Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project

"Implementing the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by Integrating the Conservation Management of Island Biodiversity" (Integrated Island Biodiversity (IIB) Project)

FINAL REPORT

Evaluation Office of UN Environment

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Photos Credits:
Front cover: Proposed new coastal ecosystem protected area with Tongan whistler habitat, Vava'u Province, Kingdom of Tonga

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Implementing the island biodiversity programme of work by integrating the conservation management of island biodiversity
GEF ID: 4023
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ABOUT THE EVALUATION[1]

Joint Evaluation: No

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Brief Description: This report is a terminal evaluation of a UN Environment-GEF project implemented between 2012 and 2017.The project's overall development goal was to assist Cook Islands, Nauru, Tonga and Tuvalu with the implementation of their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans and in doing so, their contribution to the implementation of the Islands Biodiversity Programme of Work of the Convention on Biodiversity. The evaluation sought to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment, the GEF and their executing partner Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SREP) and the relevant agencies of the project participating countries.

The project was granted an extension from 31 December 2016 to 31 March 2017 and then again to September 2017 when the terminal evaluation was already ongoing. Therefore, this TE report only covers the project from its onset to end of December 2016 and thus, does not cover the activities undertaken during the two extensions to September 2017.

Key words: biodiversity; biodiversity conservation; coastal ecosystem; convention on biological diversity; CBD; ecosystem management; global environment facility; GEF; integrated biodiversity; marine ecosystem; national biodiversity strategy and action plans; NBSAP; project evaluation; protected area; protected area management; small island developing states; SIDS; small islands; species protection; terminal evaluation; TE

[1] *This data is used to aid the internet search of this report on the Evaluation Office of UN Environment Website*

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List of acronyms & abbreviations

BSP	Bali Strategic Plan
BI	Birdlife International
BIORAP	Rapid Biodiversity Assessment
CBD	Convention On Biological Diversity
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CI	Conservation International
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GPAS	GEF- Pacific Alliance for Sustainability
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
IBPOW	Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (of the CBD)
IIB	Integrated Island Biodiversity
IUCN	World Conservation Union
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEIDECC	Ministry of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications (of Tonga)
MELAD	Ministry of Environment, Lands And Agricultural Development (of Kiribati)
MES	Ministry of Environmental Services (of the Cook Islands)
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (of Samoa)
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
MSP	Medium Sized Project
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NES	National Environment Service (Cook Islands)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NISAP	National Invasive Species Action Plan
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (USA)
P3DM	Participatory Three Dimensional Modelling
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PIW	Project Inception Workshop
PIRT	Pacific Island Round Table for Nature Conservation
PPG	Project Proposal Grant
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PSU	Project Support Unit
ROtI	Review of Outcome to Impacts
RTOC	Reconstructed Theory of Change
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound indicators
SP	Strategic Program (of the GEF)
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program
SSFA	Small Scale Funding Agreement
STAP	Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (of GEF)
TC	Technical Committee
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
ToC	Theory of Change
TOC -D	Theory of Change at Design
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
VEPA	Vava'u Environmental Protection Association (Tonga)
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

Figure 1: General Map of the Pacific Islands Region

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

Table 1: Project Identification Table

UNEP PIMS ID:		IMIS number:	GFL-2328-2740-4B50
Sub-programme:		Expected Accomplishment(s):	
UNEP approval date:	2nd March 2012	PoW Output(s):	
GEF project ID:	4023	Project Type:	FSP
GEF OP #:	Unknown	Focal Area(s):	BD
GEF approval date:	19 December 2011	GEF Strategic Priority/Objective:	BD1
Expected Start Date:	1 March 2012	Actual start date:	31 March 2012
Planned completion date:	28 February 2015	Actual completion date:	30 September 2017
Planned project budget at approval:	$4,302,720	Total expenditures reported as of [30 June 2015]:	$1,021,762
GEF Allocation:	$1,740.600	GEF grant expenditures reported as of 31 December 2016:	$1,611,738
PDF GEF cost:	$77,000	PDF co-financing:	$94,330
Expected MSP/FSP co-financing:	$2,562,120	Secured MSP/FSP co-financing:	$1,103,452
First Disbursement:	20 March 2012	Date of financial closure:	n/a
No. of revisions:	Four	Date of last revision:	April 2017
Date of last Steering Committee meeting:	November 2015		
Mid-term review/ evaluation (planned date):	March - July 2014	Mid-term review/ evaluation (actual date):	March - July 2014
Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	31 May 2017		

Executive summary

1. This Terminal Project Evaluation is undertaken by the Evaluation Office of UN Environment in order to assess the effectiveness of the project and its likely future impact on the state of integrated biodiversity, ecosystem and threatened species management in the four participating countries (Cook Islands, Nauru, Tuvalu and Tonga) and incrementally, on the Pacific region and globally. The project seeks to assist the participating countries with the implementation of their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans and in doing so, their contribution to the implementation of the Islands Biodiversity Programme of Work of the Convention on Biodiversity. The report also aims to discern lessons and recommendations which may help improve the development and implementation of future similar multi-country projects in both in the Pacific region and globally.

2. The protection and sustainable use of the unique but fragile biodiversity and ecosystems of the small island developing states of the Pacific is fundamental to the future sustainability of the environmental, economic and human well-being of these small countries. Pacific island ecosystems and their constituent biodiversity make up one of the world's important biodiversity hotspots, with high numbers of endemic species that are particularly vulnerable to extinction due to their limited habitat and isolation. The need for improved biodiversity management and its integration with national natural resource management and development planning is recognised both by the countries themselves and by regional and international development and biodiversity conservation institutions. Indeed, the need to give priority to biodiversity conservation in small island states was recognised by the 8th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) through its development of a specific programme of work for islands known as the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW) which provides guidance on priorities for biodiversity management in small island developing states, including the application of ecosystem approaches to management.

3. Working within this international framework, UN Environment and GEF have combined with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) which has the regional mandate for biodiversity conservation, to develop and implement a project to support the integrated management of biodiversity in four of the geographically, demographically and economically smallest nations in the region. The "Implementing the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by Integrating the Conservation and management of Island Biodiversity" or IIB project as it is known, provides technical support and biodiversity management assistance and guidance to the Kingdom of Tonga, Nauru, the Cook Islands and Tuvalu.

4. The project was implemented by UN Environment as the Implementing Agency (IA) and Executed by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) as the Executing Agency (EA). In country sub projects and activities were facilitated by National Project Coordinators and overseen by national lead environmental agencies and where present, biodiversity of environmental coordinating committees. Its goal "*to improve the well being of Pacific Island communities by applying an ecosystem approach to the conservation of ecosystems, species and genetic diversity in the Pacific regions, species and genetic diversity in the Pacific region*" is broad and aspirational and is further refined by the project objective "to contribute to the implementation of the CBD's Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by supporting an integrated system approach to biodiversity conservation and management at local level in four Pacific countries.

5. The ensuing Project consisted of 5 core components. Component I focuses on conserving priority species and ecosystems by identifying and applying measures which will lead to their improved conservation status, including recovery plans and the identification and protection of key conservation sites in consultation with local communities. Component 2 is closely related to Component 1 in that it seeks to facilitate the sustainable use of island biodiversity by working with stakeholders to identify native species which have been traditionally harvested and to develop sustainable harvesting regimes supported by strengthened knowledge management, policy and legislation. Component 3 seeks to build capacity through technical support and training in biodiversity and ecosystem management methods and in project management for national personnel, particularly for the National Coordinators. Components 4 and 5 are standard GEF/UN Environment requirements for monitoring and evaluation and an effective project management and governance structure.

6. The project was several years in the design process which began in 2009 and was finally endorsed by the GEF Secretariat in December 2011. Due to recruitment issues, full implementation of the work plan was delayed into late 2012 and progress was slow until 2014 when the enabling conditions for many activities kicked in and led to markedly accelerated progress in the second half of the project cycle. This Terminal Project Evaluation is undertaken by the Evaluation Office of UN Environment in order to

assess the effectiveness of the project and its likely future impact on the state of IAS management in the region and its likely impact on invasive species and the environmental health of the participating countries. The Evaluation also provides an opportunity to assess project implementation successes, challenges and issues and to use these to identify lessons or recommendations which may improve the quality of future project management or enhance the probability of securing the planned long term project impacts. The evaluation report will be made available project stakeholders, especially those involved in the implementation of the project in SPREP and the participating countries and to conservation practitioners working on biodiversity conservation in the Pacific and internationally.

Evaluation methodology

7. The findings of the evaluation were based on desk reviews, field visits and evaluation of the technical aspects of the project in all nine participating countries. Due to budgetary constraints, field visits were confined to Tonga, the Cook Islands and a visit to meet with project management staff at SPREP in Samoa was also undertaken.. Information was acquired through e-mail exchanges and Skype interviews with the project management team as well as face to face interviews with key stakeholders during country visits to Tonga and the Cook Islands held in conjunction with visits arranged for the sister GEFPAS Invasive Alien Species (IAS project). These visits were held in advance of the completion of both projects, primarily to take advantage of important regional IAS focussed meetings such as the PILN meeting in Samoa in August 2016. Other country-specific documents related to project management were also consulted prior to and after the field missions which included the material developed for national awareness campaigns.

Summary of the main evaluation findings

A. Strategic relevance:

8. The Project's objectives and implementation strategies were directly relevant to the Objective of contributing to the implementation of the CBD COP 8 Islands Biodiversity Programme of Work as well as the goals of the Global Environment Facility - Pacific Alliance for Sustainability - GEFPAS (GEF 4) which funded the project along with co-finance contributions from the participating countries, SPREP, CEPF and NOAA. Internationally and globally the project also aligned with the biodiversity and development aims of UN Environment's Medium Term Strategy 2010-2013 and the capacity and sustainability provisions of the Bali Strategic Action Plan. At the national level, the project worked to align with the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans of the participating countries and at the regional level, harmonisation of the project with the regional Action Strategy for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas 2008-2012 and the subsequent Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected in the Pacific Region 2014 - 2020 was achieved.

B. Achievement of outputs:

9. Although the project was slow to get underway and there was concern expressed in the Mid-Term Review (MTR) that the suite of national sub projects and activities would be more than could reasonably be implemented, judicious re-assessment of priorities and budget together with a concerted effort by project management resulted in most outputs being achieved by project termination. One key reason for this was the employment of Rapid Biodiversity Assessment (BIORAP) methodology in three countries, and particularly in Nauru and Tonga, which allowed multiple activities to be addressed in one intensive period of in-country activity. The BIORAPS and other project activities led to outputs which were also instrumental in raising public awareness, training and mentoring in best practices, garnering government and political support and linking with and mutually supporting the conservation priorities of the Integrated Island Biodiversity GEFPAS projects. The evaluation rated the achievement of Outputs as Satisfactory.

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

10. To achieve its objectives and its overall impact, the project delivered outcomes across the three inter-related components needed to develop improved and integrated biodiversity and ecosystem management and build the foundations and capacity to sustain this effort. It is fair to say that overall, the project was successful in delivering its outcomes in these three key areas and generating impact in the form of improved status of priority threatened species and terrestrial and marine ecosystems, improved understanding of the need for sustainable management of traditional harvested species and improved information systems and public and community understanding of the importance of biodiversity and its sustainable management. The evaluation of the achievement of the project's objectives and outcomes was considered satisfactory, reflecting the view that the project's intended outcomes were delivered and were designed to feed into a continuing process.

D. Sustainability and replication:

11. This multi-faceted and multi- layered suite of outcomes achieved by the project has built a sound foundation for sustaining the project outcomes well beyond its termination. This is further reinforced by the knowledge that SPREP has a leadership role and responsibility to continue to address and strengthen biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use through its regional biodiversity mandate and leadership and will maintain to the best of its ability, the technical support and advisory role which it applied throughout the project. Other factors assessed when considering the sustainability of the project were socio- political, financial, environmental and institutional sustainability. In each of these cases the evaluation provided evidence to indicate that related project outcomes were likely or highly likely to be sustained.

Catalytic role and replication:

12. In this regard the project has performed very well and was rated as being highly successful though its introduction and replication of best practices for biodiversity surveys, the introduction of the Participatory 3-Dimension Modelling (P3DM) methodology to three of the four countries (Tonga, Nauru and Cook Islands and associated capacity building through field training involving "hands on" experience, mentoring with experts and importantly, the encouragement of Pacific island people to train and support other Pacific islanders in their acquisition of biodiversity knowledge and management skills. The Tuvalu Project Coordinator was involved with the P3DM activities in Tonga as part of his training. The project has also been highly catalytic in influencing and changing community practice at those sites where it has been operating, and has helped catalyse integration of biodiversity considerations with government policy, legislation and regulations.

E. Efficiency:

13. The relatively low level of funding in relation to the expected project outputs and outcomes which was allocated to the IIB project required careful use of funding and project management has been diligent in seeking out cost efficiencies. One example is the use of the BIORAP survey methodology which concentrated a number of national level activities into a single intensive period of surveys, training, mentoring, data analysis, planning and community consultation and public awareness campaigns. This proved to be a very efficient approach and was instrumental in accelerating the project's overall progress. Overall, the level of achievement across all project components represents efficient use of funds and the other resources available to project management which include SPREP and external technical experts.

F. Factors affecting project performance:

14. The evaluation found that despite being drawn out, the design process resulted in a strong design with activities, outputs and outcomes relevant to the needs of the countries and in alignment with the CBD Islands Programme of Work, GEFPAS and UN Environment goals for biodiversity and sustainability and regional conservation frameworks. However the time taken to recruit National Coordinators, particularly in Tuvalu which experienced major delays due to the limited human resources in country, together with the requirements of building capacity for project management and multiple changes to personnel led to delays with work plan implementation. These factors indicate that the project preparedness and readiness was only moderately satisfactory.

Conclusions

15. Significant milestones in the context of advancing integrated biodiversity and ecosystem management principles of the IBPOW in the four countries were achieved through the project. These included the completion of the first multi-disciplinary biodiversity survey in Nauru and associated plans and recommendations which have laid the foundation for future integrated biodiversity management in that country. Similarly BIORAP surveys in Tonga (Vava'u) and the Cook Islands (Rarotonga cloud forests) have significantly improved knowledge of the status of biodiversity and threatened species at those sites and provided management recommendations and strategies. The project has clearly influenced the development of national species recovery and conservation area plans and in some cases, policy and legislation in each country. These outputs contributed strongly towards the achievement the desired project outcomes relating to priority threatened species and terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

16. The project was innovative in its use of approaches to generate outputs and create outcomes. Two notable examples were the use of the BIORAP methodology to assess biodiversity and threatened species status and the P3DM methodology to create community awareness and interest in biodiversity

and ecosystem issues and generate stakeholder engagement in planning for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management. In this regard, the project has helped to identify and replicate successful methods of planning for and facilitating integrated ecosystem management and has reinforced the utility of these methodologies in the small island context. This suggests that these should be more broadly utilised as models for further GEF (or other donor) funded conservation projects. Both approaches provided opportunities for learning and training and the project is to be commended for its efforts to use these to promote inter- country staff exchanges and peer learning amongst the young conservation professionals involved. It is also notable that the project introduced and provided training in the widely used Open Standards for Conservation (Miradi) planning methodology to personnel from the four countries, further enhancing its innovative knowledge management and learning credentials.

17. The project was also instrumental in helping develop awareness of the importance of biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management in sustaining island lifestyles through its support for effective and innovative public and community outreach programmes. In this regard, the Cook Islands national biodiversity awareness programme (Our biodiversity, Our islands, Our future) was an outstanding example of how social media can be linked to more traditional campaign forms to achieve impressive results. This was further enhanced by the introduction of the "Live and Learn" training for teachers in biodiversity programme which the project replicated in two other countries. Collaboration with partners like Live and Learn to enhance the work of the project is evident in the approach to implementation in all four countries as are the linkages forged with other biodiversity projects in the region e.g. the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, Birdlife International. Importantly, the project demonstrated the value of working in collaboration with the other GEF PAS projects, particularly the Invasive Alien Species project where shared activities helped defray the costs such as for the BIORAP in Tonga. The joint project activities like the rat eradication in support of the protection of the Tongan whistler in the Mt Talau conservation area demonstrated how the integrated management of biodiversity and ecosystems can be enhanced through collaboration between projects can result in "win - win" conservation outcomes.

18. The evaluator concludes that the project did well to overcome the challenge created by the long drawn out recruitment process which led to a delayed start to implementation and limited progress in the first half of the project timeframe. Ultimately this was addressed through accelerated progress in the second half of the project timeframe helped by the more settled situation with regard to National Coordinators. The 15 month extension also ensured the project had the time needed to achieve most of its outputs and outcomes. Unfortunately, the long recruitment delays in Tuvalu and other issues impacting on project implementation which were outside the control of management were not easily overcome and the project's performance and outcomes in that country was not as strong as originally planned. However, overall, the project is rated a success and diligent, committed management at the regional and national levels has resulted in some remarkable outputs and outcomes in the four countries which it has to be remembered, had not previously been the subject of significant donor funding or technical assistance for biodiversity conservation. When measured against the weak project baselines, there is ample justification for the conclusion that the project has improved institutional skills, linkages, networks and technical capacity for biodiversity and ecosystem management in the participating countries.

Table 2: Summary of Evaluation Ratings

Criterion	Overall Rating(see Key below)
A. Strategic relevance	HS
B. Achievement of outputs	S
C. Effectiveness: Attainment of objectives and planned results	S
1. Achievement of direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed TOC	S
2. Likelihood of impact using ROtI approach	L
3. Achievement of formal project objectives as presented in the Project Document.	S
D. Sustainability of outcomes	S
1. Socio-political sustainability	HL
2. Financial resources	L

Criterion	Overall Rating(see Key below)
3. Institutional framework	L
4. Environmental sustainability	L
5. Catalytic role and replication	HS
E. Efficiency	S
F. Factors affecting project performance	
1. Preparation and readiness	MS
2. Project implementation and management	HS
3. Stakeholders participation, cooperation and partnerships	HS
4. Communication and public awareness	HS
5. Country ownership and driven-ness	S
6. Financial planning and management	MS
7. Supervision, guidance and technical backstopping	HS
8. Monitoring and evaluation	S
i. M&E design	S
ii. M&E plan implementation	S
Overall project rating	S

Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability is rated from Highly Likely (HL); Likely (L); Moderately Likely (ML); Moderately Unlikely (ML); Unlikely (U); Highly Unlikely (HU).

Summary of recommendations and lessons learned

19. The following is a summary of the main recommendations and lessons that have been generated from the evaluation findings:

Recommendation #1. This recommendation is in response to the assessment that several project activities including some relating to policy and legislation were nearing completion at the time of project termination, but may still require additional external support to bring them to fruition. It recommends that UN Environment and SPREP remain in consultation with the countries concerned and work together to find ways to help bring the activities to a successful conclusion if additional support is needed.

Recommendation #2. This recommendation recognises the success of the IIB project in introducing, demonstrated (and replicating) two important methodologies (BIORAP and Participatory 3 Dimensional Modelling) for facilitating integrated biodiversity and ecosystem management in the small island environments of the Pacific. It calls on UN Environment and SPREP in consultation with the GEF, to seek to investigate with members of the Pacific Islands Round Table for Nature Conservation, the potential for a training programme in these methodologies linked to and in support of, current biodiversity programmes and projects underway in the region such as the GEF5 Ridges to Reef (R2R) programme and those of the international NGO's.

Recommendation #3. This recommendation is aimed at ensuring that the innovative and positive learning, knowledge sharing, communications and awareness raising experiences achieved through the IIB project are widely shared with the local, regional and international conservation community. These include the use of tools such as the BIORAP, P3DM and social and traditional media campaigns like the one run by the Cook Islands National Environment Service which inspired and motivated project teams and community groups to work together and achieve successful conservation outcomes. The recommendation calls for a series of case studies which capture these experiences to be developed and shared widely through posting on appropriate SPREP, UN Environment and GEF websites.

Lesson # 1. Multi-country projects such as the IIB project provide multiple opportunities for inter-country staff exchanges and if these are appropriately utilised, they can prove to be powerful learning and training mechanisms based on the sharing of experiences, skills and knowledge of people from similar socio-cultural backgrounds. In the case of the IIB, young islanders from Samoa, Tonga, Nauru and Tuvalu were all given opportunities to work together on different project activities e.g. BIORAPS and P3DM. However, it is important that project management recognises the potential of these opportunities and ensures the resources are made available to facilitate these 'South - South" type exchanges.

Lesson #2. The length of time it takes to secure policy change or enact legislation and regulation in the Pacific island context can easily span most of a project time frame and take longer to bring to fruition than anticipated. It is important that projects with policy and legislative components give priority to getting these underway at the earliest possible stage of project implementation to ensure the maximum possible time frame to bring them to fruition prior to project termination.

Lesson #3. The IIB project demonstrated that having the same coordinator engaged throughout the project and dedicated to the National Coordination role ensures continuity of effort, commitment to results, and the accumulation of institutional knowledge. This was clear from the analysis of project results that in countries where this is the case, the project achieved outstanding results. The lesson is that in addition to striving to recruit the most suitable candidate, serious discussions need to take place between the IA/EA and governments on expectations from governments, particularly in relation to the need to dedicate the successful candidate to the project and ensure their work load is not compromised by other duties.

Lesson #4. Project designs inevitably call for the establishment of Technical Working Groups however, all too frequently insufficient funding is allocated and this function is abandoned once the project is underway. The lesson here is that unless the project constituents, including the participating countries are serious about providing the resources necessary to fund and convene independent Technical Working Groups comprising external experts, then inclusion of such mechanisms in these project designs really only amounts to "lip service" to meet generic GEF and UN Environment preferred project management structures. The more pragmatic alternative is to recognise that in small budget projects such as the IIB this is not usually an option due to the competing priorities for available project funding, nor is it likely to be necessary if suitable alternatives can be found such as expertise available within the Project Support Unit, EA and IA or a partner organisation. If suitable alternatives are not considered appropriate and the need for independent technical advice is clear, then project must be prepared to allocate adequate financial resources to support this function.

Lesson #5. The time factors often associated with the design, approval and implementation of multi-country projects mean there most likely will be significant changes in the implementation environment which will require competent adaptive management on behalf of the Project Management Unit. The lesson here is that rigorous and diligent annual Project Implementation Review process as carried out by the IIB project management team is essential to the efficient and effective execution of the project. Furthermore, the project design and budget must ensure there are sufficient resources to convene multi-stakeholder PIR meetings to assist the quality and transparency of this process.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Subject and scope of the evaluation

20. The Implementing the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by integrating the conservation management of island biodiversity project (GFL 4023) hereafter referred to as the Integrated Island Biodiversity or IIB project, commenced on 31 March 2012 and was due for completion on 31 December 2014. The project was designed to provide support to selected Pacific Island countries in their national efforts to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity (IBPoW) which was adopted by the 8th Conference of the Parties (COP). In adopting the IBPOW, the COP also asked that the GEF provide support to its implementation, particularly to Small Island Developing States (SIDS). This project is a manifestation of that support for four small Pacific SIDS, the Cook Islands, Tonga, Nauru and Tuvalu, all of which are eligible for GEF funding as signatories to the CBD. Three of the countries (Cook Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu) consist of archipelagos of islands and atolls dispersed across vast areas of ocean and the fourth, Nauru is an isolated single raised limestone island.

21. The IBPOW aims to address the uniqueness and fragility of island biodiversity and the fact that islands, particularly SIDS, constitute a special case for environmental and sustainable development action. It encourages the Parties to the Convention to take into account an ecosystem approach in implementing biodiversity conservation projects. Such an approach emphasises the connectivity between ecological systems, the impacts of human actions, the need for protection and restoration of ecosystems and their functions and the integration of biological, socio-economic and governance perspectives. The project is designed to help the participating countries to develop capacity and experience in applying the ecosystem approach to their biodiversity conservation work. In doing so the project was expected to provide support towards the conservation and restoration of priority species and ecosystems and develop successful method(s) for facilitating integrated ecosystem management which might serve as models for future GEF funded projects.

22. Preparation for the project was undertaken jointly by UNEP and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Program Preparation Grant (PPG) and Project Identification Form (PIF) were approved in 2009. These approvals followed consultations to establish priorities under the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (GEFPAS) which was established in 2007 and set aside GEF funding streams specifically for eligible Pacific islands countries. Under the project which is funded form GEF 4, UNEP was designated as the Implementing Agency (IA) and SPREP as the Executing Agency (EA). More specifically, the responsibility of the IA was vested in the UNEP Pacific Technical Advisor based in the UNEP Pacific regional office in Apia, Samoa as the project Task Manager (TM) and for the EA (SPREP) it was vested with the SPREP Biodiversity Advisor, as Project Manager (PM).

23. The Terminal Evaluation covers the project implementation from its onset (31 March 2012) to 31 December 2016. The project requested, and was granted, an extension from December 2016 to 31 March 2017 and again to 30 September 2017, when the TE was already underway. Therefore, the TE does not cover the period of the last extensions from 31 December 2016 to 30 September 2017.

1.2 Evaluation objectives

24. In line with UNEP Evaluation Policy and the requirements of the GEF, this IIB project Terminal Evaluation (TE) aims to objectively assess project performance particularly in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency and to determine its actual and potential outcomes and impact, including their replicability and sustainability. The Evaluation has two primary purposes: i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and ii) to promote operational improvement learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and the main project partners. These include organisations and networks active in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management in the Pacific, e.g. International and national NGO's such as World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Conservation International (CI), The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Island Conservation, Vava'u Environmental Protection Association (VEPA), World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the Pacific Islands Round Table for Nature Conservation (PIRT) network members.

25. It is in this context that the evaluation has taken place in September- December 2016 and the report prepared in February-March 2017. The evaluation has focussed on assessing whether overall, the project has resulted in the improved conservation status of priority threatened species, and terrestrial and marine ecosystems. Further, the evaluation will aim to assess the degree to which the project has been successful in improving the sustainable use of native species and the institutional and capacity foundations which are needed to support sustainable ecosystem management, including the promotion of improved knowledge management. Another aspect of the project to be assessed is the degree to which SPREP as the Executing Agency was able to support the capacity building component through the provision of technical support and training in key aspects of biodiversity conservation and management processes. The results of the project in terms of improving understanding of the focus of the Islands Biodiversity Programme of Work as it relates to conservation on small Pacific island countries and whether it has added value to other projects established under the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (GEFPAS) framework in the region will also be assessed.

1.3 Evaluation approach and methodology

26. The Evaluation was undertaken by an independent consultant with considerable experience working with regional organisations, governments and NGO's in all facets of biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management in the Pacific. Overall responsibility for and management of the Evaluation rests with the UNEP Evaluation Office and it would normally have been undertaken in consultations with the UNEP Task Manager and the Sub Programme Coordinators of the Ecosystem Management Sub-programme. However, it should be noted that the incumbent UNEP Task Manager located in the UNEP sub regional office in Apia, Samoa retired just prior to the commencement of the Evaluation but to his great credit, remained personally committed to be available to assist with advice on an "as required" basis.

27. The TE was carried out using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders were consulted and kept informed throughout the evaluation process. Qualitative evaluation methods were primarily used to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. Information was triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) to the extent possible.

28. The TE was undertaken as a mix of desk reviews, in-depth interviews (face-to-face, by Skype or telephone, and by email) with SPREP staff, participating national government project coordinators and other relevant national staff that have been involved in the design, implementation and management of the Project, as well as selected national partner representatives and other international stakeholders, including technical experts who have participated in the Project.

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

(a) Relevant background documentation, inter alia,

- Project design documents, including Request for Project Preparation Grant(PPG), Small Scale Fund Agreement for PPG and PPG Approval, PPG Review Sheet; Project Identification Form (PIF), Regional Project Review Sheet, Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) review, UNEP GEF Project Review Committee checklist and the Regional Project - CEO endorsement;
- IIB Project Document incorporating the logical framework and its budget, work plan, incremental cost analysis; Key deliverables and benchmarks and the costed Monitoring and Evaluation plan;
- Project reports including annual and half yearly progress reports from countries, QER financial reports, PSU review meetings minutes 2013, 2014, 2015;
- GEF project tracking tool - reviewed with SPREP staff;
- Project Support Unit notes and meeting minutes relevant correspondence etc.;
- Project Audit reports (2013, 2014, 2015);
- Revisions to Annual Work Plans and Operating Budget Budgets (2014 and 2014) as reported in Project Implementation Review meetings (2014 and 2015);
- Project technical reports and outputs: –BIORAP reports and subsequent strategic plans for Tonga, Nauru and Cook Islands, communications and awareness materials, information and data bases, and training and workshop outputs;
- MTR of the project (July 2014);

- Project documentation related to its activities, outputs and deliverables such as media articles concerning the project, Project newsletter, information on the Project on the internet, and other communication products;
- Relevant Project correspondence especially in relation to project delays.

30. During the course of the evaluation country visits were undertaken to Tonga and the Cook Islands (Annex III). During these visits the consultant visually verified to the extent possible, written project outputs such as policy documents, awareness materials, activity and research reports and cross checked these against project output requirements. Further verification of completion of documentary outputs was sought through interviews with the SPREP staff and country project coordinators.

