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EVALUATION SYNTHESIS REPORT

2016 - 2017

Evaluation Office
UN ENVIRONMENT



Evaluation Office of UN Environment

Credits:

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CONTENTS

Executive Summary	9
1 INTRODUCTION	21
1.1 Scope and Objectives of the Synthesis Report.....	21
1.2 Evaluation Office.....	21
1.3 Mandate and Mission	22
2 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE	23
2.1 Sample Sizes and Ratings Scales.....	23
2.1.1 Limitations	24
2.2 Performance in the 2014-2017 Biennium.....	24
2.3 Analysis by Individual Evaluation Criteria.....	29
2.4 Overall Performance	34
2.5 Strategic Relevance	36
2.6 Effectiveness.....	37
2.6.1 Delivery of Outputs.....	38
2.6.2 Achievement of Direct Outcomes.....	40
2.6.3 Likelihood of Impact	41
2.7 Sustainability.....	43
2.8 Efficiency	46
2.9 Factors Affecting Project Performance.....	48
2.9.1 Preparation and Readiness	48
2.9.2 Project Implementation and Management.....	49
2.9.3 Stakeholders Participation, Cooperation and Partnerships.....	50
2.9.4 Communication and Public Awareness.....	52
2.9.5 Country Ownership and Driven-ness.....	54
2.9.6 Financial Planning and Management	56
2.9.7 UN Environment Supervision, Guidance and Technical Backstopping.....	57
2.9.8 Monitoring and Reporting	59
2.10 Improving Comparability Across Project Evaluations.....	61
3 KEY FINDINGS FROM STRATEGIC EVALUATIONS	63
3.1 UN Environment Finance Initiative	63
3.1.1 Summary of Key Recommendations.....	64
3.2 Green Economy Initiative.....	65
3.2.1 Summary of Key Recommendations.....	66
3.3 The International Resource Panel.....	67

3.3.1	Summary of Key Recommendations.....	68
3.4	UN Environment-European Commission Strategic Cooperation Agreements	69
3.5	Biosafety Portfolio Evaluation	70
3.6	China Trust Fund.....	73
3.6.1	Structure of Funding	75
3.6.2	Management Arrangements.....	75
3.6.3	Management Processes	75
3.7	Selected Key Lessons Learnt.....	76
4	COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS.....	81
4.1	Acceptance of Evaluation Recommendations	82
4.2	Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations.....	83
5	PERFORMANCE OF THE EVALUATION OFFICE AND EVALUATION QUALITY	85
5.1	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network.....	85
5.2	GEF Independent Evaluation Office Assessment of the Quality of UN Environment Evaluation Reports ..	85
5.3	The OIOS Evaluation Dashboard study of UN Environment Evaluation Office	86
5.4	UN System Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP).....	86
5.5	Evaluation Report Quality assurance and assessment	88
	Annex I: List of evaluations finalised in the 2016-2017 Biennium.....	90

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Number of completed evaluations with performance ratings	23
Table 2: Evaluation rating scale	23
Table 3. Summary of new and/or revised evaluation tools and guidelines	24
Table 4: Number of evaluations by sub-programme	25
Table 5: Number of completed evaluations by funding modality	26
Table 6. Expected Accomplishments targeted in Projects Evaluated in MTS 2014-2017 and Biennium 2016-17	26
Table 7. Planned Project Budget for Development of National Biosafety Frameworks	70
Table 8. Compliance on submission of implementation plans by UN Environment Divisions	81
Table 9. Evaluation Implementation Plans Issued in the 2016-17 Biennium.....	82

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure ES 1. Distribution of project evaluations by thematic Sub-programmes 2014-17.	9
Figure ES 2. Summary of project performance 2016-2017 biennium across 79 evaluated projects – main evaluation criteria.	10
Figure ES 3. Summary of project performance 2016-2017 biennium across 79 evaluated projects – ‘Factors affecting performance’.	12
Figure ES 4. The performance of all UN Environment projects evaluated in the 2016-17 biennium against all evaluation criteria.	12
Figure ES 5. The overall performance trends for the Medium-Term Strategy period 2014-17 against all evaluation criteria.	13
Figure ES 6. Summary of project performance 2016-2017 biennium across 127 evaluated projects in the 2014-17 MTS period	14
Figure ES 7. Recommendation Implementation Compliance 2016-2017 (Accepted recommendations N=164).....	19
Figure ES 8. MOPAN Assessment covering the UN Environment evaluation function.	20
Figure 1. Comparison of Evaluations by Sub-programme in MTS 2014-2017 and Biennium 2016-2017.....	25
Figure 2. Comparison of evaluations conducted for GEF and non-GEF projects in MTS 2014-17 and 2016-17 Biennium	26
Figure 3. Expected accomplishments targeted in projects evaluated in 2016-2017 biennium).....	28
Figure 4. Alignment with expected accomplishments in projects evaluated in MTS 2014-2017.....	28
Figure 5: Overview of project performance by criteria in the 2016-2017 biennium.....	30
Figure 6: Overview of project performance by criteria in the MTS 2014-2017	31

Figure 7: Overview of project performance by evaluation criteria in MTS 2014-2017	32
Figure 8. Overview of project performance by evaluation criteria in 2016-2017 biennium.....	32
Figure 9. Projects by sub-programme rated 'Satisfactory' or better in overall performance in MTS 2014-2017.....	35
Figure 10. Projects by sub-programme rated 'Satisfactory' or better in overall performance in 2016-2017 biennium.....	35
Figure 11. Strategic relevance by year (2010-2017).....	36
Figure 12. Strategic relevance by sub-programme in 2016-17 biennium.....	36
Figure 13: Comparison of strategic relevance between GEF and non-GEF Projects (2016-17)	37
Figure 14: Project effectiveness by year (2010-2017).....	37
Figure 15. Project effectiveness by sub-programme in 2016-17 biennium	38
Figure 16. Comparison of effectiveness between GEF-funded and Non-GEF funded projects (2016-2017)	38
Figure 17. Delivery of outputs by year (2010-2017).....	39
Figure 18. Delivery of outputs by sub-programme in 2016-17 biennium	39
Figure 19. Comparison in delivery of outputs between GEF and Non-GEF funded projects (2016-17)	40
Figure 20. Achievement of direct outcomes by year (2010-2017)	40
Figure 21: Achievement of Direct Outcomes by Sub-programme in 2016-17 biennium	41
Figure 22. Comparison in Achievement of Direct Outcomes between GEF and Non-GEF funded Projects	41
Figure 23. Likelihood of Impact by Year (2010-2017)	42
Figure 24. Likelihood of Impact by Sub-programme in 2016-2017 Biennium.....	42
Figure 25. Comparison of Likelihood of Impact Assessment between GEF and non-GEF projects	43
Figure 26. Assessment of Overall Sustainability of Project Outcomes by Year (2010-2017).....	44
Figure 27. Sustainability of Project Outcomes by Sub-programme in the 2016-17 biennium	44
Figure 28. Sustainability of Project Outcomes by Sub-criteria in the 2016-2017 biennium.....	45
Figure 29. Comparison of Overall Sustainability between GEF and non-GEF projects in 2016-2017 biennium.....	46
Figure 30. Assessment of Project Efficiency by Year (2010-2017).....	46
Figure 31. Assessment of Project Efficiency by Sub-programme in 2016-2017 Biennium	47
Figure 32. Comparison of Project Efficiency between GEF and non-GEF projects 2016-2017 Biennium....	47
Figure 33: Comparison of Preparation and Readiness by Year (2010-2017).....	48
Figure 34: Assessment of Preparation and Readiness by Sub-Programme for the Biennium 2016-17	48
Figure 35: Comparison of GEF and Non-GEF projects for Preparation and Readiness for the Biennium 2016-2017	49
Figure 36: Comparison of Project Implementation and Management ratings by Biennium.....	49

Figure 37: Assessment of Implementation and Adaptive Management by Sub-Programme in the Biennium 2016-17	50
Figure 38: Comparison of GEF and Non-GEF projects for Project Implementation and Management in the Biennium 2016-17	50
Figure 39: Assessment of Stakeholder Participation, Cooperation and Partnerships from 2010 to 2017 ..	51
Figure 40: Assessment of Stakeholder Participation by Sub Programme in biennium 2016-2017	51
Figure 41: Comparison of GEF and non-GEF projects for Stakeholder Participation 2016-2017	52
Figure 42: Assessment of Communication and Public Awareness by year 2010 - 2017.....	53
Figure 43. Communication and Public Awareness by Sub-programme in 2016 – 2017 Biennium.....	53
Figure 44: Comparison of GEF and Non GEF Communication and Public Awareness 2016 - 2017	53
Figure 45: Assessment of Country Ownership and Driven-ness 2010 - 2017.....	54
Figure 46: Comparison of Country Ownership and Driven-ness by Sub-programme 2016-2017	55
Figure 47: Comparison of GEF and non GEF projects for Country Ownership and Driven-ness 2016 - 2017	55
Figure 48: Assessment of Financial Planning and Management from 2010 – 2017.....	56
Figure 49: Comparison across sub programmes in Financial Planning and Management in the Biennium 2016-17	57
Figure 50: Comparison of GEF and non GEF projects in Financial Planning and Management 2016-2017	57
Figure 51: Assessment of UN Environment Supervision and Technical Backstopping 2010 - 2017	58
Figure 52: Comparison of Sub-Programmes against Supervision and Technical Backstopping in the Biennium 2016-17.....	58
Figure 53: Comparison of GEF and Non GEF projects - UN Environment supervision and backstopping 2016 – 2017	59
Figure 54: Assessment of Overall Monitoring Criterion 2010 – 2017	60
Figure 55: Comparison of Monitoring by Sub Criteria 2016 - 2017	60
Figure 56: Comparison across sub-programmes - Overall Monitoring in the Beinnium 2016-17.....	61
Figure 57: Comparison of GEF and Non GEF projects - Monitoring in the Biennium 2016-17.....	61
Figure 58. Acceptance of Recommendations in Evaluations Completed in 2016-2017 Biennium	82
Figure 59. Evaluation Recommendation Implementation Compliance 2014 – 2017.....	83
Figure 60. Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations by the close of 2016-2017	84
Figure 61. Implementation Status of Recommendations due for Completion in 2016-2017 Biennium	84
Figure 62. MOPAN Assessment covering the UN Environment evaluation function	85
Figure 63. Quality of GEF Terminal Evaluation Reports by agency 2004-15.....	86
Figure 64. Quality of Draft and Final Evaluation Reports for the Biennium 2016-17	89

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CC	Climate Change
CW	Chemicals and Waste
DC	Disasters and Conflicts
EA	Expected Accomplishments
EG	Environmental Governance
EM	Ecosystem Management
EuR	Environment under Review
GEF	Global Environment Facility
MTS	Medium Term Strategy
PoW	Programme of Work
RE	Resource Efficiency
UN	United Nations
USD	United States Dollar

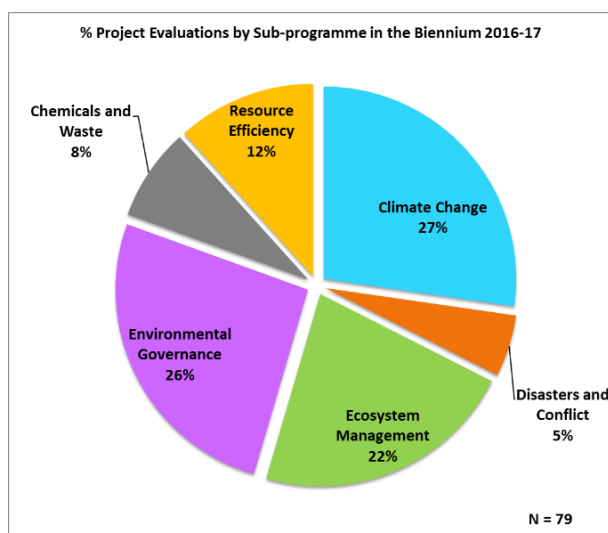
Executive Summary

1. The Evaluation Synthesis Report summarises all independent evaluations undertaken by the UN Environment Evaluation Office in the 2016-17 biennium. During this period **more than eighty evaluations** of UN Environment interventions that, together, **encompass a resource envelope in excess of USD 556 million¹** of expenditure were completed. Highlights of the aggregated performance trends across these evaluations for the 2016-2017 biennium and a summary for the 2014-17 Medium Term Strategy period are presented. The report also provides brief highlights drawn from a selection of evaluations of projects of high strategic importance including; the Green Economy Initiative, the UN Environment Finance Initiative, an in-depth evaluation of the Strategic Cooperation Agreements with the European Commission, and the International Resource Panel to name but a few.
2. All evaluations should improve organizational learning and help stakeholders to hold UN Environment accountable for contributing to development results at different levels. In short, the work of the Evaluation Office enhances accountability, transparency and learning. Evaluations generate evidence to identify 'what works' and 'what doesn't' and provides feedback for the improvement of planning and management processes.

Performance of projects completed during the 2016 – 2017 biennium

3. The evaluations undertaken by the Evaluation Office are strongly influenced by project life-cycles. Evaluations are scheduled and initiated as projects approach, or reach, their operational completion. The distribution of evaluated projects against thematic areas for the biennium was as shown in Figure ES 1 below.

Figure ES 1. Distribution of project evaluations by thematic Sub-programmes 2014-17.



¹ This is the approximate total of the reported expenditures declared in each evaluation report and includes GEF grants, Extra Budgetary funding, Environment Fund contributions, cash co-finance and resources covered by Strategic Cooperation Agreements (China and the EU).

4. All projects are evaluated against a standard set of evaluation criteria that are consistent with international good practice. Performance against these criteria is rated on a six-point scale from 'Highly Unsatisfactory' through to 'Highly Satisfactory'². The benchmark for good performance is set at points 5 and 6 on this scale, i.e. ratings of 'Satisfactory' or 'Highly Satisfactory'.
5. Some positive performance trends across UN Environment project evaluations were observed. The **overall performance**³ of more than **two thirds** (67%) of the projects evaluated achieved a rating of '**Satisfactory**' or **better**, a 12% increase on the previous biennium.
6. The proportion of projects that received a 'Satisfactory' or better rating for the extent to which project outcomes are **sustained / replicated** showed a small increase from 34% in 2014-2015 to 39% of projects in 2016-17 (Figure ES 2). The continued need for UN Environment projects to **place greater emphasis on creating the conditions that help to sustain their direct outcomes** is highlighted by the fact that this statistic represents a little over one third of projects. Future project designs and their associated budgets should reflect this.

Figure ES 2. Summary of project performance 2016-17 biennium across 79⁴ evaluated projects – main evaluation criteria.



² The labels given to the six points on the scale are Highly Unsatisfactory, Unsatisfactory, Moderately Unsatisfactory, Moderately Satisfactory, Satisfactory and Highly Satisfactory. The wording is changed to 'Highly Unfavourable – Highly Favourable' for the criterion Nature of External Context and 'Highly Unlikely – Highly Likely' for the criterion Likelihood of Impact.

³ Overall project performance is a weighted average across all evaluation criteria – with greatest weight being put on the achievement of direct outcomes and sustainability (i.e. tangible results).

⁴ Although more than 80 evaluations were conducted, some were of strategic initiatives or arrangements and were not rated against standard evaluation criteria.

