information access

1. Establish a database of IEA practitioners and leading scientists (All Regions)
2. Establish a GEO CCs Community of Practice or networking, exchange and knowledge management to identify, review, document good and innovative practices in environmental assessment and reporting. [5] (All regions)

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[5] These are communities of people who share the same cause, situation, or vocation. These communities facilitate professional exchange, allow members to establish a bond of common experiences and challenges, and build networks of relationships which are leveraged at offline events and meetings.

3. Establish necessary internet- based communication and information facilities and tools based on the technologies available in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and West Asia

Budget

At project inception the following budget prepared:

UN Development Account-US$ 560,000= 100%
Total cost of Project-US$ 560,000

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION

1. Objective and Scope of the Evaluation
The objective of this terminal evaluation is to examine the extent and magnitude of any project impacts to date and determine the likelihood of future impacts. The evaluation will also assess project performance and the implementation of planned project activities and planned outputs against actual results.

The evaluation will focus on the following main questions:

- Did the project improve environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels?
- Did the project make available and accessible relevant integrated environmental assessment information, data, tools, methodologies and approaches?
- To what extent did the project establish a mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking?
- To what extent did the project enhance the use of ICT?
- To what extent did the project enhance capacities of GEO South-South Network Collaborating Centres to undertake Integrated Environmental Assessments (IEAs)?

2. Methods
This terminal evaluation of the South-South Network of GEO Collaborating Centres for integrated environmental assessment and reporting to support policy formulation and informed decision-making processes at national and regional level will be conducted as an in-depth evaluation using a participatory mixed-methods approach, during which the UNEP Project Manager, key representatives of the executing agencies and other relevant staff are kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation. The consultant will liaise with the UNEP Project Task Manager on any logistic and/or methodological issues to properly conduct the review in as independent a way as possible, given the circumstances and resources offered. The draft report will be circulated to UNEP Project Manager, and key representatives of the executing agencies. Any comments or responses to the draft report will be sent to UNEP Evaluation Office for collation and the consultant will be advised of any necessary or suggested revisions.

When these communities have been successfully combined into a thriving 'Internet Eco System', it will be able to provide a solution that enables a people-centric networked organization. This will not only create a more efficient, effective and productive environment, in which people can come together to share their knowledge, but it will also break through any institutional, geographical and social boundaries that might otherwise stand in the way. Bringing together the collective ideas, energy and vision of so many people, all with the same aspirations, will undoubtedly help to increase awareness for such a globally important cause, and in doing so, will lead to long term solutions for those environmental issues that need to be addressed.

The findings of the evaluation will be based on multiple approaches:

1. A desk review of project documents including, but not limited to:
    (a) The project documents, outputs, monitoring reports (such as progress and financial reports to UNEP and relevant correspondence).
    (b) Other project-related material produced by the project staff or partners.
    (c) Relevant material published on the project web-site.

2. Interviews with project management and technical support staff.

3. Face-to-face and telephone interviews with intended users for the project outputs and other stakeholders involved with this project, including in the participating countries and international bodies. The Consultant shall determine whether to seek additional information and opinions from representatives of donor agencies and other organisations. As appropriate, these interviews could be combined with an email questionnaire, online survey, or other electronic communication.

4. Interviews with the UNEP Project Manager and Fund Management Officer, and other relevant staff in UNEP dealing with GEO-related activities as necessary. The Consultant shall also gain broader perspectives from discussions with other relevant UNEP staff.

5. Field visits to project staff and target audiences. The evaluator will make field visits to selected project executing agencies in the focal regions and to key project personnel and collaborators in Africa, Asia Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and West Asia.

Key Evaluation principles
In attempting to evaluate any outcomes and impacts that the project may have achieved, evaluators should remember that the project's performance should be assessed by considering the difference between the answers to two simple questions *"what happened?"* and *"what would have happened anyway?"*. These questions imply that there should be consideration of the baseline conditions and trends in relation to the intended project outcomes and impacts. In addition it implies that there should be plausible evidence to **attribute** such outcomes and impacts **to the actions of the project**.

Sometimes, adequate information on baseline conditions and trends is lacking. In such cases this should be clearly highlighted by the evaluator, along with any simplifying assumptions that were taken to enable the evaluator to make informed judgements about project performance.

3. Project Evaluation Parameters and Ratings
The success of project implementation will be rated on a scale from 'highly unsatisfactory' to 'highly satisfactory'. In particular the evaluation shall **assess and rate** the project with respect to the eleven categories defined below[6].

It should be noted that many of the evaluation parameters are interrelated. For example, the 'achievement of objectives and planned results' is closely linked to the issue of 'sustainability'. Sustainability is understood as the probability of continued long-term project-derived outcomes and impacts and is, in turn, linked to the issues

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[6] However, the views and comments expressed by the evaluator need not be restricted to these items.

of 'catalytic effects / replication' and, often, 'country ownership' and 'stakeholder participation'.