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

- UNEP Task Manager: (now retired);
- SPREP Project Manager and other project management and execution support staff at SPREP;
- A selection of the Project's national stakeholders and participants including National Project Coordinators;
- Representatives of other relevant stakeholder and donor organisations, with an interest in IIB in the Pacific.

31. To maximise the efficiency of the evaluation process and minimise costs, the country visits to the Cook Islands and Tonga were undertaken in conjunction with visits to also assess the GEFPAS Pacific Invasives Alien Species (IAS) prevention, control and management project which is being evaluated by the consultant. Elements common to both projects included priority site identification and management action including IAS eradication activities. Similarly, although the GEFPAS Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) project in Kiribati did not directly overlap with the IIB project, the protected area management components of that project informed the evaluation and vice versa. Although influenced by the cost efficiencies mentioned above, the choice of the Cook Islands and Tonga for country visits was logical in that both countries presented the opportunity to examine the full range of IIB activities. In addition, as will be commented on later in the report, project activities in Tuvalu were minimal. It would have been useful to visit Nauru but the cost of doing so precluded this.

32. All interviews were guided by a standard questionnaire which assisted in assessing overall response in terms of project results, management performance and implementation efficiency and effectiveness. In addition group meetings with project management staff were held at SPREP and in both Tonga and the Cook Islands where the Theory of Change and evaluation questionnaire were used to guide discussion. Skype calls were undertaken with SPREP Project management and external stakeholders.

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

1.4 Main evaluation criteria and questions

34. An evaluation matrix presenting broad categories of areas to be addressed and key sample questions to be asked during the evaluation process, with sources of data and information and the methods by which these would be gathered, was compiled and approved during the TE's inception period (set out in an Inception Report (an internal document submitted to the UNEP EOU) produced in September 2016). These questions served as guides and were integral to the guiding questionnaire used in all interviews, tailored for each stakeholder. Overall the TE sought to determine answers to these key questions:

35. Has the Project:

- Succeeded in supporting the development of an integrated ecosystem approach to biodiversity conservation management at the national level in the four participating countries?;

- Succeeded in or provide significant support towards the conservation and restoration of priority ecosystems and species at risk n each of the countries (as identified in the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work)?;
- Contributed significantly to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity's Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPoW)?;
- Helped to identify a successful method(s) of planning for and facilitating integrated ecosystem management (or similar) which might serve as a useful model(s) for further GEF funded projects (or other donor) funded conservation projects?;
- Increased institutional skills, linkages, networks and technical capacity for biodiversity and ecosystem management in the participating countries?;
- Added value to or complemented other GEF PAS projects in the Pacific?

36. In seeking to assess the project's success or otherwise in addressing these questions, the evaluation reviewed and reconstituted the results chain in the form of a Reconstructed Theory of Change (the ToC concept was not in play at the time of project design) together with the identification of assumptions and drivers influencing project success. Also examined were the success of output delivery and its influence on project outcomes and overall impact, identification of constraints on project implementation, assessment of project leverage, especially in relation to building partnerships and networks and engaging with stakeholders. Also assessed were indicators of project replicability and sustainability including strengthened institutions and capacity and levels of government support.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

2.1 Context

37. Island ecosystems make up one of the world's biodiversity "hotspots" with the islands containing high levels of endemic species which have evolved in isolation from the influences of continental land masses and other islands in the region. Island species are therefore, particularly vulnerable to external threats and many of these unique species have been lost or are today threatened with extinction. Species vulnerability is being exacerbated by ecosystem modification and habitat loss due to anthropogenic and natural pressures which have led to the loss of natural forests and other important habitats including coastal and near-shore marine ecosystems. Invasive alien species, climate change and variability, natural and environmental disasters, land degradation, land based sources of marine pollution and overharvesting all endanger the survival of island species and ecosystems and require a focussed effort by governments and communities on conservation and sustainable resource use if the rate of biodiversity loss is to be effectively addressed and reduced.

38. The special environmental and sustainable development needs of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) has been recognised in numerous international fora and global plans of action including in the UN Agenda 21 (Chapter17), the Barbados Programme of Action (for the sustainable development of SIDS) and by the Committee of Parties (COP) for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). In 2006 the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW) of the CBD was adopted by the COP 8 specifically in response to the need to address the threats to the survival of the unique and vulnerable biodiversity of islands.

39. The IBPOW is intended to assist Parties, which include the four participating countries in the IIB project, to establish national programmes of work with targeted goals, objectives and actions and timeframes aimed at addressing national biodiversity conservation and sustainable use priorities. In doing so, the IBPOW strongly encourages countries to take into account the CBD integrated ecosystem approach to planning, management and the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation in government systems. Further related guidance from the CBD urges Parties to take into account the socio-economic, cultural and environmental considerations of biodiversity conservation action and to consider the use of appropriate and adaptive technologies, sources of finance and technical cooperation to help ensure they meet their conservation challenges.

40. At the 10th Conference of Parties (COP10) a 10 year Strategic Plan was adopted which aimed to give new momentum to the implementation of the CBD by increasing resource mobilisation and official levels of development assistance. The Strategic Plan embraced 20 targets (known as the "Aichi Targets") for attainment by the year 2020. These have become the overarching framework for

international biodiversity conservation action and are linked to National Biodiversity Support and Action Plans (NBSAPs) which in turn reflect the principles of the IBPoW.

41. In the Pacific islands region which embraces some 21 small island states and territories, the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) has the regional mandate for the biodiversity conservation. SPREP has worked with its member countries and international partners to help its member countries develop their NBSAPs. SPREP has also facilitated the development of regional guiding strategies and frameworks to support coordinated action for species protection and biodiversity conservation including the Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands 2014 - 2020 which links the Aichi Targets to regional action, the Guidelines for invasive species management in the Pacific : a Pacific strategy for managing pests, weeds and other invasive species 2009 and the Pacific Islands Regional Marine Species Action Plan 2013-2017. These complement the IBPoW and provide the regional context for the IIB project.

42. The implementation of the IIB project commenced in March 2012 following several years of concept development and document preparation. The project had its genesis in the establishment of the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (GEFPAS) in April 2007. GEFPAS set aside GEF funding streams specifically for stimulating the environmentally sustainable development of the eligible Pacific Island states. Using the GEFPAS Framework, a Project Identification Form (PIF) and Project Preparation Grant (PPG) were developed for this project in 2007 -2009 for the four participating Pacific Island countries which were not participating in other regional biodiversity projects such as the Micronesia Challenge.

43. The project was based on the country led identification of priorities which in turn reflected the Focal Area Strategies and Strategic Programming for GEF 4 namely, Biodiversity Long Term Objective 1, to *catalyse sustainability of protected area systems* and LO 2, *to mainstream biodiversity in production landscapes/seascapes and sectors* and LO3, to *safeguard biodiversity*. Importantly, the Project planning process also recognised that the four participating countries were challenged to meet their obligations under the CBD and in particular, the targets of the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW) which was adopted by the CBD Conference of the Parties (COP) 8 to address the uniqueness and fragility of island biodiversity. The GEFPAS IIB project offered a special opportunity to assist the participating countries with the implementation of the IBPOW and to contribute, in a meaningful way, to the global goals of the CBD and those of GEF.

2.2 Project Objectives and Components

Objectives

44. The Goal of the GEF-funded IIB was "to improve the well-being of Pacific island communities by applying an ecosystem approach to the conservation of ecosystems, species and genetic diversity in the Pacific region" and its primary global environmental objective project was to “contribute to the work of the Convention n Biological Diversity's Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by supporting an integrated approach to biodiversity conservation management at the local level in four Pacific countries”.

Components

45. The IIB project comprised 3 key results focused components: (1) Priority species and ecosystems Conservation and restoration of priority species and ecosystems, (2) Sustainable use of island biodiversity, and (3) Technical support and training. Two further components, (4) Monitoring and evaluation and (5) Project management addressed internal project management.

46. **Component 1: Priority species and ecosystems**. The component addresses the conservation and restoration of priority species and ecosystems at risk in each of the countries’ archipelagos, as identified in the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work**.** The component activities embrace the conservation priorities of the participating countries as identified in their NBSAPs and include a focus on threatened terrestrial species such as endemic birds like the Tongan megapode, the Rarotonga flycatcher and the Nauru reed warbler. Also in focus are threatened plants especially those used for cultural purposes. Marine species are addressed through ecosystem protection programmes and recommendations developed in association with the multi-disciplinary BIORAP surveys of Vava'u in Tonga, and Nauru and marine turtle nesting site surveys in the Cook Islands. Ecosystem conservation activities are aimed at the development of conservation areas. Approximately 36% of GEF funds were originally allocated to this component.

47. **Component 2: Sustainable Use of island biodiversity.** The component addresses the sustainable use of island biodiversity through promoting improved systems and processes including resource assessment and monitoring, legislation, information management, capacity and awareness building. Activities include surveys in each country aimed at building inventories of biodiversity to inform priority setting for conservation areas and to develop data bases to hold the information and data. Public awareness and capacity building programmes will support sustainable results. Approximately 44% of GEF funds were originally allocated to this component.

48. **Component 3: Technical support and training.** The component provides for technical support and training by the Executing Agency. The component requires SPREP to utilize the Project Manager and its technical staff to provide support and training across marine & terrestrial biodiversity conservation, public awareness and information services. It also provides for training needs to be identified and contracts let to provide expertise where SPREP staff cannot meet the particular training needs. This component includes an inception process that involved a multi-country workshop including training of project coordinators from the four countries in management and UNEP reporting procedures followed by four in-country workshops.

49. **Component 4: Monitoring and evaluation**. The component provides for independent mid-term and terminal evaluations and project financial audits.

50. **Component 5: Project management by the EA**. The component provides funding for SPREP to carry out the effective project management and coordination.

51. The project's logical framework is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Project Logical Framework

Components	Outputs	Outcomes
Component 1: Priority species and ecosystems	Surveys undertaken to establish status of species at different sites. Programmes developed to protect and manage threatened species (not including Tongan megapode). Tongan megapode species recovery plans developed.	1.1 Main measures which will lead to the improved conservation status of priority threatened species are identified and plans made for their implementation.
	Plans to establish Conservation areas in consultation with local communities using existing successful models. Vegetation plots established to monitor conservation area condition.	1.2 Main measures which will lead to the improved conservation status of priority threatened terrestrial and marine ecosystems Identified
	Plans towards establishing Conservation areas developed in consultation with local communities using existing successful models. Pilot programme for re-establishment and replenishment of corals completed in Nauru.	1.3 Means to improve the conservation status of priority threatened marine ecosystems identified.
Component 2: Sustainable Use of island biodiversity.	Surveys undertaken to assess and monitor sustainability of current uses of species. Work with communities to develop sustainable harvesting regimes.	2.1 Plans for sustainable use of populations of native species that have been traditionally harvested are developed with full stakeholder participation.

Components	Outputs	Outcomes
	Information reviews and surveys undertaken to identify priority sites for conservation. Legislation, regulations and policies developed for sustainable management of biodiversity and conservation area establishment. Information management systems established or re-configured. Education and awareness programmes developed.	2.2 Improved information systems and processes are planned or in place in relevant agencies.
Component 3: Technical support and training.	Technical support requirements met by SPREP staff. Country personnel, particularly coordinators, provided with training required. Project inception establishes the framework for future monitoring and evaluation.	3.1 Country personnel provided with technical support and training needed to deliver project.
Component 4: Monitoring and evaluation	UNEP standards of transparency, accountability and project outcomes are objectively assessed.	4.1 Project integrity and accountability for deliverables is maintained
Component 5: Project management by the EA.	Project deliverable produced on time within budget and reporting, monitoring and evaluation requirements met.	5.1 Effective project management and coordination in place.

2.3 Target areas/groups

52. The IIB project is a multi-country (Cook Islands, Kingdom of Tonga, Nauru and Tuvalu) project which was designed to deliver multiple activities aimed at identifying appropriate measures to achieve improved conservation status for threatened species and their habitats in a small Pacific island country context. Specific targets included threatened endemic birds (Tongan megapodes, the Rarotonga flycatcher, the Nauru reed warbler and the Black and Brown noddies on Nauru). The project also targeted the establishment of conservation areas in consultation with local communities and aimed to work with communities to develop sustainable harvesting plans and regimes for traditionally harvested species such as marine turtles and coconut crabs. Another project target was the improvement of biodiversity information systems which in turn would support improved legislation and public education and awareness programmes in all four countries. Importantly in the context of the Pacific region and particularly the four small participating countries, the project was strongly focused on building national human and institutional capacity for improved biodiversity and ecosystem management. As such, the project targeted both the development and improvement of legislative and policy frameworks in all countries and human capacity strengthening in biodiversity related project management and coordination.

53. In the course of implementing its activities, the project engaged with a diverse range of stakeholder groups within each of the countries. These often involved the participation of civil society groups including local environment NGO's, school and youth groups and village communities, depending on the nature of the project and country involved. This was particularly the case in the planning, implementation and follow up associated with the intensive survey work which characterised the BIORAP activities which are credited with multiple outcomes in terms of information and data gathering, building capacity and experience, strengthening public awareness of the value of biodiversity and healthy ecosystems and laying foundations for improved institutional frameworks to

help improve future biodiversity management. An analysis of the full range of IIB project stakeholders was completed under the Inception Report for this evaluation and is included in Annex X.

2.4 Milestones in Project Design and Implementation

54. Table 4 below presents the milestones and key dates in project design and implementation:

Table 4: Milestones and key dates in project design and implementation

Milestones	Completion dates
Project concept developed through consultations undertaken in the context of GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability funding model (GEF 4 funding)	2007 - 2008
Request for Project Preparation Grant submitted	5 February 2009
PPG Approved by GEF for $77,000	25 February 20009
Project Identification Form (PIF) submitted to GEF	18 December 2009
Project Identification Form cleared by GEF for $1,740,600	28 January 2010
STAP Screening Review completed	29 January 2010
SSFA for Project Preparation Grant (PPG) signed between UNEP and SPREP ($117,000)	19 August 2010
Project Document approved by Project Review Committee	19 May 2011
Project endorsed by GEF SEC	19 December 2011
Project approved by UNEP and first disbursement	March 2012
Project Extension requested and approved Amendment #1 signed in April 2015 and Amendment #2 signed in June, 2016	
Project Completion (Financial Closure)	31 March 2017

2.5 Implementation Arrangements and Project Partners

55. As the implementation agency, UNEP was responsible for ensuring that GEF policies and criteria were adhered to and that the project met its objectives and achieved expected outcomes in an efficient and effective manner. The UNEP project Task Manager was based in the UNEP Pacific Regional Office in Apia, Samoa and was responsible for project supervision on behalf of the GEF Executive Coordinator - Director, Division of Global Environment Facility Coordination, UNEP[2]. UNEP was expected to ensure timelines, quality and fiduciary standards in project delivery were met at all times.

56. The Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) was designated the Executing Agency for the project. The choice of SPREP as the Executing Agency was endorsed by the four participating countries, all of which are SPREP member countries. SPREP also has the regional mandate for biodiversity conservation and protected areas making is a logical choice to administer the project. SPREP designated its overall project management role to a permanent staff member as Project Manager assisted by a Project Facilitator whose role was to facilitate project implementation across the nine participating countries and provide support to the national Project Coordinators and a Financial Officer. These SPREP staff together with the UNEP Task Manager formed the core of the Project Support Unit.

57. Project implementation was undertaken in the participating countries through the appointment of National Project Coordinators who were responsible to their own head of agency for all project activities in their country. Although the National Project Coordinator for Tonga was recruited before the Inception Workshop, recruitment of the Coordinators for Nauru and the Cook Islands took longer but this completed by the end of 2012. There were significant delays to the appointment process in Tuvalu where the NC was not recruited until well the second year of project implementation. This significantly slowed progress in that country to the point where by January 2014 no progress had been made. The sad passing of the Cook Islands National Coordinator several months before the conclusion of the project was a great loss to both the project and the Cook Islands conservation community.

58. The project Implementation arrangements also provided for the establishment of a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) comprising 5 - 7 technical experts and additional stakeholders as needed. The TAG was meant to provide an external perspective to help the PSU evaluate progress, identify project

[2] Note that as of 2013, this was under the DEPI now renamed the Ecosystem Division.

implementation issues and recommend solutions, and assist with project reviews. In reality the TAG was not formally constituted, did not meet as was originally anticipated (5 - 10 working days per year) and did not formally engage in review processes. This was primarily due to the lack of budgeted funds to support TAG operation. As it transpired the role of the TAG was not critical to project implementation due in part to the expertise represented within the PSU which included the UNEP Task Manager, the SPREP Project Manager and professional biodiversity and ecosystem management staff from the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management Division of SPREP. Several meetings of this group including some country project managers were held over the course of the project creating an informal advisory group which successfully moderated the project work.

59. It was also planned to utilise the expertise of the Protected Area Working Group of the Pacific Islands Round Table for Nature Conservation (PIRT) to assist with the technical review and provide advice on project activities on an as required basis. The PIRT is a coalition of nature conservation and development organisations, governments, inter-government and non-government agencies, donor agencies and community groups which was created to increase effective conservation action in the Pacific Islands region.

2.6 Project Financing

60. The total project cost at approval was $ 4,302,720. Of this amount a total of $ 1,740,600 was contributed from the GEF Trust Fund and $2,562,720 was identified as in-kind co-financing from the participating countries, SPREP and two international partners, the Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF) and the US National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration. No additional cash co-financing contribution was forthcoming from the countries or partners (see Table 5 below):

Table 5: Project budget summary

Particulars	Amount (USD)	Percentage of Overall Budget
Cost to GEF	1,740,600	40.5
Country and Partner Co-financing (in kind)		
Cook Islands	350,000	8.1
Nauru	601,660	14.0
Tonga	524,000	12.2
Tuvalu	400,000	9.3
SPREP	400,000	9.3
CEPF	176.460	4.1
NOAA	110,000	2.5
Sub Total	2,5672,120	59.5
Total Cost of the Project	4,302,720	100

2.7 Changes in design during implementation

61. The project was endorsed by the GEF Secretariat in December 2011 and received UNEP approval in March 2012 with the first financial disbursement made later in that month. Project Implementation Reviews were carried out in 2013, 2014 and 2015. The Mid Term Review was undertaken in July 2014 and assisted the PIR of that year. The PIR's led to adaptive management related decisions which adjusted the scope of project activities and outputs without impacting on the achievement of outcomes and outcomes and impact. In fact the decisions taken improved the overall success of the project by ensuring resources were targeted to activities with a strong probability of success, or activities with high replication value such as the Participatory 3 Dimension Modelling (P3DM) stakeholder engagement processes.

2.8 Reconstructed Theory of Change of the Project

62. The Reconstructed Theory of Change traces the causal pathways between the project's outputs and its outcomes and identifies key assumptions and drivers which will need to hold true or be in place if the project is to progress from the production of outcomes through to the achievement of its ultimate impact which is summarised for the RToC as being the *"Improvement in the well-being of Pacific Island communities through the sustainable and integrated management and conservation of biodiversity and*

ecosystems and the services they provide, including species of subsistence and cultural importance, and the genetic in the region." This reflects both the broad global goal and immediate project objective, these being: **Goal** "*to improve the well being of Pacific Island communities by applying an ecosystem approach to the conservation of ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity in the Pacific Region* and **Objective "**to *contribute to the implementation of Convention Biological Diversity's Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by supporting an integrated approach to conservation management at a local level in four Pacific countries (Tonga, Nauru, Tuvalu and Cook Islands).*

63. There are two key external drivers which will heavily influence the achievement of project impact, both of which are well understood in the Pacific region. The first **driver** at this level is *International concern over biodiversity loss creates global and regional commitments to assist Pacific island countries to strengthen commitment and capacity for biodiversity conservation*. Despite their best endeavours, the Small Island Developing States of the region struggle to secure the funding needed to meet their many economic and social priorities. In this situation of competing priorities, conservation and environmental management are inevitably underfunded and technically and professionally under-resourced. This is despite the fragility and vulnerability of island biodiversity and the important role the conservation and sustainable use of island biodiversity plays in sustainable development. In these circumstances external assistance and support plays an important and complementary role in ensuring countries have access to supplementary funding to support conservation initiatives and help meet their biodiversity challenges.

64. It should be noted that the IIB participating countries are geographically and demographically four of the smallest of the independent island States in the region and all face severe challenges of capacity with environment agencies having very small staff struggling to deal with multiple responsibilities including the obligations and requirements of MEA's.

65. The second of the key **drivers** influencing the achievement of project objectives, goals and long term impact is the *increasing understanding and acceptance by Pacific Island Governments that improved biodiversity conservation planning and policy together with strengthened capacity is essential to maintaining or enhancing ecosystem services and sustaining and improving livelihoods*. This helps achieve conservation goals by providing a supportive environment not just for government related initiatives, but also for non-government organisations and communities which are frequently at the forefront of community based conservation efforts. In the Pacific the patterns of traditional resource ownership and customary use rights require close consultation and partnerships with local communities if conservation initiatives are to be successful which leads to another important driver, this being community concern at the impact of species loss and overharvesting on livelihoods which in turn stimulates interest in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use options.

66. To achieve the project objective and ensure it contributes to the goal, the IIB project consists of three primary interrelated components (Components 1, 2 and 3) aimed at:

i. supporting direct intervention in countries to conserve and restore priority species and ecosystems,
ii. promoting sustainable use of island biodiversity though improved systems and processes such as resource assessment and monitoring , legislation, capacity and awareness building and;
iii. providing technical support and training via the Executing Agency and partners.

67. In addition, the project includes two management orientated components (Component 4. Monitoring and evaluation and Component 5. Project Management), the first of which assesses and guides the need for adaptive management and the second, shapes the project governance and execution mechanisms.

68. Overall, the project seeks to apply these three programmatic components in a way that establishes the building blocks for a sound foundation for future conservation management in place in each of the participating countries. The project approach is to work with the four countries to build human and institutional capacity including the mainstreaming of biodiversity considerations, to help meet their biodiversity management challenges and as identified in their NBSAPs, especially in relation to threatened species management, the establishment of terrestrial and marine conservation areas and the acquisition and management of biodiversity information and data on which to base future conservation investment decisions. The NBSAPs, have been developed in consultation with many government agencies and provide a platform for the project to encourage inter-agency dialogue between environment departments and other key resource management agencies such as fisheries, agriculture and forestry.

69. Key elements of the project's methodology include the application of biodiversity survey methods appropriate to the small island context and developing sustainable solutions to conservation issues by making use of many years of learning in the region. In this regard the adoption of the BIORAP (Rapid Biodiversity Assessment) as the primary tool for targeted in-country biodiversity surveys was particularly effective as it not only facilitated the collection of a wide range of species data and the identification of protected area priorities, but also provided a valuable training and mentoring platform. Use of the BIORAP approach also enabled the promotion of learning through exchanges of experience, ideas and information to boost peer learning and add to the body of knowledge available to all countries in the region. It also assisted the project to work with and help empower communities to manage biodiversity and natural resources sustainably, including through the establishment and management of community based conservation areas using proven models appropriate in the region such as Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs).

70. It should be noted that the output and capacity baselines against which the project's outcomes and impact will be measured are extremely weak with a mere *estimated* $0.515 million being spent in all four countries by all stakeholders on biodiversity conservation and capacity related activities across all four project components[3]). This is despite there being serious concerns at the status of rare and threatened native species in each of the countries and over the degradation of terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems and the associated loss of natural resources important to sustaining livelihoods. Baseline data on these species is also very sparse.

Project Outcomes

71. Components 1 and 2 address the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity through several interrelated pathways which lead to the identification of measures which will lead to improved conservation status of priority threatened species and terrestrial and marine ecosystems, while meeting the selected outcomes of the CBD IBPOW. The project set out to achieve these outcomes through activities which include surveys to improve knowledge of species status and inform the development of recovery plans and the related selection of priorities for conservation area sites. Plans for the establishment of both terrestrial and marine conservation areas were developed in consultation with communities based on models which have been successful in similar community based conservation situations in the region. The outcomes identified in the ROTC presented in figure 2 below have been modified from those in the ProDoc Results Framework to more aptly represent the likely longer term biodiversity and capacity outcomes arising from the successful implementation of project activities. Table 6 below describes the co-relation between the Pro Doc and ROTC outcome descriptions.

72. Important **assumptions** underlie the success of these pathways, not the least being that the project can actually command and deploy the resources needed for the multi-disciplinary surveys envisaged and can overcome the logistical issues which dog these types of activities in the Pacific. Another key **assumption** is that the project time frame will be sufficient to achieve the necessary community "buy in" and consensus agreement needed to proceed with conservation area establishment. This is a notoriously difficult process to navigate in the Pacific as communities which control land and natural resources under customary ownership rules are often factionalised and local political priorities can prevail. Facilitating agreements under these conditions can be a lengthy process. However, even under these circumstances the project is still positioned to catalyse its long term impact by at least initiating the site selection process and facilitating early dialogue for follow up by national agencies and other CSO partners.

73. Component 2 establishes a results chain which builds on activities and outputs which include surveys in each of the countries aimed at completing inventories of biodiversity which feed into the identification of priority sites for conservation under Component 1. As mentioned above, a key **driver** behind the rationale underlying this component is the level of community concern over the loss of valuable species and the impact of over-harvesting on livelihoods, which is stimulating interest in sustainable use options. From a government perspective, heightened awareness that improved information and information management systems will underpin effective planning and investment in biodiversity management including priority setting, and help meet international MEA (CBD/IBPOW) obligations, drives government support for these activities.

[3] Table 4 Summary of Incremental Cost Analysis, Para 192, page 52, IIB Project Document.

74. Thus, in recognition of the importance of information and data management to the ongoing management and monitoring of biodiversity and ecosystems in each country, and a means of aiding informed decision making, the results chain includes the development of data bases in Nauru, Tonga and Tuvalu and the updating of the existing data base in the Cook Islands. These are seen as important building blocks for the long term improvement and mainstreaming of biodiversity management in all four countries.

75. The surveys and data generated are also seen as providing information on biodiversity use by communities which can be used to firstly identify priority species of traditional harvesting value for sustaining livelihoods and secondly, to assist the development of plans for the sustainable use of those species with community and other stakeholder support. The survey information will also point to the need for additional or supplemental legislation of regulations to support sustainable resource use and conservation area establishment which constitutes another outcome of the project.

76. Several **assumptions** are relevant to the achievement of the desired outcomes under Component 2 not the least being that, as under Component 1, the project will have the time and can coordinate and deliver the resources needed for the surveys and can overcome the logistical and political constraints which often impact these activities in the Pacific. It is also assumed the communities themselves will be enthusiastic supporters of sustainable harvesting and prepared to share traditional knowledge and actually implement and enforce plans. In relation to new legislation or regulations, the assumption that sufficient time will be available to draft and shepherd legislation through political processes is a major potential constraint.

77. The third results chain developed by the project leads to improved national capacity through the delivery of technical support and training targeted at country personnel and particularly the project coordinators. This is in fact, woven throughout the implementation of Components 1 and 2, which are the means by which training, mentoring and technical support are delivered. This assumes that government and other stakeholders, especially at regional level and in international environment agencies, accept that biodiversity outcomes and impact cannot be achieved or sustained, nor can countries meet their international MEA (CBD/IBPOW) obligations without growing in- country management capacity.

78. The project aims to achieve its capacity building outcomes by building country staff capacity to implement the project through training and mentoring inputs from SPREP professional staff and the support of other implementing partners. In this regard, the use of BIORAP assessments in each country, which has proved a particularly effective approach for training and mentoring. However, it also **assumes** that the countries have suitably qualified staff available who can absorb and retain the training provided and have the status and job security to apply their experience in the post project institutional environment. This is by no means a given in the small island countries of the Pacific where national budgets severely restrict government staff numbers, staff have multiple responsibilities and functions and there is high staff mobility between agencies. A corollary is the need to repeat training where staff turnover occurs leading to project delays and loss of momentum.