7. **Delivery of outputs** remained a strong dimension of project performance with nearly four fifths of projects (79%) attaining a rating of 'Satisfactory' or better for this criterion. The aggregate performance in the 2016-17 biennium against the criterion '**stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships**' showed a 12% improvement, with 72% of projects rated 'Satisfactory' or better as compared to 60% in 2014-15.
8. Less positive trends included the performance of projects against the **efficiency** criterion. There was a reduction in the percentage of projects rated 'Satisfactory' or better in the 2016-2017 biennium (49% in the 2016-2017 cohort down from 66% in the 2014-2015 cohort). Anecdotally, many projects cited delays associated with the introduction the new UN enterprise resource planning system, Umoja, during the life of the project.
9. The **likelihood of impact achievement** was considered 'Likely' or 'Highly Likely' in **only 41% of the projects** evaluated in 2016-17, a small reduction compared to the previous biennium (47%). This again highlights the continued need for project designs and implementation actions to focus on, and invest more in, influencing the change processes that lead beyond project outputs to higher level results.
10. Performance against the criterion '**project supervision, guidance and technical backstopping**', showed a 17% drop with 64% of projects evaluated achieving a 'Satisfactory' or better rating in 2016-17 compared to 81% in the previous biennium (Figure ES 3).
11. Some trends established in previous biennia continue; the aggregate project performance against a few evaluation criteria show **low performance levels**, implying that these are areas that still require more attention if performance is to be enhanced. These include: '**project preparation and readiness**'⁵, '**financial planning and management**', and '**monitoring and reporting**' (Figure ES 3). These findings imply that stronger management attention is needed to ensure that projects move efficiently from approval to implementation, that financial planning and management are more results-based and that project monitoring systems go beyond basic reporting to monitoring approaches that better inform management decisions during project implementation towards the achievement of higher level results.

⁵ The preparation period is defined as the time between project approval and the first disbursement of funds.

Figure ES 3. Summary of project performance 2016-17 biennium across 79⁶ evaluated projects – ‘Factors affecting performance’.

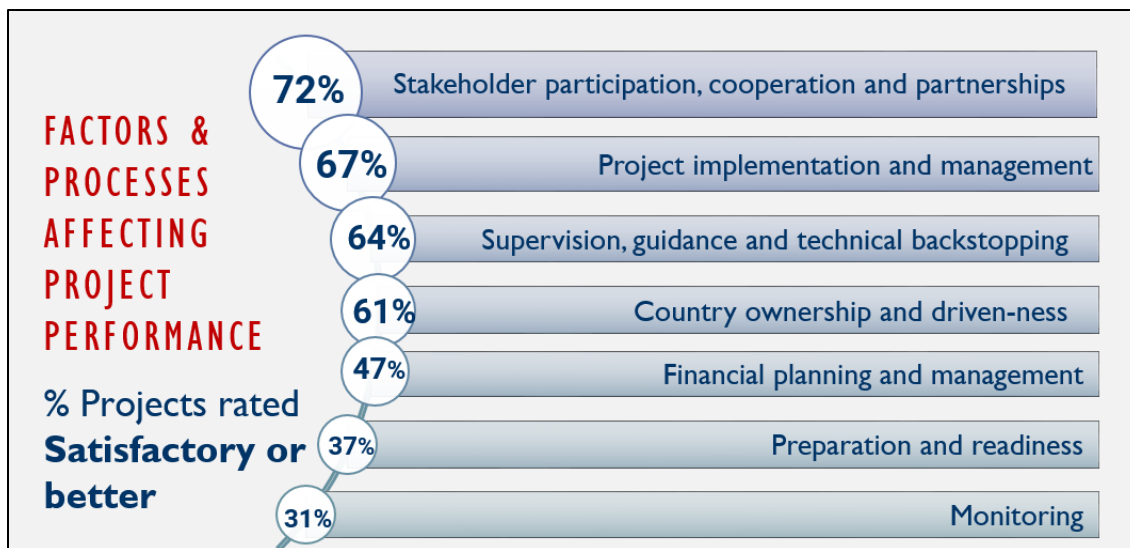
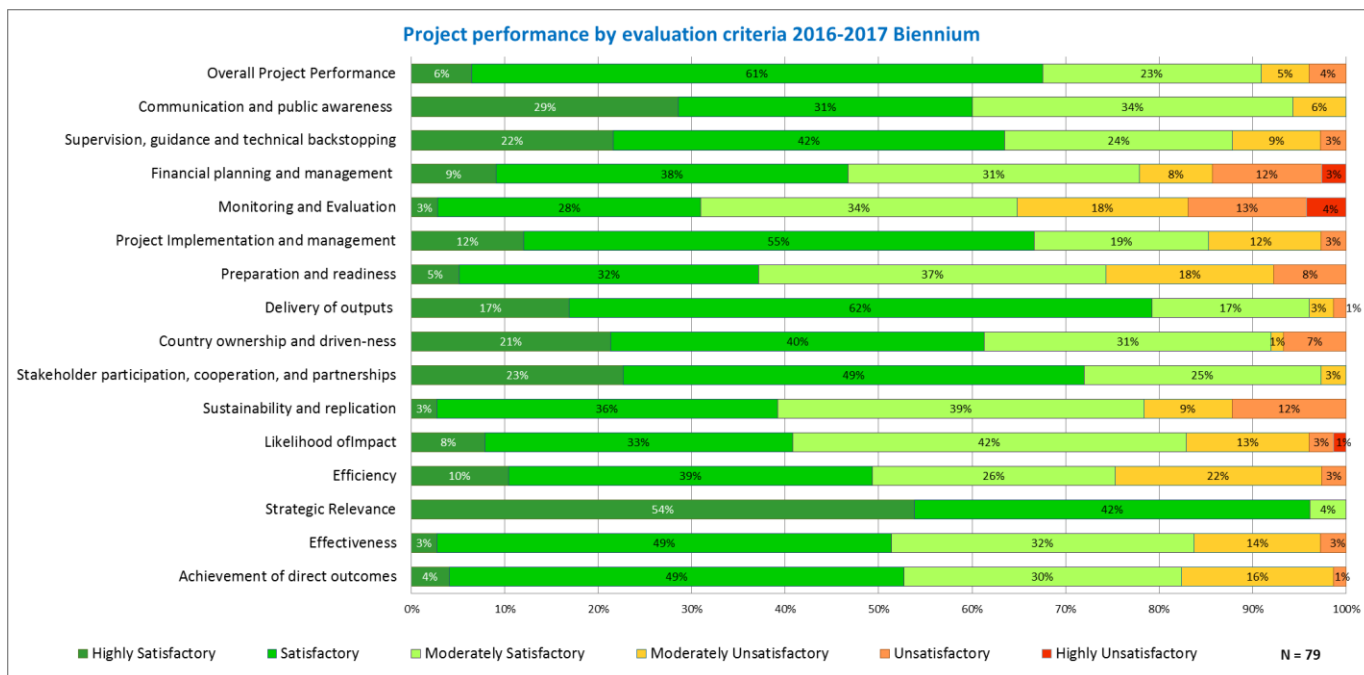


Figure ES 4. The performance of all UN Environment projects evaluated in the 2016-17 biennium against all evaluation criteria.



⁶ Although more than 80 evaluations were conducted, some were of strategic initiatives or arrangements and were not rated against standard evaluation criteria.

Aggregate performance of projects completed during the Medium-Term Strategy period 2014 – 2017

12. Since the completion of the biennium also marked the end of the period of the 2014-17 Medium Term Strategy, the aggregate performance of evaluated projects was also collated. During the period of the Medium-Term Strategy 2014-17 **one hundred and twenty-nine UN Environment projects were evaluated.**
13. It is interesting to note that performance against the evaluation criteria for the two biennia (2014-15 and 2016-17) produces quite consistent patterns despite the diversity of the project interventions evaluated. The combined performance data for the Medium-Term Strategy period is therefore quite similar to that of the 2016-17 biennium.

Figure ES 5. The overall performance trends for the Medium-Term Strategy period 2014-17 against all evaluation criteria.

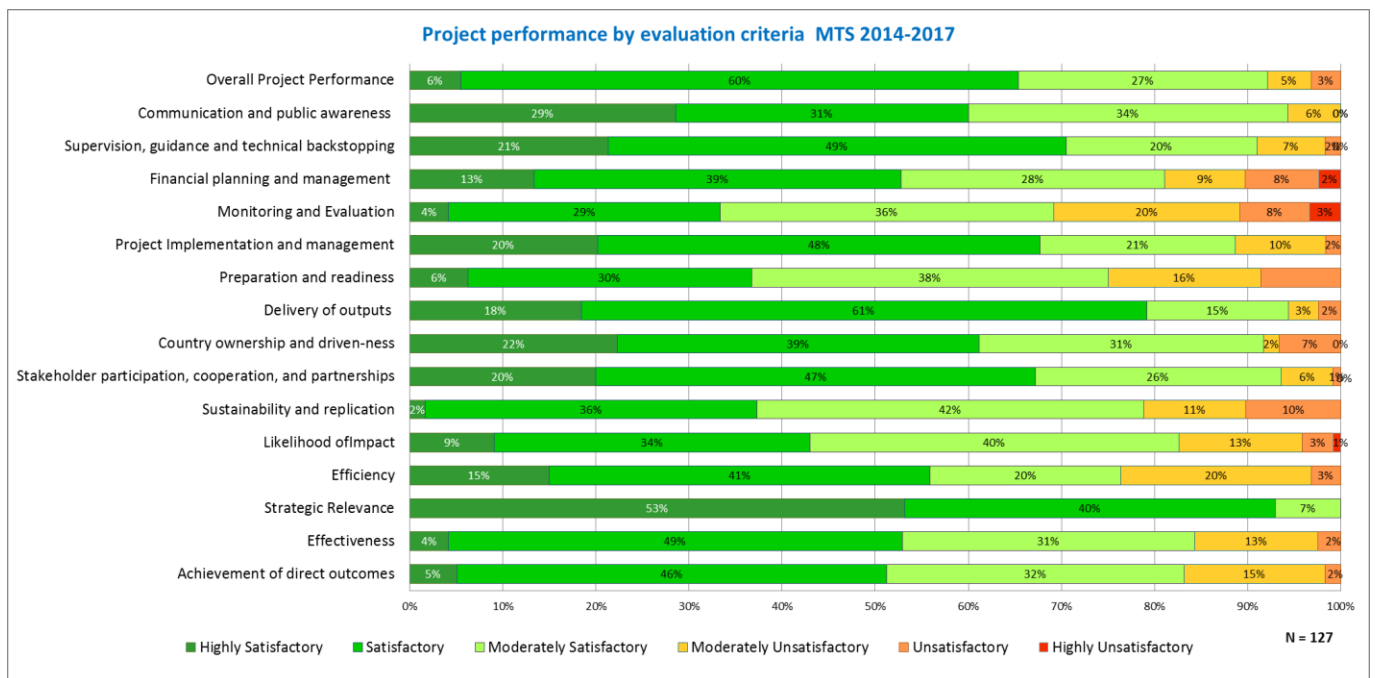
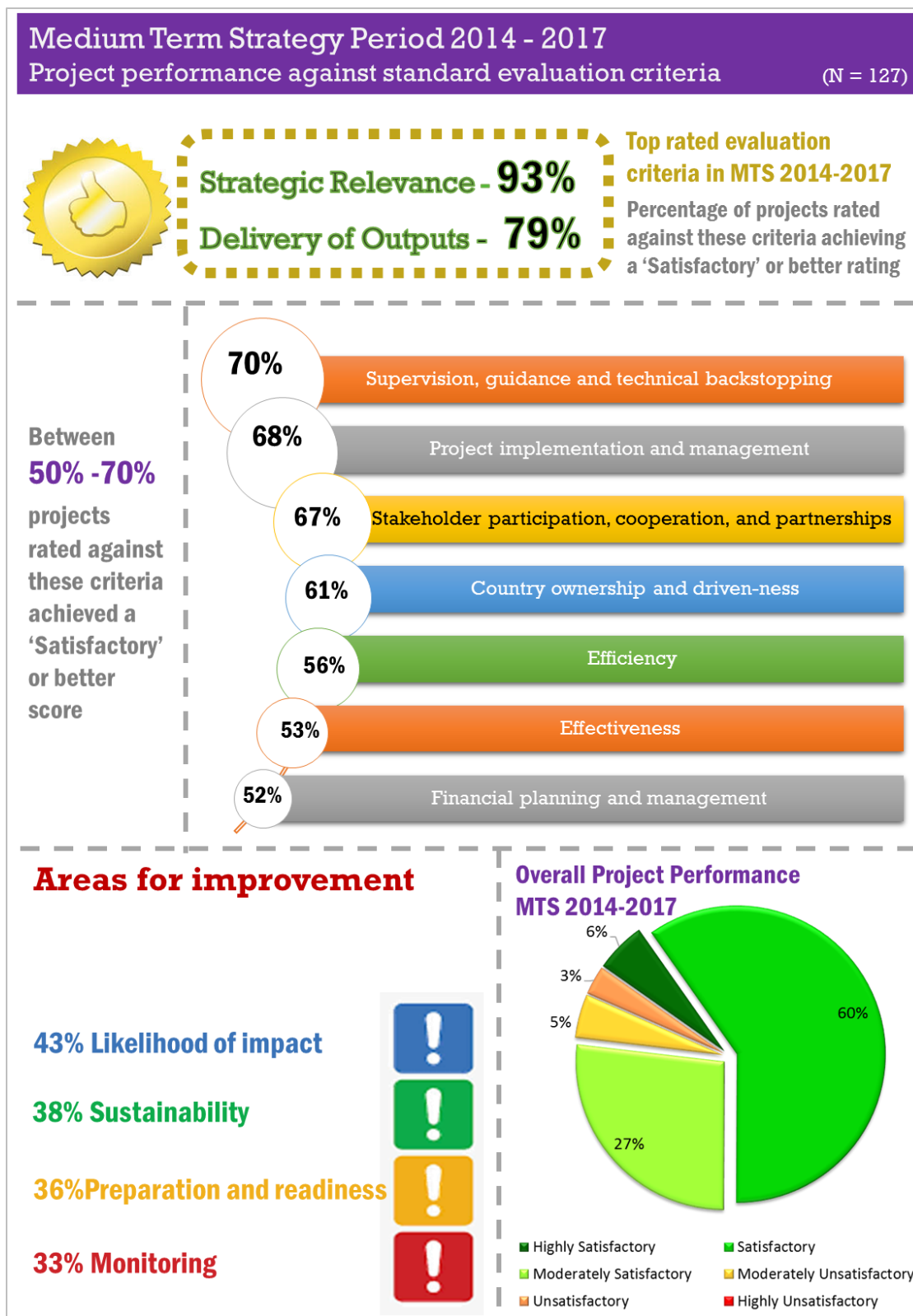


Figure ES 6. Summary of project performance 2016-17 biennium across 127 evaluated projects in the 2014-17 MTS period



Evaluation lessons

14. Several evaluations undertaken during the biennium were of high strategic importance to the organization. These included the Green Economy Initiative, the UN Environment Finance Initiative and the International Resource Panel among others; summaries are provided in the main body of this report. These and other projects highlighted useful lessons for UN-Environment.
15. A small, highly selective, set of lessons is presented here. These lessons were derived from specific interventions and, although they may be useful in other contexts, their generalisability has not been formally tested.