A. Attainment of objectives and planned results:
The evaluation should assess the extent to which the project's major relevant objectives were effectively and efficiently achieved or are expected to be achieved and their relevance. Any project contributions to the achievement of UNEP Expected Accomplishments[7] should be clearly highlighted.

- *Effectiveness:* Evaluate the overall likelihood of impact achievement, taking into account the "achievement indicators", the achievement of outcomes and the progress made towards impacts. UNEP's Evaluation Office advocates the use of the **Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI)** method (described in Annex 7) to establish this rating. The analysis should specify whether the project has plausible causal pathways that link project activities to the achievement of Expected Accomplishments. It should also specify whether the intervention is likely to have any lasting differential impacts in relation to gender.

  - *Relevance*: In retrospect, were the project's outcomes consistent with those of the programme frameworks and thematic sub programmes? Ascertain the nature and significance of the contribution of the project outcomes to other UNEP thematic sub programmes. To what extent does the project intervention link to the achievement of the MDGs (in particular Goal 7)?

  - *Efficiency*: Was the project cost effective? Was the project the least cost option? Was the project implementation delayed and if it was, then did that affect cost-effectiveness? Assess the contribution of cash and in-kind co-financing, and any additional resources leveraged by the project, to the project's achievements. Did the project build on earlier initiatives; did it make effective use of available scientific and / or technical information? Wherever possible, the evaluator should also compare the cost-time vs. outcomes relationship of the project with that of other similar projects.

B. Sustainability:
Sustainability is understood as the probability of continued long-term project-derived outcomes and impacts after the project funding ends. The evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to contribute or undermine the persistence of benefits after the project ends. Some of these factors might be outcomes of the project, e.g. stronger institutional capacities or better informed decision-making. Other factors will include contextual circumstances or developments that are not outcomes of the project but that are relevant to the sustainability of outcomes. The evaluation should ascertain to what extent follow-up work has been initiated and how project outcomes will be sustained and enhanced over time. **Application of the ROtI method** described in Annex 7 will also assist in the evaluation of sustainability.

Five aspects of sustainability should be addressed: financial, socio-political, institutional frameworks and governance, environmental (if applicable). The following questions provide guidance on the assessment of these aspects:
- *Financial resources.* Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes and onward progress towards impact? What is the likelihood

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[7] UNEP Expected accomplishments are specified in the 2010- 2011 Programme of Work and the 2010-2013 Medium Term Strategy. http://www.unep.org/PDF/FinalMTSGCSS-X-8.pdf

that financial and economic resources will not be available once the project funding ends (resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and trends that may indicate that it is likely that in future there will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)? To what extent are the outcomes and eventual impact of the project dependent on continued financial support?

- *Socio-political:* Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes and onward progress towards impacts? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project?

- *Institutional framework and governance.* To what extent is the sustenance of the outcomes and onward progress towards impacts dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance? What is the likelihood that institutional and technical achievements, legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes will allow for, the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? While responding to these questions consider if the required systems for accountability and transparency and the required technical know-how are in place.

- *Environmental.* Are there any environmental risks that can undermine the future flow of project environmental benefits? The TE should assess whether certain activities in the project area will pose a threat to the sustainability of the project outcomes. For example; construction of dam in a protected area could inundate a sizable area and thereby neutralize the biodiversity-related gains made by the project; or, a newly established pulp mill might jeopardise the viability of nearby protected forest areas by increasing logging pressures; or a vector control intervention may be made less effective by changes in climate and consequent alterations to the incidence and distribution of malarial mosquitoes. Would these risks apply in other contexts where the project may be replicated?

C. Catalytic Role and Replication

The catalytic role of UNEP is embodied in its approach of supporting the creation an enabling environment, investing in activities which are innovative and show how new approaches and market changes can work, and supporting activities that can help upscale new approaches to a national (or regional) level to sustainably achieve global environmental benefits. In general this catalytic approach can be separated into are three broad categories of activities: (1) "**foundational**" and enabling activities, focusing on policy, regulatory frameworks, and national priority setting and relevant capacity (2) **demonstration** activities, which focus on demonstration, capacity development, innovation, and market barrier removal; and (3) **investment** activities (rarely if ever undertaken exclusively by UNEP) with high rates of cofunding, catalyzing investments or implementing a new strategic approach at the national level.

> The three categories approach combines all the elements that have been shown to catalyze results in international cooperation. Evaluations in the bilateral and multilateral aid community have shown time and again that activities at the micro level of skills transfer—piloting new technologies and demonstrating new approaches—will fail if these activities are not supported at the institutional or market level as well. Evaluations have also consistently shown that institutional capacity development or market interventions on a larger scale will fail if governmental laws, regulatory frameworks, and policies are not in place to support and sustain these improvements. And they show that demonstration, innovation and market barrier removal do not work if there is no follow up through investment or scaling up of financial means. (From GEF OPS4)

In this context the evaluation should assess the catalytic role played by this project by consideration of the following questions:

− INCENTIVES: To what extent have the project activities provided incentives (socio-economic / market based) to contribute to catalyzing changes in stakeholder behaviours?
− INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE: To what extent have the project activities contributed to changing institutional behaviors?
− POLICY CHANGE: To what extent have project activities contributed to policy changes (and implementation of policy)?
− CATALYTIC FINANCING: To what extent did the project contribute to sustained follow-on financing from Government and / or other donors? (this is different from co-financing)
− PROJECT CHAMPIONS: To what extent have changes (listed above) been catalyzed by particular individuals or institutions (without which the project would not have achieved results)?
(Note: the ROtI analysis should contribute useful information to address these questions)

Replication approach, in the context of UNEP projects, is defined as lessons and experiences coming out of the project that are replicated or scaled up in the design and implementation of other projects. Replication can have two aspects, replication proper (lessons and experiences are replicated in different geographic area) or scaling up (lessons and experiences are replicated within the same geographic area but funded by other sources).