Table 6 Co-relation between of Project Document Outcome Statements and those in ROTC

Co-relation between of ProDoc Outcome Statements and those in ROTC		
ProDoc Outcome	**ProDoc Outcome Statement**	**Revised Outcomes in RTOC**
OC 1.1	Main measures which will lead to the improved conservation status of priority threatened species are identified and plans made for their implementation (consistent with selected outcomes set out in the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW)).	Improved Government and NGO capacity to utilize threatened species conservation measures (surveys, species recovery and management plans).
OC1.2	Identify main measures which will lead to improved conservation status of priority threatened terrestrial ecosystems , consistent with selected outcomes set out in the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW)	Improved Government and NGO capacity to utilise conservation area planning and establishment methods (site identification, community engagement, management planning) leading to the establishment of new PA's.
OC1.3	Means to improve the conservation status of priority threatened marine ecosystems are	

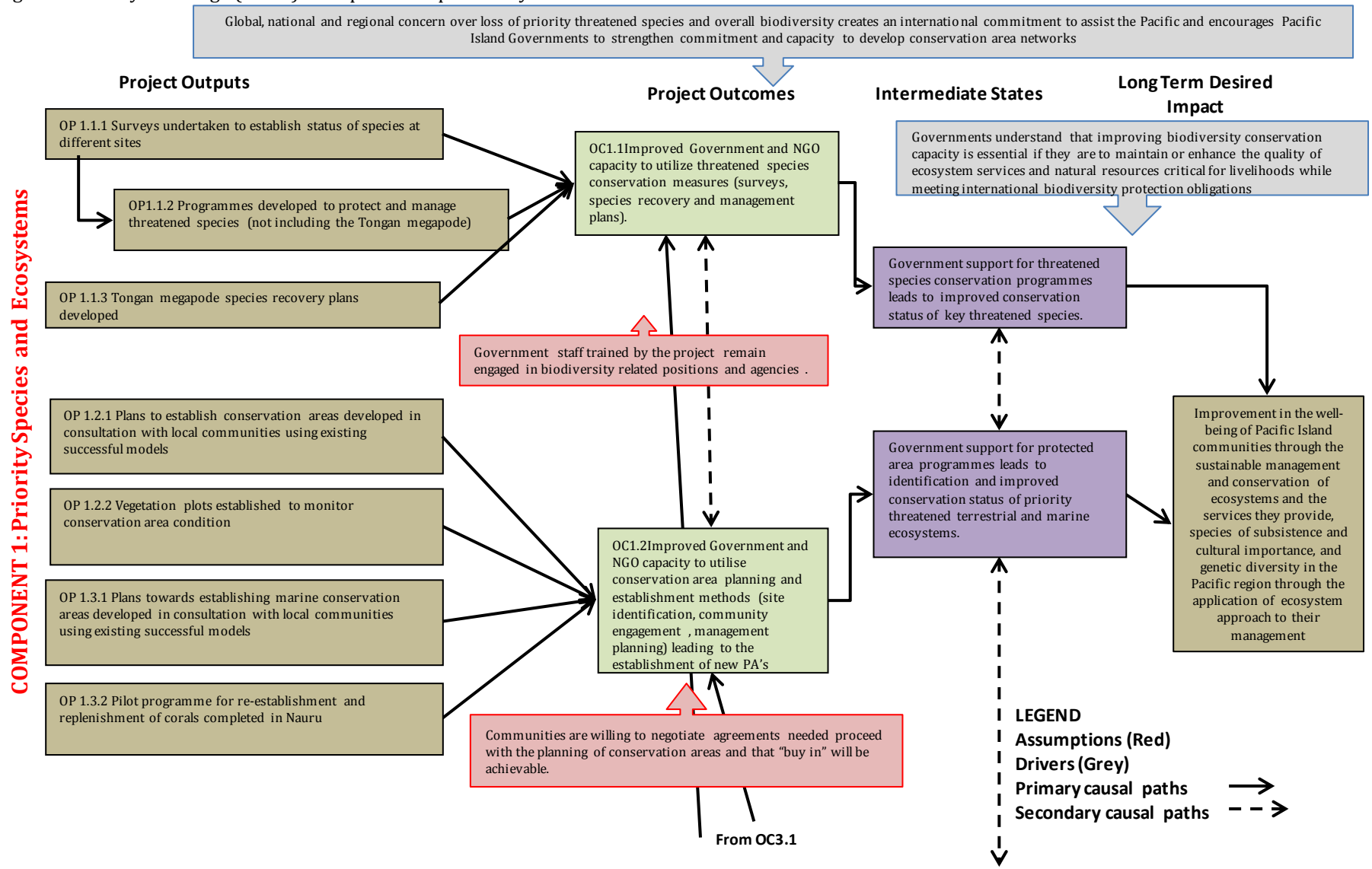
	identified, consistent with selected outcomes set out in the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW	
OC 2.1	Plans for the sustainable use of populations of native species that have been traditionally harvested are developed with full stakeholder participation.	Increased awareness by communities in project countries of sustainable species/resource harvesting needs and strengthened commitment to implementing harvesting plans
OC 2.2	Improved information systems and processes are planned or in place in relevant agencies to support implementation of the IBPOW	Participating governments have strengthened institutional mechanisms (e.g. dedicated conservation and protected area and information and awareness staff, better information collection and dissemination capability, new or upgraded protected area legislation and /or regulations) to develop biodiversity conservation initiatives consistent with the IBPOW
		Participating governments have increased capacity to identify and establish priority sites for conservation consistent with the IBPOW
OC3.1	Country personnel provided with technical support and training needed to deliver the project	Country personnel provided with technical support and training needed to deliver project

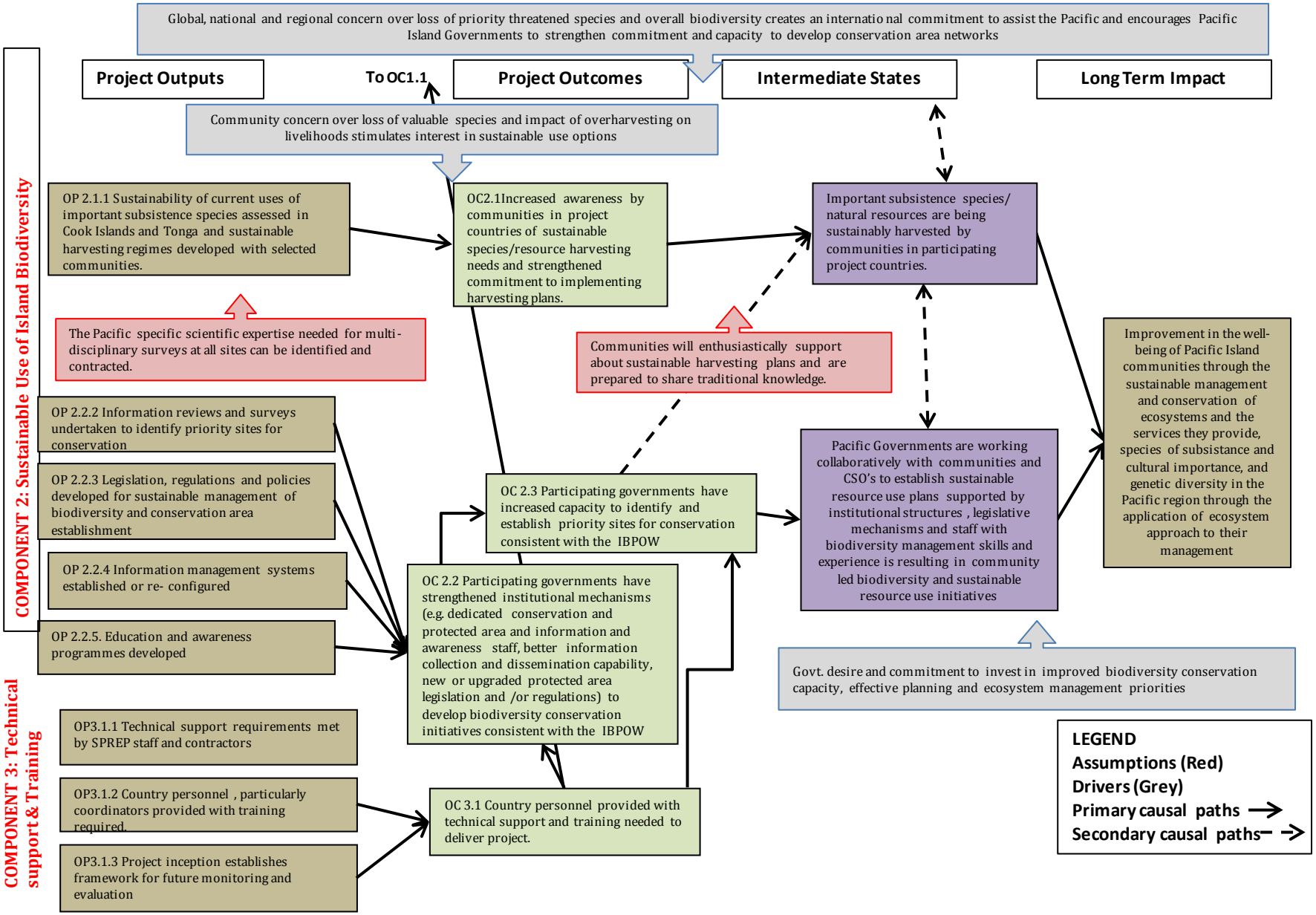
Intermediate States and Impact

79. The pathways, assumptions and drivers described above are aimed at project outcomes which lead to two core intermediate states and in the long term, benefits and impact in the four participating countries. Firstly, the successful achievement of the project outcomes based on research and surveys will have improved understanding of each country's biodiversity, particularly threatened species and species of subsistence and economic importance and will result in this information being used to assist in identifying priority marine and terrestrial conservation areas, developing species recovery and sustainable resource use plans and it will have established or strengthened set up data bases to assist with monitoring species and ecological change.

80. Secondly, underpinning this work will be an improvement in the biodiversity management capacity and the institutional and policy basis for conservation in the countries through the training and technical assistance delivered throughout the project's life. Public and government understanding of the importance of effective biodiversity management will have been increased and the governments will be working more collaboratively with communities and CSO's to establish conservation and sustainable resource use measures supported by institutional structures, legislative mechanisms and staff with biodiversity management skills and experience. Through government and community engagement in successful project activities leading to future government resource commitments at a scale needed to maintain and accelerate the momentum built by the project. International funding and resource commitments have, in some instances been secured for complementary 'Ridges to Reefs' biodiversity management projects under the GEF5. Efforts are underway to also seek funding from GEF6 and GEF 7 to support and sustain the foundations which have been built. Taken together, and with the ongoing technical and financial support of regional and international organisations, the intermediate states will, over time result in the improved well-being of the communities of the participating countries through the sustainable, integrated management and conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems and the services they provide, including species of subsistence and cultural importance.

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




Global, national and regional concern over loss of priority threatened species and overall biodiversity creates an internatio nal commitment to assist the Pacific and encourages Pacific Island Governments to strengthen commitment and capacity to develop conservation area networks
Project Outputs
To OC1.1
Project Outcomes
Intermediate States
Long Term Impact
Community concern over loss of valuable species and impact of overharvesting on livelihoods stimulates interest in sustainable use options
COMPONENT 2: Sustainable Use of Island Biodiversity
OP 2.1.1 Sustainability of current uses of important subsistence species assessed in Cook Islands and Tonga and sustainable harvesting regimes developed with selected communities.
OC2.1Increased awareness by communities in project countries of sustainable species/resource harvesting needs and strengthened commitment to implementing harvesting plans.
Important subsistence species/ natural resources are being sustainably harvested by communities in participating project countries.
The Pacific specific scientific expertise needed for multi-disciplinary surveys at all sites can be identified and contracted.
Communities will enthusiastically support about sustainable harvesting plans and are prepared to share traditional knowledge.
Improvement in the well-being of Pacific Island communities through the sustainable management and conservation of ecosystems and the services they provide, species of subsistance and cultural importance, and genetic diversity in the Pacific region through the application of ecosystem approach to their management
OP 2.2.2 Information reviews and surveys undertaken to identify priority sites for conservation
OP 2.2.3 Legislation, regulations and policies developed for sustainable management of biodiversity and conservation area establishment
OP 2.2.4 Information management systems established or re- configured
OP 2.2.5. Education and awareness programmes developed
OC 2.3 Participating governments have increased capacity to identify and establish priority sites for conservation consistent with the IBPOW
OC 2.2 Participating governments have strengthened institutional mechanisms (e.g. dedicated conservation and protected area and information and awareness staff, better information collection and dissemination capability, new or upgraded protected area legislation and /or regulations) to develop biodiversity conservation initiatives consistent with the IBPOW
Pacific Governments are working collaboratively with communities and CSO's to establish sustainable resource use plans supported by institutional structures , legislative mechanisms and staff with biodiversity management skills and experience is resulting in community led biodiversity and sustainable resource use initiatives
Govt. desire and commitment to invest in improved biodiversity conservation capacity, effective planning and ecosystem management priorities
COMPONENT 3: Technical support & Training
OP3.1.1 Technical support requirements met by SPREP staff and contractors
OP3.1.2 Country personnel , particularly coordinators provided with training required.
OP3.1.3 Project inception establishes framework for future monitoring and evaluation
OC 3.1 Country personnel provided with technical support and training needed to deliver project.
LEGEND
Assumptions (Red)
Drivers (Grey)
Primary causal paths
Secondary causal paths

3 EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.1 Strategic Relevance

Alignment with UNEP's strategy, policies and mandate

81. The project was designed to assist the four participating countries to address their biodiversity conservation priorities in their own terms, while being consistent with global and regional aim of key frameworks like the CBD IBPOW and the POWPA. Importantly, it is also highly consistent with the UNEP Medium Term Strategy 2010-2013 and the UNEP Programme of Work (POW) 2010 - 2011 and 2012 - 2013 Sub programme 3: Ecosystem Management Objective which aims "to ensure that countries utilise the ecosystem approach to enhance human well being" and encompasses many of the associated strategic elements and PoW outputs. Further, through its focus on environment -related technology support and capacity building, it also directly addresses and is consistent with, the Objectives of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building in developing countries. As such it provides considerable opportunity for advancing the environmental, social and economic importance of Integrated Island Biodiversity interventions in the fight to conserve biodiversity and ecosystem functions in island settings. In this regard, the project's three main components are designed to help build national capacity, skills, experience and institutional frameworks at national level. The engagement of the participating countries and non-government stakeholders in the design process ensured the project activities outputs and anticipated outcomes reflected their national priorities.

Gender balance

82. The project document recognises that women in particular, play a crucial role in all four countries and that their views and involvement are acknowledged and respected in local community governance and decision making. As such it was important that the project ensured it enhanced the opportunities for active participation by women (and youth and children) in project activities. This was achieved through involvement of women and youth/school children not only through project related community activities, but also in key project management positions in both SPREP, Tonga and the Cook Islands. At the country level project management exhibited a good gender balance with 5 women and 4 men in either Project Coordinator or Project Manager roles. An illustrated case study on gender balance has been prepared by the Project Coordinator and SPREP staff. Although the project design was not specific in its approach to UN Common Understanding on Human Rights Based Approach of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, it did provide guidance on the environmental and social safeguards which guided its development and have influenced its implementation, particularly the identification of the need to balance social and environmental needs and the risks to rural people living largely subsistence lifestyles. These indicated that the fundamental issues of Human Rights and the rights of Indigenous people were appropriately considered by the project designers and during implementation. There was a strong focus on community based approaches and the project had at its core, the achievement of positive and sustained changes in the lives of people necessary for the full enjoyment of their human rights including human well-being.

Environmental safeguards and human well-being

83. Project document assessed environmental safeguards and social impacts noting that no adverse environmental impacts were anticipated and indicating that existing national EIA regulations and procedures would be followed if any activities were considered to have any potential impact. The project was also developed in line with the environmental and social priorities of the participating countries captured in NBSAPs and was subject to stakeholder consultation. This helped to negate any untoward and negative impacts on environment and human well being. In fact, it was anticipated the project would have a positive effect on livelihoods and human welfare in the Pacific by utilising a community/ecosystem based approach to establishing conservation areas providing for the sustainable use of important natural resources while contributing to the protection of the Pacific way of life.

South-South Cooperation

84. The application of the BIORAP methodology in Tonga, Nauru and the Cook Islands is an important example of how the project encouraged and utilised south-south cooperation principles. Originally

developed for use in Samoa which was a non project country, the methodology was honed for replication in small Pacific island countries through its application in three project countries. This resulted in refinement of the methodology but perhaps more importantly, the BIORAPS provided opportunities for learning and sharing experiences between the many individuals involved from at least four Pacific Island countries. Exchange activities included the use of key national personnel involved in the Samoa BIORAP to assist with training and sharing of experiences with of BIORAP personnel in Tonga, Nauru and the Cook Islands. Another key activity illustrating was the exchange and learning associated with the implementation of Participatory 3 Dimension Modelling (P3DM) in Tonga, Nauru and the Cook Islands. Again trained staff from Samoa assisted those in Tonga and staff form Tonga assisted those in the Cook Islands. Yet another example of was the Nauru Marine Spatial Training organised and delivered by SPREP in collaboration with the Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research organisation (CSIRO) which facilitated country to country exchanges and learning through the participation of Project Coordinators and key staff from the Cook Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu. Further training and learning from inter-country experience was achieved at the project sponsored workshop on Open Standards for Conservation held in Auckland, New Zealand in February 2016 where National Coordinators from participating countries were able to share experiences with conservation agency staff from other Pacific island countries.

85. The project also encouraged south-south cooperation in project administration and management by bringing national coordinators and senior environment staff from the participating countries together in Tonga to assess overall project progress and future priorities. An important outcome of the meeting was the decision by some countries to reallocate funding to other countries to help meet conservation needs in Tonga and support regional capacity building activities to benefit all parties. This is a noteworthy example of the constructive cooperation between individuals representing their countries which was fostered by the project.

Alignment with GEF focal areas and strategic priorities

Lesson# 1. Multi-country projects such as this provide multiple opportunities for inter-country staff exchanges and if these are appropriately utilised, they can prove to be powerful learning and training mechanisms based on the sharing of experiences, skills and knowledge of people from similar socio-cultural backgrounds. However, in order to maximise the potential of these capacity building opportunities, it is important that they are recognised in the project design and inception phases and that financial resources are made available to facilitate internal project learning exchanges.

86. The GEF provides grants for projects in focal areas of biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer, and persistent organic pollutants. The Pacific IIB project delivered outcomes specifically relevant to the GEF 4 (GEF 2007) Biodiversity Strategic long term Objective for Biodiversity which aims to safeguard biodiversity and also catalyse sustainability of protected area systems, mainstream biodiversity in production landscapes/seascapes and sectors and build capacity on access and benefit sharing. Specifically the project addresses and is aligned to, Strategic Programme (SP) 3, " strengthening terrestrial PA networks and is also aimed at contributing to SP 4 "strengthening the policy and regulatory framework for mainstreaming biodiversity", SP 7 "prevention control and management of invasive alien species and SP 8 "building capacity on access and benefit sharing".

87. The IIB project delivered outcomes which contributed to the achievement of these Objectives and Strategic Program goals by identifying priority areas and high value biodiversity suitable protection within conservation areas or through species specific management plans, enhancing knowledge of biodiversity and its management and by increasing public and community awareness of its importance. By working with the participating governments to identify and recommend options for strengthening their biodiversity and ecosystem management policy and regulatory frameworks, the project helped the longer term process of mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem management. The project also worked in synergy with the closely related GEF 4 GEFPAS projects on invasive

species[4] where it contributed to and supported alien plant and animal eradication activities in Tonga and the Cook Islands.

Relevance to global, regional and national environmental issues and needs

88. The integrated management of island biodiversity is internationally recognised as being critical to the survival of the often unique and highly vulnerable biodiversity and ecosystems of oceanic island regions such as the Pacific and Caribbean. This was clearly recognised and acted upon by the CBD when its Conference of the Parties decided a specific Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW) based on the ecosystem management approach was needed to address the problem of island biodiversity loss. The IIB project contributes to the IBPOW and in doing so also addresses elements of the Barbados Programme of Action for small island developing states relating to poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

89. Regionally the critical importance of biodiversity and ecosystem protection to the environmental, social and economic well-being of Pacific island countries and the Pacific way of life has long been recognised. Regional forums including the long running sequence of Pacific Conferences on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas and their associated five yearly Action Strategies for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the region and the Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas 2014 - 2020 which incorporates Aichi Targets for biodiversity have provided guidance to countries to help them meet their national (as represented in NBSAPs) and international biodiversity conservation priorities. In this regard, the IIB project has significantly boosted the work of the relevant agencies in Nauru, Tonga and the Cook Islands, and to a lesser extent, Tuvalu.

The overall rating for project relevance is "highly satisfactory"

3.2 Achievement of outputs

90. The reviewer was able to undertake only limited travel to assess project activities in the field and as a result his frame of reference is closely linked to those experiences in Tonga and the Cook Islands. However, interviews with project personnel in the countries visited in which all outputs were reviewed together with the very good documentation on project activities and results which was made available, has greatly helped this aspect of the evaluation. This information was compiled into Table 6 below and then reviewed with the Project Manager to ensure consensus on the achievement rankings. Table 6 below describes the status of completion of project outputs in detail. It ranks all the outputs of Components 1,2 and 3 as designated in the Results Framework on a scale of 0 - 10 with 0 indicating no progress and 10 full completion of the output. The following analysis of Table 6 shows the percentage of outputs either completed or nearly completed (8- 10 on the scale) as being 85% of all project outputs. It is highly likely that those outputs currently ranked 8-9 will be completed within 2017 after the project finishes. It should also be noted that those activities with low completion scores tend to relate to outputs which have been scaled back from those originally envisaged (e.g. only one threatened bird recovery project in Cook Islands instead of three hence a ranking of 3) or are related to Tuvalu where for a number of reasons the project was slow to get underway with consequences for project outputs. Given the delayed start to the project and the moderate progress recorded in the MTR, the results presented in Table 6 represent a remarkable turn-around in project implementation.

Rate of Output Completion: IIB Components 1 - 5.												
Rate of Output Completion: Scale 0 - 10	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**Total Outputs**
Component 1				1		1			3	3	12	20
Component 2			1	1	1		1	2	3	2	10	21
Component 3											4	4
Component 4											1	1

[4] GEFPAS project "Prevention, control and management of Invasive Alien Species in the Pacific"

Component 5											1	1
Total Outputs per Rating			**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**6**	**5**	**28**	**47**
			2%	**4%**	**2%**	**2%**	**2%**	**4%**	**13%**	**11%**	**60%**	

91. A number of IIB project activities/outputs are nearly but not fully completed on the termination of the project. Several of these are related to policy and legislative initiatives which have taken longer than originally envisaged to bring to fruition, due in part to the extensive consultation processes and re-drafting involved. Although it is unlikely, there remains a possibility that one or other of these uncompleted initiatives will struggle to get the necessary approvals, unless the political will and commitment already exists to ensure policy frameworks are completed and endorsed beyond the project and specially without the on-going financial and regional support which was available through the project management structure.

Recommendation #1 That the UNEP (Pacific regional office) and SPREP Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management Division (BEMD) assess progress with the uncompleted IIB project activities (see Table 6 of this report) through regular consultation with the lead agencies in the participating countries and where additional support is deemed necessary, decide on how best the two agencies can continue to assist the countries to complete the activity (ies).

92. While it is difficult for the evaluator to provide an overall score or assessment of the project's achievement of outputs due to some countries performing more strongly than others, looking at the project's accomplishments across the broad spectrum of its activities and outputs and taking into account the capacity issues which inevitably hinder efficient project implementation in small island countries (e.g. high staff turnover, inexperience, inappropriate qualifications, budgetary constraints, institutional fragility etc.), it is considered that the project can justify an overall rating for achievement of the Outputs of the five project components of "Satisfactory".

Table 6: Summary of the Project's success in producing programmed outputs.

Objective	**Activities**	**Status at Project completion**	**Score (0-10)**
OUTCOME 1.1 Improved conservation status of priority threatened species consistent with selected outcomes set out in the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW).			
OUTPUTS			
1.1.1 Surveys undertaken to establish status of species at different sites.			
Nauru	Surveys to establish status of endemic Nauruan reed warbler.	Survey has been completed as component of Nauru BIORAP	10
Tonga	Surveys of Late and Fonulei islands to assess fate of introduced populations of Tongan megapodes	Surveys have been completed on September 2013 with good numbers of megapodes that survived on Fonualei island more than with population found in 2003. Still no sign of Megapodes on Late island.	10
	Surveys of Niuafo'au to obtain further information on status and habitat of the Tongan megapode	Survey completed	10

Objective	Activities	Status at Project completion	Score (0-10)
1.1.2 Programmes developed to protect and manage threatened species.			
Cook Islands	Programme developed to protect & conserve rare Vairakau Maori (traditional medicine) plants	Data base of Vairakau Maori plants updated and report on options and conservation programme /recommendations for plant nursery formulated completed. Further assessment indicated nursery was unnecessary as key plants were deemed common	10
	Programme developed to protect & conserve rare birds: kakerori, tangaeo and ioi	Activity was modified to focus only on the Kakerori (Rarotonga flycatcher) and involved project support for rat eradication in the Takitimu Conservation Area as part of the on-going recovery programme for this endangered species. Reviewer note: The Kakerori management plan was in place prior to project.	3
	Programme developed to protect & conserve rare plants: tou, miro, tamanu, pukatea & arapepe	This activity was adapted to develop a collaborative partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture to establish a nursery of rare native plants which were raised and subsequently planted out in Rarotonga by school children as part of a school awareness and engagement programme.	10
	Programme developed to protect & conserve marine turtles	Project linked to Pacific Island marine Turtle Conservation programme training and nesting surveys on Rarotonga (potential nesting sites and raui), Mangaia, Aitutaki and Rarotonga.	10
Tonga	Community education programme undertaken on Niuafo'ou regarding sustainable harvesting of eggs.	Community education undertaken in conjunction with population survey	10
1.1.3 Species recovery plans developed.			
Cook Islands	Recovery plans developed for rare species subject to conservation programmes if appropriate	This output is very vague. Specific rare species recovery plans not produced but several activities can be considered as relevant to the output. These are the marine turtle nesting site assessment, the rare native plants nursery project with the Min. of Agriculture, the contribution of the project to critical support for rat eradication	8

Objective	Activities	Status at Project completion	Score (0-10)
		in Kakerori habitat at Takitimu.	
Nauru	Recovery plan developed for reed warbler if survey suggest one is required	Assessment completed as component of BIORAP. PAN for Nauru is designed to protect reed warbler habitat although bird not considered in danger.	10
Tonga	Recovery plan for Tongan megapode revised as survey information obtained	A national 10 year recovery plan was completed to international standards including strategy, targets and a work plan with provision for review in 5 years.	10
OUTCOME 1. 2. Improved conservation status of priority threatened terrestrial ecosystems, consistent with selected outcomes set out in the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW).			
OUTPUTS			
1.2.1 Conservation areas established in consultation with local communities using existing successful models			
Cook Islands	Facilitate consultative and formalization process for Rarotonga Cloud Forest Reserve	Baseline survey of cloud forest ecosystem and habitats completed and recommendations developed for future catchment management.	10
	Develop a programme to protect and manage Teroto Nui and TerotoItite Pito o Kare (muddy lakes') on Mitiaro	Project review in 2014 led acknowledged that local communities were leading this work independently. Funds were re-allocated to other Cook Island activities including cloud forest survey.	NA
Nauru	Establish one or more pilot conservation areas including development of alternative livelihood options.	BIORAP results and subsequent recommendations for network of priority conservation areas provide basis for ongoing CA establishment work. Reviewers note: Unrealistic to expect establishment of conservation areas within project timeframe but management plans for Iiuw and Anabar wetland sites subsequently completed through community and stakeholder consultation this being a significant factor in protection of	9

Objective	Activities	Status at Project completion	Score (0-10)
		the areas.	
Tonga	Establish one or more pilot conservation areas based on surveys and community consultations.	BIORAP in Vava'u led to identification or priority conservation areas (Mt Talau, Talahele and Vai'utukakau, Fonualei,Maninita,Taula and Lualoli) and following community and stakeholder consultations these are under action for gazettal.	9
1.2.2 Vegetation plots established to monitor conservation area condition.			
Tonga	Complete vegetation plot establishment in Eua National Park.	Vegetation plots have been established and a monitoring protocol is in place.	10
OUTCOME 1.3 Improved conservation status of priority threatened marine ecosystems, consistent with selected outcomes set out in the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW).			
OUTPUTS			
1.3.1. Conservation areas established in consultation with local communities using existing successful models			
Cook Islands	Consultations on development and promotion of Ra'ui concept.	Initial consultations ascertained that Kouta Nui (sub Chiefs Council) was undertaking this work with support from another sources (Aronga Mana) which allowed re-allocation of IIB funds to other activities.	N/A
Nauru	Establish one or more pilot conservation areas based on surveys and community consultations.	A concept for a marine conservation area network was developed and BIORAP identified priority areas for Marine Protected Areas. Consultations also undertaken with Fisheries. The MPA's are still to be established but work on the Environment Bill will eventually support this. Reviewers note- it is unrealistic to expect conservation areas to be identified, stakeholders consulted and areas to be established within the time frame of the project.	8

Objective	Activities	Status at Project completion	Score (0-10)
		Note also: A Participatory 3 Dimensional Model (P3DM) for all of Nauru was completed. The P3DM was conducted to engage communities and key stakeholders to share outcomes of the BIORAP but more importantly to gauge local knowledge and information to construct the P3D model. The P3DM is an effective tool for community engagement and to support planning and decision making on resource management.	
Tonga	Establish one or more pilot conservation areas in the Vava'u Group based on surveys and community consultations.	BIORAP identified priority MPA's and surveys have been completed. Sites will be formally established once the gazettal process is completed. See note above re establishment. A Participatory 3 Dimensional Model of all of the Vavau Island Group was completed. The P3DM was conducted to engage communities and key stakeholders to share outcomes of the BIORAP but more importantly to gauge local knowledge and information to construct the P3D model. The P3DM is an effective tool for community engagement and to support planning and decision making on resource management.	9
Tuvalu	Establish demonstration pilot conservation projects in 4 sites biologically and culturally representative of the 9 atolls.	Mapping of sites for LMMA's in Tuvalu is underway with four of eight outer islands completed - remainder due for completion by end of project.	5
1.3.2 Pilot programme for re-establishment and replenishment of corals completed.			
Nauru	Carry out assessments and establish pilot planting programme for re-establishment and replenishment of corals.	Output/Activity modified following surveys carried out during the BIORAP that deemed pilot replanting of coral reefs inappropriate and led to recommendations regarding protection and rehabilitation of existing in situ reef ecosystems and habitats.	10
OUTCOME 2.1 Plans for the sustainable use of populations of native species			