International Resource Panel: Key Lessons on the Science-Policy Interface

STAKEHOLDERS WITH POLICY INTEREST NEED TO BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

16. According to conventional wisdom regarding policy influence, a key approach is to identify the intended audiences for the assessment findings and involve them throughout the assessment process. The evaluation highlighted that 'quality reports + communication efforts = policy use' model is not sufficient to have policy impact. Stakeholders with relevant policy interests need to have an opportunity to engage in key decision-making points of the assessment process (such as defining the issues and assessment questions) and, contrary to common practice, giving them only a formal role on a steering committee is not necessarily a sufficient way ensure this. A participatory and thorough stakeholder analysis, needs assessment and identification of the targeted policy decisions is vital from the outset of an assessment process. Stakeholders should comprise not only those directly involved in policy processes, but also the diverse groups and industries that can influence policy processes indirectly (not only environmental authorities).

COMMUNICATION MUST BE SEEN AS CENTRAL TO THE SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS

17. An efficient assessment process should closely involve the decision-making interest from the outset. This approach should be supported by effective communications' efforts as well as outreach. This requires that communications and outreach are seen as central to the assessment process, not as an add-on after the science product has been published. The operationalization of communication strategies for assessment projects could be enhanced by the following suggestions: 1) support the communication capacity of scientists/authors to reach policy-makers, 2) share knowledge/findings frequently throughout the process – not only after the final product is produced, 3) ensure there is sufficient identification of user communities and opinion leaders from the beginning of the assessment process, and 4) beyond identifying different user groups, communications strategies of assessment projects need to also provide guidelines.

BOUNDARY ORGANIZATIONS AT THE SCIENCE-POLICY INTERFACE SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED AND SELECTED CAREFULLY

18. The International Resource Panel evaluation highlighted the importance of 'boundary organizations' that can help in reaching the relevant policy arenas. One evident boundary organization is UN Environment itself. While the evaluation argues that decision-makers should be brought into the core of the assessment process to ensure the uptake and application of findings, the literature shows that a boundary organization such as UN Environment can ensure the credibility and legitimacy of the scientific process despite the close involvement of decision-making interest in the assessment process. At the same time, UN Environment and its Environment Assembly (UNEA) are key channels for linking the assessment findings with the interest of environmental authorities.
19. However, the International Resource Panel evaluation underlines that the environmental domain is not the only policy interest to be reached by UN Environment's scientific products. The evaluation points out that the UN Environment assessment processes should identify boundary organizations that can provide useful bridges to the industry sectors and associated ministries covering other areas than environment. This is closely linked with the need for a thorough stakeholder analysis, needs assessment and identification of the targeted policy decisions (lesson 1) at early stages of the assessment process.

Project for Ecosystem Services (ProEcoServ)

'RISK' CAN BE A COMMON ENTRY POINT TO CONVENE MULTIPLE ACTORS

20. The Project for Ecosystem Services (ProEcoServe) Africa team had significant success with their work at Eden District focusing on addressing the use of ecosystem-based management to address disaster risk (mostly from drought, wild fire, storms, floods).
21. Lesson: The use of the concept of 'risk' can be very effective in helping to bring together a diverse range of stakeholders who would not normally collaborate, including, for instance, the insurance industry, government authorities, researchers and those concerned with disaster risk management, to understand the value of incorporating ecosystem based management strategies into decision making, and co-design response strategies to enhance the resilience of ecosystems to natural hazards.

'ECOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE' CAN BE USED AS A CONCEPT TO BRING TOGETHER NATIONAL ACTORS

22. The Project for Ecosystem Services -South Africa team chose to focus on the concept of ecological infrastructure which found traction in two major national development planning processes - national development planning and national water resource management. The use of the concept of 'ecological infrastructure' can be very effective in promoting ecosystem service approaches to stakeholders involved in infrastructure and development planning, In South Africa, for instance, they aligned strongly with national development goals, and the emphasis on labour-intensive ecosystem management resonated with national goals of job creation and poverty alleviation. These 'non-financial' values of ecosystem services need to be stressed more by UN Environment.

'CONSCIOUS OPPORTUNISM' TO INFLUENCE DECISION-MAKING - A KEY FACET OF ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

23. A number of opportunities came up during implementation of the ProEcoServ project to promote the uptake of the ecosystem services approaches, assessments and tools, which had not existed during the design phase, e.g. entry points in planning processes. The project would not have been as successful as it was without the flexibility to respond to (and seek out) these opportunities. *Lesson:* It is necessary to take an opportunistic approach to targeting entry points in decision-making processes. Projects seeking to mainstream ecosystem services into decision-making need to be flexible enough to be able to take advantage of opportunities as they arise (which can be unpredictable), leverage personal connections/relationships in order to catalyze discussions with decision-makers, and identify and secure champions to promote the uptake of ecosystem services management messages at the highest levels e.g. through Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, or senior Technical Advisors.

EFFECTIVE MAINSTREAMING REQUIRES A ROBUST TARGETING STRATEGY FROM THE OUTSET TO REACH BEYOND THE ENVIRONMENT SECTOR

24. One finding was that the project had good success mainstreaming project messages and results into environment sector agencies, but much less influence and traction with ministries of finance and the private sector. The non-environment sectors/agencies, particularly finance, investment and planning are the key stakeholder groups for mainstreaming of ecosystem services (environmental agencies are already 'converted').
25. *Lesson:* Project designers and executing bodies need to have better identification at the design stage (certainly by inception stage) of the most important institutions to target for mainstreaming, particularly within government (planning, investment, business, finance and economics), and alliances established with them, as environment ministries and associated national scientific research centres/institutes are generally not the key decision-makers when deciding on national development policy. Along with this there needs to be a better appreciation of the concerns of the target audiences, e.g. economists in the ministry of finance, and the 'language' they use, e.g. contribution to GDP, jobs created, etc, and a better understanding of the demand for what the project can offer/create, which means key individuals from target audiences need to be engaged in the design process of a mainstreaming project from the very beginning, and ideally, should be part of the executing team. The mapping of ecosystem services and use of infographics appear to be particularly useful forms for informing decision-makers and the former is considered an essential tool for those concerned with planning.

Policy, macro-economic assessments and instruments to empower governments and business to advance resource efficiency and move towards a Green Economy

MACRO-ECONOMIC ISSUES PIVOTAL FOR CROSS-CUTTING GOVERNMENTAL ENGAGEMENT

26. Macroeconomic issues proved pivotal for convening different sectors of government rather than environmental issues; Ministries of Environment seldom have the convening power to coordinate inter-sectoral actions that can influence economic policies. Focusing on a compelling theme that goes far beyond 'environmental conservation' as

such, proved to be a good strategy for UN Environment to attain a central role in the global development debate. By dealing with the economy of countries, UN Environment started to speak the language of the major development partners, which is key to obtain a prominent position in international fora.

WIN-WIN RATHER THAN TRADE-OFF NARRATIVES STIMULATED INTEREST IN TRANSITION TO GREEN ECONOMIES

27. The positive narrative, showing win-win solutions instead of trade-offs in the environment-development debate, triggered interest of countries in the Green Economy. This positive attitude helped to stimulate their commitment to collaborate with UN Environment and contributed to achievement of project outputs. The 'Transition to Green Economy' at country level is a long-term process, which needs national leadership at a central level, strong inter-sectoral coordination (governed by finance or planning ministries) and integration of sub-national levels, private sector and civil society organizations; a time horizon that goes beyond the project.

GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT NECESSARY BUT NOT SUFFICIENT – INCREASE EMPHASIS ON PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT

28. For actual implementation at scale of Green Economy, investments are needed from both public and private sector. Provided that in most countries, 70-80% of GDP is generated by the private sector, their role in mobilizing the green economy cannot be underestimated. By considering governments as its "natural partner", targeting principally public policies and convening working groups and debated through ministries of environment, UN Environment has not managed to engage the private sector with the Green Economy Initiative. Efforts to better engage the private sector are a priority.
29. Only in a few countries, is UN Environment the best-positioned agency to steer a process of economic transition. UN Environment has staff all over the world in regional and country offices, and project staff and consultants in offices of other agencies. Although the Green Economy Initiative mobilized this human capital adequately to direct studies and provide advisory services, this was not enough to accompany a change process at country level.

ADVISORY BODIES CAN HELP FORGE PARTNERSHIPS

30. A formal backstopping body (advisory group, steering committee or similar) for the Green Economy Initiative would not only have supported project supervision but also could have helped to formalize collaboration agreements beyond the informal (voluntary) contacts, to stimulate more contact time between lead academic thinkers and to better position global strategy development.

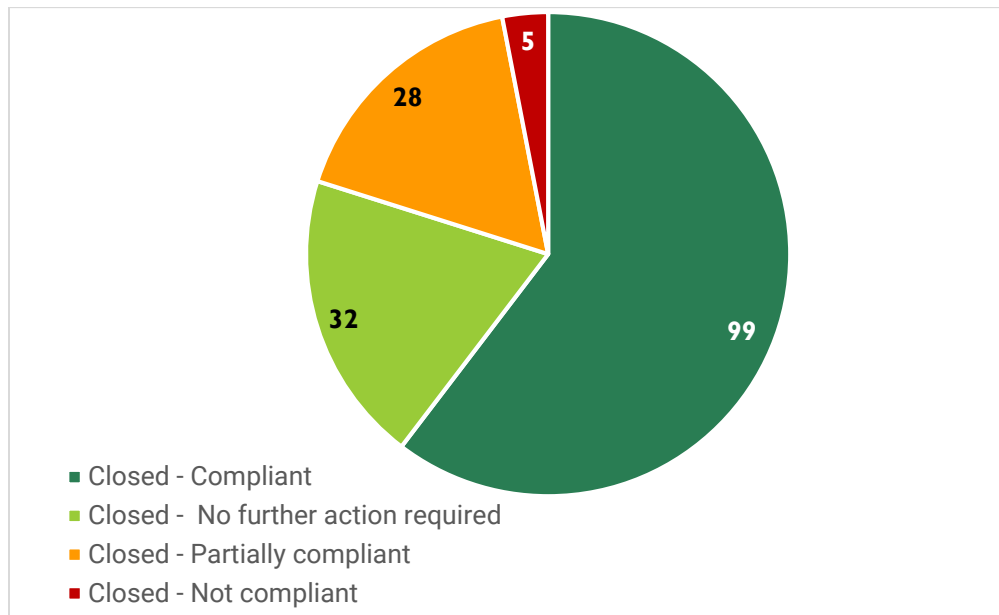
Evaluation recommendation compliance

31. UN-Environment undertakes robust independent evaluations that are followed by a **recommendation compliance process**. Apart from promoting accountability and learning, there are considerable 'process benefits' from evaluation work in terms of encouraging staff, partners and other stakeholders to reflect on the strengths and

weaknesses of past performance and to feedback existing good practices and ideas for improvement into future programme strategies, intervention designs and management actions.

32. The formal evaluation recommendation compliance system also reinforces the positive feedback and learning opportunities that evaluation can provide to the organization.
33. Out of the 65 recommendation implementation plans sent to UN Environment substantive offices, 49 (75%) provided a management response **while 16 (25%) failed to complete evaluation implementation plans** within the prescribed time. Completion of a formal management response to evaluations is mandatory and hence this remains a matter for further management attention.
34. Implementation and compliance for evaluation recommendations is tracked for 12-18 months before recommendations are 'closed' and their compliance status recorded. In the 2016-17 biennium a total of 329 recommendations were issued. During the same period a total of 164 recommendations reached their deadlines for implementation completion.
35. Within this cohort of 164 evaluation recommendations, 20% (32) required no further implementation action as conditions or contexts had changed, making further implementation unnecessary. Of the remaining 132 evaluation recommendations 75% (99) were fully implemented, 21% (28) were partially implemented and only 4% (5) were registered as 'not compliant' (i.e. not implemented).

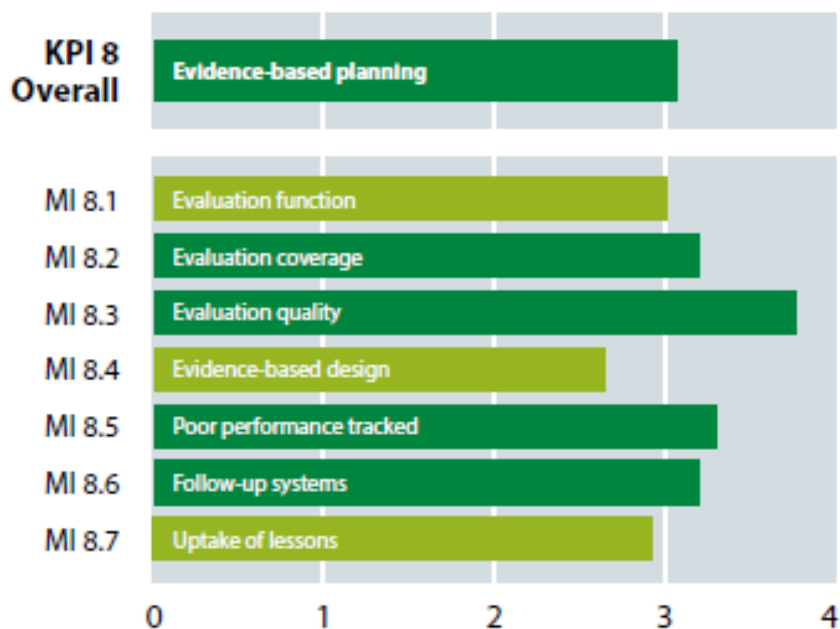
Figure ES 7. Recommendation Implementation Compliance 2016-17 (Accepted recommendations N=164)



Performance of the Evaluation Office

36. During the 2016-17 biennium there were external assessments of the work of the Evaluation office by UN Office of Internal Oversight Services⁷, The Independent Evaluation Office of the Global Environment Facility⁸ and the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network⁹; all were favourable. The OIOS study shows UN Environment’s Evaluation Office was the most productive secretariat evaluation function in terms of evaluation report delivery, producing 52 reports in the biennium assessed compared to a Secretariat average of 12 reports per function.
37. The assessment of UN Environment by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network, published in early 2017 stated that *“Independent corporate evaluation function exists and operates effectively. Recent external assessments have rated the quality of independent evaluations conducted by UN Environment’s Evaluation Office as good to very good. Appropriate evaluation quality assurance systems are in place and operate effectively, although the independence of the Evaluation Office could be further improved by more regular and systemic reporting to governing bodies.”*

Figure ES 8. MOPAN Assessment covering the UN Environment evaluation function.



⁷ <https://oios.un.org/page/download2/id/45>

⁸ <http://www.gefio.org/evaluations/annual-performance-report-apr-2015>

⁹ [http://www.mopanonline.org/assessments/unep2015-16/Mopan%20UNEP%20report%20\[interactive\]%20\[final\].pdf](http://www.mopanonline.org/assessments/unep2015-16/Mopan%20UNEP%20report%20[interactive]%20[final].pdf)

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope and Objectives of the Synthesis Report

38. This report presents **an analysis of evaluations conducted in the 2016-17 biennium** and examines performance trends across the 2014-17 Medium Term Strategy (MTS) period. It also utilizes information drawn from in-depth evaluations conducted in the biennium including; a review of the Sub-programme coordination function, an in-depth evaluation of the Strategic Cooperation Agreements with the European Commission, the International Resource Panel, and **over eighty in-depth project evaluations** spanning the UN Environment Programme of Work and Global Environment Facility project portfolios. The evaluation synthesis report also contains a review of the status of implementation of evaluation recommendations and presents external assessments of the performance of the Evaluation Office.
39. The report is prepared as an inter-sessional document of the UN Environment Assembly and also serves as part of the input of UN Environment to the Secretary-General's report on evaluation to the General Assembly. The report provides stakeholders such as Governments, UN Environment senior management and UN Environment partners with an evaluative assessment of UN Environment's programme and project performance in the 2016-17 biennium. The main objective of the report is to help UN Environment reflect on its programme performance through evaluative evidence and lessons from programme and project design and implementation.