Is the project suitable for replication? If so, has the project approach been replicated? If no effects are identified, the evaluation will describe the strategy / approach adopted by the projected to promote replication effects.

D. Stakeholder participation / public awareness:
This consists of three related and often overlapping processes: information dissemination, consultation, and "stakeholder" participation. Stakeholders are the individuals, groups, institutions, or other bodies that have an interest or stake in the outcome of the UNEP project. The term also applies to those potentially adversely affected by a project. The evaluation will specifically:

• Assess the mechanisms put in place by the project for identification and engagement of stakeholders in each participating country and establish, in consultation with the stakeholders, whether this mechanism was successful, and identify its strengths and weaknesses.
• Assess the degree and effectiveness of collaboration/interactions between the various project partners and institutions during the course of implementation of the project.
• Assess the degree and effectiveness of any various public awareness activities that were undertaken during the course of implementation of the project.
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E. Country ownership / driven-ness:
This is the relevance of the project to national development and environmental agendas, recipient country commitment, and regional and international agreements. The evaluation will:

• Assess the level of country ownership. Specifically, the evaluator should assess whether the project was effective in providing and communicating information on South-South Networking and collaboration for integrated environmental

Assessments and reporting to support policy formulation and informed decision making processes at national and regional levels in the selected regions.
- Assess the level of country commitment to the generation and use of ICTS to influence policy formulation and informed decision making

F. Achievement of outputs and activities:
- Delivered outputs: Assessment of the project's success in producing each of the programmed outputs, both in quantity and quality as well as usefulness and timeliness.
- Assess the soundness and effectiveness of the methodologies used for developing the technical documents and related management options in the participating countries
- Assess the extent to which the project outputs have the credibility, necessary to influence policy and decision-makers at the national and regional levels.

G. Preparation and Readiness
Were the project's objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its timeframe? Were the capacities of executing institution and counterparts properly considered when the project was designed? Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated in the project design? Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project implementation? Were counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities), enabling legislation, and adequate project management arrangements in place?

H. Assessment monitoring and evaluation systems.
The evaluation shall include an assessment of the quality, application and effectiveness of project monitoring and evaluation plans and tools, including an assessment of risk management based on the assumptions and risks identified in the project document. The Terminal Evaluation will assess whether the project met the minimum requirements for 'project design of M&E' and 'the application of the Project M&E plan' (see minimum requirements 1&2 in Annex 4). UNEP projects must budget adequately for execution of the M&E plan, and provide adequate resources during implementation of the M&E plan. Project managers are also expected to use the information generated by the M&E system during project implementation to adapt and improve the project.

I. Implementation approach:
This includes an analysis of the project's management framework, adaptation to changing conditions (adaptive management), partnerships in implementation arrangements, changes in project design, and overall project management. The evaluation will:
- Ascertain to what extent the project implementation mechanisms outlined in the project document have been closely followed. In particular, assess the role of the various committees established and whether the project document was clear and realistic to enable effective and efficient implementation, whether the project was executed according to the plan and how well the management was able to adapt to changes during the life of the project to enable the implementation of the project.
- Assess the extent to which the project responded the mid term review / evaluation (if any).

- Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency and adaptability of project management and the supervision of project activities / project execution arrangements at all levels (1) policy decisions: Steering Group; (2) day to day project management in each of the country executing agencies.
- Identify administrative, operational and/or technical problems and constraints that influenced the effective implementation of the project.

M&E during project implementation

- *M&E design.* Projects should have sound M&E plans to monitor results and track progress towards achieving project objectives. An M&E plan should include a baseline (including data, methodology, etc.), SMART indicators (see Annex 4) and data analysis systems, and evaluation studies at specific times to assess results. The time frame for various M&E activities and standards for outputs should have been specified.

  The evaluator should use the following questions to help assess the M&E design aspects:

  SMART-ness of Indicators

  – Are there specific indicators in the log frame for each of the project objectives and outcomes?
  – Are the indicators relevant to the objectives and outcomes?
  – Are the indicators for the objectives and outcomes sufficient?
  – Are the indicators quantifiable?

  Adequacy of Baseline Information

  – Is there baseline information?
  – Has the methodology for the baseline data collection been explained?
  – Is desired level of achievement for indicators based on a reasoned estimate of baseline?