Objective	Activities	Status at Project completion	Score (0-10)
that have been traditionally harvested are developed with full stakeholder participation.			
OUTPUTS			
2.1.1. Surveys undertaken to assess and monitor sustainability of current uses of species.			
Cook Islands	Develop an integrated ecosystem approach management plan for sustainable resource management on Mangaia and Mauke.	This activity was altered to assessing and mapping species of interest and conservation recommendations on Mauke. This resulted in completed Coconut crab survey, community consultations and associated management recommendations.	10
Nauru	Carry out survey of noddies, set monitoring and assess harvesting rates.	Surveys of both black and brown noddies were carried out during the BIORAP with recommendations provided to assist with conservation and sustainable management.	10
2.1.2 Work with communities to develop sustainable harvesting regimes.			
Tuvalu	Undertake sustainable solutions feasibility study.	This activity is being undertaken in collaboration with Fisheries Department but no results were available at time of review.	3
OUTCOME 2.2 Improved information systems and processes are planned or are in place in relevant agencies, to support implementation of the IBPOW.			
OUTPUTS			
2.2.1 National Project Coordinators appointed.			
Cook Islands	National Project Coordinator position established and functioning.	Position hired and fully functioning. Passing of original NC a loss to the project but very competent substitute appointed for final months.	10
Nauru	National Project Coordinator position established and functioning.	Position hired and functioning.	10
Tonga	National Project Coordinator position established and	Position hired and highly competent NC fully engaged with	10

Objective	Activities	Status at Project completion	Score (0-10)
	functioning.	project from the outset as is reflected in Tonga project achievements.	
Tuvalu	National Project Coordinator position established and functioning.	Position hired and functioning.	10
2.2.2 Information reviews and surveys undertaken to identify priority sites for conservation.			
Nauru	Undertake information review and surveys of terrestrial and marine ecosystems to identify potential sites for conservation areas. Share survey results and consult with communities	Major BioRAP survey undertaken in June 2013, report is finalized and printed. Reviewer note: A highly valuable multi-disciplinary survey completed with pragmatic recommendations for on-going biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, priorities, governance suggestions and associated learning and capacity building activities. Well documented and strong associated stakeholder conservation activities. This was the first such survey in Nauru and it generated much public interest and significantly improved awareness of the biodiversity values.	10
Tonga	Undertake surveys of terrestrial ecosystems of Vava'u Group to identify sites for further conservation areas. Review information, consult and carry out surveys of marine ecosystems of Vava'u Group to identify sites for conservation areas.	Major BioRAP survey undertaken in February 2014, report is finalized and printed. Reviewer note: A highly valuable multi-disciplinary survey completed with pragmatic recommendations for on-going biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, priorities, governance suggestions and associated learning and capacity building activities. Well documented and strong associated stakeholder conservation activities. Momentum and public awareness generated by BIORAP and associated consultations played a part in recent (Dec.2016) announcement of inclusion of Biodiversity in National Strategic Development Framework effectively mainstreaming biodiversity into all sector plans.	10

Objective	Activities	Status at Project completion	Score (0-10)
Tuvalu	Conduct baseline surveys of key selected indicator species.	A multi-disciplinary nation -wide BIORAP was planned for 2015 but was cancelled at short notice due to circumstances beyond the control of Project Management. The planning undertaken for the survey will remain available should it be resurrected in the near to medium term.	2
2.2.3 Legislation, regulations and policies developed for sustainable management of biodiversity and conservation area establishment.			
Cook Islands	Facilitate consultative and formalization process for the Suwarrow Island Environment Regulations and Management Plan.	The initial work on the draft regulations was completed but now has to be to be integrated with the new template for legislative drafting for the Cook Islands. More internal discussions and meetings with the national Biodiversity Committee are needed to advance the regulations and overcome issues regarding jurisdiction.	8
	Facilitate the consultative and formalisation process for the Biodiversity Conservation and Environment Regulations for the protection of the Cook Islands biodiversity.	Originally drafted under ADB project, IIB project facilitated stakeholder consultation, working group meetings and revision/re-drafting - now in final draft and awaiting submission to Cabinet	8
	Carry out mid-term review of the NESAF.	The NESAF has been reviewed and updated but is still to be submitted to Cabinet.	9
Nauru	Establish a national regulatory framework for conservation areas (terrestrial and marine).	Consultations and shared results of the BIORAP and also complementary indirect activities carried out under the NBSAP have led to recommendations for a regulatory framework to be established. Based on the recommendations of the BIORAP, Nauru has now drafted an Environment Bill for consideration by Cabinet. Reviewer notes it is unrealistic to expect a regulatory framework for conservation areas to be established in the timeframe of this project. But the progress	7

Objective	Activities	Status at Project completion	Score (0-10)
		made is commendable.	
2.2.4 Information management systems established or re-configured.			
Cook Islands	Improve biodiversity component of website.	Website hacked - information lost and requires re-building - not fully repopulated as at completion of project. Facebook page developed and operational acts as an alternative	8
	Re- programme database.	Extensive work done to upgrade and improve Cook Islands Natural Heritage Db. On completion it will be perhaps best biodiversity Db in region.	9.
Nauru	Review information systems and develop Database.	No apparent progress with activity although the BIORAP provides valuable baseline data and information for eventual inclusion in a national data base. It is noted that the full and synthesis BIORAP reports which contain vital biodiversity data and information have been uploaded to the Pacific Islands Protected Area Portal (PIPAP) by SPREP. This does ensure its protection and public availability. However the whereabouts of the raw survey data should be also recorded by SPREP.	4
Tonga	Review information systems and develop Database	Information is being integrated with existing Climate Change portal which serves all environment thematic areas including biodiversity. No progress on Db development or management at time of Terminal Review.	6
Tuvalu	Establish and maintain biodiversity database.	Discussions with Fisheries led to a request for the IIB project to provide a server to support the Fisheries Db which is maintained by Fisheries but includes marine biodiversity data.	7
2.2.5 Education and Awareness programmes developed.			
Cook Islands	Train the teachers biodiversity education programme with partner organisation Live and Learn (Fiji).	Very successful programme involving initially 18 teachers from throughout CI in biodiversity conservation awareness and education. Followed up by second	10

Objective	Activities	Status at Project completion	Score (0-10)
		training of outer island teachers. Evidence is that the training is being incorporated into teaching practices. Evaluators Note MTR commented on the need to build on this foundation and measure impact. This s very difficult to do or judge. This activity has been successfully replicated in Tuvalu.	
	Social marketing plan for national awareness and knowledge management.	Annual National Environment Service education and awareness work plan serves this purpose. Facebook page established and populated/managed. Wide range of other community and social awareness activities supported by the project include school events (cross island tour) Takitimu CA visits, biodiversity speech competition, tree planting events and annual environment week. An impressive array of posters and other information materials were produced. Reviewers note. Cook Islands also utilized re- allocated project funds for a successful P3DM activity in Vaka Puaikura district which was run by trainers from Samoa and Tonga and followed publically by many via Facebook.	10
OUTCOME 3.1. Country personnel provided with technical support and training needed to deliver project.			
OUTPUTS			
3.1.1 Technical support requirements met by SPREP staff and contractors.	SPREP Project Manager and other staff travel to countries to provide technical support and training.	Project Manager and GEF Facilitator have provided in-country support in Tonga, Nauru and Tuvalu in 2012-14. Combined IAS and IIB visit to the Cook Islands by the IAS PM and ongoing follow up as was needed.	10
	Experts sub-contracted to deliver additional technical support and training.	SPREP and other experts with Pacific Island biodiversity knowledge were contracted to support project activities throughout the project and especially for the multi-	10

Objective	Activities	Status at Project completion	Score (0-10)
		disciplinary BIORAPS and P3DMs.	
3.1.2 Country personnel, particularly coordinators, provided with training required.			
SPREP	Country staff funded to attend training and information exchanges.	Coordinators from Cook Islands, Nauru and Tonga attended the 9th Conference on Nature Conservation in Suva in December 2013. All four attended the CBD/SPREP ecosystem restoration training workshop in Suva and the opportunity to attend and participate at the IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney 2014. Further training was provided on Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation in Auckland in 2016 and on Participatory 3 Dimension Modelling. Training was also provided on marine spatial planning for all four coordinators.	10
3.1.3 Project Inception establishes the framework for future monitoring and evaluation			
SPREP	Inception workshops, national and regional.	Undertaken in 2011 and 2012.	10
OUTCOME 4.1 Project integrity and accountability for deliverables is maintained.			
OUTPUTS			
4.1.1. UNEP standards of transparency, accountability and project outcomes are objectively assessed.			
SPREP	Mid-term and final independent evaluations, annual audits.	Annual audit completed in 2013, 14 and 15. MTR completed 2014.This document constitutes the final TER.	10
OUTCOME 5.1. Effective project management and coordination in place.			
OUTPUTS			
5.1.1 Project deliverables produced on time within budget and reporting, monitoring and evaluation			

Objective	Activities	Status at Project completion	Score (0-10)
requirements met.			
SPREP	Project support offices set up, staff hired. Accounting and reporting (M&E) systems developed and implemented.	Project support offices set up, staff hired. Accounting and reporting (M&E) systems developed and implemented.	10

The overall rating on the delivery of outputs is "satisfactory"

3.3 Effectiveness: Attainment of objectives and planned results.

Achievement of direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed ToC.

93. As discussed in section 2.8 (Reconstructed TOC), the project sought to achieve a range of outcomes which would contribute the overall objective and goal. Clearly this entails a long term and iterative process of capacity building, institutional strengthening and improved public awareness of the values of healthy biodiversity and ecosystems. Consideration must also be given to the scale of achievement and the impact that can be reasonably attributed to project successes in four of the smallest (geographically and socio-economically) countries in the Pacific. The project Results Framework called for outcomes relating to *improvement*s to the baseline status of priority threatened species and priority threatened terrestrial and marine ecosystems in the four participating countries. The evaluation of the effectiveness is based on the extent to which the project outcomes and objectives were achieved.

94. Outcome 1.1 required main measures which will lead to the improved conservation status of priority threatened species to be identified and plans made for their implementation (consistent with selected outcomes set out in the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW)) Several project activities contributed to the achievement of this outcome most notably the completion of the Tongan megapode surveys in Vava'u Province and the development of programmes for their recovery, protection and management. At a national level the project achieved the adoption of the overarching national 10 year Tonga Megapode Recovery Plan. Other examples which relate to the successful achievement of Outcome 1.1 include the survey and assessment of the status of Nauru Reed Warbler, the Tongan whistler and the beach surveys of the nesting status of marine turtles in the Cook Islands together with the programmes developed for the conservation of rare plants and plants of traditional medicinal importance in that country.

95. Outcomes 1.2 and 1.3 required the project to identify main measures which will lead to the improved conservation status of priority threatened terrestrial ecosystems (1.2) and priority threatened marine ecosystems (1.3) (consistent with selected outcomes set out in the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW)). The key to the project's success in achieving these outcomes was the implementation of the BIORAP surveys in Nauru, Tonga and the Cook Islands. These were highly successful events which facilitated surveys, data collection, identification of priority sites, and the development of biodiversity management recommendations. The BIORAPs resulted in terrestrial and marine sites of importance being identified in Vava'u Province in Tonga leading to the endorsement of 7 new protected areas buy the government and strengthened management for the Mt Talau and 'Eua National Parks. Similarly the BIORAP in Nauru led to the identification of priority wetland and marine sites for conservation and triggered a stakeholder consultative process which will most likely lead to their protection. In the Cook Islands the BIORAP of the Rarotonga cloud forest identified the critical importance of this ecosystem as a habitat of rare and threatened species and for the maintenance of Rarotonga's watershed values. The recommendations from the survey will help shape the future conservation and sustainable management of the watershed. In Tuvalu the project has assisted with the identification of at least four new Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) and is helping facilitate the establishment with the local communities and Fisheries Department.

96. Outcome 2.1 required the project to develop plans for the sustainable use of populations of native species that have been traditionally harvested with full stakeholder participation. Again, the project can point to some success in achieving this outcome through its project in the Cook Islands where surveys of marine turtle nesting sites and the status of coconut crabs were followed up with discussions on the sustainable management of these species with the local communities. In Nauru where sea bird consumption is traditional the project undertook surveys of the black and brown noddy populations and shared recommendations for their sustainable harvest with local stakeholders. Already mentioned was the project's significant contribution to the protection and management of the Tonga megapode population which is an important food source for those living on the outer islands.

97. Outcome 2.2 required improved information systems and processes to be planned and in place in relevant agencies to support implementation of the IBPOW. Key elements in achieve the outcome included the implementation of surveys and reviews for gathering information, improved legislation and policies, improved information management and education and awareness programs. In this regard, the project was particularly successful in delivering the collection of new biodiversity information through its BIORAPS and other survey activities, all of which is captured in technical reports and reviews available through the SPREP resources library. The project also contributed significantly to the revision and upgrading of the Cook Islands Natural Heritage Database which is perhaps the pre-eminent national data base of its type in the Pacific region. However, the project was unable to effectively address the issue of national information and data storage and management in the other 3 countries. To a degree this has been subsequently addressed by the inclusion of country information in the Pacific Island Protected Area Portal (PIPA) which is hosted by SPREP as a regional backstopping mechanism for Pacific countries and was developed and established after the IIB project implementation was initiated.

98. New legislation, regulation and policies to support sustainable management of biodiversity were developed with project support such as in the Cook Islands where the Suwarrow Island Environment Regulations and Management Plan and the Biodiversity Conservation and Environment Regulations are in the process of endorsement. In Nauru the project has been strongly proactive in the development of a wetlands management plan and a National Wetlands Directory and in Tonga the project facilitated a process to gazette seven conservation sites identified under the BIORAP. What did become evident during the course of the project was the risk of some of these elements, taking longer than expected to bring to fruition and exceeding the project timeframe. In this regard, several t of the project supported initiatives were still to be completed by project termination, although most were well advanced in their approval process as for example, in Tonga where the process is considered 98%complete.

99. Education and awareness programmes also contributed to the achievement of outcome 2.2.In this regard, the project is considered to have been highly successful through a wide range of initiatives which have significantly improved public perceptions of the importance of biodiversity and sustainable natural resource management. These included the use of World Biodiversity Day and World Environmental Day events to promote biodiversity issues addressed by the project. When assessing the achievement of the outcome, it is also relevant to consider the substantial support the project provided to help facilitate successful public and community awareness programmes in all four countries. Tools like the P3DM proved highly successful in engaging communities and stakeholders on biodiversity issues and programs like that delivered by "Live and Learn" in the Cook Islands, and Tuvalu , which successfully trained teacher in biodiversity education techniques, helped leverage education and awareness into schools throughout these small Island nations.

100. Outcome 3.1 related to the project's success in providing participating country personnel with technical support and training needed to deliver project. This successful achievement of this key project outcome has implications for the continuity of many of the project's initiatives and its long term and was another strong feature of project implementation. One on one training of national coordinators in project management was undertaken as was group training of NCs and other key staff involved in biodiversity in the participating countries in technical areas such as the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation, on P3DM methods and on marine spatial planning. The BIORAP surveys offered valuable training in biodiversity survey techniques and mentoring opportunities to many national government agency and CSO staff and the efforts by project management to ensure cross fertilisation of ideas and experiences between the staff of the participating countries was highly commendable. Several of the national participants interviewed emphasised the value of these learning experiences which also included project support for participation in international forums like the

Ninth Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas and the IUCN World Parks Conference, and did much to help build confidence and an understanding of international biodiversity policy formulation processes.

101. Outcomes 4.1 and 5.1. Although these components are included in the Results Framework they are not strictly "programmatic" in terms of their contribution to the achievement of the project's direct outcome and outputs. For this reason they have not been included in the RTOC analysis which focuses on identifying the long term impact of project outputs and outcomes on the state of biodiversity in the project countries. Nevertheless it is appropriate to briefly comment on their achievement here. Both outcomes are commented on in greater detail under Section 3.6. in sub sections Monitoring and Evaluation and Programme Management and Implementation

102. Outcome 4.1 relates to the Monitoring and Evaluation Component of the project and requires that project integrity and accountability for deliverables is maintained. In this regard, the project has successfully achieved its inception programme, completed the MTR, has undertaken audits as required and will have completed the required Terminal Evaluation once this review is submitted. In addition the project has completed the Biodiversity Tracking Tool developed for GEF4, 5 and 6.

103. Outcome 5.1 relates to effective project management and coordination being in place and this has been shown to be the case with the establishment of the Project Management Unit comprising the Task Manager, representing the IA, the Project Manager, representing the EA and the National Coordinators representing the National Coordination Office. The project strengthened coordination through annual Project Implementation Reviews and established communication protocols.

104. Overall, the project was able to translate the high standard of achievement of direct project outputs into the successful achievement of outcomes which given the resources and capacity available and in the context of Pacific Island conservation and the institutional and socio-cultural environment in which it operates, are rated as "satisfactory".

The rating for overall achievement of outcomes is "satisfactory"

Likelihood of impact

105. The ROtI approach is used to assess the likelihood of impact by building upon the concepts of Theory of Change (Section 3.9). The ROtI approach requires ratings to be determined for the outcomes achieved by the project and the progress made towards the 'intermediate states' at the time of the evaluation.

106. **Immediate State 1**: This calls for the project to encourage and facilitate government and community support for threatened species conservation and protected area programs leading to improved conservation status of priority threatened species and terrestrial and marine ecosystems. Examination of the project's overall success in working with government and stakeholders, including communities, to deliver a range of relevant outputs and direct outcomes suggests the project has been responsible for at least laying the foundation for achieving improved conservation status in Tonga, Nauru and the Cook Islands. The project has not been able to achieve its full range of outputs and direct outcomes in Tuvalu, largely due to the slow start in that country, difficulties with communications and correspondence and local circumstances beyond the control of project management which led to the last minute cancellation of the planned BIORAP and thus the loss of momentum this activity successfully generated in the other three countries.

107. The BIORAP surveys in Nauru, Tonga and the Cook Islands were highly successful events which facilitated the development of local capacity to undertake many aspects of biodiversity management including surveys, data collection, priority identification, recommendations and consultations, and the development of biodiversity management recommendations. In Nauru the BIORAP represented the first full scale multi-disciplinary survey to gather data and information on key species, habitats and ecosystems in that island's history and opened the way for biodiversity conservation from an almost zero pre-project baseline. Similarly, the activities in Vavau, Tonga together with the associated government and public consultations by the survey teams and follow up activities such as the collaborative P3DM exercise led to government and community support for the implementation of recommendations on species management e.g. the Tongan megapode and for the planning and establishment of protected areas. In the Cook Islands the mini BIORAP of the Rarotonga cloud forest identified key species and habitats and led to recommendations for the future management of this

critically important catchment ecosystem. The recommendations for management measures arising from these surveys and the information and data collected have been widely accepted by government agencies and other stakeholders including communities and will, over time and subject to ongoing implementation efforts, serve these countries very well in terms of their efforts to manage biodiversity and contribute to the IBPoW.

108. **Immediate State 2**: This calls on Pacific governments to work collaboratively with communities and CSO's to establish sustainable resource use measures supported by institutional structures, legislative mechanisms and staff with biodiversity management skills and experience to encourage community led biodiversity and sustainable resource use initiatives. There is clearly overlap and complementarity with the direct project outcomes and underlying outputs contributing to Intermediate State 1. However, the key outputs and outcomes related to achieving this intermediate state are those focussed on plans for the sustainable use of populations of native species that have been traditionally harvested, improvements to information management systems, policy and legislation on which sustainable resource management decisions can be made and regulated and strengthening national management and technical capacity.

109. In this regard, the project has been successful in achieving its planned outcomes through improvements in these categories in all countries with Tonga and the Cook Islands demonstrating strong results and Nauru, where biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use has not previously been a focus of government, embracing project generated recommendations. Examples which support this assessment include the survey, assessment and management recommendations for the black and brown noddy populations on Nauru which have long been a traditional source of food, the coconut crab assessment and sustainability recommendations in the Cook Islands, marine turtle nesting site surveys on the outer Cook Islands, recovery plans and monitoring of the Tongan megapodes and the project's support for the documentation and sustainable use of traditional medicinal plants in the Cook Islands.

110. Satisfactory achievements in terms of improved information systems, policy, legislation and regulation can also be attributed to the project. In Nauru the project has been strongly proactive in the development of a wetlands management plan and a National Wetlands Directory. Training on GIS and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) has prompted government agencies to collaborate and begin work on a MSP with assistance from SPREP and other project partners. A feature of this work was the active participation of environment officers from the Cook Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu and the resultant sharing of their country experiences. The project's adoption of the P3DM as a methodology for engaging communities in biodiversity management planning and increasing awareness in Nauru was highly successful as it was in Tonga and the Cook Islands. Biodiversity management policy and legislation was also advanced in the Cook Islands and in Tonga, the project achieved equally impressive outcomes with a formal process for the establishment of new conservation areas being initiated and the process for official gazettal of seven new conservation areas recommended by the BIORAP now underway. Although the project outcomes in Tuvalu were not at the same scale as in the other three countries, at the conclusion of the project work was well underway to map new conservation areas and Locally Managed Marine Areas with four of eight islands completed.

111. The combined effect of the project's achievements and outcomes provide each of the participating countries with an improved foundation of technical skills, management experience, biodiversity management techniques, legislation and policy, information, knowledge and public awareness on which they can continue to build the biodiversity conservation capacity needed to fully realise the impact of the project.

112. The rating system is presented in Table 7 below and the assessment of the project's progress towards achieving its intended impacts is presented in Table 8.

Table 7: Rating Scale for Outcomes and Progress towards Intermediate States

Outcome Rating	Rating on progress toward Intermediate States
D: The project's intended outcomes were not delivered	D: No measures taken to move towards intermediate states.
C: The project's intended outcomes were delivered, but were not designed to feed into a continuing process after project funding	C: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started, but have not produced results.

B: The project's intended outcomes were delivered, and were designed to feed into a continuing process, but with no prior allocation of responsibilities after project funding	B: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and have produced results, which give no indication that they can progress towards the intended long term impact.
A: The project's intended outcomes were delivered, and were designed to feed into a continuing process, with specific allocation of responsibilities after project funding.	A: The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and have produced results, which clearly indicate that they can progress towards the intended long term impact.

Table 8: Overall Likelihood of Achieving Impact

Results rating of project entitled:

Implementing the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by Integrating the Conservation Management of Island Biodiversity.

Outputs	Outcomes	Rating (D – A)	Intermediate states	Rating (D – A)	Impact (GEB)	Rating (+)	Overall
Surveys undertaken to establish status of species at different sites. Programmes developed to protect and manage threatened species. Species recovery plans developed Conservation areas established in consultation with local communities using existing successful models. Vegetation plots established to monitor conservation area condition. Conservation areas established in consultation with local communities using existing successful models. Pilot programme for re-establishment and replenishment of corals completed. Surveys undertaken to assess and monitor sustainability of current uses of species. Work with communities to develop sustainable harvesting regimes. Information reviews and surveys undertaken to identify priority sites for	Improved conservation status of priority threatened species consistent with selected outcomes set out in the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW). Improved conservation status of priority threatened terrestrial ecosystems, consistent with selected outcomes set out in the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work(IBPOW). Improved conservation status of priority threatened marine ecosystems, consistent with selected outcomes set out in the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW). Plans for the sustainable use of populations of native species that have been traditionally harvested are developed with full stakeholder	B	Government and community support for threatened species conservation and protected area programs leads to improved conservation status of priority threatened species and terrestrial and marine ecosystems Governments are working collaboratively with communities and CSO's to establish sustainable resource use measures supported by institutional structures, legislative mechanisms, and staff with biodiversity management skills and experience resulting in community led biodiversity and sustainable resource use initiatives.	B	Improvement in the well being of Pacific Island communities through the sustainable and integrated management and conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems and the services they provide, including species of subsistence and cultural importance and the genetic diversity in the region.		BB

conservation. Legislation, regulations and policies developed for sustainable management of biodiversity and conservation area establishment. Information management systems established or re-configured. Education and Awareness programmes developed Technical support requirements met by SPREP staff and contractors. Country personnel, particularly coordinators, provided with training required. Project Inception establishes the framework for future monitoring and evaluation.	participation Improved information systems and processes are planned or are in place in relevant agencies, to support implementation of the IBPOW. Country personnel provided with technical support and training needed to deliver project.						
	Justification for rating:		Justification for rating:		Justification for rating:		
	With one or two exceptions, the project's intended outcomes were predominantly delivered and many, but not all, were designed to feed into a continuing process after project funding. Similarly, most outcomes were linked to ongoing biodiversity conservation programs in lead government agencies but it is questionable whether the desired level of follow up activity will be possible due to funding and capacity constraints faced by the countries.		The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and many but not all, are producing promising results which if sustained, will, over time, lead significantly to assisting the countries to achieve the desired long term impact.		Project has laid the foundations for change but has not yet clearly achieved documented changes in environmental status during its lifetime.		

113. Not all the outcomes were fully achieved, particularly those associated with Tuvalu which suffered through the last minute cancellation of the planned BIORAP. It must be stressed this was due to factors beyond the control of the Project Manager (and the IA and EA) and although efforts have been made to intensify implementation of activities since this event occurred, these lagged behind the levels of progress achieved in the other three countries. The cancellation of the BIORAP had a severe impact on the progress of the project in Tuvalu as it denied project management the opportunity to build momentum through the physical presence of a scientific team in the country. As can be seen from the strong performances of the other three countries, BIORAPs can significantly assist with the development of protected area policy, strategies and recommendations as well as government and public awareness. As such the cancellation in Tuvalu represents a lost opportunity for both the government and people of the country. It should also be noted that the loss of project momentum in Tuvalu through the cancellation of the BIORAP is reflected in some of the lower ratings and scores of the evaluation and a case could be made that this should not be a reflection on the work of the IA/EA or PSU as this event was outside their control.

114. Given the very slow start to work plan implementation, the Secretariat has worked very hard with the National Coordinators and lead government agencies and partners to achieve a remarkable suite of outcomes and to ensure the project leaves a legacy of increased capacity and improved understanding and commitment to biodiversity conservation in Nauru, Tonga and the Cook Islands in particular. In addition the project management has been very conscious of the need to strengthen the institutional foundations for biodiversity conservation in the participating countries and this work has established instruments in several countries which can be viewed as bridges between the direct outcomes, the intermediate states and long term impact. Rating of progress towards Outcomes is rated "B".

115. As mentioned above, the outcomes have also contributed to the mainstreaming of biodiversity through the project's contribution towards improved national policy and legislation. This, together with the progress made in capacity building, strengthening information management systems, species conservation and recovery planning and protected area planning and establishment represents measures which are moving the countries towards the intermediate states. Adding to the assessment is the knowledge that the project has contributed significantly to the subsequent development of the GEF 5 Ridge to Reef (R2R) projects in Nauru and Tuvalu, the also in the Cook Islands and Tonga. In all four countries the IIB project has helped establish the capacity and institutional foundation needed to support on-going biodiversity conservation efforts such as the R2R projects. Rating of progress towards the Intermediate States is rated "B".

116. According to this methodology, the rating obtained is translated onto the usual 6-point rating scale used in UNEP project evaluations, as shown in Table 9 below.

Table 9: 'Overall likelihood of impact achievement' on a six point scale.

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

NB: projects that achieve documented changes in environmental status during the project's lifetime receive a positive impact rating, indicated by a "+".

117. The aggregate rating is "BB". While the project has done much to improve the biodiversity information and data available to the participating countries and its recommendations lay the foundation for improved policy legislation and planning, it is still too early to be able to point to documented changes in environmental status which have resulted from the project. Therefore the + appellation does not apply. However, the Project with an aggregated rating of BB as described in the Table 8 above, can be rated as "Likely" to achieve the expected Impact.

The evaluation rating for the likelihood of impact of the project is "likely"

Achievement of the formal project objectives as presented in the Project Document

118. The overall project goal "to improve the well-being of Pacific Island communities by applying an ecosystem approach to the conservation of ecosystems, species and genetic diversity in the Pacific

region" is high level and very broad in scope. This is narrowed somewhat by the Project Objective of "contributing to the implementation of the Convention on Biodiversity's Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by supporting an integrated ecosystem approach to biodiversity conservation management at the local level in four Pacific countries" While achievement of the project objective will, in a small way, contribute incrementally to the broad regional scale Goal, the real benefits of the project are accruing to the four participating countries where the achievement of the project objective has been responsible for improved knowledge and data on the state of biodiversity, plans and recommendations for improving biodiversity conservation and management which are being taken forward by the governments and affected communities and improving the capacity and mechanisms for biodiversity management. Importantly, the project has resulted in increasing public awareness of the importance of biodiversity and integrated ecosystem management to maintaining a healthy society across all age groups and genders. Clearly some elements of the project will be stronger in some countries than in others e.g. legislation and policy in the Cook Islands, protected area planning and establishment in Tonga, Nauru and Tuvalu. However, looking at the project achievements across each of the countries and taking into account the capacity constraints in all four countries, there is ample justification to conclude that in aggregate the overall Objective has been satisfactorily achieved.