1.2 Evaluation Office

40. The mandate for conducting, coordinating and overseeing evaluation in UN Environment is vested in the Evaluation Office. This mandate covers all programmes and projects of the Environment Fund, related trust funds, earmarked contributions and projects implemented by UN Environment under the Global Environment Facility. The Evaluation Office undertakes a variety of evaluations and management studies, in accordance with the requirements of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the United Nations Environment Assembly, and in conformity with the United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards for Evaluation.
41. The activities of the Evaluation Office include high level strategic evaluations of UN Environment's thematic sub-programmes, formative evaluations of the UN Environment strategic planning processes, in-depth project evaluations, portfolio evaluations, cross-cutting thematic evaluations and management studies. The Evaluation Office closely follows-up on the implementation of all accepted evaluation recommendations and, when requested, provides technical backstopping to project and programme managers undertaking project reviews. Guidelines, formal requirements and practical advice in planning for evaluations have been specified in detail in the UN Environment Programme Manual and are further elaborated on the UN Environment Evaluation website at: www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation

42. During the biennium the Evaluation Office had a small staff of four professionals and three support staff supported by regular budget and Environment Fund resources. Global Environment Facility (GEF) funds have covered some individual contractor inputs but, currently, no staff positions (despite the large volume of GEF project evaluation work).

1.3 Mandate and Mission

43. This evaluation synthesis report has been prepared as part of the mission of the Evaluation Office to promote the independence, credibility and utility of evaluation across UN Environment. Evaluation is of importance for organizational learning, informed decision-making and accountability. According to the Secretary General's bulletin on programme planning, monitoring and implementation (ST/SGB/2000/8), which consolidates the General Assembly decisions on the evaluation function, "The objective of evaluation is: (a) To determine as systematically and objectively as possible the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the Organization's activities in relation to their objectives; (b) To enable the Secretariat and Member States to engage in systematic reflection, with a view to increasing the effectiveness of the main programmes of the Organization by altering their content and, if necessary, reviewing their objectives."
44. The mandate for undertaking evaluations has been stated in various General Assembly resolutions and UN Environment Governing Council / Environment Assembly decisions. The Governing Council recognized the importance of evaluation as an integral part of the programme planning cycle, while retaining its independence, and requested the Executive Director to continue to refine evaluation methodologies in collaboration with Governments (Governing Council decisions 75 IV, 6/13, 13/1 and 14/1) and partners within the United Nations system. In its decision 19/29, the Governing Council also requested the Executive Director to strengthen the UN Environment oversight function.

2 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE

2.1 Sample Sizes and Ratings Scales

45. In the period spanning from 2010 to 2017, the Evaluation Office of UN Environment completed over two hundred and sixty (260) project and programme evaluations¹⁰. In the biennium 2016-17 the Evaluation Office completed over eighty (80) project and programme evaluations, and among these were seven (7) strategic evaluations (discussed in Chapter 3 of this report). The data used for the analysis in this chapter covers those projects for which performance ratings (by criteria) were included in the evaluation report. At the end of 2017, there were over 35 ongoing evaluations carried over into the new 2018-19 biennium. Table 1 below shows a breakdown of the number of completed evaluations within the time periods listed.

Table 1: Number of completed evaluations with performance ratings

Evaluations by sub-programme								
Period	CC	EM	RE	DC	EG	CW	EuR	TOTAL
2010-2017	70	81	14	4	49	13	1	232
MTS 2014-17	30	41	9	4	35	7	1	127
MTS 2010-13	40	40	5	0	14	6	0	105
POW 2014-15	9	24	0	0	15	1	1	50
POW 2016-17	21	17	9	4	20	6	0	77

46. A six-point scale is used to rate each evaluation criterion, as presented in Table 2 below. The rating system and evaluation quality control processes used are consistent with those applied by the GEF, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank and UN Environment's evaluation ratings are regularly benchmarked against them.

Table 2: Evaluation rating scale

Category	Rating ¹¹	Abbrev.	Abbrev.*	
Strategic relevance; Achievement of outputs; Effectiveness - attainment of objectives and planned results; Sustainability and replication; Efficiency; Factors and processes affecting project performance and Monitoring and evaluation	Highly 'Satisfactory'	HS	HL	↑ 'Satisfactory' range
	'Satisfactory'	S	L	
	Moderately 'Satisfactory'	MS	ML	
	Moderately 'Unsatisfactory'	MU	MU	↓ 'Unsatisfactory' range
	'Unsatisfactory'	U	U	
	Highly 'Unsatisfactory'	HU	HU	

*Sustainability and Impact are rated against a 6-point 'likelihood' scale, ranging from 'Highly Likely' to 'Highly Unlikely'

¹⁰ In some instances, programme evaluations and special studies are not conferred any criteria-based performance ratings

¹¹ The evaluation criteria under 'Sustainability' and 'Impact' are rated based on "Likelihood", on a scale from Highly Likely (HL) to Highly Unlikely (HU)

47. As has been reported in previous biennia (i.e. 2012-13 and 2014-15), the Evaluation Office develops tools and procedures that are intended to help evaluate projects with greater rigor, consistency and objectivity. In the biennium 2016-17, new / revised methods, tools and guidelines were prepared by the Evaluation Office, including:

Table 3. Summary of new and/or revised evaluation tools and guidelines

New/Revised Guidelines	New/Revised Tools
Scope and definition of evaluation criteria	A rubric for 'Assessment of the Quality of Project Design'
Use of the Theory of Change approach in evaluations	A matrix defining attributes across evaluation criterion and performance ratings
Undertaking a stakeholder analysis (including guidance for consultants in evaluating issues related to Human Rights and Gender Equality)	Assessment of the 'Likelihood of Impact'
Formulating evaluation questions by criteria	Weighted scoring of evaluation criteria to assess overall performance

48. These tools and guidelines are designed to increase the consistency of evaluative judgements made by expert evaluators across the evaluation portfolio. In general, the new guidelines and tools require evaluators to 'raise the bar' in terms of the evidence required to give performance ratings in the 'Satisfactory' range.

2.1.1 Limitations

49. The sample of evaluations undertaken is strongly influenced by project implementation events. Evaluations are scheduled and initiated as projects approach or reach their operational completion. Some project evaluations are deferred due to project extensions and others brought forward if projects complete earlier than originally anticipated. Due to differences in the total number of active projects in each sub-programme and the inevitable variation in the timing of each project's operational completion, there are uneven numbers of evaluations across sub-programmes. Evaluation is mandatory for some project funding agencies, whereas for others the Evaluation Office determines whether an evaluation should be conducted. In practice, projects commanding a large resource envelope are prioritised over projects with low levels of expenditure.

2.2 Performance in the 2014-2017 Biennium

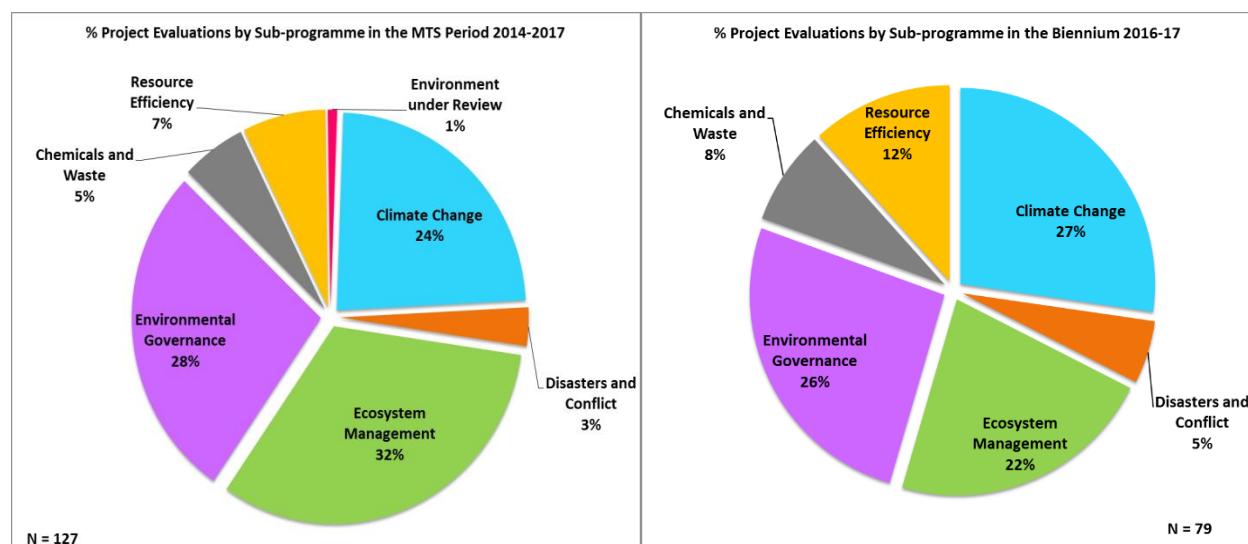
50. An analysis of project performance trends across the evaluation criteria is discussed in detail in this chapter and comparisons are made by year, thematic sub-programme and funding modalities (specifically between GEF-funded and non-GEF projects).
51. The Evaluation Office has data spanning the past eight (8) years, which covers two (2) Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) periods of four years each (i.e. 2010-13 and 2014-17). Regarding the time-frame, comparisons in this chapter are made between the performance in the 2016-17 Biennium, the MTS 2014-17, and the longer eight-year timeline described above.

52. As the timing of project-level evaluations is determined by the project life cycle, specifically project end dates, the distribution of evaluations across the seven sub-programmes is not within the control of the Evaluation Office. Similarly, sub-programmes vary widely in the number of projects they contain, and the number of project evaluations completed for each sub-programme in any period will also vary. As such, disparities in numbers of projects evaluated, disaggregated by sub-programme, is reflective of various factors. Table 4 and Figure 1 below show a comparison between evaluations completed for each sub-programme in the biennium 2016-17 and the MTS period 2014-17.

Table 4: Number of evaluations by sub-programme

Period	Evaluations by sub-programme						
	CC	EM	RE	DC	EG	CW	EuR
MTS 2014-17	30	41	9	4	35	7	1
POW 2016-17	21	17	9	4	20	6	0

Figure 1. Comparison of Evaluations by Sub-programme in MTS 2014-17 and Biennium 2016-17



53. With regard to **funding modalities**, although significantly more GEF-funded projects have been subject to evaluation compared to non-GEF funded projects (67% and 33% respectively) over the past eight years, the 2016-17 biennium has a more balanced distribution of project evaluations between these two modalities.

54.

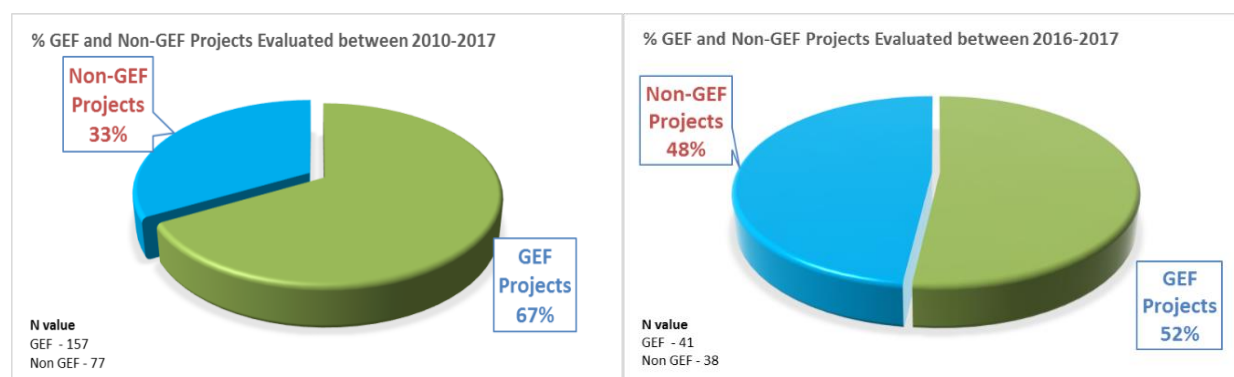
55. Table 5 and

56. Figure 2 below shows a comparison between the 8-year period that combines MTS 2010-13 and MTS 2014-17, the most recent MTS period and the 2016-17 biennium.

Table 5: Number of completed evaluations by funding modality

Period	GEF	Non-GEF
2010 - 2017	157	77
MTS 2014-17	74	52
POW 2016-17	41	38

Figure 2. Comparison of evaluations conducted for GEF and non-GEF projects in MTS 2014-17 and 2016-17 Biennium



57. UN Environment’s Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) guides programme planning over a four-year period; it identifies thematic priorities (referred to as sub-programmes) and sets out the desired expected accomplishments (planned programmatic outcomes) and objectives for each sub-programme. In strengthening the foundation for results-based management, all UN Environment’s efforts are geared towards achieving the planned outcomes as embodied in the **expected accomplishments (EAs)**.
58. The Programme of Work for the biennium 2016-17 was guided by the MTS 2014-17. The expected accomplishments listed under the range of sub-programmes are shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6. Expected Accomplishments targeted in Projects Evaluated in MTS 2014-17 and Biennium 2016-17

Sub-programme	Expected Accomplishment	Abbreviation	Frequency MTS 2014-2017	Frequency POW 2016-2017
Climate Change	EA1 Climate Resilience	CC EA1	18	12
	EA2 Low Emission Growth	CC EA2	24	10
	EA3 REDD-plus	CC EA3	5	3

Sub-programme	Expected Accomplishment	Abbreviation	Frequency MTS 2014-2017	Frequency POW 2016-2017
Disasters and Conflicts	EA1 Risk Reduction	DC EA1	5	4
	EA2 Response and Recovery	DC EA2	1	1
Ecosystem Management	EA1 (Production) Ecosystems and essential services safeguarded	EM EA1	21	5
	EA2 (Marine issues) Ecosystems and essential services safeguarded	EM EA2	11	2
	EA3 Enabling Environment	EM EA3	54	28
Environmental Governance	EA1 Coherence and Synergies	EG EA1	7	6
	EA2 Law	EG EA2	34	18
	EA3 Mainstreaming Environmental Sustainability	EG EA3	27	12
Chemicals and Waste	EA1 Enabling Environment	CW EA1	10	7
	EA2 (Chemicals) Increased use of scientific and technical knowledge and tools	CW EA2	3	1
	EA3 (Waste) Increased use of scientific and technical knowledge and tools	CW EA3		
Resource Efficiency	EA1 Enabling Environment	RE EA1	5	4
	EA2 Sector and Supply (Uptake of sustainable consumption and production and green economy)	RE EA2	7	7
	EA3 Lifestyles	RE EA3	2	2
Environment under Review	EA1 Assessment	EuR EA1	1	0
	EA2 Early Warning	EuR EA2	1	0
	EA3 Information	EuR EA3	1	0