  Arrangements for Monitoring of Implementation

  – Has a budget been allocated for M&E activities?
  – Have the responsibility centers for M&E activities been clearly defined?
  – Has the time frame for M&E activities been specified?

  Arrangements for Evaluation

  – Have specific targets been specified for project outputs?
  – Has the desired level of achievement been specified for all Indicators of Objectives and Outcomes?

- *M&E plan implementation.* A Terminal Evaluation should verify that:
  – an M&E system was in place and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period (perhaps through use of a logframe or similar);
  – annual project reports and Progress Implementation Review (PIR) reports were complete, accurate and with well justified ratings;
  – that the information provided by the M&E system was used during the project to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs;
  – and that projects had an M&E system in place with proper training for parties responsible for M&E activities.
- *Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities.* The terminal evaluation should determine whether support for M&E was budgeted adequately and was funded in a timely fashion during implementation.

J. Financial Planning

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

- Assess the strength and utility of financial controls, including reporting, and planning to allow the project management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for a proper and timely flow of funds for the payment of satisfactory project deliverables.
- Present the major findings from the financial audit if one has been conducted.
- Identify and verify the sources of co- financing as well as leveraged and associated financing (in co-operation with the IA and EA).
- Assess whether the project has applied appropriate standards of due diligence in the management of funds and financial audits.
- The evaluation should also include a breakdown of final actual costs and co-financing for the project prepared in consultation with the relevant UNEP Fund Management Officer of the project (table attached in Annex 1 Co-financing and leveraged resources).

K. UNEP Supervision and Backstopping

The purpose of supervision is to work with the executing agency in identifying and dealing with problems which arise during implementation of the project itself. Such problems may be related to project management but may also involve technical/substantive issues in which UNEP has a major contribution to make. The evaluator should assess the effectiveness of supervision and administrative and financial support provided by UNEP including:

(i)   the adequacy of project supervision plans, inputs and processes;
(ii)   the emphasis given to outcome monitoring (results-based project management);
(iii)   the realism / candor of project reporting and rating (i.e. are PIR ratings an accurate reflection of the project realities and risks);
(iv)   the quality of documentation of project supervision activities; and
(v)   financial, administrative and other fiduciary aspects of project implementation supervision.

In summary, accountability and implementation support through technical assistance and problem solving are the main elements of project supervision (Annex 6).

L. Complementarity with UNEP Medium Term Strategy and Programme of Work

Linkage to UNEP's Expected Accomplishments. The UNEP Medium Term Strategy specifies desired results in six thematic focal areas. The desired results are termed Expected Accomplishments. Using the completed ROtI analysis, the evaluation should comment on whether the project makes a tangible contribution to any of the Expected Accomplishments specified in the UNEP MTS. The magnitude and extent any contributions and the causal linkages should be fully described.

Project contributions that are in-line with the Bali Strategic Plan (BSP).[8] The outcomes and achievements of the project should be briefly discussed in relation to the objectives of the UNEP BSP.

South-South Cooperation is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology, and knowledge between developing countries. Briefly describe any aspects of the project that could be considered as examples of South-South Cooperation.

The *ratings for the parameters A - K will be presented in the form of a table*. Each of the eleven categories should be rated separately with **brief justifications** based on the findings of the main analysis. An overall rating for the project should also be given. The following rating system is to be applied:

HS   = Highly Satisfactory
S   = Satisfactory
MS   = Moderately Satisfactory
MU   = Moderately Unsatisfactory
U   = Unsatisfactory
HU   = Highly Unsatisfactory

4. Evaluation Report Format and Review Procedures

The report should be brief, to the point and easy to understand. It must explain; the purpose of the evaluation, exactly what was evaluated and the methods used. The report must highlight any methodological limitations, identify key concerns and present evidence-based findings, consequent conclusions, recommendations and lessons. The report should be presented in a way that makes the information accessible and comprehensible and include an executive summary that encapsulates the essence of the information contained in the report to facilitate dissemination and distillation of lessons.

The evaluation will rate the overall implementation success of the project and provide individual ratings of the eleven implementation aspects as described in Section 1 of this TOR. *The ratings will be presented in the format of a table* with brief justifications based on the findings of the main analysis.

Evidence, findings, conclusions and recommendations should be presented in a complete and balanced manner. Any dissident views in response to evaluation findings will be appended in an annex. The evaluation report shall be written in English, be of no more than 50 pages (excluding annexes), use numbered paragraphs and include:

i)   An **executive summary** (no more than 3 pages) providing a brief overview of the main conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation;
ii)   **Introduction and background** giving a brief overview of the evaluated project, for example, the objective and status of activities The report should provide summary information on when the evaluation took place; places visited; who was involved; the key questions; and, the methodology.
iii)   **Scope, objective and methods** presenting the evaluation's purpose, the evaluation criteria used and questions to be addressed;
iv)   **Project Performance and Impact** providing *factual evidence* relevant to the questions asked by the evaluator and interpretations of such evidence. This is the main substantive section of the report. The evaluator should provide a commentary and analysis on all eleven evaluation aspects (A − K above).