The overall rating for the achievement of project goals and objectives is "satisfactory"

3.4 Sustainability of Outcomes

119. Sustainability is understood to be the probability of continued long-term project-derived results and impacts after the project funding and assistance has ended. As such there are a number of critical factors which influence the sustainability of the outcomes of the IIB project. These include the overall capacity of countries to maintain the momentum generated by the project, socio-political support, the availability of internal budgetary funding and the continuing levels of regional and international funding, and regional support and leadership for biodiversity conservation through SPREP and its partners. As mentioned in the discussion of achievement of outcomes and impact above, the project design has, from the outset, addressed factors which are fundamental to sustaining the momentum and benefits arising from the outcomes. These include addressing the issue of capacity constraints through the training of National Coordinators in project management and biodiversity management methodologies, strengthening national policy and legislation, driving new levels of public awareness and address community, women and youth involvement through innovative measures such as P3DM activities. This multi-faceted and multi- layered suite of outcomes has built a sound foundation for sustaining the project outcomes well beyond its termination. This is further reinforced by the knowledge that SPREP has a leadership role and responsibility to address biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use through its regional biodiversity mandate and leadership of the Pacific Islands Round Table for Nature Conservation and as such, will maintain to the best of its ability the technical support and advisory role which it applied throughout the project.

The overall rating for sustainability of outcomes is "satisfactory"

Socio-political sustainability

120. The IIB project has been managed and implemented by professionals who fully understand the importance encouraging government and public support for conservation efforts if these are to be sustainable. This is particularly relevant in the Pacific Islands context where populations are small, and where communities and families make decisions on natural resource use under the traditional and cultural resource use systems which still prevail. Small populations also mean governments are close to and influenced by their communities but are also challenged to meet the many competing demands for services in the face of insufficient revenues. It is therefore important for projects advocating conservation and sustainable development of biodiversity to raise awareness and strengthen political will and government commitment by working at multiple levels e.g. with youth, villages and the broader community and with government agencies and politicians. In this regard, the IIB project has been outstanding. There are many examples of successful community and government engagement in project activities, especially in association with the BIORAPS. The broad community interest generated by these intense multi-disciplinary surveys on islands, especially on small islands like Nauru and the

Vavau Group in Tonga led to engagement by local politicians as advocates for recommendations for legislation and policy change at the national level e.g. the Governor of Vava'u Province fully supported BIORAP recommendations for 7 new protected areas now under gazettal processes.

121. Amongst the many activities supported by and implemented through the project, it is the adoption by project management of the Participatory 3 Dimensional Modelling (P3DM) methodology as a key tool for driving socio-political support that stands out as being a highly innovative and effective decision. Having seen the results of the various modelling activities in Tonga and listening to the enthusiasm of some of those involved in the activities, it is clear that the P3DM process was responsible for creating a high level of interest in biodiversity and ecosystem management in those communities involved. Further, it worked as an innovative mechanism for learning and sharing experiences, bridging gaps between stakeholders and between countries through south - south exchanges such as the one between Samoa and Tonga whereby Samoa Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment staff assisted their Tongan counterparts. Another outstanding example of efforts to strengthen socio-political support was the broad national biodiversity education and awareness supported by the project in the Cook Islands. Again, this highly successful programme targeted multiple sectors in the broader community and has been instrumental in raising the profile and importance of biodiversity in that country.

122. The contribution of these efforts to sustaining the overall work of the IIB and the likelihood of achieving its objective and goal is difficult to objectively measure however, the Governments of Nauru, Tonga and the Cook Islands are all now in the process of considering or enacting new legislation which supports long term biodiversity management. This and the impact of the public awareness and community engagement activities supported by the project provide evidence for the probability of socio - political sustainability of the project outcomes.

The rating for socio-political sustainability is "highly likely"

Sustainability of Financial Resources

123. The continued progress with project results, especially the monitoring and management of threatened species, the expansion of protected area networks, the continuation of public education and awareness programmes and importantly the finalisation of policy and legislative instruments will depend on the availability of financial resources. National government budgetary allocations are the long term key to sustainability for financial resources for biodiversity management. In this regard, by raising the profile of integrated biodiversity management and its benefits, the project has provided incentives to governments to at least maintain, if not increase their budget allocations to the lead government environment agencies including in the case of Tonga and Nauru, funding to establish permanent biodiversity officer positions to be filled by the project's National Coordinators. However, the relatively intense levels and short term surge of activity generated by the IIB project will not be fully maintained or repeated without substantial external funding. In another example of the important role assigned the Project Implementation Review process, participants in the 2015 meeting canvassed a wide range of potential sources for this funding. Options included the GEF, European Union, Green Climate Fund (GCF) and bilateral sources. Presently the GEF 5 Ridges to Reef project is providing funding for integrated natural resource management to all four of the participating IIB countries which are applying this to ongoing and overlapping activities developed under the IIB project, thus sustaining progress at least for the next 4 years. Again, based on the outcomes of the IIB project, the Government of Tonga has included Vavau in a new project proposal for the GCF initiated in late 2015.The rating for the financial sustainability is "likely"

Sustainability of Institutional Frameworks

124. This section assesses the likelihood that institutional and government structures which have been influenced by the project will be sustained over time. In this regard the project has focussed primarily on strengthening the national biodiversity management coordination mechanisms and assisting with the development of policy and legislation. In the case of the former, the project recognised the importance of having biodiversity focal points with training in management and the technical aspects of biodiversity conservation sustaining project outcomes. Establishing the national coordination offices and the National Coordinator positions, although slow to get underway, was seen as critical to strengthening in country biodiversity capacity. This was achieved with the help of

SPREP's training and support initiatives and the offices and NC's were functioning well at project termination. Commendably, Tonga committed to establishing a permanent biodiversity officer's position for its national coordinator and biodiversity management responsibilities were also assigned to permanent environment agency staff in Nauru and the Cook Islands. This work on the institutional framework of the project enabled project outcomes and benefits to be sustained during the life of the project, and will significantly assist with their continuation beyond project termination.

125. At another higher level, the project outcomes in relation to policy and legislation represent institutional advances which bode well for outcome sustainability. Initiatives such as the community based management planning for two recommended wetland areas in Nauru, the adoption for gazettal of 7 new protected areas in Tonga and the project's influence on biodiversity being included in the National Development Strategic Framework in December 2016 and the drafting of Biodiversity Regulations, the Suwarrow Management Plan, and the review of the Cook Islands National Environment Strategic Action Framework all represent a significant contribution to the institutional sustainability of project outcomes and justify at least a "likely" rating .

The rating for the institutional sustainability is "likely"

Environmental sustainability

126. The rationale behind the project is to help the participating countries protect and manage their biodiversity in integrated and sustainable way while ensuring ecosystem stability by building the knowledge, institutions, capacity, technical skills and experience needed to achieve this objective. In this regard the entire project is working toward improving national environmental stability while also contributing positively to environmental sustainability in the region and, albeit in a small way, to the broader global of the CBD Islands Biodiversity Programme of Work. In doing so the project has been responsible for several significant advances to the existing knowledge of biodiversity in the environments of the participating countries through the BIORAPs and surveys of priority and threatened species and plants and animals of traditional and subsistence importance. The recommendations from the BIORAPs are all aimed at progress towards improving environmental sustainability in the participating countries.

127. It should be noted that Climate Change poses an insidious threat to the marine and terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity of the region and by implication, environmental stability in the participating countries and the Pacific. Because of its pervasiveness and potential effect on fundamental biological processes, climate change will interact with other existing stressors to affect distribution, spread and abundance of many species and impact the ecological integrity of the unique and vulnerable ecosystems and habitats of the region. While CC was not a specific focus of the project and it is difficult to know how this will unfold over time, the project outcomes may help add a small measure of resilience to the impacts of climate change. In short, the project has contributed to environmental sustainability in all the participating countries but the unknown impact of Climate Change introduces an element of uncertainty and suggests a rating of "likely" is appropriate.

The rating for the environmental sustainability element is "likely"

Catalytic Role and Replication

128. It is noted that the catalytic role of UNEP interventions is embodied in the approach to supporting the creation of an enabling environment and of investing in pilot activities which are innovative and showing how new approaches can work and can be up-scaled. In this regard the project has performed very well though its introduction of best practices for biodiversity surveys (the BIORAP methodology), the introduction of P3DM methodology to all four countries, and the provision of training in the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation and associated capacity building through field training involving "hands on" experience, mentoring with experts and importantly, the encouragement of Pacific island people to train and support other Pacific islanders. The key categories are addressed below:

129. ***Catalysed behavioural changes***: The project has been responsible for catalysing behavioural change at multiple levels including communities, local government and national government. The use of the P3DM methodology to encourage communities and stakeholders at priority sites to engage in

dialogue on biodiversity and the importance of healthy natural ecosystems and the impact of human actions, was extremely well received and enthusiastically supported by the target stakeholders. In fact, some of these emphasised to the reviewer how much it had affected their thinking and attitude in support of active sustainable management of natural systems and resources. The P3DM process also had a valuable role in capacity building. The Project Manager is to be commended for facilitating the exchange of knowledge, the confidence building and the learning and training which was achieved through the use of P3DM trained staff from the MENR in Samoa to assist local staff in Nauru, Tonga and the Cook Islands with the National Coordinator from Tonga also assisting in the Cook Islands. This collaboration between Pacific islanders working and learning together is a strong catalyst for behavioural change. At another level the implementation of BIORAPs in three of the participating countries acted as a catalyst for change in that it exposed individuals and stakeholders to new fields of knowledge and catalysed new levels of understanding and support for biodiversity and its sustainable management. That the BIORAPs and P3DM (and the project) have led to changed attitudes in government is alluded to by the active involvement and interest of the Governor of Vava'u in promoting action on the Vava'u BIORAP recommendations and the President of Nauru's personal interest in the P#DM model of Nauru and the findings of the BIORAP.

Recommendation# 2. The IIB project has successfully introduced, demonstrated (and replicated) two important methodologies (BIORAP and Participatory 3 Dimensional Modelling) for facilitating integrated biodiversity and ecosystem management. By trialling these in the Pacific island context, the project has demonstrated that they are particularly appropriate for use in support of biodiversity management in the small island context and could serve as a useful models for further GEF or other donor funded island biodiversity conservation projects. Further, SPREP has collaborated with a partner (Wildlands) to produce guidelines for the implementation of BIORAPs and similar guides and case studies are available for P3DM methodologies. Accordingly, it is recommended that in consultation with the GEF, UNEP and SPREP seek to Investigate with members of the Pacific Islands Round Table for Nature Conservation, the potential for a training programme in these methodologies linked to and in support of, current biodiversity programmes and projects underway in the region such as the GEF5 Ridges to Reef (R2R) programme and those of the international NGO's.

130. ***Provided incentives***: In the absence of direct financial incentives, the primary incentive offered through the project to encourage stakeholder engagement and changed behaviour was the promise of learning, training and opportunity to become up-skilled in aspects of environmental management. Capacity strengthening of this nature is welcomed in the Pacific region where education and learning opportunities are highly sought after. In this regard, the evaluator was consistently informed by the participants in project activities that their involvement and the training and mentoring offered had been a valued experience resulting in a new appreciation of and commitment to, biodiversity and threatened species management.

131. ***Institutional changes***: Prior comment has been made on the project's catalytic role in establishing or strengthening national biodiversity management coordination mechanisms and providing for permanent biodiversity focal points resulting in improved institutional capacity for biodiversity management. It was also mentioned in interviews and noticeable during the country visits, that there was a good degree of cooperation between government agencies with biodiversity responsibilities and NGO's and other national ad hoc organisations with biodiversity mandates. For example the collaboration with the Vava'u Environmental Protection Association and the project management staff was critical to the success of the Vava'u BIORAP as was the cooperation between the lead government agency in the Cook Islands (National Environment Service) and the Cook Islands Natural History Trust (manager of the national natural heritage data base) and Te Ipukarea Society, an NGO with a strong environmental focus. It is fair to say that the project provided opportunities which led to improved cooperation and collaboration between lead government agencies and a range of supportive partners, particularly in Tonga and the Cook Islands.

132. ***Policy changes***: Key policy changes have been described elsewhere and centre on the drafting, updating, or approval of biodiversity related policy and legislation. Of particular note are the drafting of the Biodiversity Regulations for the Cook Islands, that country's development of the Suwarrow National Park management plan, and its review of the Cook Islands National Environment Strategic Action Framework all represent improvements in policy and legislation. However, undoubtedly the most significant policy change which the outcomes of the IIB project may have contributed was the

Tongan government decision to integrate biodiversity into the National Development Strategic Framework which affects all sectors and effectively mainstreams biodiversity into the development process in that country.

133. Despite these gains it is noted that at the time of project termination most of these policy and legislative initiatives were still ether in draft form and working through a consultative process, or were in the government system awaiting final Cabinet or other Executive approval. This is not unusual as projects such as the IIB are time-bound interventions to assist countries to progress their biodiversity priorities. But it does reflect the length of time it takes to secure policy change or enact legislation and regulation in the Pacific. While it is highly unlikely the IIB supported initiatives will founder as countries should continue to look for external financial support for their priorities , there is always the possibility that without the on-going support, attention and resources the project provides, these will fall behind in terms of government priority and take longer to bring to fruition than anticipated.

Lesson# 2. It is important that projects with policy and legislative components give priority to getting these underway at the earliest possible stage of project implementation in order to ensure the maximum possible time frame to bring them to fruition prior to project termination. Failure to do so may mean the completion of project outputs and outcomes is compromised and further delays may occur if the project is unable to provide on-going support for the approval process.

134. ***Catalytic financing***: It should be noted that each of the participating countries are also participants under the $91 million GEF 5 Ridges to Reefs (R2R) regional programme being implemented by UNDP and the Secretariat for the Pacific Community. In each case it is clear that the outcomes of the IIB project have provided the catalyst for the follow up activities under the R2 R project which will build upon and sustain the IIB investment in integrated biodiversity and ecosystem management

135. ***Champions to catalyse change***: Overall, it is fair to say the project has been successful in creating not just one or two "champions" but a small cadre of individuals across the participating countries who have demonstrated leadership and a commendable level of commitment to biodiversity conservation and management. These people have been instrumental in the facilitation of project implementation and have become key "go to" people on national biodiversity management issues. They include the National Coordinators in each country and in particular Tonga where the NC has been dedicated to the project from its inception and is widely acknowledged to have performed outstanding in this role. The project has also benefitted from the patronage of high level politicians in some countries. Notable examples include in Tonga where the Governor of Vava'u Province has been a champion for biodiversity management in the Province and in Nauru where the President has taken and personal interest in the work of the project. Finally, it is appropriate to note here the consistent appreciation of the leadership and pragmatic management approach of the SPREP Project Manager by many of the interviewees, including project partners, who also noted the importance of her contribution to the facilitation of the strong capacity building component of the project.

Replication

136. Integrated biodiversity management is a holistic concept requiring, among other elements, the coordination of a wide range of technical elements, data and information analysis, stakeholder consultation, and a supportive and enabling policy and institutional environment. Although replication strategies are not clearly articulated in the project design, the project has identified several management tools and practices which are highly appropriate for application in the Pacific region. These include the very successful BIORAP survey methodology and the P3DM community engagement tool, both of which were introduced to the participating countries for the first time and played a pivotal role in ensuring the overall success of the project. Both methodologies were applied successfully in Samoa and it is commendable that IIB project management recognised their potential to advance progress with project activities, outputs and outcomes and ensured their successful replication in the participating countries. While these two methodologies are outstanding examples of replication, so too is the Train the Teachers biodiversity education programme run by the project partner Live and Learn Environmental Education (Fiji). This highly successful model for integrating biodiversity into the primary and secondary school curricula was introduced to the Cook Islands and replicated in Tuvalu and is another example of the effort made by the Project Manager to strengthen

broad community understanding and appreciation of the role of biodiversity in supporting human well-being in the Pacific Islands.

The project's catalytic role and replication is rated as "highly satisfactory"

3.5 Efficiency

Cost efficiencies

137. The relatively low level of funding in relation to the expected project outputs and outcomes which was allocated to the IIB project required careful use of funding and project management has been diligent in seeking out cost efficiencies. One example is the use of the BIORAP survey methodology. These carefully planned multi-disciplinary surveys concentrated a group of external experts and local staff in one place at one time and facilitated a number of outputs (information and data collection, local staff training and mentoring, integrated data and information analysis, formulation of recommendations for threatened species, sustainable resource use, priority protected areas etc.) while at the same time providing a vehicle to advance public and community awareness and engage with politicians. Although no actual numbers are available, the savings arising from this intensive approach versus the cost of a number of single purpose visits to these countries would have been substantial and were an important contribution to the high activity completion levels the project achieved.

138. The other notable area where cost efficiencies were achieved was through the linking of the GEFPAS IIB project activities with those of the GEFPAS IAS project in Tonga and the Cook Islands which were participating countries in both projects. For example, the Cook Islands National Environment Service (NES) which was the lead agency for both projects in that country, developed its 2014 themed public awareness campaign "E Tango Maori te Ao Ora Natura: Our Islands, Our Biodiversity, Our Future" by integrating biodiversity conservation, invasive species management and their importance to the future of the country. Other cost saving measures were ensuring that meetings of project management and national coordination staff were held in conjunction with regional conferences or international meetings (e.g. 9th Pacific Islands Conference on nature Conservation and Protected Areas (Fiji 2013) and the IUCN World Congress in Sydney 2015. This approach provided opportunities for participants to also contribute to and participate in the international forums.

139. Examination of the project also reveals success in working strategically with a range of partners where utilisation of their expertise and resources has added value to project activities for the overall benefit of all parties. Examples have been mentioned elsewhere but include the Vava'u Environmental Protection Association's critical role in support of the Vava'u BIORAP and its follow up, including bait laying and monitoring of invasive species impacts on in the Tongan whistler in Talau protected area.

Timeliness

140. Substantial effort went into the design process of the IIB project which overall, resulted in a strong suite of activities and outputs which were appropriate to the needs of the participating countries and have helped significantly to advance biodiversity and ecosystem management and public awareness. That project management was able to overcome the significant delays to work plan implementation due to slow recruitment of NC's (over a year in some cases) is a result of their persistence and commitment to achieving results. Other issues impacting project timeliness related to reporting and the scheduling of payments. Project management has worked hard to improve the timeliness of reporting (both activity and financial) where this was needed (two of the participating countries) and this has resulted in some improvement but even by project's end, remains a point of contention. The introduction of the new United Nations financial system (UMOJA) has also been responsible for delays to the project payment cycles including the completion of a number of end of project related outputs. This is a systemic problem over which project management has little influence but it is frustrating and impacts on the otherwise strong rating for project efficiency.

The overall rating for efficiency is "satisfactory"

3.6 Factors affecting performance

Preparation and readiness

141. The project design was definitely a drawn out affair but the process did involve consultations with the participating countries from as early as 2007 and a small number of key external stakeholders leading to approval for the PIF and PPG in 2009/10 and eventual endorsement by GEF in December 2011. Finalisation of the design involved a substantial effort with significant input from both the UNEP Task Manager and the SPREP Project Manager who took leading facilitation and drafting/editing roles. Both individuals had extensive experience working in biodiversity conservation roles in the Pacific and the overall result was a strong suite of activities and outputs which were appropriate to the needs of the participating countries and have helped significantly to advance biodiversity and ecosystem management and public awareness. This process did allow time to ensure the appropriate national endorsements and commitments of counterpart funding were secured.

142. If there is criticism to be made of the project design it is that it: i) underestimated the national capacity required to implement the in-country elements of the project or the time it would take to recruit National Coordinators and develop that capacity and ii), there were too many activities which strained the resources and capacity available for implementation. The former point had an impact on the readiness of at least two of the countries (Tuvalu and Nauru) to engage in work plan implementation and is an issue with Pacific regional projects which is not just specific to this project. Either under-estimating available project management capacity or over-estimating the ability of EA's to rapidly recruit or develop that capacity has hindered many Pacific development projects and the lessons are regularly noted in evaluations. The reality is that project approval and implementation seldom allow sufficient time at the front end of the project cycle to address this issue, inevitably leading to work plan delays once the project is approved. The second point in relation to too many activities in the face of limited capacity was also raised by the MTR which recommended reducing the number of activities given the remaining timeframe. Project Management responded well by undertaking a review of all project activities and budget with the input of NC's (Sydney, 2014 and Tonga 2015) leading to rationalisation and modification of the work plan and activities for the remainder of the project (see Lesson #3). This paved the way for an acceleration in work plan implementation over the remaining 2 years of the project and the overall successful implementation which followed, without any particular loss of performance in terms of outputs, outcomes and impact. In fact, the log frame and work plan revisions led were a good example of proactive and adaptive management and led to an overall improvement to project focus and its relevance to national biodiversity needs.

The rating for project preparation and readiness was "moderately satisfactory"

Project implementation and management

143. The IIB project was implemented through a standard GEF project management structure as set out in the ProDoc. This consisted of the UNEP Task Manager representing the IA, the SPREP) Project Manager representing the EA and the National Project Coordinators in the National Coordination offices. This group was collectively named the Project Support Unit (PSU). Project Management also features as Component 5 of the Results Framework which Component 5 requires effective project management and coordination to be in place with project deliverables produced on time and within budget and reporting, monitoring and evaluation requirements to be met.

144. A feature of the project implementation and management was the strong cooperative working relationship which existed between the Task Manager and the Project Manager and the SPREP BEMD staff assisting with implementation. This was in part due to the co-location of the TM in the SPREP offices which ensured timely and pragmatic decision making based on the experience of the individuals concerned both in terms of their understanding of biodiversity conservation and the challenges of project implementation in the Pacific region. The role and excellent working relationship between the Project Manager and TM were critical to the success of the project and a number of interviewees went out of their way to commend the quality and consistency of the support received from SPREP and the TM throughout the project. In the view of the evaluator the professional and personal skills and dedication of these staff was instrumental in the ultimate success of the project.

145. The project commencement and implementation was hampered by a slow start with over a year lost before countries actually became engaged in work plan implementation as measured by the first transfer of funds or appointment of the National Coordinator. The delayed recruitment of National Coordinators in two of the countries and the need to undertake reappointments, with one country recruiting three different NC's during the term of the project significantly hampered initial implementation. Once appointed, National Coordinators were well positioned to benefit professionally from the support they received from the EA but as alluded to above, this too was hampered by changes in personnel and the need to retrain new staff in the basic administrative requirements of the project. With the exception of Tonga where the NC was dedicated to the project from the outset, NC's in the other three countries all had shared positions with multiple responsibilities. It is worth noting that the National Coordinator in Tonga was appointed to the position prior to the Inception meeting and the position was dedicated to the project with the result that she performed her duties admirably and with a high degree of professionalism as is reflected in the outstanding results achieved in Tonga. By mid project the Cook Islands also appointed a dedicated NC who also performed her duties to very high professional standards and again, progress was accelerated in that country. The NC's in Nauru and Tuvalu had other responsibilities to deal with which required them to balance their day to day priorities and leading to communication issues with the EA.

Lesson# 3. As with other projects relying on national coordination for implementation, the IIB project demonstrated that having the same coordinator engaged throughout the project and dedicated to the NC role ensures continuity of effort, commitment to results, and the accumulation of institutional knowledge. This was clear from the analysis of project results with these two countries achieving outstanding results. The lesson to be learnt here is that in addition to striving for the most suitable candidate, the experience of the IIB and other similar multi-country projects points to the need for serious discussion in the lead up to, and during inception phase between the IA/EA and the participating governments expectations from government, particularly on the need to dedicate the successful candidate to the project and ensure their work load is not compromised by other duties, and to use their best endeavours to encourage the appointee to remain for the duration of the project. These are important preconditions to ensuring the project is able to maximise the capacity strengthening benefits to the participating countries.

146. One aspect of the project management structure which was not developed was the formal establishment and engagement of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG). Originally planned to consist of 5 -7 subject or technical experts and stakeholders as needed to provide an external perspective on the project to help evaluate progress etc. the TAG never got off the ground. This was partly because the expertise available in SPREP and through the TM was deemed sufficient to address the project challenges and because it was intended to utilise the Pacific Island Round Table for Nature Conservation (PIRT) Protected Area Working Group for this purpose. While there was some reporting of project activities to the PIRT (the EA reported on progress with the IIB project to PIRT on at least one occasion), its use as an Advisory Group did not eventuate. However, the main reason the TAG did not eventuate was a lack of funding - this was also the case with the GEFPAS IAS project[5] and raises the question of how realistic it is to include these TAG mechanisms in project designs if there is insufficient funding to fully operationalise them. This is especially so if in house expertise is available to deal with most project issues and in the light of the extensive MTR process which provides external guidance for project corrections (see also Lesson #2).

[5] Terminal evaluation of the project Prevention, control and management of invasive alien species in the Pacific Islands.

Lesson# 4. The lesson here is that unless the project constituents including the participating governments, are serious about providing the resources necessary to fund and convene independent Technical Working Groups comprising external experts, then inclusion of such mechanisms in these project designs really only amounts to "lip service" to meet generic GEF and UNEP preferred project management structures. The more pragmatic alternative is to recognise that in small budget projects such as the IIB this is not usually an option due to competing priorities for available funding, nor is it likely to be necessary if suitable alternatives can be found such as expertise available within the Project Support Unit, EA and IA or a partner organisation. If suitable alternatives are not considered appropriate and the need for independent technical advice is clear, then the project must be prepared to allocate adequate financial resources to support this function.

147. A feature of IIB project management and implementation was the judicious use made of the annual Project Implementation Review (PIR) process (see also Section 2.7). The PIR's led to adaptive management related decisions which adjusted the scope of project activities and outputs without impacting on the achievement of outcomes and outcomes and impact. In fact, the decisions taken improved the overall success of the project by ensuring resources were targeted to activities with a strong probability of success, or activities with high replication value such as the Participatory 3 Dimension Modelling (P3DM) stakeholder engagement processes.

148. For example, the final PIR involving project managers and national coordinators held in Tonga in 2015 was used to sum up the overall status of the project and to pragmatically assess what activities were achievable in the time remaining and what constituted the best use of the remaining funding. This resulted in the voluntary reallocation of unused country funding to support regional training which would benefit all four countries and also additional activities in those countries best equipped to complete them by the project's end date which was also extended to mid-2016 and later to the end of 2016 (see Table 10 (a).

149. This series of PIRs and the resultant adjustments and revisions to the project design and budget allocations demonstrated effective and proactive management by the Project Manager backed by strong negotiating skills. When supported by the Task Manager's guidance and his realistic and pragmatic approach, coupled with technical advice as required, the PIRs achieved the best possible outcomes for effective project implementation.

Lesson # 5. The usually lengthy design and approval processes (PIF, PPG processes) associated with getting multi-country projects up and running means that by the time implementation is underway, as unforeseen challenges emerge and implementation conditions change making adjustments to the approved original design and budgets inevitable. Under these circumstances rigorous and diligent annual Project Implementation Review process as carried out by the IIB project management team is essential to the efficient and effective execution of the project. Furthermore, the project design and budget must ensure there are sufficient resources to convene multi-stakeholder PIR meetings.

The project's implementation and management is rated as "highly satisfactory"

Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships

150. Although a formal stakeholder analysis/mapping exercise which would have helped identify stakeholders best positioned to most significantly influence and impact the project and provide a basis to developing a clearer strategy for their engagement was not carried out, the project design included extensive identification of major international, regional and national stakeholders with a focus on lead government agencies, relevant national NGOs and important regional and international institutions and programs. As it transpired, project management worked closely with National Project Coordinators to identify and engage a small number of local, regional and international partners

whose contributions significantly complemented the project's resources and strengthened implementation capacity. For example, Live and Learn (Fiji) contributed significantly to improved biodiversity awareness through its train the teachers programme and several partners contributed expertise or funding to the BIORAP surveys (e.g. Waitt Foundation, New Zealand Department of Conservation, Birdlife International - Pacific Islands Programme, Cook Islands Natural Heritage Trust, Vava'u Environmental Protection Association and many more) and complemented the available project resources. In the spirit of south-south cooperation the Government of Samoa also made a substantial contribution to the project through the involvement of its staff from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment in project training activities.

151. The project also called for strong community involvement in many of its activities and there is evidence that this was successfully achieved particularly through the P3DM exercises in Nauru, Tonga and the Cook Islands. The Cook Islands was also able to undertake arguably one of the most comprehensive and effective national biodiversity awareness programmes this evaluator has seen in the Pacific, reaching out to school children, youth, village communities, business and government over the term of the project through and array of media including radio, posters, field activities and social media. Overall the project was highly successful with its partnership and stakeholder engagement activities in all countries reinforcing the view of many interviewees that the project has significantly improved public understanding of the importance of biodiversity.