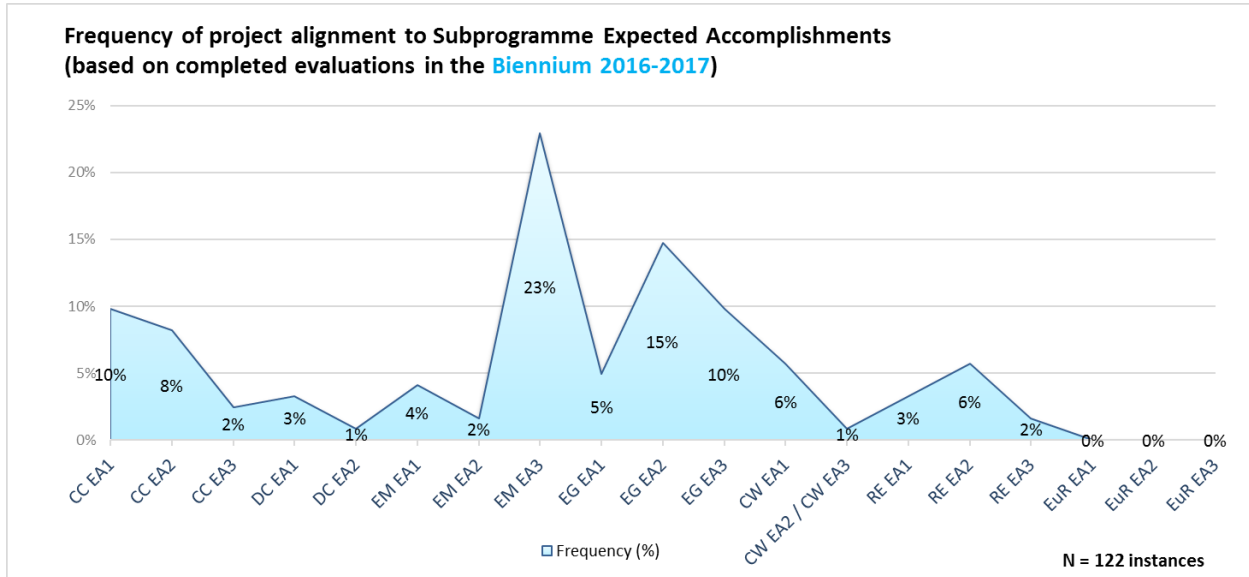
59. Terminal evaluations assess, among other things, whether projects have contributed to any of the targeted expected accomplishments specified in their project documents. The extent of contribution and the causal linkages between the project activities and the results are also described in the evaluation reports.

60. For this analysis, the frequency with which expected accomplishments are targeted by the projects¹² submitted for evaluation were considered. Figure 3 below shows the

¹² In their formally approved project documents.

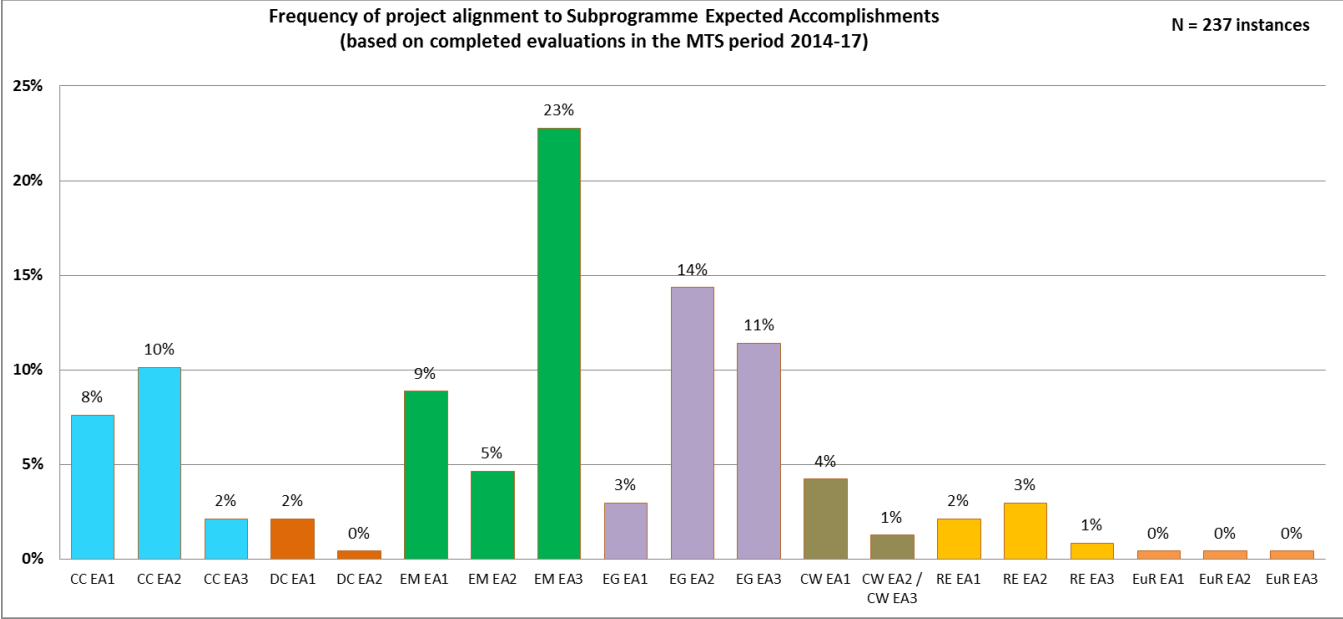
distribution of expected accomplishments targeted by projects evaluated in the 2016-17 biennium. (Abbreviations used in the chart are described in Table 6 above).

Figure 3. Expected accomplishments targeted in projects evaluated in 2016-17 biennium)



- The expected accomplishment most frequently targeted by the projects evaluated in 2016-17 was 'Ecosystem Management EA 3 **Enabling Environment**' with 23% of evaluated projects being directed towards this result; followed by 'Environmental Governance EA 2 **Law**' with 15%, and then 'Environmental Governance EA 3 **Mainstreaming Environmental Sustainability**' and 'Climate Change EA 1 **Climate Resilience**' each with 10%. All of the remaining expected accomplishments were covered in less than 10% of the projects evaluated in the 2016-17 biennium.

Figure 4. Alignment with expected accomplishments in projects evaluated in MTS 2014-17



62. Figure 4 above shows an overview of the targeted expected accomplishments by projects for the evaluations completed during the MTS period 2014-17¹³.
63. One of the factors underlying these trends is the number of projects that reach completion during the biennium (or MTS period). In the case of projects in the Resource Efficiency Sub-programme, the Evaluation Office deliberately prioritized evaluations since 2015 to generate a set of evaluative evidence to inform the (at time of writing - on-going) Resource Efficiency sub-programme evaluation.
64. Understandably, sub-programmes that have a larger number of projects in their portfolios are also likely to provide a larger sample of evaluations. Similarly, parts of the house that adequately budget for evaluation, or implement projects where funding agreements make evaluation compulsory, are also better represented in the set of completed evaluations.

2.3 Analysis by Individual Evaluation Criteria

65.

¹³ The Environment under Review sub-programme is relatively newer than the other 6 sub-programmes, having been introduced in the 2014-2017 MTS, and the available data is still too limited to make any meaningful comparative analysis alongside the other sub-programmes .

66. Figure 5 overleaf provides a general view of performance by projects evaluated in the 2016-17 biennium, with a focus on the percentage of projects rated 'Satisfactory' or better in selected evaluation criteria.

Figure 5: Overview of project performance by criteria in the 2016-17 biennium

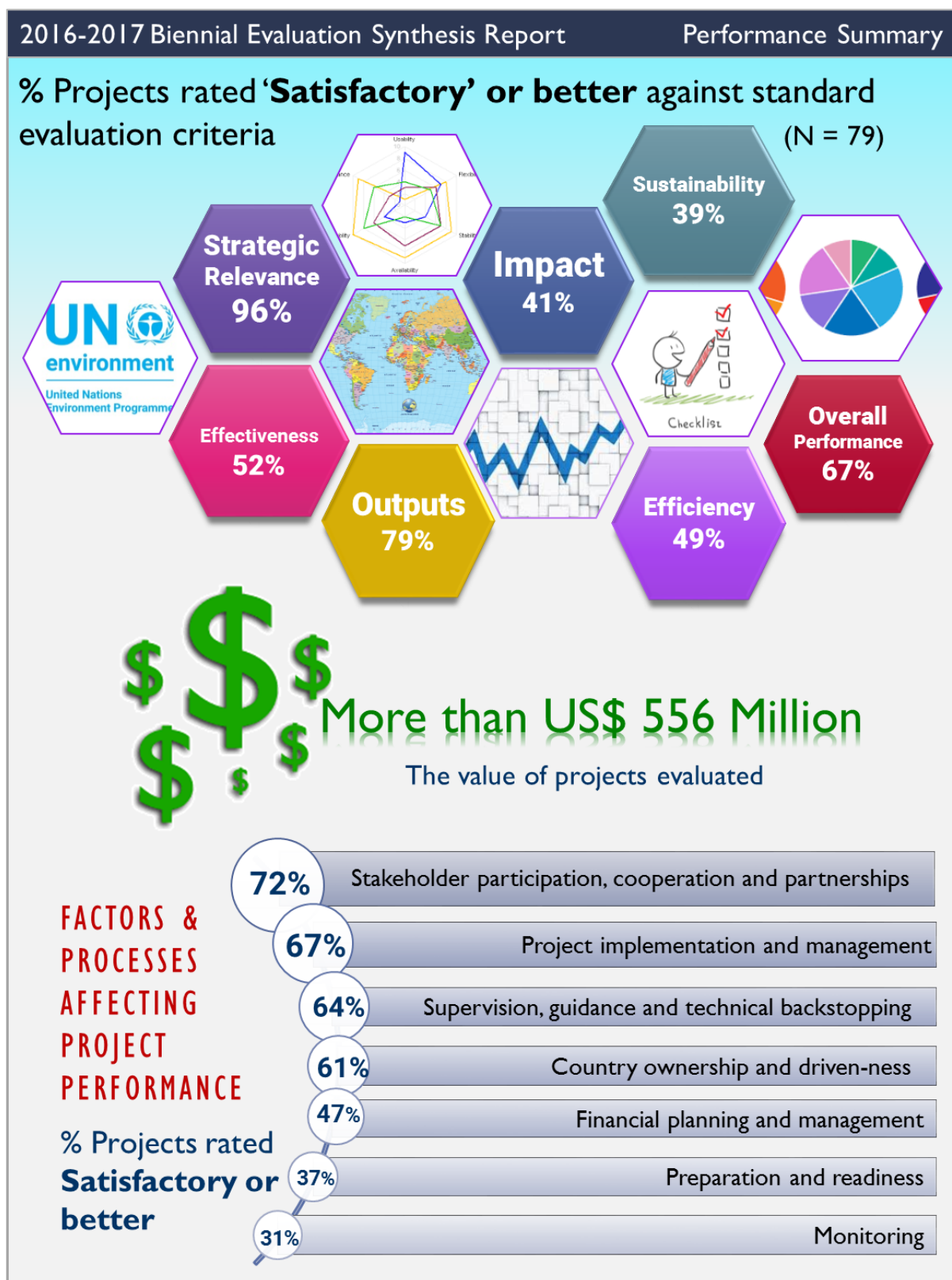
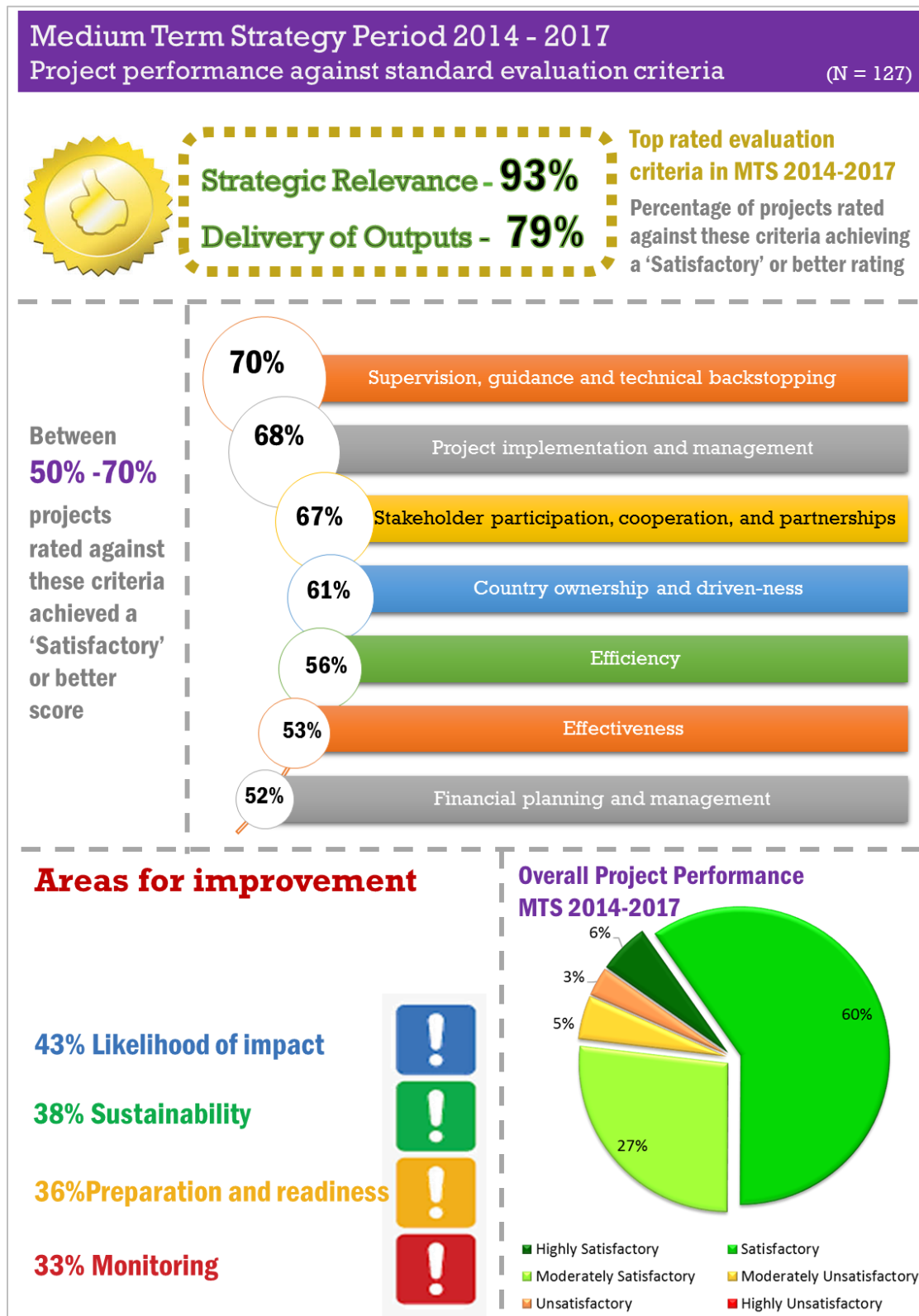


Figure 6: Overview of project performance by criteria in the MTS 2014-17



67. Figure 7 and Figure 8 below provide an aggregated view of project performance in selected evaluation criteria, based on data collated from evaluation reports completed in the MTS period 2014-17 as well as the biennium 2016-17.