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

v)   **Conclusions and rating** of project implementation success giving the evaluator's concluding assessments and ratings of the project against given evaluation criteria and standards of performance. The conclusions should provide answers to questions about whether the project is considered good or bad, and whether the results are considered positive or negative. The ratings should be provided with a brief narrative comment in a table (see Annex 1);

vi)   **Lessons (to be) learned** presenting general conclusions from the standpoint of the design and implementation of the project, based on good practices and successes or problems and mistakes. Lessons should have the potential for wider application and use. All lessons should 'stand alone' and should:
- Briefly describe the context from which they are derived
- State or imply some prescriptive action;
- Specify the contexts in which they may be applied (if possible, who when and where)

vii) **Recommendations** suggesting *actionable* proposals for improvement of the current project. In general, Terminal Evaluations are likely to have very few (perhaps two or three) actionable recommendations.

Prior to each recommendation, the issue(s) or problem(s) to be addressed by the recommendation should be clearly stated.

A high quality recommendation is an actionable proposal that is:
1. Feasible to implement within the timeframe and resources available
2. Commensurate with the available capacities of project team and partners
3. Specific in terms of who would do what and when
4. Contains results-based language (i.e. a measurable performance target)
5. Includes a trade-off analysis, when its implementation may require utilizing significant resources that would otherwise be used for other project purposes.

viii) **Annexes** may include additional material deemed relevant by the evaluator but must include:
1. The Evaluation Terms of Reference,
2. A list of interviewees, and evaluation timeline
3. A list of documents reviewed / consulted
4. Summary co-finance information and a statement of project expenditure by activity
5. Details of the project's 'impact pathways' and the 'ROtI' analysis
6. The expertise of the evaluation team. (Brief CV).

TE reports will also include any formal response / comments from the project management team and/or the country focal point regarding the evaluation findings or conclusions as an annex to the report, however, such will be appended to the report by UNEP Evaluation Office.

Examples of UNEP Terminal Evaluation Reports are available at www.unep.org/eou

Review of the Draft Evaluation Report
Draft reports submitted to UNEP Evaluation Office are shared with the corresponding Programme or ProjectManager and his or her supervisor for initial review and consultation. The UNEP staff and the Executing Agency staff are allowed to comment on the draft evaluation report. They may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions. Where, possible, a consultation is held between the evaluator, Evaluation Office Staff, the Task Manager and key members of the project execution team. The consultation seeks feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons. UNEP Evaluation

Office collates all review comments and provides them to the evaluator(s) for their consideration in preparing the final version of the report.

5. **Submission of Final Terminal Evaluation Reports.**

The final report shall be submitted in electronic form in MS Word format and should be sent to the following persons:

Segbedzi Norgbey, Chief,
UNEP Evaluation Office
P.O. Box 30552-00100
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel.: (254-20) 7624181
Fax: (254-20) 7623158
Email: segbedzi.norgbey@unep.org

With a copy to:

Mr. Peter Gilruth, Director,
UNEP/Division of Early Warning (DEWA)
P.O. Box 30552-00100
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel.: (254-20) 7623231
Email: Peter.Gilruth@unep.org

Nalini Sharma
Division of Early Warning (DEWA)
P.O. Box 30552-00100
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel.: (254-20) 7623757
Email: Nalini.Sharma@unep.org

The Final evaluation will also be copied to the UNEP Programme Operational Focal Points. The final evaluation report will be published on the Evaluation Office's website www.unep.org/eou and may be printed in hard copy. Subsequently, the report will be sent to the UNEP/GEO Programme office for their review, appraisal and inclusion on their website.

ANNEXURE B

LIST OF REFERENCES, INTERVIEWS AND QUESTIONNAIRES

REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- Annual Development Account Progress Report (June-December 2006);
- Annual Development Account Progress Report (January – December 2007);
- Annual Development Account Progress Report (January –December 2008);
- Annual Development Account Progress Report (January 2009-March 2010).
- Draft AEO Cities Methodology Manual (Africa);
- Guidelines for IEA for Health-GEO Health;
- Guidelines for Ecosystem-based IEA Assessments;
- Guidelines on Policy Analysis for IEA.
- Handbook on Policy Analysis for IEA;
- IEA Training Manual (Africa, 11, Modules, Asia and the Pacific and West Asia, 8 Modules);
- IEA Best Practice Reports (Latin America and Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific Regions);
- UNDAC South-South Network End of Project Internal Review (February, 2010).

INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS

- Project initiation meeting with UNEP Evaluation and Oversight Unit (15 February 2010): Segbedzi Norgbey, Michael Spilsbury, Marion Cheatle and Nalini Sharma;
- UNEP Financial Control Officer: Mr Gregory Patilis (17 February 2010);
- UNEP DEWA Manager: Nalini Sharma and Ivy Kinuthia (16 February 2010);
- Regional Coordinator for Africa: Chris Ambala (17 February 2010).

QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaires were sent to the following people.