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

Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships is rated "highly satisfactory"

Communication and public awareness

153. The effectiveness of any public awareness activities has been commented on in several related section of this evaluation. In summary the communication and public awareness strategies developed for each of the participating countries and regionally (through SPREP and its websites) were of a high standard and well executed. For the Cook Islands the communications and public awareness programmes were of an excellent standard and the use of media (radio, Facebook, Twitter together with publicity and information materials of the highest standard, was outstanding. The programmes in Tonga and Nauru also achieved a notably high standard resulting in improved awareness of the importance of biodiversity and the need to support its protection and management at multiple levels (schools, communities, government agencies and politicians). This evaluator was reliably informed that this level of awareness was not present pre- project in any of these countries.

The project's performance in ensuring communication and public awareness is rated "highly satisfactory"

Country ownership and driven-ness

154. The national level consultations that went into the project design confirmed that the project offered an opportunity to significantly assist the countries with the implementation of the biodiversity related components of the NBSAPs. The ProDoc identifies the linkages between the project and national biodiversity objectives very well and also refers to the needs which were identified in each country's national reports to the CBD. On this basis it is reasonable to conclude that project activities have been country driven and that there was a resulting degree of country ownership both in the implementation of the project and its national accomplishments. The project implementation structure also sought to reinforce the country ownership through the establishment of the National Coordinating Officer and associated National Coordinator position, placing the onus for in-country implementation on national agencies and national partners. As the project began to secure good results and public awareness increased, a sense of pride in the project achievements developed and as did support for biodiversity management which was translated into improved government commitment in the form of policy, legislation and in some cases improved funding or permanent, dedicated biodiversity management positions.

Country ownership and driven-ness is rated "satisfactory"

Financial planning and management

155. At project approval the IIB project was considered to be adequately financed from a combination of GEF funding and co-financing from SPREP, the participating countries and partners (NOAA and CEPF). The project budget was managed by the Project Manager in consultation with the Task Manager and the SPREP GEFPAS Project Facilitator and SPREP Finance Manager. Independent auditing was carried out in 2013, 2014 and 2015 and no adverse findings were recorded. The estimated and actual costs as well as the expenditure ratio (actual/planned) of the project based on the original project budget are summarized in

156. Table 10 below. However, at the time of completion of the TE draft, SPREP was still waiting on an outstanding payment arising from a cash advance submitted to UNEP "almost a year ago". Apparently (as advised by the Project Manager), this payment has been subject to the completion of an earlier reconciliation between SPREP and UNEP involving the small sum of USD 60.50 which is most probably a exchange rate differential. Once this is resolved UNEP has been requested to approve a further extension of the PCA to 30 September 2017 which will also allow the transfer the remaining funds and the completion of the remaining project activities

157. To help understand the financial progression of the project the evaluator has proceeded to compile an alternative final expenditure table (table (10 (a)). This is based on the final quarter (1 October - 31 December 2016 actual cumulative project expenditures and also records the culmination of variations made to the original project budget through the three project revisions which were undertaken. The figures show a cumulative unspent balance of $128,861. Of this amount $60,000 is UNEP direct expenditure on MTR and TE and including the final project audit, formal project hand over and terminal report which is required by UNEP. The remaining $68,862 is programmed for expenditure by SPREP under the requested extension of the PCA to 30 September 2017 and will cover outstanding personnel expenses and final project communication products. As one can observe in table 10a, the project revisions which culminated in the final variations made at the project review meeting in 2015, resulted in significant adjustments to a number of components. The variations represent diligent and proactive financial management on the part of the PSU and a willingness to make the difficult decisions and adapt to the project implementation scenarios and challenges as they unfolded over the course of the project. This willingness to conduct regular and transparent reviews of project performance and work with the participants to assess the likelihood of completing various activities and negotiate budget adjustments in the best interests of all participants and achievement of the project outcomes, is an important lesson for all project managers, particularly those dealing with multi- country projects (see Lesson #3). The final expenditure figures in Table 10(a) and Table 10 indicate that with the exception of the outstanding cash advance, the project has spent near its total available funding. However, it the proposed extension is granted and the outstanding funds are made available to the EA, the evaluator is confident that over nearly six years, the project will have achieved full expenditure of all GEF budgeted funds

158. While the financial management of the project was generally of a satisfactory standard and the accounting accurate, one notable example of financial oversight occurred in relation to the funding for the Vava'u BIORAP where a significant cost over-run was accumulated. This was detected by the Project Manager and Task Manager and reported in the PIR of 2014. The overrun was eventually and justifiably offset against the GEFPAS IAS sister project budget as the BIORAP was undertaken as a joint activity between the two projects. This solution was a satisfactory outcome as it ensured both projects would still be able to pursue their outputs. The issue was thoroughly discussed at project management level and led to closer attention being paid to all future project expenditure.

159. Another financial management issue which emerged was the disruption caused to the flow of disbursements from UNEP to SPREP with the introduction of the UMOJA financial management system. Dealing with this system and the associated delays between payment requests and disbursements has been stated by project management as a major factor behind the requests for three (now four) project extensions including the recent request for a final extension to the PCA to 30 September2017. While it is clear that little can be done to change the UN choice of financial system, the evaluator notes that several project management personnel expressed deep frustration with the system and the management challenges it creates.

Table 10 (a): Summary of project revisions, variations of planned expenditures and financial position as at end of fourth quarter 2016 (31 December 2016)

Summary of project revisions, variations of planned expenditures and financial position as at end of 4th quarter 2016 (31 December 2016)							
Project Component	**Original ProDoc Budget**	**Revised Budget 2015**	**Variance**	**% Variance**	**Cummulative Expenditure as at end 4th Quarter 2016**	**Cummulative unspent Balance as at 31 December 2016**	**Actual Ependiture at Project Termination**
Personnel	190,000	278,127	88,127	46.38	258,425	19,701	N/A
Sub Contract -Countries							
Cook Islands	350,000				350,000	-	
Nauru	350,000				268,031	13,887	N/A
Tonga	350,000				443,310	6,690	N/A
Tuvalu	350,000				154,960	12,214	N/A
Sub Contract -Countries	1,400,000	1,249,093	-150,907	-10.78	1,216,301	32,791	N/A
Training	60,000	107,734	47,734	79.56	113,460	- 5,726	N/A
Equipment & Premises	17,600	8,736	-8,864	-50.36	5,281	3,456	N/A
Miscellaneous	73,000	96,910	23,910	32.75	18,271	78,639	N/A
Total	1,740,600	1,740,600			1,611,738	128,861	N/A

160. The table below has been completed based on the final figures reported for QER for the fourth quarter of 2016 (period ending 31 December 2016).

Component/ Sub-component/Output	Estimated cost at design	Actual cost (as at 31 December 2016)	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)
Personnel	190,000	258,425	1.36
Sub-contract - Countries			
Cook Islands	350,000	350,000	1.0
Nauru	350,000	268,031	0.77
Tonga	350,000	443,310	1.26
Tuvalu	350,000	154,960	0.44
Total sub contract- countries	1,400,000	1,216,301	0.87
Training	60,000	113,460	1.9
Equipment and Premises	17,600	5,281	0.3
Miscellaneous	73,000	18,271	0.25
Total	1,740,600	1,611,738	0.93

Project co-financing

161. In terms of project co-financing USD 2,562,120 or 59.5% of the total original project budget was confirmed and planned as being available as in-kind financing from the participating countries, SPREP and external partners, the CEPF and the US NOAA when the project document was approved. The figures below are those provided at the completion of the project. They indicate the project has fallen well short (58%) of the planned co-financing requirements. This can probably be attributed to either , i) that the countries grossly over-estimated the true cost of their co-financing commitment (which is often the case with projects of this kind) and ii) the lack of information from Nauru and CEPF and NOAA partners which may have improved the overall result. On the positive side SPREP's contribution was substantially (77%) greater than planned reflecting that organisation's commendable commitment to the successful implementation of the project. It should also be noted that SPREP was successful in securing additional unplanned cash co-financing of USD 40,000 from the International

Climate Change Adaptation Initiative (ICCAI) to assist with project costs. Finally, in relation to co-financing it is important to note that the shortfall in planned vs. actual co-financing did not impact the overall successful implementation of the project.

Table 11: Summary of project co-financing

Co-financing Source	Amount (USD)			
	Planned	% of Project Budget	Actual	%of Planned
Cook Islands (as at 31/03/2017)	350,000	8.1	123,021	35.1
Nauru (Not Available)	601,660	14.0	N/A	N/A
Tonga (as at 31/03/2017)	524,000	12.2	191,330	36.51
Tuvalu (as at 31/03/2017)	400,000	9.3	42,431	10.61
SPREP (as at 31/03/2017)	400,000	9.3	706,670	177.0
CEPF Not Available	176,460	4.1	N/A	N/A
NOAA Not Available	110,000	2.5	N/A	N/A
Totals	2,562,120	59.5	1,063,452	42%
Noumea Convention and ICCAI EBA (Cash)	0	0	40,000	
Total with ICCAI additional unplanned co-finance			1,103,452	43%

162. Although there remains the issue of the final cash advance and the need to further extend the project, (which needs to be resolved without delay) and the matter of one country not suppling its final reports or any co-financing reports despite repeated requests, the overall management of the project finances by the EA is rated as satisfactory. In support of the rating the evaluator notes the professional manner by which project management reacted to the overspent Tonga BIORAP budget, the timely manner of the project budget reviews and variations and the overall accurate accounting for all project expenditure including the identification of the unspent funds at year end 2016 and the submission of a further detailed budget revision for the proposed extension to 30 September 2017. on the

Overall project financial planning and management was "moderately satisfactory"

Supervision, guidance and technical backstopping

163. Throughout the evaluation process the evaluator received a consistently positive response to the question "Have you received the support needed from the regional agencies (SPREP/UNEP) that you needed in a timely manner?" Comments directly relating to UNEP's supervision, guidance and technical backstopping reflected the view that the Task Manager had been prominent in supporting SPREP, through the Project Manager and the SPREP technical support staff, to provide a strong level of technical advice and support which was critical to the success of many facets of the project's in country implementation, especially the BIORAP surveys. At the PSU level it was also notable that the UNEP Task Manager was both highly regarded by the project management team, and had provided timely strategic advice while working collaboratively and constructively with the management team at all times. Indeed the reportedly excellent rapport and trust between the SPREP project management team and the Task manager was an important factor in the effective and adaptive management which characterised the project. The UNEP Fund Management Officers also provided timely and helpful advice and backup on financial issues and processes. The conclusion drawn by the evaluator is that UNEP was highly successful in providing the levels of supervision, guidance and technical backstopping need to achieve successful project implementation.

Overall UNEP supervision and backstopping was "highly satisfactory"

Monitoring and evaluation

M&E design:

164. The M&E plan was designed according to UNEP's standard monitoring and evaluation procedures as current at the time of ProDoc approval. This requires UNEP standards of transparency, accountability and project outcomes to be objectively assessed and all project deliverables including annual audits and mid- term and final evaluations to be completed. The project log frame included objectively verifiable indicators of achievements, sources and means of verification for the project objective, outcomes and outputs. The indicators used in the log frame, though ambitious for the project timeframe and budget, are measurable and relevant to the objective. In this regard, the project has completed annual project financial audits, the Mid-Term review was completed in July 2014 and this report constitutes the Terminal Evaluation. In addition, project management and National Coordinators completed the Tracking Tool for Biodiversity Projects in GEF 3, GEF4 and GEF5 which was introduced to measure progress in achieving the impacts and outcomes established at the portfolio level under the biodiversity focal area. The budget provisions for the M& E activities are considered marginally adequate. Cost efficiencies have been achieved by linking the TEs for three GEFPA projects together (IIB, IAS and PIPA). However, while the evaluator was able to travel to two of the four participating countries under the budget for the combined TEs, budget allocations for future evaluations should factor in the high cost of travel in the vast Pacific region and ensure there is sufficient funding for country visits to all or most project countries.

165. It is notable that securing timely reports and responses to communications with two of the participating countries has proved a contentious issue throughout the project. In addition, the Project Manager in consultation with the evaluator has completed the GEF Tracking Tool for Biodiversity Projects in GEF3, GEF4 and GEF5 as it relates to the GEF4 IIB project. This measures progress in achieving the impacts and outcomes established at the portfolio level under the biodiversity focal area.

The M&E design is rated as "satisfactory"

M&E plan implementation:

166. The M&E system was operational and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards project objectives throughout the project implementation period. The project manager ensured the operationalization of the M&E system based on the feedback received from the participating countries through six monthly reports and visits to each country on an occasional basis. The majority of countries were able to provide six monthly reports in a timely fashion. However, as would be expected in a multi-country project, some countries were inconsistent with their reporting with difficulties persisting with one country in particular. The information provided by the M&E system was used to track and rate annual progress with project activities and reported to the project review meetings involving PSU and SPREP technical staff and including National Coordinators. These were held in Sydney Australia in 2014 (in conjunction with the IUCN World Parks Congress) and again in Tonga in November 2015. At both meetings the M & E system was instrumental in assessing progress against the project log frame leading to the revision of priorities and the reallocation of project resources to new priorities. For example, the 2015 meeting led to the reallocation of unspent funds ($250,000) originally assigned to Nauru and Tuvalu to support additional regional activities which would benefit all four countries (training, awareness communications and promotion) and to additional activities in Tonga and Nauru. This was a good example of adaptive management based on the cooperative relationships which existed between the project participants and the ability of the Project Manager to facilitate change within the project.

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

4 CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS LEARNED

4.1 Conclusions

167. Significant milestones in the context of advancing integrated biodiversity and ecosystem management principles of the IBPOW in the four countries were achieved through the project. These

included the completion of the first multi-disciplinary biodiversity survey in Nauru and associated plans and recommendations which have laid the foundation for future integrated biodiversity management in that country. Similarly BIORAP surveys in Tonga (Vava'u) and the Cook Islands (Rarotonga cloud forests) have significantly improved knowledge of the status of biodiversity and threatened species at those sites and provided management recommendations and strategies. The project has clearly influenced the development of national species recovery and conservation area plans (primarily through the protected area recommendations of the BIORAPs) and in some cases, policy and legislation in each country. Examples include the completion of the Suwarrow Island Environment Regulations and Management Plan in the Cook Islands and project's support for the completion of the national Biodiversity Conservation and Environment Regulations for the protection of the Cook Islands biodiversity. In Nauru, a draft of an Environment Bill based on the recommendations of the Nauru BIORAPis under consideration by that government's cabinet. These important initiatives contributed strongly towards the achievement the desired project outcomes relating to priority threatened species and terrestrial and marine ecosystems, (Outcomes 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3) and Outcome 2.2 relating to improved information systems and processes to support the implementation of the IBPOW.

168. The project was innovative in its use of approaches to generate outputs and create outcomes. Two notable examples were the use of the BIORAP methodology to assess biodiversity and threatened species status and the P3DM methodology to create community awareness and interest in biodiversity and ecosystem issues and generate stakeholder engagement in planning for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management. In this regard, the project has helped to identify and replicate successful methods of planning for and facilitating integrated ecosystem management and has reinforced the utility of these methodologies in the small island context. This suggests that these should be more broadly utilised as models for further GEF (or other donor) funded conservation projects. Both approaches provided opportunities for learning and training and the project is to be commended for its efforts to use these to promote inter- country staff exchanges and peer learning amongst the young conservation professionals involved. It is also notable that the project introduced and provided training in the widely used Open Standards for Conservation (Miradi) planning methodology to personnel from the four countries, further enhancing its innovative knowledge management and learning credentials.

Recommendation# 3. To ensure that the innovative and positive learning, knowledge sharing, communications and awareness raising experiences achieved through the IIB project are widely shared with the local, regional and international conservation community, it is recommended that SPREP develop a series of case studies illustrating the learning and knowledge sharing successes of the project and make these available through both the SPREP website and the PIPA portal with links to guidelines on undertaking P3DM and BIORAPs. These should also be shared with UNEP GEF Unit for posting on appropriate UNEP and GEF websites.

169. The project was also instrumental in helping develop awareness of the importance of biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management in sustaining island lifestyles through its support for effective and innovative public and community outreach programmes. In this regard, the Cook Islands national biodiversity awareness programme (Our biodiversity, Our islands, Our future) was an outstanding example of how social media can be linked to more traditional campaign forms to achieve impressive results. This was further enhanced by the introduction of the "Live and Learn" training for teachers in biodiversity programme which the project replicated in two other countries. Collaboration with partners like Live and Learn to enhance the work of the project is evident in the approach to implementation in all four countries as are the linkages forged with other biodiversity projects in the region e.g. the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, Birdlife International. Importantly, the project demonstrated the value of working in collaboration with the other GEF PAS projects, particularly the Invasive Alien Species project where shared activities helped defray the costs such as for the BIORAP in Tonga. The joint project activities like the rat eradication in support of the protection of the Tongan whistler in the Mt Talau conservation area demonstrated how the integrated management of biodiversity and ecosystems can be enhanced through collaboration between projects can result in "win - win" conservation outcomes.

170. The evaluator concludes that the project did well to overcome the dual challenges created by the long drawn out recruitment process which led to a delayed start to implementation and limited

progress in the first half of the project timeframe and a number of administrative problems which beset the project at the outset and collectively, had a negative effect on the initial efficiency of project implementation. Ultimately these were addressed through the more settled situation with regard to National Coordinators in the second half of the project which accelerated progress in the second half of the project timeframe and work by the TM and PM to improve the project administrative systems through training and liasion with UNEP to help improve the timeliness of cash advances which had contributed to the problems. The 15 month extension also ensured the project had the time needed to achieve most of its outputs and outcomes. Unfortunately, the long recruitment delays in Tuvalu and other issues impacting on project implementation which were outside the control of management, were not easily overcome and the project's performance and outcomes in that country was not as strong as originally planned. However, overall, the project is rated a success and diligent, committed management at the regional and national levels has resulted in some remarkable outputs and outcomes in the four countries. It should also be remembered, that these countries had not previously been the subject of significant donor funding or technical assistance for biodiversity conservation. When measured against the weak project baselines, there is ample justification for the conclusion that the project has improved institutional skills, linkages, networks and technical capacity for biodiversity and ecosystem management in the participating countries.

171. Table 12 below provides a tabular summary of the evaluation ratings and assessments. This shows clearly that the project was highly relevant in relation to its potential to contribute to UNEP and GEF global biodiversity conservation goals and strategies. The completion rate of the project's outputs was considered to be satisfactory with 85% of all outputs being completed or likely to be completed within a year of the project closing with support from other sources. Overall it was considered likely that the project outcomes would be sustained due in part to the success of the project in developing socio - political support for biodiversity conservation and high likelihood that project outcomes will be replicated and will catalyse new biodiversity management initiatives. Although the project's preparation and readiness together with aspects of its financial planning and management were less than satisfactory other areas of project management affecting project performance such as overall project implementation and management, stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships and communication and public awareness helped ensure the project received an overall rating of 'Satisfactory".

Table 12. Summary of evaluation ratings.

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Ref.	Rating
A. Strategic relevance	The project responded to internationally agreed environmental needs in the Pacific Islands. The project was highly consistent with UN Environment MTS 2010-2013 and GEF strategic objectives. Gender, rights of indigenous people and human rights were appropriately considered by the project design. The project supported South-South Cooperation.	3.1	HS
B. Achievement of outputs	At the termination of the project, most but not all outputs have been fully completed. The evaluation assessed that at least majority of the outputs not finished by the time of the evaluation would still be completed. Considering the delayed start to the project and the moderate progress recorded in the MTR, the project made considerable improvements in delivery during its second half.	3.2	S
C. Effectiveness: Attainment of objectives and planned results		3.3	S

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Ref.	Rating
1. Achievement of direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed TOC	The project's intended outcomes were predominantly achieved. With an improved foundation of technical skills, management experience, biodiversity management techniques, legislation and policy, information, knowledge and public awareness, the countries can continue to build the biodiversity conservation capacity needed to fully realise the desired impact of the project.	3.3.1	S
2. Likelihood of impact using ROtI approach	Many, but not all of the outcomes, were designed to feed into a continuing process and most outcomes were linked to ongoing biodiversity conservation programs. The measures designed to move towards intermediate states have started and many but not all, are producing promising results which if sustained, will, over time lead significantly assist the countries to achieve the desired long term impact. Project has laid the foundations for change but has not clearly achieved documented changes in environmental status during its lifetime.	3.3.2	L
3. Achievement of formal project objectives as presented in the Project Document.	The project has resulted in increasing public awareness of the importance of biodiversity and integrated ecosystem management to maintaining a healthy society across all age groups and genders. Some elements of the project will be stronger in some countries than in others. However, looking at the project achievements across each of the countries and taking into account the capacity constraints in all four countries, there is ample justification to conclude that in aggregate the overall Objective has been to a large extent achieved.	3.3.3	S
D. Sustainability of Outcomes			S
1. Socio-political sustainability	The Governments of Nauru, Tonga and the Cook Islands are all now in the process of considering or enacting new legislation which supports long term biodiversity management. This and the impact of the public awareness and community engagement activities supported by the project provide evidence for the probability of socio - political sustainability of the project outcomes.	3.4.1	HL
2. Financial resources	By raising the profile of integrated biodiversity management and its benefits, the project has provided incentives to governments to at least maintain, if not increase their budget allocations to the lead	3.4.2	L

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Ref.	Rating
	government environment agencies. However, the relatively intense levels and short term surge of activity generated by the IIB project will not be fully maintained or repeated without substantial external funding. Presently the GEF 5 Ridges to Reef project is providing funding for integrated natural resource management to all four of the participating IIB countries which are applying this to ongoing and overlapping activities developed under the IIB project, thus sustaining progress at least for the next 4 years.		
3. Institutional framework	Establishing the national coordination offices and the National Coordinator positions, although slow to get underway, was seen as critical to strengthening in country biodiversity capacity. Commendably, Tonga committed to establishing a permanent biodiversity officer's position for its national coordinator and biodiversity management responsibilities were also assigned to permanent environment agency staff in Nauru and the Cook Islands. This work on the institutional framework of the project enabled project outcomes and benefits to be sustained during the life of the project, and will significantly assist with their continuation beyond project termination. The project outcomes in relation to policy and legislation represent a significant contribution to the institutional sustainability of project outcomes.	3.4.3	L
4. Environmental sustainability	The project has contributed to environmental sustainability in all the participating countries but the unknown impact of climate change introduces an element of uncertainty.	3.4.4	L
5. Catalytic role and replication	The project has been responsible for catalysing behavioural change at multiple levels including communities, local government and national government. In this regard, the evaluator was consistently informed by the participants in project activities that their involvement and the training and mentoring offered had been a valued experience resulting in a new appreciation of and commitment to, biodiversity and threatened species management. It is fair to say that the project provided opportunities which led to improved cooperation and collaboration between lead government agencies and a range of supportive partners, particularly in	3.4.5	HS

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Ref.	Rating
	Tonga and the Cook Islands. Although replication strategies are not clearly articulated in the project design, the project has identified several management tools and practices which are highly appropriate for application in the Pacific region.		
E. Efficiency	The relatively low level of funding in relation to the expected project outputs and outcomes which was allocated to the IIB project required careful use of funding and project management has been diligent in seeking out cost efficiencies. Wise management and the use of cost efficient approaches such as the use of BIORAPs, linking implementation and sharing costs with other GEFPAS projects notably the IAS project, and ensuring that meetings of project management and national coordination staff were held in conjunction with regional conferences or international meetings all improved the efficiency of project delivery. Working strategically with a range of partners and utilising their expertise and resources has also added value to project activities for the overall benefit of all parties.	3.5	S
F. Factors affecting project performance			
1. Preparation and readiness	Project design was a drawn out affair over several years but the process did involve consultations with the participating stakeholders and the end result was a strong suite of activities and outputs which were appropriate to the needs of the participating countries and have helped significantly to advance biodiversity and ecosystem management and public awareness. However it appears that despite their best endeavours, project design underestimated the national capacity required to implement the in-country elements of the project or the time it would take to recruit National Coordinators and develop that capacity. In drawing this conclusion, the evaluator also acknowledges the reality of the situation in the Pacific is such that the appointment of National Coordinators is a function of the public service systems of the countries involved and is often subject to political influences. How these factors play out in the recruitment process is beyond the predictive powers of the design team which, by necessity, relies on the assumption that countries will employ their best endeavours to fulfil their obligations. Similarly, the capabilities of the individuals employed in	3.6.1	MS

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Ref.	Rating
	the key NC roles is outside the control of project designers. These factors came into play in two of the countries where delays were excessive and were compounded by repetitive appointments. This situation is not confined to the IIB project and often besets other multi-country projects in the region which suggests that the issue needs be discussed more proactively with the participating countries in the lead-up to, and during the inception phase. The number of activities also strained the capacity available in the initial stages of implementation. This impacted on readiness of at least two countries but Project Management responded well by undertaking a reviews of all project activities and budget leading to rationalisation and modification of the work plan and activities for the remainder of the project.		
2. Project implementation and management	The IIB project was implemented through a standard GEF project management structure based on a PSU consisting of the TM, PM and National Coordinators. It is notable that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAG) proposed in the ProDoc did not eventuate as planned but its function was successfully fulfilled through alternative means. Project implementation was initially hampered by the slow start with over a year lost before countries actually became engaged in work plan implementation as measured by the first transfer of funds or appointment of the National Coordinator. Delayed recruitment and the need to undertake reappointments, were factors significantly hampering initial implementation. A commendable feature of project management and implementation was the judicious use made of annual Project Implementation Reviews (PIR) which led to adaptive management related decisions to adjust the scope of project activities and outputs without impacting on the achievement of outcomes and potential impact.	3.6.2	HS
3. Stakeholders participation, cooperation and partnerships	Project design included extensive identification of major international, regional and national stakeholders with a focus on lead government agencies, relevant national NGOs and important regional and international institutions and programs. In addition to partnerships with regional and international organisations, project management worked closely with National Project Coordinators to identify and engage a small number of local, regional and	3.6.3	HS

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Ref.	Rating
	international partners whose contributions significantly complemented the project's resources and strengthened implementation capacity. The results of some of these partnerships were outstanding and overall, the project was highly successful with its partnership and stakeholder engagement activities in all countries.		
4. Communication and public awareness	The communication and public awareness strategies developed for each of the participating countries, and regionally were of a high standard and well executed. The use of social media and more traditional modes of communication was evident in all programmes and the evaluator was reliably informed that the project had resulted in noticeably improved levels of public awareness.	3.6.4	HS
5. Country ownership and driven-ness	The project was closely linked to NBSAP's and its implementation structure sought to reinforce the country ownership through the establishment of the National Coordinating Officer and associated National Coordinator position, placing the onus for in-country implementation on national agencies and national partners. As the project began to secure good results and public awareness increased, a sense of pride in the project achievements developed and as did support for biodiversity management. This translated into improved government commitment in the form of policy, legislation and in some cases improved funding or permanent, dedicated biodiversity management positions.	3.6.5	S
6. Financial planning and management	The project was considered to be adequately financed from a combination of GEF funding and co-financing from SPREP, the participating countries and partners (NOAA and CEPF). The project budget and finances were managed by the Project Manager in consultation with the Task Manager. To their credit, the project management team was adept at budget management especially in the latter stages of the project. Independent auditing in 2013, 2014 and 2015 found no adverse findings. However, at the time of completion of the zero TE draft an outstanding request for payment of a final cash advance hindered SPREP from providing complete end of project details.	3.6.6	MS
7. Supervision, guidance and technical backstopping	The UNEP Task Manager was highly regarded by the project management team and provided timely strategic advice while working collaboratively and constructively	3.6.7	HS

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Ref.	Rating
	with the management team at all times. The excellent rapport and trust between the SPREP project management team and the Task manager was an important factor in the effective and adaptive management which characterised the project. The UNEP Finance Division also provided timely and helpful advice and backup on financial issues and processes. The conclusion drawn by the evaluator is that UNEP was highly successful in providing the levels of supervision, guidance and technical backstopping need to achieve successful project implementation.		
8. Monitoring and evaluation	The project has completed annual project financial audits, the Mid-Term review was completed in July 2014 and this report constitutes the Terminal Evaluation. In addition, project management and National Coordinators completed the Tracking Tool for Biodiversity Projects in GEF 3, GEF4 and GEF5. The budget provisions for the M& E activities, especially MTR and TE are considered marginally adequate but costs were able to be defrayed and efficiencies achieved by consolidating the field inspection costs across three related GEFPAS projects.	3.6.8	S
i. M&E design	The M& E design was generally satisfactory and followed UNEP's standard monitoring and evaluation procedures as current at the time of ProDoc approval. This required UNEP standards of transparency, accountability and project outcomes to be objectively assessed with all project deliverables including annual audits and mid- term and final evaluations to be completed. The project log frame included objectively verifiable indicators of achievements, sources and means of verification for the project objective, outcomes and outputs.	3.6.8	S
ii. M&E plan implementation	The M&E system was operational and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards project objectives throughout the project implementation period. The M & E system was instrumental in assessing progress against the project log frame leading to the revision of priorities and the reallocation of project resources to new priorities at project review meetings. Completion of the GEF biodiversity tracking tool assisted.	3.6.8	S
Overall project rating			S

4.2 Recommendations

172. The following is a presentation of the main recommendations that have been generated from the evaluation findings:

Context:	A number of IIB project activities/outputs are nearly but not fully completed on the termination of the project. Several of these are related to policy and legislative initiatives which have taken longer than originally envisaged to bring to fruition, due in part the extensive consultation processes and re-drafting involved. Although it is unlikely, there remains a possibility that one or other of these uncompleted initiatives will struggle to get the necessary approvals, especially without the on-going financial and regional support which was available through the project management structure.
Recommendation #1	That the UNEP (Pacific regional office) and SPREP Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management Division (BEMD) assess progress with the uncompleted IIB project activities (see Table 6 of this report) through regular consultation with the lead agencies in the participating countries and where additional support is deemed necessary, decide on how best the two agencies can continue to assist the countries to complete the activity(ies).
Responsibility:	UNEP regional office in consultation with SPREP
Timeframe:	Within the first 6 months of 2017
Context:	Not all conservation tools or approaches are appropriate for use in the small island context of the Pacific region where the status of biodiversity and many threatened species is not well understood and successful conservation requires strong community engagement.
Recommendation #2.	The IIB project has successfully introduced, demonstrated (and replicated) two important methodologies (BIORAP and Participatory 3 Dimensional Modelling) for facilitating integrated biodiversity and ecosystem management. By trialling these in the Pacific island context, the project has demonstrated that they are particularly appropriate for use in support of biodiversity management in the small island context and could serve as useful models for further GEF or other donor funded island biodiversity conservation projects. Further SPREP has collaborated with a partner (Wildlands) to produce guidelines for the implementation of BIORAPs and similar guides are available for P3DM methodologies. Accordingly, it is recommended that in consultation with the GEF, UNEP and SPREP seek to Investigate with members of the Pacific Islands Round Table for Nature Conservation, the potential for a training programme in these methodologies linked to and in support of, current biodiversity programmes and projects underway in the region such as the GEF5 Ridges to Reef (R2R) programme and those of the international NGO's.
Responsibility:	UNEP working in consultation with SPREP
Time Frame:	The potential for a training programme in key methodologies to be investigated during calendar year 2017 with results reported to the 2017 SPREP Members Meeting
Context:	One of the strengths of the IIB project is the strong focus on innovative and positive learning, knowledge sharing, communications and awareness raising experiences which are embodied in the consistent use of tools such as the BIORAP, P3DM and social and traditional media campaigns like the one run by the Cook Islands National Environment Service. Several inspiring stories related to the use of these tools and campaigns to motivate project teams and community groups have been conveyed to the evaluator and should be shared more widely.
Recommendation #3.	Accordingly, it is recommended that SPREP develop a series of case studies illustrating the learning and knowledge sharing successes of the project and make these available through both the SPREP website and the PIPA portal with

	links to guidelines on undertaking P3DM and BIORAPs. These should also be shared with UNEP GEF Unit for posting on appropriate UNEP and GEF websites.
Responsibility:	SPREP Project Manager working with the SPREP project implementation team, National Coordination Offices and UN Environment Pacific Regional Office.
Time Frame:	Case studies completed and uploaded to the website by 30 September 2017.