Figure 7: Overview of project performance by evaluation criteria in MTS 2014-17

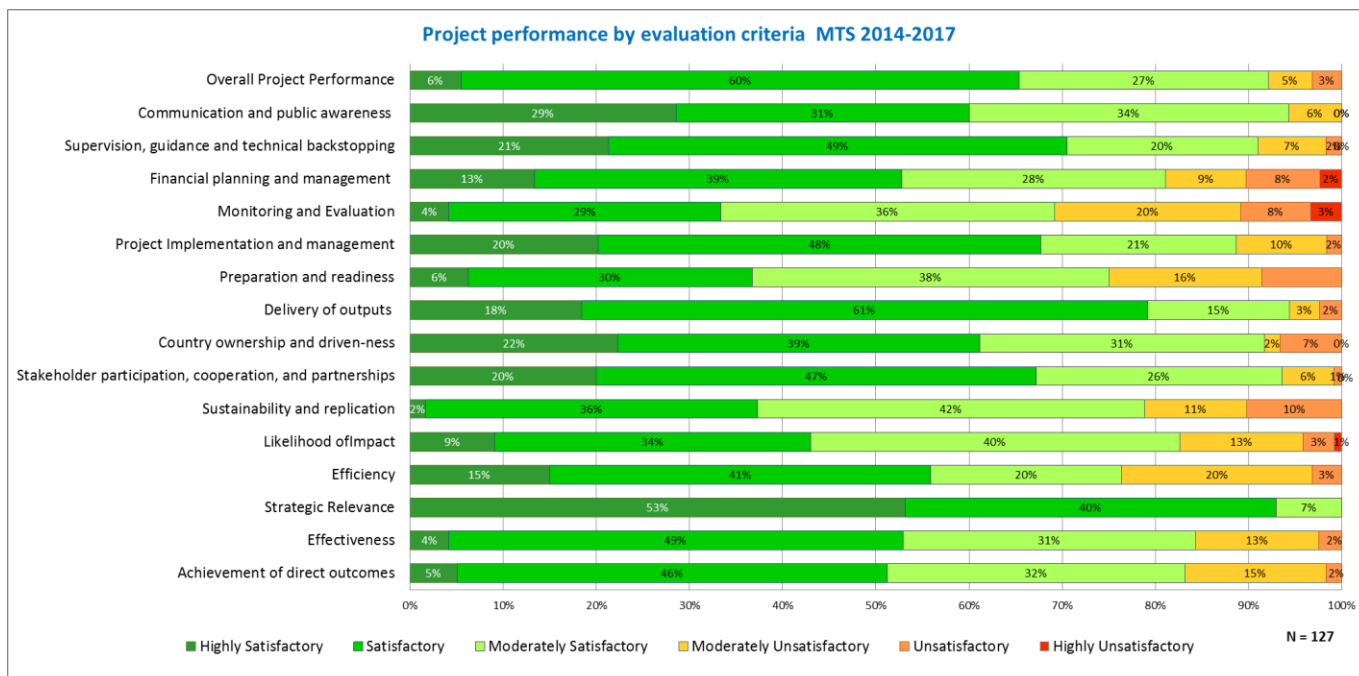
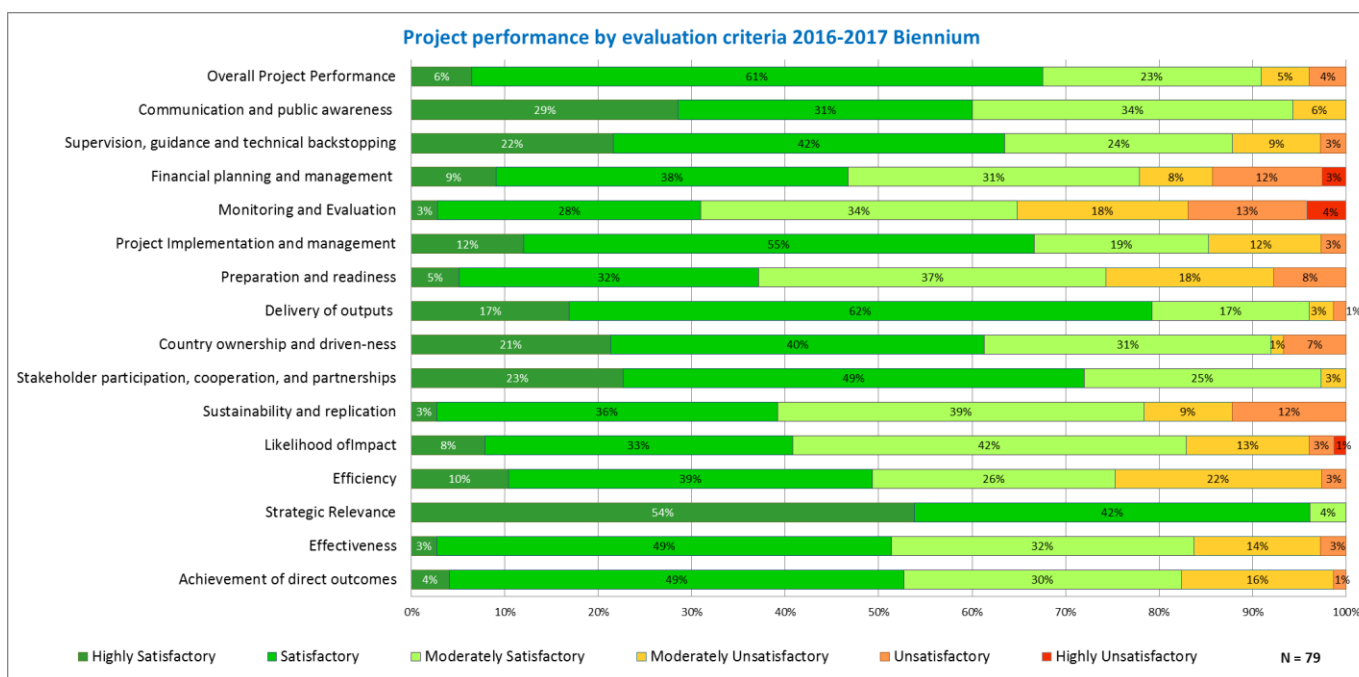


Figure 8. Overview of project performance by evaluation criteria in 2016-17 biennium



68. Some positive trends were observed. The **overall performance**¹⁴ of more than two thirds (67%) of the projects evaluated achieved a rating of **'Satisfactory' or better**, a 12% increase on the previous biennium.
69. The **strategic relevance** of projects has, over the MTS 2014-17, been the evaluation criterion against which projects have collectively achieved the highest proportion of favourable ratings; this biennium is no different. All of the projects evaluated (100%) were rated in the 'satisfactory' range (see Table 2).
70. The performance on **delivery of outputs** remained the same in both biennia with **79%** of evaluated projects attaining a rating of **'Satisfactory' or better**. The corresponding performance for the **sustainability and replication** criterion also remained stable showing a small increase from 34% to 39%. In other words, just over one third of projects evaluated, are achieving favourable ratings. This highlights the continued need for UN Environment projects to place greater emphasis on creating the conditions that will help to sustain their immediate outcomes. Future project designs and their associated budgets should reflect this.
71. Less positive trends included the performance of projects against the **efficiency** criterion. There was a reduction in the percentage of projects rated 'Satisfactory' or better in the 2016-17 biennium (49% in the 2016-17 cohort down from 66% in the 2014-15 cohort). Anecdotally, many projects cited delays associated with the introduction the new UN enterprise resource planning system, Umoja, during the life of the project.
72. The **likelihood of impact achievement** was considered 'Highly Likely' or 'Likely' in **only 41% of the projects** evaluated in 2016-17 a small reduction compared to the previous biennium (47%). This highlights the continued need for project designs and implementation actions to focus on, and invest more in, influencing the change processes that lead to higher level results.
73. The percentage of projects attaining a 'Satisfactory' or better rating in the **effectiveness** criterion this biennium dropped marginally by 2% compared to the previous biennium, i.e. 52% in 2016-17 compared to 54% in 2014-15.
74. Under the 'Factors and processes affecting project performance', performance against the sub-criterion **'stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships'** showed the greatest improvement across projects evaluated in the 2016-17 biennium, with 72% of projects rated 'Satisfactory' or better as compared to 60% in 2014-15 – a 12% increase. Against the sub-criterion **'project supervision, guidance and technical backstopping'**, the data shows a substantial 17% drop in performance with 64% of projects evaluated achieving a 'Satisfactory' or better rating in 2016-17 compared to 81% in the previous biennium. On the other hand, performance against the criterion **'country ownership and driven-ness'** remained constant in performance levels with 61% of the projects evaluated attaining a 'Satisfactory' or better score in 2016-17 compared to 60% in 2014-15.

¹⁴ Overall project performance is a weighted average across all evaluation criteria – with greatest weight being put on the achievement of immediate outcomes and sustainability (i.e. tangible results).

75. Continuing the trends established in previous biennia, project performance against a few evaluation criteria have consistently shown low performance levels, implying that these are areas that require more management attention if performance is to be enhanced and sustained. These include: **'project preparation and readiness'**, **'financial planning and management'**, and **'monitoring and evaluation'**.
76. It was noted in previous Evaluation Synthesis Reports (2012-13 and 2014-15), that there was a need for improvement in the quality of **preparation and readiness**. The percentage of projects rated 'Satisfactory' or better for this criterion has not improved much in the MTS 2014-17 (with 36% in 2014-15 and 37% in 2016-17), similarly, the percentage of projects rated in the 'unsatisfactory' range (i.e. 'Moderately Unsatisfactory' to 'Highly Unsatisfactory') has stayed almost the same with 26% in this biennium compared to 24% in 2014-15 and 19% in 2012-13. Considering the knock-on effect that the design of an intervention often has on its later implementation, there is clearly a need to continue efforts to enhance the quality of project designs. Similarly, efforts to initiate projects in an efficient and timely manner need to be redoubled.
77. Although **financial planning and management** is critical for reducing financial risks by monitoring and controlling project expenses throughout its lifecycle, this remains one of the evaluation criteria against which poor performance continues to be noted in evaluations undertaken over the past eight (8) years i.e. MTS 2010-13 and MTS 2014-17. In the biennium 2016-17, only 47% of projects evaluated attained a score that was 'Satisfactory' or better for this criterion, and almost a quarter of projects (23%) were rated in the 'unsatisfactory' range for performance against this criterion (i.e. 'Moderately Unsatisfactory' to 'Highly Unsatisfactory').
78. Performance against the **monitoring and evaluation** (M&E) criterion has consistently shown low performance ratings over the last eight years (2010-17) with the highest proportion of ratings falling in 'Moderately Satisfactory' and 'Moderately Unsatisfactory' categories. The performance shows an 11% drop from 76% in 2014-15 down to 65% in 2016-17 for the percentage of projects rated in the 'satisfactory' range ('Moderately Satisfactory' to 'Highly Satisfactory'). As has been mentioned in previous Evaluation Synthesis Reports, a robust monitoring system is better able to support results-based project implementation by providing the data needed for strategic and evidence-based adaptive management.
79. Sections 2.5 to 2.9 contain more detailed analyses of the criteria described above, including graphical representation and some explanatory discussion of the aspects highlighted above.

2.4 Overall Performance

80. This criterion provides an indication of a project's overall performance. During the 2016-17 biennium, the Evaluation Office began using weighted scores across all the evaluation criteria to calculate the overall project performance instead of a mathematical average. The criteria that hold the greatest 'weights' in this scoring system include: 'Effectiveness' (which factors in the following sub-criteria: 'delivery of outputs', 'achievement of direct outcomes' and 'likelihood of impact'); 'Sustainability' (which

includes socio-political, financial and institutional dimensions of sustainably); and 'Efficiency'. In other words, not all criteria are considered equal, there is a strong **focus on the achievement of sustainable results and value for money**.

81. Figure 9 and Figure 10 below show the percentage of projects, by sub-programme, that achieved a 'Satisfactory' or better rating for their overall performance in projects evaluated in the 2016-17 biennium and the MTS 2014-17.

Figure 9. Projects by sub-programme rated 'Satisfactory' or better in overall performance in MTS 2014-17

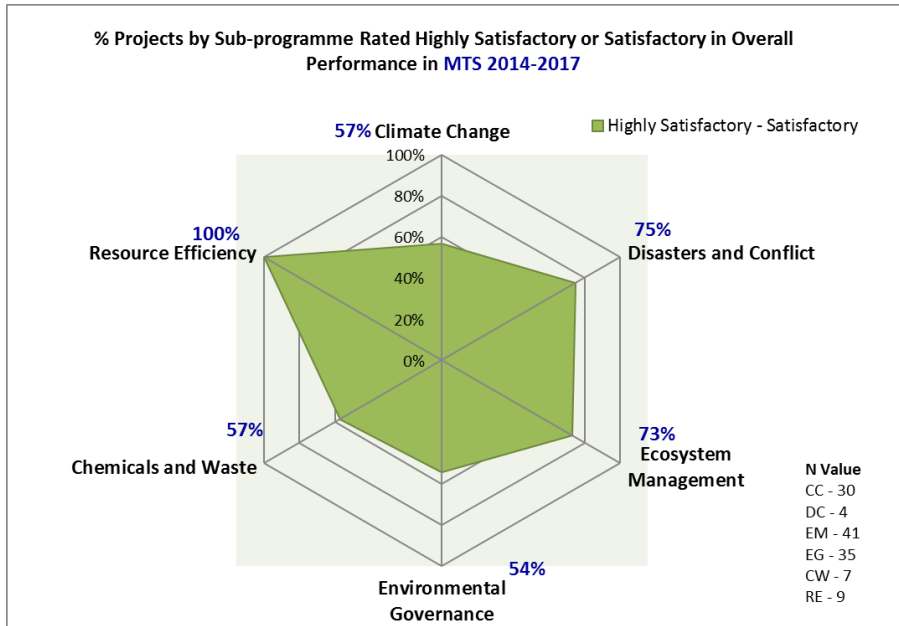
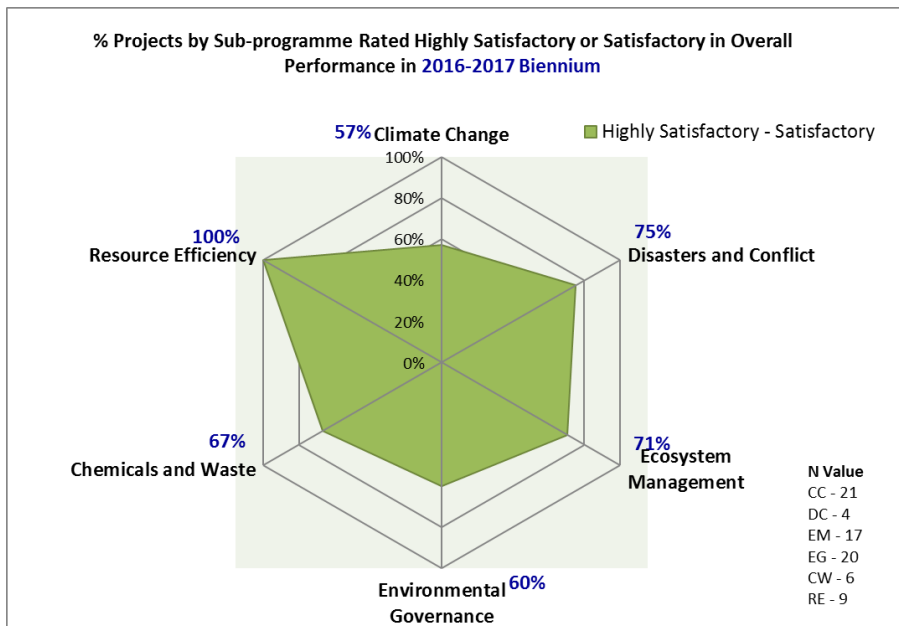