Regional Coordinators
- Mr. Christopher Ambala (Africa)
- Ms. Anna Stabrawa (Asia and the Pacific)
- Ms. Graciela Metternicht (Latin America and the Caribbean)
- Mr. Adel Farid Abdel-Kader (West Asia)

Collaborative Centre Representatives

Africa Region
- Mr. Ahmed Abdelrehim
- Mr. Clever Mafuta
- Ms. Gina Bonne

Asia and the Pacific
- Prof Dr Huang Yi
- Dr. Somrudee Nicro
- Dr. Aranbinda Mishra
- Mr Tepa Suasi

West Asia

- Dr. Waleed Khalil Zubari
- Dr. Asma Ali Abahussain
- Dr. Mohammed Abido
- Dr. Abdullah Droubi

Latin America and the Caribbean

- Ms. Rosario Gomez

ANNEXURE C

TERMINAL EVALUATION
OF
SOUTH-SOUTH NETWORK OF GEO COLLABORATING CENTRES FOR
INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND
REPORTING TO SUPPORT POLICY FORMULATION AND
INFORMED DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AT
NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS

DA/9999-06-02 (1566)

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Tony Barbour

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT AND RESEARCHER

P O Box 1753, Sun Valley, 7975, South Africa
(Tel) 27-21-789 1112 - (Fax) 27-21-789 1112 - (Cell) 082 600 8266
(E-Mail) tbarbour@telkomsa.net

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1. INTRODUCTION

The South-South Network of Global Environment Outlook (GEO) Collaborating Centres for integrated environmental assessment and reporting established by this project is aimed at supporting policy formulation and informed decision-making processes at national, regional and global levels through innovative use of information and communication technology for networking and knowledge access and management. The project is a milestone in the efforts to address the lack of adequate information, knowledge and skills for carrying out quality integrated environmental impact assessments in many developing countries and countries in transition. The project uses the Global Environment Outlook Process (GEO) approach.

The overall project objective was to improve environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels. The specific objectives of the project were:

➢ To make relevant integrated environmental assessment information, data, tools, methodologies and approaches available and accessible;
➢ Establish a mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking;
➢ Enhanced use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for information and knowledge management and networking;
➢ Enhanced capacities of GEO Collaborating Centres to undertake Integrated Environmental Assessments (IEAs).

2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Tony Barbour has been appointed by UNEP to undertake a Terminal Evaluation of the project. The objective of the Terminal Evaluation is to examine the extent and magnitude of any project impacts to date and determine the likelihood of future impacts. The evaluation also requires an assessment of project performance and implementation of planned project activities and planned outputs against actual results.

In order to achieve this the focus of the questionnaire is on the following main questions:

➤ Did the project make available and accessible relevant integrated environmental assessment information, data, tools, methodologies and approaches?
➤ Did the project improve environmental decision and policy making at regional and sub-regional levels?
➤ To what extent did the project establish a mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking?
➤ To what extent did the project enhance the use of ICT?
➤ To what extent did the project enhance capacities of GEO South-South Network Collaborating Centres to undertake Integrated Environmental Assessments (IEAs)?

The aim of the questionnaire is to provide input into the Terminal Evaluation of the project. The key questions for the evaluation are listed below. Your time and effort in completing this questionnaire is much appreciated

3. KEY QUESTIONS

3.1   ACHIEVEMENT OF OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES

➤ Were the outputs envisaged by the project delivered?
➤ Were the outputs useful and of good quality?
➤ Did the project enhance capacities of GEO South-South Network Collaborating Centres to undertake Integrated Environmental Assessments (IEAs)?
➤ Did the project establish a mechanism to facilitate and promote exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking?
➤ Did the project enhance the use of ICT?
➤ Did the project improve environmental decision and policy making at national, regional and or sub-regional levels?
➤ Were the outputs delivered within the specified timeframes of the project (i.e were deadlines met)?
➤ Was the approached used to develop the technical documents and related outputs effective?

3.2   PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

➤ Were the project's objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its timeframe?
➤ Were the capacities of the executing institutions and counterparts properly considered when the project was designed?
➤ Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated in the project design?

- Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project implementation?
- Were the required committees established and did they function effectively in terms of supporting the implementation of the project?
- Were there any administrative, financial, operational and/or technical problems or constraints that influenced the effective implementation of the project? If so please comment.

3.3   REPLICATION OF THE PROJECT

Replication can have two aspects, replication proper (lessons and experiences are replicated in different geographic area) or scaling up (lessons and experiences are replicated within the same geographic area but funded by other sources).

- Is the project suitable for replication?

3.4   MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS

- Did the project have M&E plans in place to monitor results and track progress towards achieving the objectives of the project?
- Did the M&E plan make provision for proper training for parties responsible for M&E activities and was this budgeted for?
- Was a budget allocated for M&E activities and was this budget adequate?

3.5   UNEP SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT

- Did UNEP provide adequate project supervision and administrative support during the project?
- Was the feedback from UNEP in terms of assistance timely and of an adequate quality?
- Did UNEP provide adequate financial support during the project?