4.3 Lessons Learned

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

Context:	Multi-country projects such as the IIB are the ideal vehicle to facilitate powerful south-south learning experiences particularly between staff from countries with similar challenges and socio-political conditions. Too often this potential is not recognised, especially in the project design phase and resources are not specifically allocated to support this type of activity as was the case with the IIB project. However, the adoption of the BIORAP methodology and the re-allocation of funding following the 2015 project review opened the way for more exchange activities through the P3DM process.
Lesson # 1	Multi-country projects such as this provide multiple opportunities for inter-country staff exchanges and if these are appropriately utilised, they can prove to be powerful learning and training mechanisms based on the sharing of experiences, skills and knowledge of people from similar socio-cultural backgrounds. However, in order to maximise the potential of these capacity building opportunities it is important they are recognised in the project design and inception phases and that financial resources are made available to facilitate internal project learning exchanges.
Application:	All GEF/UNEP multi-country projects in the Pacific region.
Context:	Project documents such as the IIB often include the completion of legislation and policy initiatives as activities and outputs but underestimate the length of time it takes to undertake the consultation needed to secure policy change or enact legislation and regulation. In the Pacific island context this can span most of a project time frame and often takes longer to bring to fruition than anticipated. The IIB project supported several such initiatives but these were slow to get underway and at project 's end were still awaiting final government endorsement. While it is unlikely these will not proceed to final endorsement, there is always the possibility that government priorities will change and the initiatives will take much longer than anticipated without the ongoing support and advocacy provided by the project.
Lesson# 2	It is important that projects with policy and legislative components give priority to getting these underway at the earliest possible stage of project implementation in order to ensure the maximum possible time frame to bring them to fruition prior to project termination. Failure to do so may mean the completion of project outputs and outcomes is compromised and further delays may occur if the project is unable to provide on-going support for the approval process. At project design inception and workplan development stages.
Application:	

Context:	A number of factors were critical in successful completion of the project, none more so than the consistency of national coordination including the identification of local partners, preparation for project activities including stakeholder and government consultations. As with other projects relying on national coordination for implementation, the IIB project demonstrated that having the same coordinator engaged throughout the project and dedicated to the NC role ensures continuity of effort, commitment to results, and the accumulation of institutional knowledge. This was clear from the analysis of project results with these two countries achieving outstanding results. Conversely, the appointment of National Coordinators is often delayed or departures dictate several re-hirings which seriously impact the efficient implementation of the project. National Coordinators with a broad range of competing responsibilities will often struggle to meet the coordination needs of the project with an attendant decline in performance. This is a persistent issue affecting the efficient management and implementation of multi-country project in the Pacific which suggests it needs to be addressed more proactively with the participating countries at the highest possible level during project design and inception.
Lesson # 3:	The lesson to be learnt here is that in addition to striving for the most suitable candidate, the experience of the IIB and other similar multi-country projects points to the need for serious discussion in the lead-up to, and during the inception phase between the IA/EA and the participating government on expectations from the government, particularly on the need for governments to dedicate the successful candidate to the project and ensure their work load is not compromised by other duties, and to use their best endeavours to encourage the appointee to remain for the duration of the project. These are important preconditions to ensuring the project is able to maximise the capacity strengthening benefits to the participating countries.
Application:	Design and inception of future UNEP/ GEF projects in the Pacific.
Context:	Project designs almost always call for the establishment of Technical Working Groups as a component of the management structure. These usually include a panel of experts who are suitably qualified to provide objective advice and guidance on technical issues associated with project implementation and to and external perspective to help with evaluating project progress, identify issues and recommend courses of action. TAG terms of reference often require TAG members to spend 5 of more days per year in support of the project. However, all too frequently insufficient funding is allocated to support the TAG function as was the case with the IIB project. This resulted in the PSU assessing other more cost efficient options to cover this function including the use of the Protected Area Working Group of the regional Pacific Islands Round Table for Nature Conservation (PIRT) volunteer group to provide this support. While the PIRT was consulted on project progress, the project ended up relying on the considerable in-house expertise available in the SPREP Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management Division together with the expertise and experience of the UNEP TM. This more than adequately addressed the functions of the originally planned TAG without compromising the project budget or outcomes.
Lesson # 4:	The lesson here is that unless the project constituents including the participating governments, are serious about providing the resources necessary to fund and convene independent Technical Working Groups comprising external experts, then inclusion of such mechanisms in these project designs really only amounts to "lip service" to meet generic GEF and UNEP preferred project management structures. The more pragmatic alternative is to recognise that in small budget projects such as the IIB this is not usually an option due to competing priorities for available funding, nor is it likely to be necessary if suitable alternatives can be found such as expertise available within the Project Support Unit, EA and IA or a partner organisation. If suitable alternatives are not considered appropriate and the need for independent technical advice is clear, then project must be prepared to allocate

	adequate financial resources to support this function.
Application:	During the project design phase in future Pacific GEF projects careful consideration should be given to the actual need for a formal TAG and whether the TAG function can be effectively achieved through alternatives such as existing regional bodies, or with "in house" capacity.
Context:	The time factors often associated with the design, approval and implementation of multi- country projects mean there most likely will be significant changes in the implementation environment which will require competent adaptive management on behalf of the Project Management Unit. The IIB annual project review process which involved the national coordinators, lead agency representatives and some partners, identified an array of additional modifications and significant budget revisions. These changes led to the more efficient and targeted use of project resources and improved project outcomes for all four participating countries.
Lesson # 5	The usually lengthy design and approval processes (PIF, PPG, processes) associated with getting multi-country projects up and running means that by the time implementation is underway, unforeseen challenges emerge and implementation conditions change making adjustments to the approved original design and budgets inevitable. Under these circumstances, the rigorous and diligent annual Project Implementation Review process as carried out by the IIB project management team is essential to the efficient and effective execution of the project. Furthermore, the project design and budget must ensure there are sufficient resources to convene multi-stakeholder PIR meetings
Application:	Future UNEP/GEF multi country projects in the Pacific.

ANNEX I. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION

Objective and Scope of the Evaluation

1. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy[6] and the UNEP Programme Manual[7], the Terminal Evaluation is undertaken at completion of the project to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and the main project partners. Therefore, the evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation.

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

3. Did the project succeed in supporting the development of an integrated ecosystem approach to biodiversity conservation management at the local level in the four participating countries?

4. Did the project succeed, or provide significant support towards, the conservation and restoration of priority species and ecosystems at risk in each of the countries' archipelagos (as identified in the Island Biodiversity Programme of work).

5. Has the project contributed significantly to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity's Island Biodiversity Programme of Work?

6. Has the project helped identify a successful method(s) of planning for and facilitating Integrated Ecosystem Management (or similar) which may serve as useful models for further GEF funded projects (or other sources of funding).

Overall Approach and Methods

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

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

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

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

Relevant background documentation, inter alia

Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework and its budget;

Project reports such as six-monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence etc.;

Project outputs: e.g. capacity development events, standardised methodologies, baseline biodiversity assessments, knowledge transfer mechanisms, funding and operational partnerships

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

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

MTR or MTE of the project
Evaluations/reviews of similar projects

(b) **Interviews (individual or in group) with**:
UNEP Task Manager: Greg Sherley
Project management team
UNEP Fund Management Officer; Shakira Khawaja/Ludmila Khorosheva
Project partners (see attached list) – SPREP (EA) refer Ms Easter Galuvao (easterg@sprep.org) and four Government agencies (obtain current list of country managers from Ms Galuvao)
Relevant resource persons;

(c) **Surveys** (as required)

(d) **Field visits** field visits to meet with key national partners and projects' beneficiaries and to visit projects' sites. Meetings/workshop with key stakeholders, local communities and partners also are recommended.

(e) **Other data collection tools** (as required)

Key Evaluation principles

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Evaluation criteria

Strategic relevance

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

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

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

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

1. *Alignment with the Bali Strategic Plan (BSP)*[8]. The outcomes and achievements of the project should be briefly discussed in relation to the objectives of the UNEP BSP.
2. *Gender balance*. Ascertain to what extent project design, implementation and monitoring have taken into consideration: (i) possible gender inequalities in access to and the control over natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of women and children to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of women in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation. Are the project intended results contributing to the realization of international GE (Gender Equality) norms and agreements as reflected in the UNEP Gender Policy and Strategy, as well as to regional, national and local strategies to advance HR & GE?
3. *Human rights based approach (HRBA) and inclusion of indigenous peoples issues, needs and concerns*. Ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on HRBA. Ascertain if the project is in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, and pursued the concept of free, prior and informed consent.
4. *South-South Cooperation.* This is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology, and knowledge between developing countries. Briefly describe any aspects of the project that could be considered as examples of South-South Cooperation.
5. *Safeguards*. Whether the project has adequately considered environmental, social and economic risks and established whether they were vigilantly monitored. Was the safeguard management instrument completed and were UNEP ESES requirements complied with?

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

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

Achievement of Outputs

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

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

Effectiveness: Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results

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

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

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

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

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

(b) Assessment of the **likelihood of impact** using a Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) approach[9]. The evaluation will assess to what extent the project has to date contributed, and is likely in the future to further contribute, to [intermediate states], and the likelihood that those changes in turn to lead to positive changes in the natural resource base, benefits derived from the environment and human well-being. The evaluation will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead to unintended negative effects (project documentation relating to Environmental, Social and Economic. Safeguards)

(c) Evaluation of the **achievement of the formal project overall objective, overall purpose, goals and component outcomes** using the project's own results statements as presented in the Project Document[10]. This sub-section will refer back where applicable to the preceding sub-sections (a) and (b) to avoid repetition in the report. To measure achievement, the evaluation will use as much as appropriate the indicators for achievement proposed in the Logical Framework (Logframe) of the project, adding other relevant indicators as appropriate. Briefly explain what factors affected the project's success in achieving its objectives, cross-referencing as needed to more detailed explanations provided under Section F. Most commonly, the overall objective is a higher level result to which the project is intended to contribute. The section will describe the actual or likely **contribution** of the project to the objective.

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

10 Or any subsequent **formally approved** revision of the project document or logical framework.

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

Sustainability and replication

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

28. Four aspects of sustainability will be addressed:

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

(b) *Financial resources.* To what extent are the continuation of project results and the eventual impact of the project dependent on financial resources? What is the likelihood that adequate financial resources[11] will be or will become available to use capacities built by the project? Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project results and onward progress towards impact?

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

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

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

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

(a) *catalyzed behavioural changes* in terms of use and application, by the relevant stakeholders, of capacities developed;
(b) provided *incentives* (social, economic, market based, competencies etc.) to contribute to catalyzing changes in stakeholder behaviour;
(c) contributed to *institutional changes*, for instance institutional uptake of project-demonstrated technologies, practices or management approaches;
(d) contributed to *policy changes* (on paper and in implementation of policy);
(e) contributed to sustained follow-on financing (*catalytic financing*) from Governments, private sector, donors etc.;
(f) created opportunities for particular individuals or institutions ("*champions*") to catalyze change (without which the project would not have achieved all of its results).

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

Efficiency

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

32. The evaluation will give special attention to efforts by the project teams to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency. For instance, complimentarity with the other GEF PAS projects administered by UNEP and other IA's e.g. UNDP and FAO and similarly complementarity with BD projects run by SPREP and possibly other BD agencies in the region (e.g. Conservation International, World Conservation Society and WWF) [insert relevant examples for the project being evaluated].

Factors and processes affecting project performance

33. **Preparation and readiness**. This criterion focusses on the quality of project design and preparation. Were project stakeholders[12] adequately identified and were they sufficiently involved in project development and ground truthing e.g. of proposed timeframe and budget? Were the project's objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its timeframe? Are potentially negative environmental, economic and social impacts of projects identified? Were the capacities of executing agencies properly considered when the project was designed? Was the project document clear and realistic to enable effective and efficient implementation? Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project implementation? Were counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities) and enabling legislation assured? Were adequate project management arrangements in place? Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated in the project design? What factors influenced the quality-at-entry of the project design, choice of partners, allocation of financial resources etc.? Were any design weaknesses mentioned in the Project Review Committee minutes at the time of project approval adequately addressed?

34. **Project implementation and management**. This includes an analysis of implementation approaches used by the project, its management framework, the project's adaptation to changing conditions and responses to changing risks including safeguard issues (adaptive management), the

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

performance of the implementation arrangements and partnerships, relevance of changes in project design, and overall performance of project management. The evaluation will:

(a) Ascertain to what extent the project implementation mechanisms outlined in the project document have been followed and were effective in delivering project milestones, outputs and outcomes. Were pertinent adaptations made to the approaches originally proposed?
(b) Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of project management and how well the management was able to adapt to changes during the life of the project.
(c) Assess the role and performance of the teams and working groups established and the project execution arrangements at all levels.
(d) Assess the extent to which project management responded to direction and guidance provided by the UNEP Task Manager and project steering bodies including (UNEP, SPREP, country rep – latter rotated)[list].
(e) Identify operational and political / institutional problems and constraints that influenced the effective implementation of the project, and how the project tried to overcome these problems.

35. **Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships.** The Evaluation will assess the effectiveness of mechanisms for information sharing and cooperation with other UNEP projects and programmes, external stakeholders and partners. The term stakeholder should be considered in the broadest sense, encompassing both project partners and target users (such Government Departments, regional agencies (especially SPREP and University of the South Pacific, and relevant NGO/CSO's such as Conservation International, WWF, WCS etc) of project products. The TOC and stakeholder analysis should assist the evaluators in identifying the key stakeholders and their respective roles, capabilities and motivations in each step of the causal pathways from activities to achievement of outputs, outcomes and intermediate states towards impact. The assessment will look at three related and often overlapping processes: (1) information dissemination to and between stakeholders, (2) consultation with and between stakeholders, and (3) active engagement of stakeholders in project decision making and activities. The evaluation will specifically assess:

(a) the approach(es) and mechanisms used to identify and engage stakeholders (within and outside UNEP) in project design and at critical stages of project implementation. What were the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches with respect to the project's objectives and the stakeholders' motivations and capacities?
(b) How was the overall collaboration between different functional units of UNEP involved in the project? What coordination mechanisms were in place? Were the incentives for internal collaboration in UNEP adequate?
(c) Was the level of involvement of the Regional, Liaison and Out-posted Offices in project design, planning, decision-making and implementation of activities appropriate?
(d) Has the project made full use of opportunities for collaboration with other projects and programmes including opportunities not mentioned in the Project Document[13]? Have complementarities been sought, synergies been optimized and duplications avoided?
(e) What was the achieved degree and effectiveness of collaboration and interactions between the various project partners and stakeholders during design and implementation of the project? This should be disaggregated for the main stakeholder groups identified in the inception report.
(f) To what extent has the project been able to take up opportunities for joint activities, pooling of resources and mutual learning with other organizations and networks? In particular, how useful are partnership mechanisms and initiatives such as the Pacific Round Table for Nature to build stronger coherence and collaboration between participating organisations?
(g) How did the relationship between the project and the collaborating partners (institutions and individual experts) develop? Which benefits stemmed from their involvement for project performance, for UNEP and for the stakeholders and partners themselves? Do the results of the project (strategic programmes and plans, monitoring and management systems, sub-regional agreements etc.) promote participation of stakeholders, including users, in environmental decision making?

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

37. **Country ownership and driven-ness.** The evaluation will assess the degree and effectiveness of involvement of government / public sector agencies in the project, in particular those involved in project execution and those participating in the project steering committee and various networks participating in the project (e.g. aforementioned Pacific Round Table, Pacific Islands Invasives Network).

(a) To what extent have Governments assumed responsibility for the project and provided adequate support to project execution, including the degree of cooperation received from the various public institutions involved in the project?
(b) How and how well did the project stimulate country ownership of project outputs and outcomes?
How well did the project compliment related regional agencies work and networks

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Risk monitoring (including safeguard issues) was regularly documented

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

The Consultant

43. For this evaluation, the evaluation team will consist of a single consultant. The consultant should have 10 years of technical experience, including of evaluation large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; and a broad understanding of large-scale, consultative assessment processes and factors influencing use of assessments and/or scientific research for decision-making.

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

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

Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

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

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

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

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

48. The inception report will also include a stakeholder analysis identifying key stakeholders, networks and channels of communication. This information should be gathered from the Project document and discussion with the project team. See annex 8 for template.

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

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

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

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

53. When data collection and analysis has almost been completed, the consultant will present preliminary findings to the project team and Evaluation manager. The purpose of this activity is to allow the consultant to receive guidance on the relevance and validity of the main findings emerging from the evaluation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Logistical arrangements

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

Schedule of the evaluation

62. Table 7 below presents the tentative schedule for the evaluation.

Table 7. Tentative schedule for the evaluation

Milestone	**Deadline**
Inception Report	April
Evaluation Mission	April/May
Telephone interviews, surveys etc.	
Presentation of preliminary findings and recommendations	June
Zero draft report	June
Draft Report shared with UNEP Task Manager	
Draft Report shared with project team	
Draft Report shared with Evaluation Reference Group	
Draft Report shared with stakeholders	
Final Report	July

CONSULTANT-SPECIFIC TERMS OF REFERENCE

The consultant will be hired for 4 months spread over the period April to July 2016. Evaluation tasks as outlined in the TORs will involve.

Inception Phase

- conduct a preliminary desk review and introductory interviews with project staff;
- draft the reconstructed Theory of Change of the project;
- prepare the evaluation framework;
- develop the desk review and interview protocols;
- draft the survey protocols (partner survey and user survey) if needed;
- plan the evaluation schedule;
- prepare the inception report, including comments received from the Evaluation Office
-

Data collection and analysis phase of the evaluation

- field mission and desk based interviews to conduct in-depth interviews with key stakeholders of the project and observe project activities;
- present preliminary findings to solicit first comments from the Project team

Reporting phase

- prepare zero draft report and share with the Evaluation Office for comments
- liaise with the Evaluation Office on comments received on the draft report and ensure that comments are taken into account during finalization of the main report; and
- prepare a Response to Comments annex for the main report, listing those comments not accepted by the consultant and indicating the reason for their rejection.

Managing relations of the evaluation team

- maintain a positive relationship with evaluation stakeholders, ensuring that the evaluation process is as participatory as possible but at the same time maintains its independence;
- communicate in a timely manner with the Evaluation Office on any issues requiring its attention and intervention.

The Consultant shall have had no prior involvement in the formulation or implementation of the Project and will be independent from the participating institutions. (S)He will sign the Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct Agreement Form.

The Consultant will be selected and recruited by the UNEP Evaluation Office through an individual consultancy contract.

Key selection criteria

Advanced university degree in international development, environmental sciences or other relevant political or social science areas.

- Extensive evaluation experience, including of large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach;
- Extensive team leadership experience;
- Broad understanding of Biodiversity and Ecosystem management.
- Knowledge of the UN system, and specifically of UNEP if possible;
- Excellent writing skills in English;
- Attention to detail and respect for deadlines;
- Minimum 20 years of professional experience.

The fee of the Consultant Leader will be agreed on a deliverable basis and paid upon acceptance of expected key deliverables by the UNEP Evaluation Office.

Deliverables:

- Inception report
- Presentation of preliminary findings
- Draft report
- Final report incorporating comments received from evaluation stakeholders as appropriate, including a "response to comments" annex
- 2 page bulletin summarising project findings (see template in Annex 10.)

Schedule of Payment:

Deliverables	Percentage payment
[Signature of contract for lump sum contract only, remove for fee only]	[Travel expenses]
Inception report	20% of fees
Presentation of the preliminary findings	20% of fees
Submission and approval of the draft evaluation report	30% of fees
Submission and approval of the final evaluation report	30% of fees

Contractual arrangements

63. The consultant will be hired under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA).

64. The contract stipulates consultant fees only. Air tickets will be purchased by UNEP and 75% of the DSA for each authorised travel mission will be paid up front. Local in-country travel and communication costs will be reimbursed on the production of acceptable receipts. Terminal expenses and residual DSA entitlements (25%) will be paid after mission completion.

65. By undersigning the Special Services Agreement with UNEP/UNON, the consultants certify that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests (within the six months following completion of the contract) with the project's executing or implementing units.

66. The consultant may be provided with access to UNEP's Programme Information Management System (PIMS) and if such access is granted, the consultants agree not to disclose information from that system to third parties beyond information required for, and included in, the evaluation report.

67. In case the consultant is not able to provide the deliverables in accordance with these TORs, and in line with the expected quality standards by the UNEP Evaluation Office, payment may be withheld at the discretion of the Director of the Evaluation Office until the consultants have improved the deliverables to meet UNEP's quality standards.

68. If the consultant fails to submit a satisfactory final product to UNEP in a timely manner, i.e. before the end date of their contract, the Evaluation Office reserves the right to employ additional human resources to finalize the report, and to reduce the consultants' fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the Evaluation Office to bring the report up to standard.

ANNEX II. RESPONSE TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

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

ANNEX III. EVALUATION PROGRAM

This Terminal Evaluation commenced several months in advance of the termination of the IIB project (31 December 2016) to take advantage of the presence of the UNEP Task Manager in the Pacific Regional Office in Apia, Samoa in the closing months before his retirement from his position as UNEP's Pacific Regional Advisor in July 2016. It was also seen as prudent to commence the evaluation at this time to also take advantage of the opportunity to combine the travel schedule with that for the GEFPAS Invasive Alien Species project which is also being evaluated by the author. This meant early travel to Samoa and Tonga which was required to attend the Pacific Invasives Learning Network which hosted many of the Pacific's IAS volunteers and focal points and was held in Samoa in August 2016. A second travel component was organised in September 2016 to the Cook Islands in conjunction with travel to Kiribati to undertake field interviews for the GEFPAS Phoenix Islands Protected Area project which is also being evaluated by this Evaluator.

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

Table 1. Outline of Country Visits and Activities

Date (2016)	Country	Activities
27 July - 4 August	Samoa	Met with TM and PM and project linked SPREP technical staff.
8 - 16 August	Tonga	Interviews with senior government officials, travelled to Vava'u Province and met with VEPA IIB team, Fisheries staff, and inspected Mt Talau and two other priority protected area sites. Returned to Nuku'alofa and inspected Toloa Forest Restoration site and met with Ministry of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications Staff.
9 September	Auckland N.Z.	Interviewed Conservation International Pacific Advisor.
11 - 15 September	Cook Islands	Interviews with Cook Island IIB project staff, Ministry of Agriculture and NGO partners, Cook Islands National Trust and Te Ipukarea Society. Inspected Takitimu Conservation Area and threatened Kakerori (Rarotongan flycatcher habitat..
16 September - returned to Brisbane via Fiji and Kiribati	Fiji - Kiribati-Fiji	No direct IIB activities - focus on GEFPAS PIPA project.

Table 2. List of Personnel Interviewed or Contacted

Country	**Names**	**Position**
UNEP	Greg Sherley	UNEP Task Manager and regional focal point In the Pacific (retired)
	Mohamed Sessay	Substitute UNEP task Manager for Dr. Sherley's projects
	Tiina Piiroinen	Evaluation Officer, UNEP Evaluation Office
SPREP	Ms Easter Galuvao	IIB Project Manager
	Anna Bertram	GEFPAS Tech. Specialist -
	Amanda Wheatley	SPREP Ecosystem and Biodiversity Officer

	Vainuupo Jungblut	BIOPAMA Engagement Consultant
Cook Islands	Joseph Brider	Director of Environment
	Louisa Karika	Project manager (Manager - Island Futures Division)
	Elizabeth Munro	Project coordinator
	Gerald McCormack	Director, Cook Islands Natural Heritage Trust
	Ian Karika	Owner, Takitimu Conservation Area
	Dr. Maya Poeschko	Head Scientist, Ministry of Agriculture
	Mr. Brian Tairea	Agriculture Extension Officer
	Mr. Matt Parea	Director of Ministry of Agriculture
	Mr. William Whigmore	Director of Research
	Mr. Brian Maxwell	Compliance Advisory Manager, Ministry for the Environment
	Mr. LIam Kokaua	Volunteer, Te Ipukarea Society
	Ms Alana Smitjh	Manager, Te Ipukarea Society
Tonga	Mr. Asipeli Palaki	Secretary for Lands, Survey and Natural Resources
	Atelaite Lupe Matoto.	Project Manager (Head of Environment Department)
	Ana Fekau	National Coordinator, GEFPAS IIB Project
	Viliami Hakaumotu,	National Coordinator GEFPAS IAS Project
	Ms Karen Stone	Project Coordinator, Vava'u Environmental Protection Association (VEPA)
	Lisa Fanua	Project Officer Vava'u Environmental Protection Association (VEPA)
	Seini Ika	Asst. Project Officer Vava'u Environmental Protection Association (VEPA)
	Halalilika Etika	MEIDECC (GIS)
	Lynette Sifa	MEIDECC (GIS)
	Mele Finau	Environment Officer Vava'u Branch MEIDECC
	Siosiua Latu	Environment Information Officer MEIDECC
New Zealand		
Conservation International	Sue Taei	Pacific Islands Advisor, Conservation International
Mr. B Jefferies	Bruce Jefferies	Ex SPREP Ecosystem and Biodiversity Officer
Pacific Invasives Initiative	Dr. Souad Boudjelas	Programme Manager, Pacific Invasives Initiative (PII)
Australia		
Islands Conservation	Dr. Ray Nias	Director of Southwest Pacific Program, Island Conservation

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ANNEX V. PROJECT COSTS AND CO-FINANCING TABLES

Note: as at the time of completing the TE Draft - final project expenditure figures were not available to the Evaluator who has used the figures provided to 31 December 2016 to compile this table.