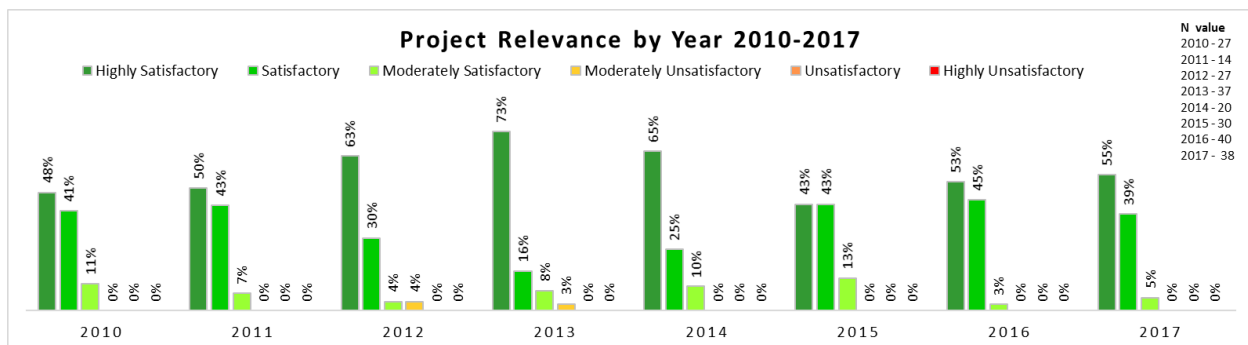
Figure 10. Projects by sub-programme rated 'Satisfactory' or better in overall performance in 2016-17 biennium



2.5 Strategic Relevance

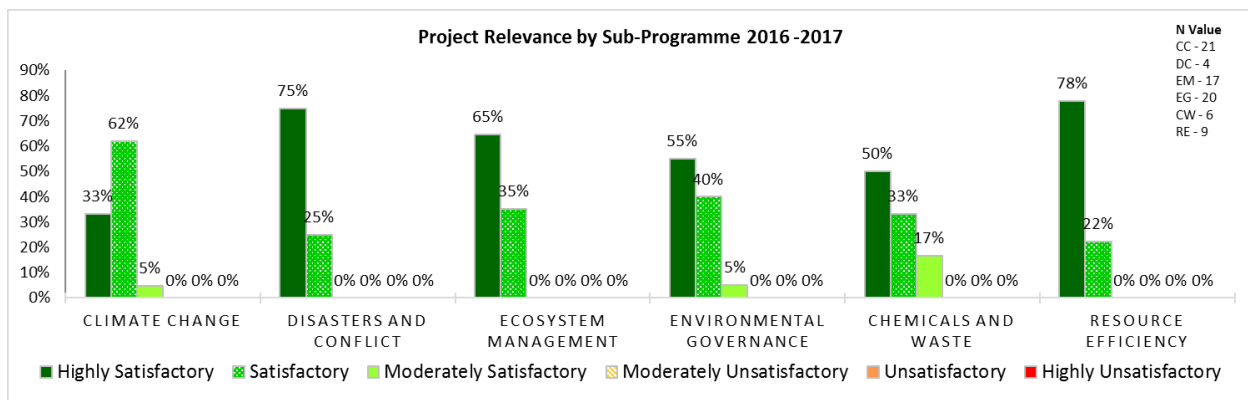
82. In assessing **strategic relevance**, evaluations examined the extent to which projects' implementation strategies and results showed alignment with the following: UN Environment's and/or other funding agency's mandate, strategic direction and thematic priorities; regional, sub-regional and / or national environmental priorities; the needs and priorities of the target groups; complementarity to other recent, ongoing or planned interventions in the project area or on the same concern; and where applicable, the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, South - South Cooperation policies, Gender Balance, as well as Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) and inclusion of indigenous peoples issues, needs and concerns.
83. 'Strategic Relevance' remains the evaluation criterion that attains the highest ratings, with this biennium having 100% of the evaluated projects being rated as 'Satisfactory' or better. Figure 11 below shows how projects have been rated for their relevance over the past eight years (2010-17). The criterion essentially focusses on alignment of the intervention's intentionality.

Figure 11. Strategic relevance by year (2010-17)



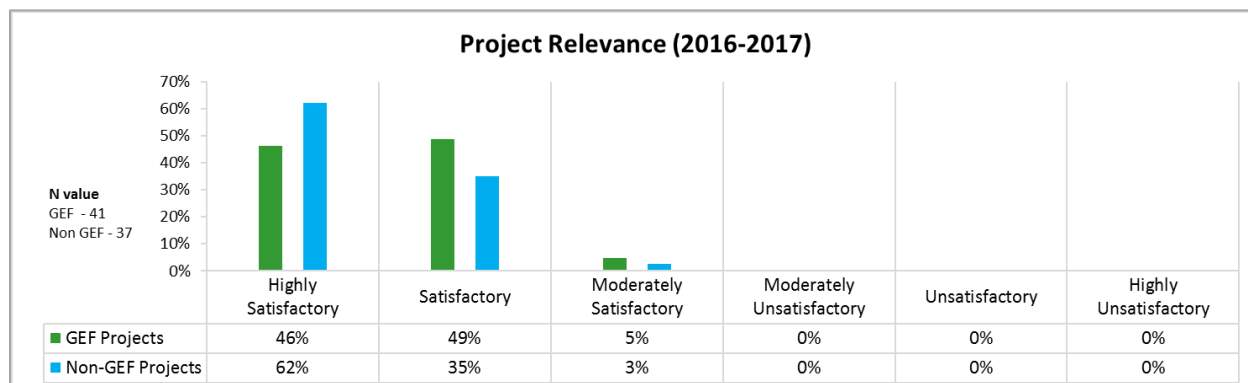
84. In the 2016-17 biennium, all sub-programmes registered 'Highly 'Satisfactory' ratings in over 50% of the projects that were evaluated as shown in Figure 12 below.

Figure 12. Strategic relevance by sub-programme in 2016-17 biennium



85. The comparison between GEF and non-GEF projects (Figure 13) indicates that up to 95% of GEF projects and up to 97% of non-GEF projects were rated 'Satisfactory' or better for strategic relevance in the 2016-17 biennium.

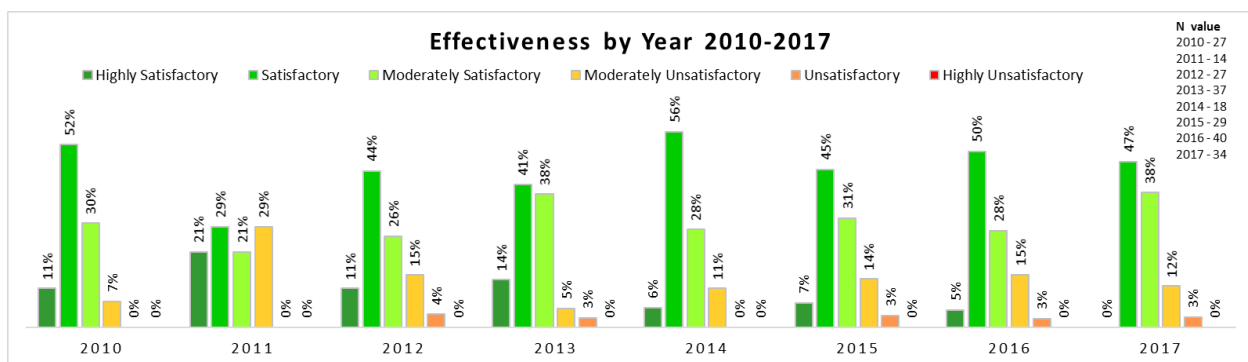
Figure 13: Comparison of strategic relevance between GEF and non-GEF Projects (2016-17)



2.6 Effectiveness

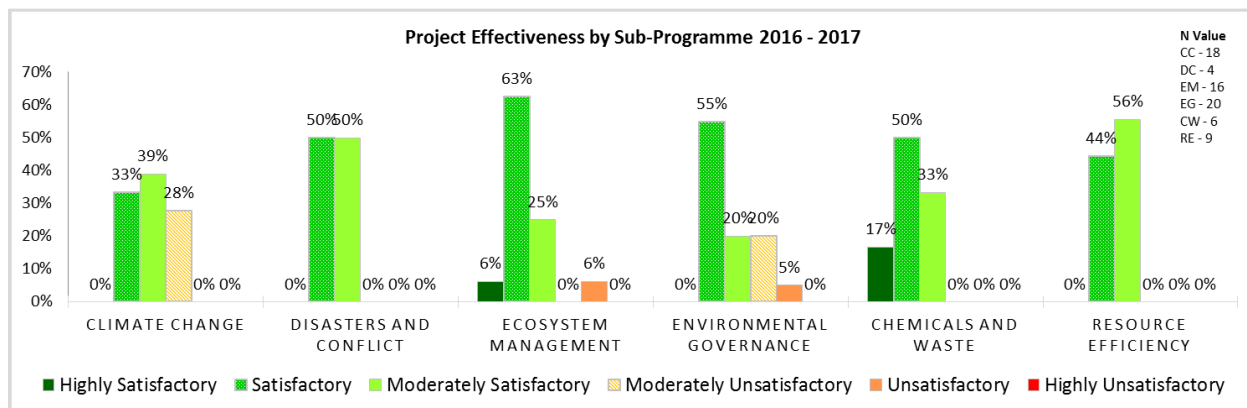
86. For the effectiveness criterion, the evaluation takes into consideration project performance in the following sub-criteria: (i) the project's success in delivering the programmed outputs (products, capital goods and services resulting from the intervention) and achieving milestones as per the project design document (ProDoc); (ii) the achievement of direct outcomes i.e. short and medium-term effects of the intervention's outputs, often demonstrated as a change of behaviour resulting from the direct use/application of these outputs; and (iii) the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts (longer term effects) becoming a reality.
87. Projects evaluated in the 2016-17 biennium showed a small (3%) decrease in the percentage of projects rated 'Satisfactory' or better against the overall 'Effectiveness' criterion, with 52% in 2016-17 as compared to 55% in 2014-15. For the eight-year period from 2010 to 2017 (Figure 14), an average of 54% projects were rated 'Satisfactory' or better in the overall "Effectiveness" criterion.

Figure 14: Project effectiveness by year (2010-17)



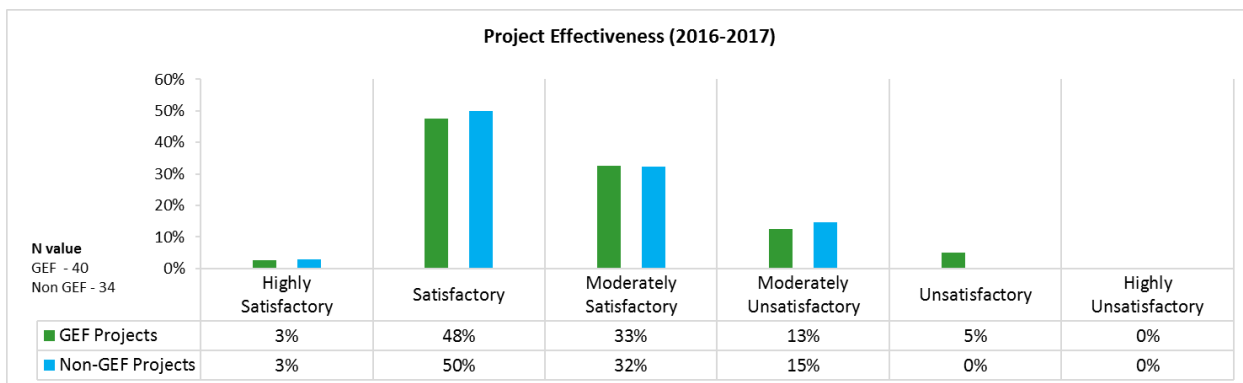
88. At sub-programme level, as shown in Figure 15 below, the data from the 2016-17 biennium show that projects under the Ecosystem Management and Chemicals and Waste sub-programmes had the highest percentage of projects rated 'Satisfactory' or better for effectiveness, with 69% and 67% projects respectively¹⁵.

Figure 15. Project effectiveness by sub-programme in 2016-17 biennium



89. In the evaluations completed in the 2016-17 biennium, GEF-funded projects showed a similar performance in the achievement of their planned objectives and outcomes to those funded by UN Environment and/or other funding modalities, as shown Figure 16 in below.

Figure 16. Comparison of effectiveness between GEF-funded and Non-GEF funded projects (2016-17)



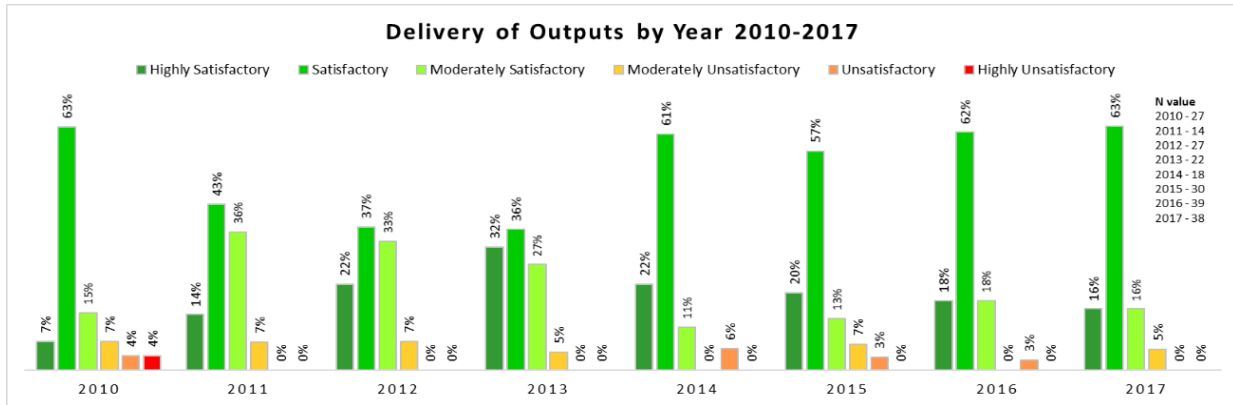
2.6.1 Delivery of Outputs

90. During evaluations the delivery of programmed outputs in terms of both **quantity** and **quality** is assessed; evaluations also consider output ownership by, and usefulness to,

¹⁵ Whilst Chemicals and Waste, Resource Efficiency and Disasters and Conflict sub-programmes had 100% of projects rated in the 'satisfactory' range (refer to Table 2) these sub-programmes had a very small number (<10) of projects evaluated.