3.6   ON GOING SUSTAINABLITY

- Based on your experience with the project, please comment on the probability of continued long-term outcomes and impacts after the UNEP funding for this project ends.
- Identify and comment on the key conditions or factors that are likely to contribute or undermine the persistence of benefits after the project ends.

Thank you for your time and input

ANNEXURE D

UNEP QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

During January – February 2010 a final survey was circulated to all the GEO Collaborating Centres. The objective of the survey was to evaluate the effectiveness of the project, including the 4 objectives as set out in the project's logical framework. The main findings of the survey are as follows:

- 73% of the respondents noted that the overall objectives of the project were well attained.
- 80% of the respondents noted that relevant integrated environment assessment information, data, tools and methodologies and approaches were made accessible.
- 66% of the respondents noted that the mechanism facilitated and promoted exchange of ideas and expertise through peer interaction and networking.
- 47% of the respondents noted that the ICT for information and knowledge management and networking was enhanced.
- 73% of the respondents noted that their capacity to undertake integrated environmental assessments was enhanced.
- 80% of the respondents felt that the project sufficiently satisfied their needs and requirements.
- 80% of the respondents noted that the IEA Community Platform, facilitates interaction and networking.
- 67% of the respondents felt that the mechanism was effective in facilitating professional interaction among the GEO CCs and those involved in IEA in developing countries.
- 92% of the respondents felt that ICT solutions, including eLearning would be useful in the implementation of their work.
- 75% of the respondents noted that participating in regional workshops had lead to an increase in capacity of the GEO CCs.
- 91% of the respondents positively evaluated the overall impacts of the GEO South-South Network.
- 100% of the respondents would like to continue participating in the GEO South-South Network.
- Finally, 91% of the respondents rated the project positively.

ANNEXURE E

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Project Title: South-South Network of GEO Collaborating Centres for Integrated Environmental Assessment and Reporting to Support Policy Formulation and Informed Decision-Making Processes at National, Regional and Global Levels
Duration: Initially 24 months, commencing 1 May 2006 and ending on 30 April 2008. Project was extended by a year, ending December 2009.
Fund Code: ROA (Development Account, Section 35 UN Regular Budget)
BAC: 2007-ROA-2294-1566-6875
Total Budget: US$ 560 000
Additional Funding: Norwegian (US$ 11 000) and Belgian Governments (US$ 10 975) and UNEP Environment Fund for the Advisory Missions in the Asia and the Pacific Region (US$ 8 000).

Summary Table: Total Budget (US$)

BIS Account and Object Code	IMIS Object Class	Objective of Expenditure	Total Allotment (US$)
ROL-56272-040	604	Consultants fees and travel	223 000.00
ROL-56272-0600	604	Ad hoc expert groups	120 000.00
ROL-56272-240	608	Travel of staff	39 000.00
ROL-56272-300	612	Contractual services	43 000.00
ROL-56272-400	616	General operating expenses	13 000.00
ROL-56272-600	618	Acquisition of equipment	7 000.00
ROL-56272-800	621	Fellowships, grants and contributions	115 000.00
Total			**560 000.00**

Summary Table: Allotments for each region (US$)

Budget Code	Object Description	Allotment Africa	Allotment LAC	Allotment Asia & Pacific	Allotment West Asia	Allotment All Region	Total (US$)
604	Consultants fees and travel	65 000	40 000	35 000	30 000	53 000	223 000
604	2602 Ad hoc expert groups	30 000	30 000	30 000	20 000	10 000	120 000
608	Travel of staff	4 000	10 000	9 000	6 000	10 000	39 000
612	Contractual services					43 000	43 000
616	General operating expenses	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 000	5 000	13 000
618	Acquisition of equipment					7 000	7 000
621	Fellowships, grants and contributions	15 000	40 000	35 000	25 000		115 000
Total (US$)		**116 000**	**122 000**	**111 000**	**83 000**	**128 000**	**560 000**

ANNEXURE F

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Intervention logic	Indicators of success	Source of verification	Risks/Assumptions
Objective: To improve environmental decision and policy-making at regional and sub-regional levels.	Accuracy, comprehensiveness and credibility of regional and sub-regional environmental assessment reports improved.	Increased access to information for decision making and to lessons and best practices from regions of the south	Policy processes allow for scientific inputs
Expected accomplishment 1: Mechanism established to facilitate professional interaction among GEO CCs and those involved in inter and intra regional levels in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and West Asia	Network established involving 90% of GEO CCs in the selected regions Agreed institutional framework, strategy and implementation plan plan by participating CCs. At least 300 inter regional and intraregional collaborations/interactions among professions by the end of the project Positive and constructive feedback from the virtual review meetings	Number of CCs signed up to the GEO South-South Network. Endorsement by 100% participating CCs of the institutional framework, strategy and implementation plan 2 virtual review meetings of the GEO SSN and one end of project review meeting of the core Collaborating Centres CCs and partners building the GEO SSN into regular work plans	All participating CCs are committed to south-south networking and to engagement within their regions