Component/sub-component/output	**Estimated cost at design**	**Actual Cost (0.0) = Expenditure Ratio of Actual w known co finance to planned w co-finance.**	**Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)**
SPREP (including Personnel Component, Publications/ Outreach, Training Component, Equipment and Premises, Annual Audits	Project costs:$ 340,600 Co-finance: $400,000 **Total: $ 740,600**	Project Costs: $395,437 Co-finance: $706,760 **Total: $1,102,197 (1.49)**	1.16
COOK ISLANDS	Project Costs: $350,000 Co-finance: $ 350,000 **Total: $700,000**	Project Costs: $350,000 Co-finance: $123,021 **Total: $473,021 (0.68)**	1.0
NAURU	Project Costs: $350,000 Co-finance:601,600 **Total: $951,600**	Project Costs: $268,031 Co-finance: N/A **Total $268,031 (0.28)**	0.77
TONGA	Project Costs: $350,000 Co-finance: $524,000 **Total: $874,000**	Project Costs: $443,309 Co-finance: $191,330 **Total: $634,639 (0.73)**	1.26
TUVALU	Project Costs: $350,00 Co-finance: $400,000 **Total: $750,000**	Project Costs: $154,960 Co-finance: $42,431 **Total: $197,391 (0.26)**	0.44
CEPF (Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund)	Project Costs $ NA Co-finance $176,400 **Total: $176,400**	Project Costs $ NA Co-finance $NA **Total: $NA**	N/A
NOAA (National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration)	Project Costs $ NA Co-finance $110,000 **Total: $110,000**	Project Costs $ NA Co-finance $NA Total: $	N/A
UNEP Absorbed Costs (Evaluations)	Project Costs$ N/A Co-finance(In Kind) $60,000 **Total: 60,000**	Project Costs $N/A Co-Finance (Full expenditure assumed) **Total $60,000 (1.0)**	1.0
Totals	Project Costs: $1,740,600 Co-finance: $2,562,120 **Total* with c/f: $4,302,720** *excludes UNEP in-kind.	Project Costs: $1,611,738 Co-finance: $ 1,123,542 **Total* with c/f:$2,674,280 (0.62)** *excludes UNEP in-kind.	**0.93**

- Co-financing

Co financing (Type/Source)	UNEP own Financing (US$1,000)		Government (US$1,000)		Other* (US$1,000)		Total (US$1,000)		Total Disbursed (US$1,000)
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	
– Grants					0	40	0	40	
– Loans									
– Credits									
– Equity investments									
– In-kind support			1875	357	686	707	2561	1064	
Other (*) SPREP CEPF NOAA ICCAI					 400 176 110 0	 707 N/A N/A 40			
Totals			1875	357	686	**747**	2561	1064	

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- * This refers to contributions mobilized for the project from other multilateral agencies, bilateral development cooperation agencies, NGOs, the private sector and beneficiaries.

GEF projects

Financial management components			**Rating**	**Evidence/ Comments**
Attention paid to compliance with procurement rules and regulations			HS:HU	S
Contact/communication between the PM & FMO			HS:HU	S
PM & FMO knowledge of the project financials			HS:HU	S
FMO responsiveness to financial requests			HS:HU	S
PM & FMO responsiveness to addressing and resolving financial issues			HS:HU	S
Were the following documents provided to the evaluator:				
A.	An up to date co-financing table	Y/N		Y
B.	A summary report on the projects financial management and expenditures during the life of the project - to date	Y/N		Y
C.	A summary of financial revisions made to the project and their purpose	Y/N		Y
D.	Copies of any completed audits	Y/N		Y
Availability of project financial reports and audits			HS:HU	S
Timeliness of project financial reports and audits			HS:HU	S
Quality of project financial reports and audits			HS:HU	S
FMO knowledge of partner financial requirements and procedures			HS:HU	S
Overall rating				**S**

"Implementing the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by integrating the conservation management of Island Biodiversity - IIB project" (GFL/4023)

Results and Lessons Learned

The **Goal** of this project is "to improve the well being of Pacific Island communities by applying an ecosystem approach to the conservation of ecosystems, species and genetic diversity in the Pacific regions, species and genetic diversity in the Pacific region". It is a high level goal and is broad and aspirational in its scope but is further refined by the project **Objective** "to contribute to the implementation of the CBD's Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by supporting an integrated system approach to biodiversity conservation and management at local level in four Pacific countries. It is clear that the successful implementation of the project in the four chosen countries would contribute incrementally to both the Goal and Objective, but would have a much more substantial impact at the national and local (community) levels. The evaluation indicates that this has indeed been the case, especially in view of the fact that none of the countries had previously been recipients of significant external funding to specifically support biodiversity conservation.

Background

Implementation Dates. The IIB project was originally conceived in 2008 and was incorporated under the GEF policy for encouraging sustainably solutions in natural resource management in the Pacific region known as the GRF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (GEF PAS). GEFPAS was the funding framework for a number of related biodiversity and natural resource management projects in the region and sought to enhance integrated ecosystem management and strengthened capacity through linkages between the projects. Other closely related GEF PAS projects included the Pacific Invasive Alien Species (IAS), the Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) and the Micronesia Challenge (MC) projects. The IIB project was first developed in 2009 but the project was not approved by the GEF until December 2011 and finally got underway in May 2012. Originally a three year project (2012 - 2015) the project had three extensions with a final termination date set for 31 December 2016.

Implementation Arrangements

The Project was delivered to the Pacific islands region of the Asia Pacific global region. Participating countries were Cook Islands, Nauru Tonga and Tuvalu, which are among the smallest (geographically and economically) island countries in the region.

UNEP was the Implementing Agency for the project under the Ecosystems Division[14]. The UNEP Task Manager was the Pacific Regional Focal Point (now retired). The Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) was the Executing Agency with in-country implementation assigned to National Coordination Offices and Officers.

The original project budget was USD 4,302,720 consisting of USD 1,740,600 in GEF funds and USD 2,562,120 in SPREP, country and partner co-financing.

Relevance

The Pacific IIB project aimed to assist the participating countries to contribute to the CBD Islands Biodiversity Programme of Work (IBPOW) which was approved by the CBD eighth Committee of the Parties (COP 8) and called for special attention to be given to the protection of the unique and fragile biodiversity and ecosystems of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The project was also aligned with outcomes specifically relevant to the Focal Areas Strategies of Strategic Programming of GEF 4 (GEF 2007) specifically Long Term Objective 1, "to catalyse sustainability of protected area systems", LT Objective 2"to mainstream biodiversity in production landscapes/seascapes and sectors and LT Objective 3 " To safeguard biodiversity". In addition the project was relevant to Strategic Program (SP) 3 "strengthening terrestrial protected area networks; SP 2 "increasing representation of effectively

[14] Formerly the Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI).

managed marine protected area networks" ; SP4 "strengthening the policy and regulatory framework for mainstreaming biodiversity" and SP7 "prevention control and management of invasive alien species". Overall the relevance to global and international biodiversity conservation goals and objectives of the time was very high. So too was the project's alignment with regional and national biodiversity management frameworks including the Framework for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands Region 2014 - 2020 and most importantly, the National Biodiversity Action Plans and Strategies of the participating countries.

Performance

A slow start and a number of teething problems associated with poor readiness in some participating countries including delays with the recruitment of National Project Coordinators in two countries led to a moderately satisfactory rating at mid-term. To their credit the EA and Project Support Unit were able to accelerate progress in the second half of the project time frame, helped by the appointment of National Coordinators in all four countries and particularly Tonga and Samoa where the Coordinators were dedicated to the project. The project produced strong results with the near full completion of all project outputs including additional examples in some areas. The focus on building capacity through on the ground experience, training and mentoring, together with building an improved institutional and policy basis for IIB management and vastly improved public and government awareness of the role of biodiversity in supporting healthy ecosystems and human well being are outcomes that, if built on will ensure substantive progress towards long term project impact. Features of project performance were the innovative use conservation tools such as BIORAPS, P3DM and the Open Standards for Conservation together with a strong focus on cross training and learning between countries.

Factors Affecting Performance

Several factors impacted on project performance. The first was the difficulty in recruiting National Project Coordinators in a timely fashion and then having to re-recruit (and re-train personnel) when staff moved on which in one case, occurred three times. Related to this was the need to provide project management and systems/reporting training for National Coordinators in some of the countries. Secondly, the project was challenged by unexpected events relating to internal national issues which were beyond the control of project management but led to a significant set back to the programme in one of the participating countries. Thirdly, the project implementation environment was dynamic and required three significant budget revisions over the eventually four year project time frame. These should not be seen in a negative light, rather they are indicative of the adaptive qualities exhibited by the PSU, which are often a critical factor in a projects success for failure. Finally, on a positive note, the project was very proactive in achieving efficiencies of scale through the encouragement of partnerships and the use of BIORAPS and P3DM methodologies which facilitated multiple outputs and outcomes through concentrated in-country initiatives.

Key Lessons Learned.

1. Recruitment of competent National Coordinators is vital to project success and as such the recruitment process should be give the highest priority by the EA an participating countries. Preferably countries should be encouraged to recruit for a dedicated project management position especially where the project is contributing directly to the cost.

2. This GEF PAS project and others familiar to the evaluator did not establish and functioning Technical Advisory Group as called for in the project design. The lesson is that unless appropriate levels of funding are to be made available to facilitate meetings and the work of such a committee it is better to acknowledge the reality that it will not be established and build an alternative into the project design, perhaps using in-house expertise rather than external experts.

3. The time factors often associated with the design, approval and implementation of multi- country projects mean there most likely will be significant changes in the implementation environment which will require competent adaptive management on behalf of the Project Management Unit. The lesson here is that rigorous and diligent annual Project Implementation Review process as carried out by the project management team is essential to the efficient and effective execution of the project. Furthermore, the

project design and budget must ensure there are sufficient resources to convene multi-stakeholder PIR meetings.

4. Multi-country projects such as the IIB are the ideal vehicle to facility powerful south-south learning experiences particularly between staff from countries with similar challenges and socio-political conditions. However, it is important that project management recognises the potential of these opportunities and ensures the resources are made available to facilitate these exchanges and endeavours to build in follow up networking and training opportunities.

5. The length of time it takes to secure policy change or enact legislation and regulation in the Pacific island context can span most of a project time frame and take longer to bring to fruition than anticipated. It is therefore important that projects with policy and legislative components give priority to getting these underway at the earliest possible stage of project implementation in order to ensure the maximum possible time frame to bring them to fruition prior to project termination.

ANNEX VII. PRESENTATION

No Formal presentations were made during the Evaluation.

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

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

Abbreviated Curriculum Vitae Mr. Peter Thomas

Contact	123 Point Wells Road, Point Wells R D 6, Warkworth 0986, New Zealand Phone: (M)+64 (0) 21 0496411 Email: Peter@tierramar.com.au
Professional Strengths and Interest	• Extensive international management and professional experience in environmental program and project development, management, monitoring, evaluation and improvement with a strong professional background in biodiversity conservation. • Strategic and business planning, organisation design, restructuring and change management. • Capacity analysis, team building, leadership and knowledge management solutions to support learning and mentoring for positive and sustainable natural resource management outcomes in developing countries. • Development, support and analysis of innovative approaches and policy for achieving sustainable environmental and natural resource management outcomes. • Strategic project and programme development at regional, sub regional and national levels.
Profile	• Over 35 years professional experience in government and non-government organisations focussed on natural resource management, biodiversity conservation and protected area management. • 25 years experience in community based engagement in marine and terrestrial conservation area establishment and management, species and habitat protection and conservation policy development, particularly in the Pacific islands. • 25 years experience in strategic planning, development, management and leadership in non profit and international environment and conservation organisations. • 25 years successful experience in fundraising from multi-lateral and bi-lateral sources, private foundations and individuals including the design and establishment of sustainable financing mechanisms. • 10 years experience in government natural resource management agencies engaged in environmental impact assessment, alien species control, national protected area policy development and land use and natural and cultural protected area management planning. • 6 years engagement in negotiation and development of international and regional conservation agreement and forums. • Extensive report, proposal writing and public speaking experience.
Core skills	• Institutional building, strategic and business planning, organisation design and capacity assessment. • Resource management and biodiversity conservation project/programme design, planning and implementation. • Sustainable community based approaches to natural resource management in tropical island

	countries, particularly in the Pacific. • Project/programme monitoring and evaluation and improvement. • Policy analysis and development. • Knowledge management and learning network development. • People management, including distance management, supervision, mentoring and career development and team building. • Financial management, establishment of standard operating policies and associated compliance. • Fundraising and proposal preparation. • Cross-cultural working relationships and travel in developing countries and workplace adaptability.
International Experience.	Australia; Cook Islands; China; Cambodia, Fiji; Federated States of Micronesia; Indonesia; Jamaica; New Caledonia; Laos, Marshall Islands; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Palau; Samoa; Solomon Islands; Tonga; United States of America; Vanuatu; Malaysia; Philippines; Timor Leste. Regional/Sub-regional experience in: Pacific; Coral Triangle, Greater Mekong and Heart of Boreno.
Qualifications	Master of Science (Resource Management), Canterbury University, Christchurch, NZ. 1981 Bachelor of Commerce and Administration, Victoria University of Wellington, NZ. 1979

ANNEX IX. QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

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

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

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Draft Report Rating	Final Report Rating
Substantive report quality criteria			
A. Quality of the Executive Summary: Does the executive summary present the main findings of the report for each evaluation criterion and a good summary of recommendations and lessons learned? (Executive Summary not required for zero draft)	Draft report: The executive summary presents the project background, introduces the evaluation and presents main evaluation findings per criterion. Lessons and recommendations could rather be summarized than presented in full. Final report: The executive summary is very well presented.	S	HS
B. Project context and project description: Does the report present an up-to-date description of the socio-economic, political, institutional and environmental context of the project, including the issues that the project is trying to address, their root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being? Are any changes since the time of project design highlighted? Is all essential information about the project clearly presented in the report (objectives, target groups, institutional arrangements, budget, changes in design since approval etc.)?	Draft report: The project context has been well described. Final report: Same as above.	S	S
C. Strategic relevance: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of strategic relevance of the intervention in terms of relevance of the project to global, regional and national environmental issues and needs, and UNEP strategies and programmes?	Draft report: The report presents a good assessment of relevance. All required aspects are discussed. Final report: Same as above.	HS	HS
D. Achievement of outputs: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of outputs delivered by the intervention (including their quality)?	Draft report: The division between activities and outputs are not always clear. In cases, outcomes are discussed in the section. Final report: The report presents an adequate assessment of the achievement of outputs.	MS	MS
E. Presentation of Theory of Change: Is the Theory of Change of the intervention clearly presented? Are causal pathways logical and complete (including drivers, assumptions and key actors)?	Draft report: The ToC has been well presented, providing a detailed description of the impact pathways. Final report: Same as above.	S	S
F. Effectiveness - Attainment of project objectives and results: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the achievement of the relevant outcomes and project objectives?	Draft report: Achievement of outcomes has not been adequately discussed. Final report: The report presents a good assessment of effectiveness.	MU	S
G. Sustainability and replication: Does the report present a well-reasoned and evidence-based assessment of sustainability of outcomes and replication / catalytic effects?	Draft report: The report presents a good assessment of sustainability and replication. Final report: Same as above.	S	S
H. Efficiency: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of efficiency? Does the report present any comparison with similar	Draft report: Both timeliness and cost-efficiency have been discussed.	S	S

	interventions?	Final report: Same as above.		
I.	Factors affecting project performance: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of all factors affecting project performance? In particular, does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used; and an assessment of the quality of the project M&E system and its use for project management?	Draft report: The factors affecting performance have been well assessed in general. Some additions are needed on financial management and M&E. Supervision section should discuss UN Environment support as the implementing agency. Final report: The factors affecting project performance have been well discussed.	MS	S
J.	Quality of the conclusions: Do the conclusions highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the project, and connect those in a compelling story line?	Draft report: Conclusions section is brief and describes the main strengths and weaknesses of the project as a story line. Final report: Same as above.	S	S
K.	Quality and utility of the recommendations: Are recommendations based on explicit evaluation findings? Do recommendations specify the actions necessary to correct existing conditions or improve operations ('who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?)'. Can they be implemented?	Draft report: Recommendations are based on explicit evaluation findings but they could be revised to describe specific action. Final report: Recommendations are well presented.	MS	S
L.	Quality and utility of the lessons: Are lessons based on explicit evaluation findings? Do they suggest prescriptive action? Do they specify in which contexts they are applicable?	Draft report: Lessons are based on explicit evaluation findings, but could be redrafted to more clearly present the context, lesson and application. Final report: Lessons are well presented.	MS	S
Report structure quality criteria				
M.	Structure and clarity of the report: Does the report structure follow EOU guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included?	Draft report: The structure of the report follows EOU guidelines. Some financial annexes are missing. Final report: The report structure follows EOU guidelines.	MS	HS
N.	Evaluation methods and information sources: Are evaluation methods and information sources clearly described? Are data collection methods, the triangulation / verification approach, details of stakeholder consultations provided? Are the limitations of evaluation methods and information sources described?	Draft report: Evaluation purpose, scope, key information sources and key questions have been described. Final report: Same as above.	S	S
O.	Quality of writing: Was the report well written? (clear English language and grammar)	Draft report: The report is well written. Final report: Same as above.	HS	HS
P.	Report formatting: Does the report follow EOU guidelines using headings, numbered paragraphs etc.	Draft report: Paragraphs were not numbered or formatted. Final report: The report is well formatted.	MS	S
		OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING	S	S

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

		UNEP Evaluation Office Comments		Rating
Evaluation process quality criteria				
Q.	Preparation: Was the evaluation budget agreed and approved by the EOU? Was inception report delivered and approved prior to commencing any travel?	The evaluation budget was agreed by the EOU. Inception report was delivered prior to travels.		S
R.	Timeliness: Was a TE initiated within the period of six months before or after project	The project was extended when the TE was already		MS

	completion? Was an MTE initiated within a six month period prior to the project's mid-point? Were all deadlines set in the ToR respected?	ongoing.		
S.	Project's support: Did the project make available all required documents? Was adequate support provided to the evaluator(s) in planning and conducting evaluation missions?	Project provided adequate support.		S
T.	Recommendations: Was an implementation plan for the evaluation recommendations prepared? Was the implementation plan adequately communicated to the project?	Recommendations implementation plan was prepared and communicated to the project.		S
U.	Quality assurance: Was the evaluation peer-reviewed? Was the quality of the draft report checked by the evaluation manager and peer reviewer prior to dissemination to stakeholders for comments? Did EO complete an assessment of the quality of the final report?	Evaluation was peer-reviewed and quality of the draft report was checked by the evaluation manager and the peer reviewer prior to dissemination to stakeholders. Quality assessment was completed.		HS
V.	Transparency: Were the draft ToR and evaluation report circulated to all key stakeholders for comments? Was the draft evaluation report sent directly to EOU? Were all comments to the draft evaluation report sent directly to the EOU and did EO share all comments with the commentators? Did the evaluator(s) prepare a response to all comments?	Draft ToR was circulated for comments. Draft evaluation report and comments were sent directly to EOU. Comments were shared with the commentators with responses.		HS
W.	Participatory approach: Was close communication to the EOU and project maintained throughout the evaluation? Were evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations adequately communicated?	Good communication was maintained throughout the evaluation.		S
X.	Independence: Was the final selection of the evaluator(s) made by EOU? Were possible conflicts of interest of the selected evaluator(s) appraised?	Final selection of the evaluator was made by EOU.		HS
		OVERALL PROCESS RATING		S

Rating system for quality of evaluation reports

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

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

Stakeholder Analysis

The IIB ProDoc identifies an extensive array of potential project stakeholders and beneficiaries ranging from international and regional institutions and organisations, national government agencies in the four participating countries, national NGO's and civil society organisations and local communities and community groups. For the purposes of this evaluation, these have been listed in Table 2 and ranked by the Evaluator in terms of their relative interest in and influence on, the project and its outcomes. Table 2 has been graphically mapped using a standard stakeholder mapping format (see Figure 1) which has helped identify the priorities for stakeholder consultations under the evaluation process.

Principal amongst the stakeholders are the UNEP as the Implementing Agency which was represented in the design process by the Task Manager (UNEP Pacific Regional Focal Point in Samoa), the Executing Agency (SPREP) and the lead government implementing agencies represented by the project coordination staff of the participating countries. These stakeholders were closely engaged in the project design process from PIF through PPG to the completion of the ProDoc and the Inception Workshop. The process took circa 2 years with in-country consultations being co-ordinated through the lead agency using existing committees or other mechanisms where appropriate. These national level consultations also engaged other important stakeholders including community representatives, NGO's and other relevant CSO's such as youth and women's groups and the church, especially where these had previous involvement in biodiversity projects.

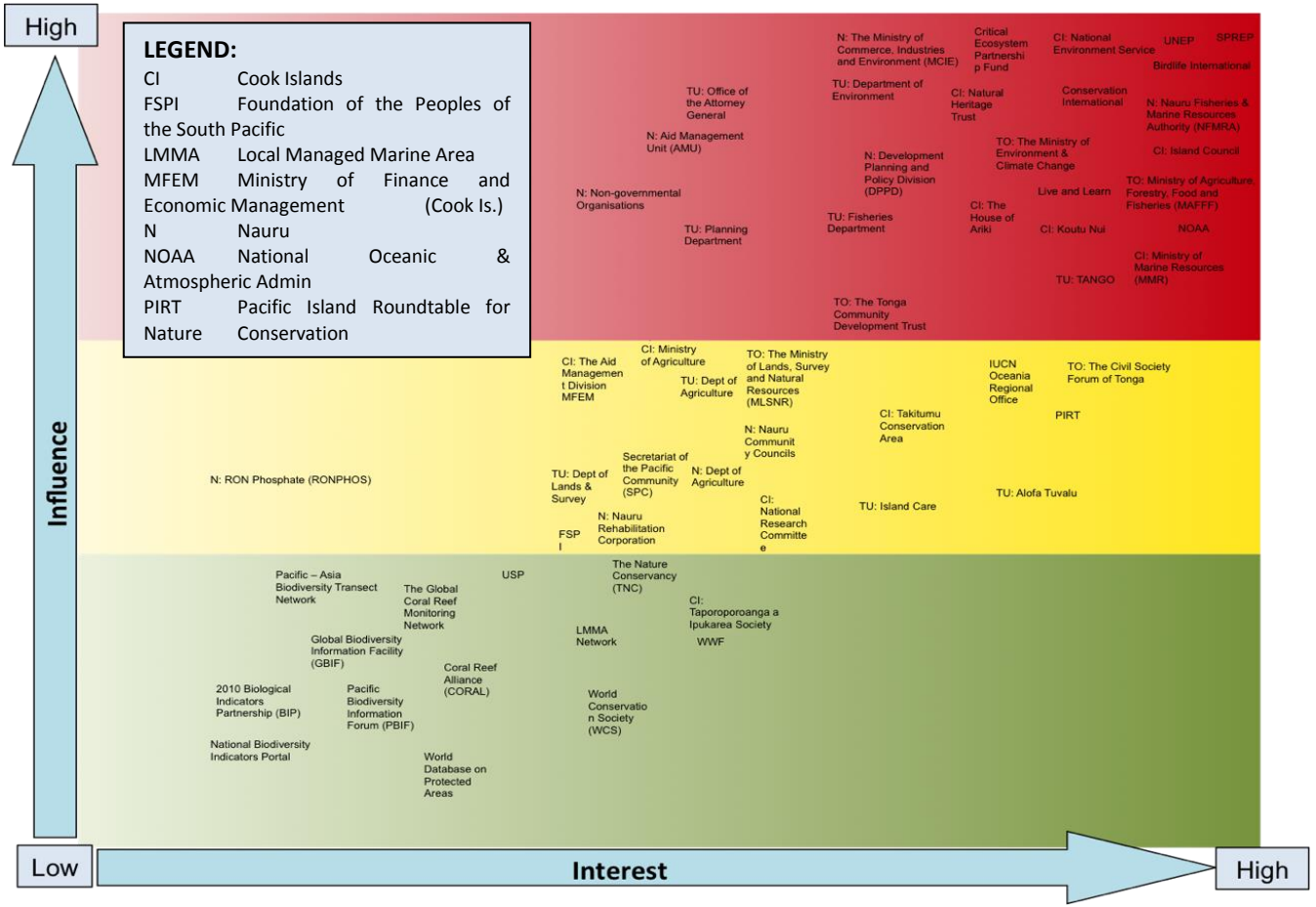
A project planning meeting was convened in association with a meeting of the PIRT where the country representatives were brought together and given the opportunity to review every aspect of the project with the IA, EA and design consultant. This meeting also provided an opportunity for regional and international NGO stakeholder members of the PIRT to contribute to the project design. The final formal opportunity for primary stakeholder consultation took place at the Inception Workshop which was attended by the IA, EA and country representatives and key NGO stakeholders.

Throughout the project stakeholder consultation was achieved through and in support of project implementation activities, especially those requiring community approval and engagement. In country this was achieved with the help of the NBSAP management and coordination mechanisms in each country which facilitate stakeholder networking and cooperation. Further consultation was facilitated through the project MTR process.

Table 12: Assessment of Stakeholder interest and influence

Institution/Agency	**Interest***	**Influence***
Regional/International Enabling Institutions		
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	H	H
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)	H	H
Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)	H	H
Birdlife International	H	H
Conservation International (CI)	H	H
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)	H	H
University of the South Pacific (USP)	L	L
IUCN Oceania Regional Office	H	M
Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)	M	M
The Nature Conservancy (TNC)	M	L
Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF)	M	L
Pacific Island Roundtable for Nature Conservation (PIRT)	H	M
Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) Network	M	L
The Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN)	L	L
Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL)	L	L

2010 Biological Indicators Partnership (BIP)	L	L
Pacific-Asia Biodiversity Transect Network (PABITRA)	L	L
Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF)	L	L
National Biodiversity Indicators Portal	L	L
World Database on Protected Areas	L	L
Pacific Biodiversity Information Forum (PBIF)	L	L
World Conservation Society (WCS)	M	L
The German Pacific Programme of GIZ	M	M
Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific (FSPI)	M	M
Live and Learn	H	H
Cook Islands		
CI: National Environment Service (NES)	H	H
CI: Natural Heritage Trust	H	H
CI: Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR)	H	H
CI: Ministry of Agriculture	M	M
CI: The Aid Management Division of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM)	M	M
CI: National Research Committee	M	M
CI: Island Council	H	H
CI: The House of Ariki	H	H
CI: Koutu Nui	H	H
CI: Taporoporoanga a Ipukarea Society	M	L
CI: Takitumu Conservation Area	H	M
Nauru		
N: The Ministry of Commerce, Industries and Environment (MCIE)	H	H
N: Nauru Fisheries & Marine Resources Authority (NFMRA)	H	H
N: Department of Agriculture	M	M
N: Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation (NRC)	M	M
N: RON Phosphate (RONPHOS)	L	M
N: Development Planning and Policy Division (DPPD)	H	H
N: Aid Management Unit (AMU)	M	H
N: Non-governmental Organisations	M	H
N: Nauru Community Councils	M	M
Tonga		
TO: The Ministry of Environment & Climate Change	H	H
TO: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Food and Fisheries (MAFFF)	H	H
TO: The Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources (MLSNR)	M	M
TO: The Tonga Community Development Trust	H	H
TO: The Civil Society Forum of Tonga	H	M
Tuvalu		
TU: Department of Environment	H	H
TU: Fisheries Department	H	H
TU: Department of Agriculture	M	M
TU: TANGO	H	H
TU: Department of Lands & Survey	M	M
TU: Planning Department	M	H
TU: Office of the Attorney General	M	H
TU: Island Care	H	M
TU: Alofa Tuvalu	H	M
* H = High M = Medium L = Low		


High
Influence
Low
Interest
High
LEGEND:
CI Cook Islands
FSPI Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific
LMMA Local Managed Marine Area
MFEM Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (Cook Is.)
N Nauru
NOAA National Oceanic & Atmospheric Admin
PIRT Pacific Island Roundtable for Nature Conservation
N: The Ministry of Commerce, Industries and Environment (MCIE)
Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CI: National Environment Service
UNEP
SPREP
Birdlife International
TU: Office of the Attorney General
TU: Department of Environment
CI: Natural Heritage Trust
Conservation International
N: Nauru Fisheries & Marine Resources Authority (NFMRA)
N: Aid Management Unit (AMU)
TO: The Ministry of Environment & Climate Change
CI: Island Council
N: Development Planning and Policy Division (DPPD)
N: Non-governmental Organisations
Live and Learn
TO: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Food and Fisheries (MAFFF)
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CI: The House of Ariki
CI: Koutu Nui
NOAA
TU: Planning Department
CI: Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR)
TU: TANGO
TO: The Tonga Community Development Trust
CI: The Aid Management Division MFEM
CI: Ministry of Agriculture
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TO: The Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources (MLSNR)
IUCN Oceania Regional Office
TO: The Civil Society Forum of Tonga
CI: Takitumu Conservation Area
PIRT
N: Nauru Community Councils
N: RON Phosphate (RONPHOS)
Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)
TU: Dept of Lands & Survey
N: Dept of Agriculture
TU: Alofa Tuvalu
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Pacific – Asia Biodiversity Transect Network
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WWF
Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF)
Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL)
2010 Biological Indicators Partnership (BIP)
Pacific Biodiversity Information Forum (PBIF)
World Conservation Society (WCS)
National Biodiversity Indicators Portal
World Database on Protected Areas