Main activities

1. Establish a South-South interregional network of GEO Collaborating Centres (GEO-SSN): (All selected regions)
2. Carry out a consultations to develop an institutional framework and implementation plan acceptable to all partners. (All selected regions)
3. Convene a inter-regional start-up meeting of GEO SSN with the eligible CCs (and candidate organizations as appropriate) on the framework, design, working arrangements and modalities, strategy and action plan for inter and intra-regional collaboration. (All selected regions)
4. Conduct 2 virtual review meetings of the network
5. Hold one end of project review meeting of the core Collaborating Centres involved in the network

Expected accomplishment 2: Improved access to IEA reporting tools and methodologies	3 methodological approaches developed and adapted from GEO IEA methodology At least 20 major IEA products available to all regions GEO Cities methodologies	The actual methodologies developed Number of products posted to the website GEO Cities resources including regional	Tools and methodologies that are available at global and regional levels are posted to the website.

	customized and translated in 3 regions (Africa, West Asia and Asia and the Pacific)	examples and translated in Arabic, French, Russian, Chinese and French	
	Interactive-online GEO training manual	Training manual accessible on web	
	At least 20 IEA practitioners per region using the internet based training materials in the first 12 months of establishment	Questionnaires on number of users and user feedback on the use of the training materials Report	
	1 IEA Good/Best Practice produced by end of first year of project	On-line statistics and feedback forms.	
	At least 400 on-line users of GEO Cities Resource material in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and West Asia		

Main activities

6. Develop guidelines to carry out thematic-based assessments and eco-region and watershed assessments based on the GEO IEA methodology. (LAC Region)

7. Research and document good practices in IEA and reporting in developing regions. (All selected regions)

8. Electronically publish and translate the Best Practices resource book (#2 above) into Chinese, Spanish, French and Arabic and Russian (All Regions)

9. Publish electronically the policy analysis guidelines and handbook developed by Africa region (Africa region)

10. Translate into French and Arabic the IEA Assessment and Reporting Training Manual for Africa (Africa Region)

11. Develop a web-based interactive version of the integrated environmental assessment and reporting training manual for (Africa Region)

12. Develop a web version of the GEO Cities IEA methodology resource book and translate into French and Arabic (Africa Region)

13. Customise the GEO Cities methodology resource book for the Asia Pacific region and translate into French and Russian (Asia and the Pacific Region)

14. Compile and develop datasets on 30 major Asia cities with the Asia Pacific GEO CCs and other partners (Asia and the Pacific Region)

15. Develop an interactive web-based training version of the GEO global IEA and reporting manual and customize with regional examples and case studies. Translated into Arabic, Chinese, French, Spanish and Russian. (All regions)

City environment outlook methodology customised for West Asia (printed and CD ROM)

Expected accomplishment 3: Enhanced capacity of GEO CCs in developing countries to	200 practitioners trained in GEO IEA and	On-line confirmation of completion of training	On-line facilities work and no technical

undertake IEA and reporting at regional and sub-regional levels.	reporting methodology using interned based training tools	modules and assignments.	problems arise
	50 people per region trained on how to influence policy processes with the results/findings of integrated environmental assessment reports by June 2007	Surveys prior to training for baseline and following training workshops to determine level of capacity developed and questionnaires on how the training is integrated into their work	
	150 people trained in GEO Cities methodology in West Asia, Asia and the Pacific and Africa		
	30 people trained in LAC on Eco-region and watershed assessments		
	50 people trained in LAC on thematic assessments		

Main activities

1. Hold a regional workshop with cities that have regular SOE reporting requirements (8 cities) Asia and the Pacific (Asia and the Pacific)

2. Hold a workshop on thematic-based assessment (Latin America and the Caribbean)

3. Hold a workshop based on eco-region and watershed based assessment (Latin America and the Caribbean)

4. Hold 4 regional meetings on linking integrated environmental assessment findings to policy processes.

5. Training undertaken on GEO Cities approach in 3 regions (West Asia, Africa and Asia and the Pacific)

6. Hold Intra regional multi-stakeholders consultations on good practice in IEA reporting and policy linkages in West Asia

Expected accomplishment 4: Improved ICT based networking, knowledge management and information access	At least 1000 users of the GEO SSN by the end of the project	Web based survey results database	Technical problems with the ICTs don't arise
	Database of at least 200 names per region of professional/experts & institutions	# of teleconferencess and virtual meetings and number of participants	
	At least 300 inter regional & Intraregional collaborations/interactions	Survey results	
		Half yearly progress reports by GEO CCs	

	2 comprehensive web-based surveys on content & usefulness and uses of web – based guidance documents		63
	Documented use of such tools and methodologies in network members work		
	2 annual surveys on networking platform	Survey results	

Main activities
1.Establish a GEO CCs Community of Practice for networking, exchange and knowledge management to identify, review, document good and innovative practices in environmental assessment and reporting. (All regions)

2.Establish necessary internet- based communication and information facilities and tools based on the technologies available in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and West Asia.

3. Establish a database of IEA practitioners, leading scientists and institutions

4. Manage the network

5. Conduct surveys to improve network through user feedback