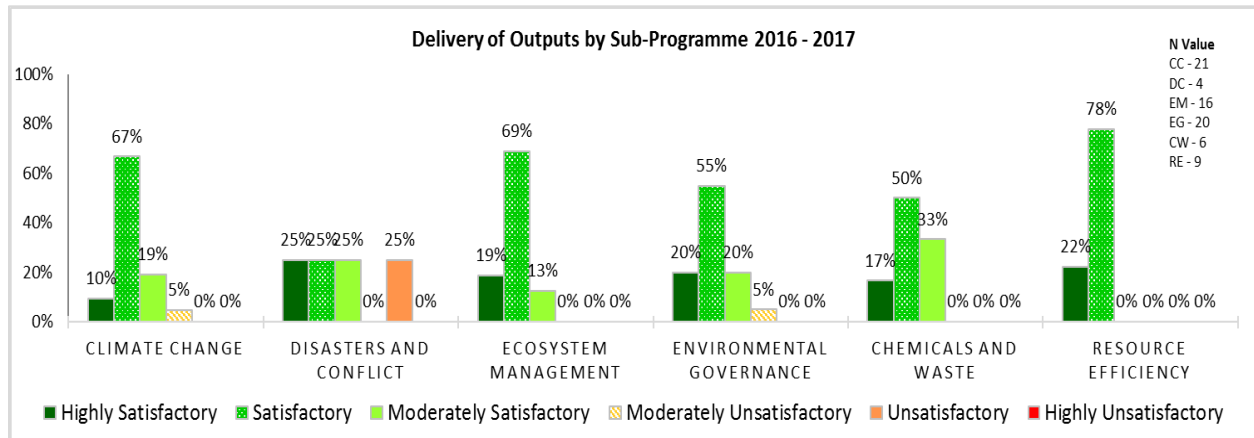
the intended beneficiaries as well as the **timeliness** of the delivery of outputs. Projects that score highly in this sub-criterion are those that can demonstrate that all planned outputs were delivered fully, at the time required to maximise their intended use, and are deemed to be of excellent quality / utility. In the MTS 2014-17 period, this criterion has been one of the top-rated evaluation criteria with 79% projects achieving a 'Satisfactory' or better score (Figure 6). In the 2016-17 biennium there was also a decrease in the percentage of projects rated in the 'unsatisfactory' range for their output delivery (Figure 17).

Figure 17. Delivery of outputs by year (2010-17)



91. The Resource Efficiency and Ecosystem Management sub-programmes recorded the highest percentages of projects rated 'Satisfactory' or better for output delivery in the 2016-17 biennium with 100% and 88% respectively (Figure 18).

Figure 18. Delivery of outputs by sub-programme in 2016-17 biennium

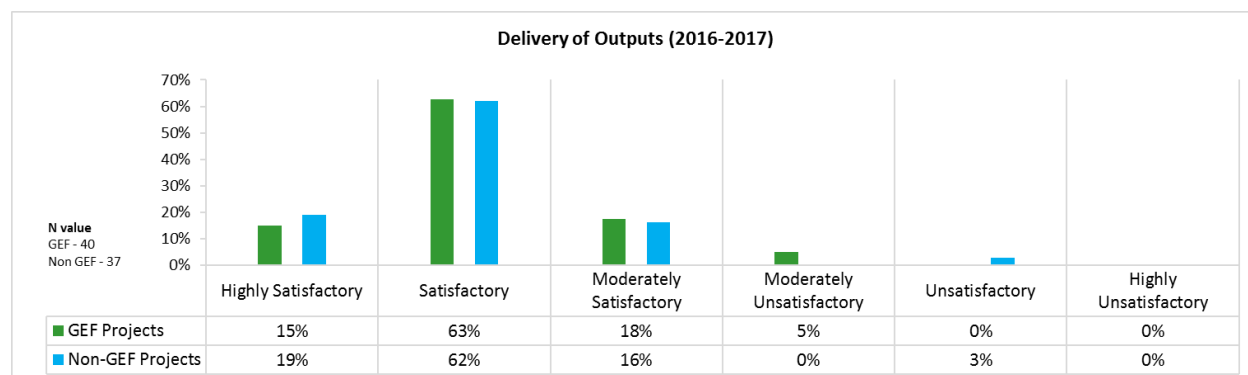


92. GEF and Non-GEF projects evaluated in 2016-17 biennium showed similar levels of performance against this criterion (

93.

94. Figure 19). 81% of Non-GEF funded projects were rated 'Satisfactory' or better in the delivery of outputs in comparison to 78% of GEF-funded projects.

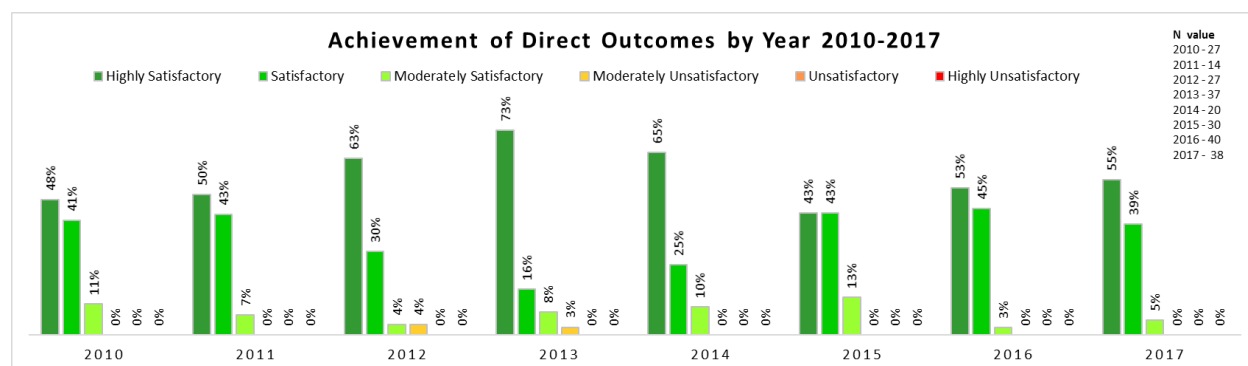
Figure 19. Comparison in delivery of outputs between GEF and Non-GEF funded projects (2016-17)



2.6.2 Achievement of Direct Outcomes

95. 'Direct Outcomes' are the first-level outcomes expected to be achieved as an immediate result of the use of project 'Outputs'. Projects that score highly against this criterion, have ensured that the necessary conditions to transition from outputs to direct outcomes are in place (assumptions and 'drivers') and behaviour change in response to the use of outputs is observable. The data from 2010-17 shows that there has been a relatively good performance in this criterion, with ratings in the 'unsatisfactory' range appearing only minimally in the 2012 and 2013 (Figure 20).

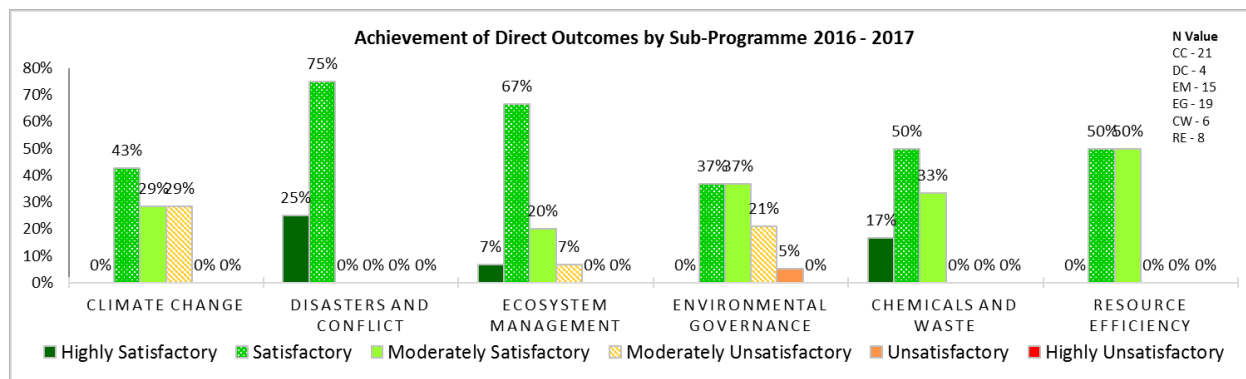
Figure 20. Achievement of direct outcomes by year (2010-17)



96. For projects evaluated in the 2016-17 biennium, 53% were rated 'Satisfactory' or better in their achievement of direct outcomes (see

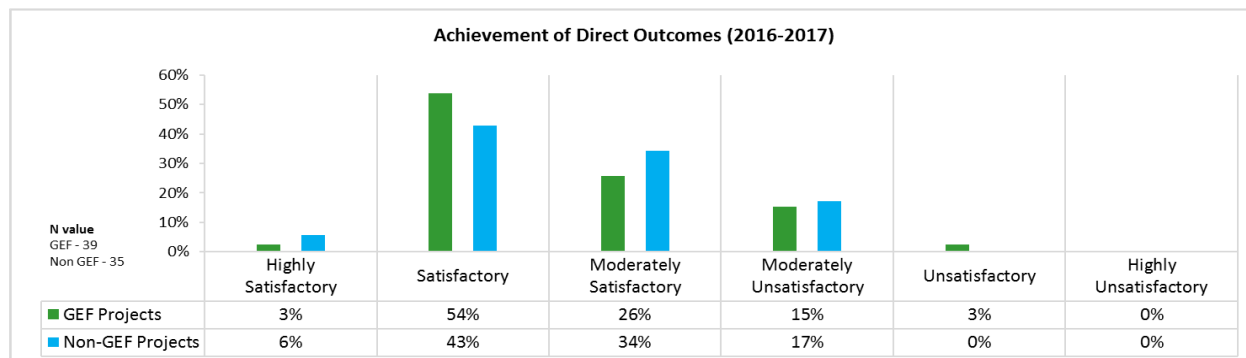
97. Figure 5), a minor improvement from 49% of projects the 2014-15 biennium.
98. In the 2016-17 biennium, as shown in Figure 21 below, a relatively high percentage of projects under the Ecosystem Management Sub-programme (74%) were deemed 'Satisfactory' or better in achieving their direct outcomes; projects in the Chemicals and Waste Sub-programme also did relatively well against this criterion with 67% in the same performance range.

Figure 21: Achievement of Direct Outcomes by Sub-programme in 2016-17 biennium



99. A comparison between GEF and Non-GEF funded projects evaluated in the 2016-17 biennium shows that the former had 8% more projects rated 'Satisfactory' or better for achieving their direct outcomes, with 57% and 49% respectively (Figure 22).

Figure 22. Comparison in Achievement of Direct Outcomes between GEF and Non-GEF funded Projects



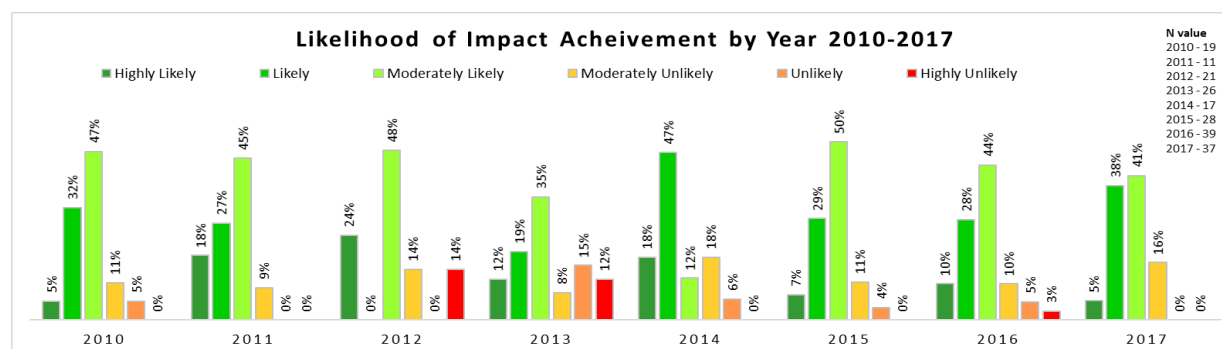
2.6.3 Likelihood of Impact

100. Evaluations assess the likelihood that an intervention may lead or contribute to planned (or even unintended) impacts, the extent to which a project has played a catalytic role or

has promoted scaling up and/or replication¹⁶, and the factors that are likely to contribute to longer term impact. In the biennium 2012-13, a method based on 'Theory of Change' (ToC) concepts was introduced by the Evaluation Office as an approach for assessing the likelihood of impact achievement. In recent years, Theory of Change approaches have been increasingly used for designing and monitoring development interventions and also as a framework for use in evaluations. A Theory of Change of a project intervention describes the processes of change by outlining the causal pathways from outputs (goods and services delivered by the project) through direct outcomes (changes resulting from the use of outputs by key stakeholders) through other 'intermediate states' towards Impact, in UN Environment's case - long term changes that deliver (or lead to) environmental benefits and improved human well-being.

101. As shown in Figure 23 below, although the percentage of projects rated 'Likely' or better to achieve Impact dropped from 65% in 2014 to 36% in 2015, the biennium 2016-17 has seen a gradual increase in the percentage projects in the same performance range, with 38% in 2016 and 44% in 2017 deemed likely to sustain and up-scale their higher-level results.

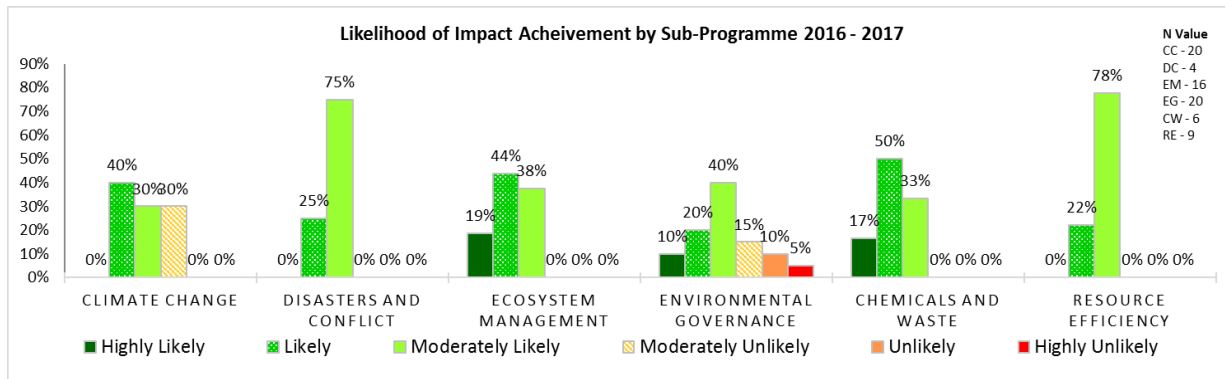
Figure 23. Likelihood of Impact by Year (2010-17)



102. At programme level in the 2016-17 biennium (Figure 24), projects rated as 'Highly Likely' to achieve impact were from Ecosystem Management (19%), Chemicals and Waste (17%) and Environmental Governance (10%) sub-programmes (see Figure 24). Of concern, however, is the observation that 30% of projects under both the Environmental Governance and Chemicals and Waste sub-programmes, each with 20 projects evaluated during this biennium, received ratings in the 'unlikely' range (refer to Table 2) against this criterion. When this is considered alongside the positive performance for output delivery, it serves to further emphasise the need for project designs and implementation actions to focus on, and invest more in, influencing the change processes that lead to higher level results

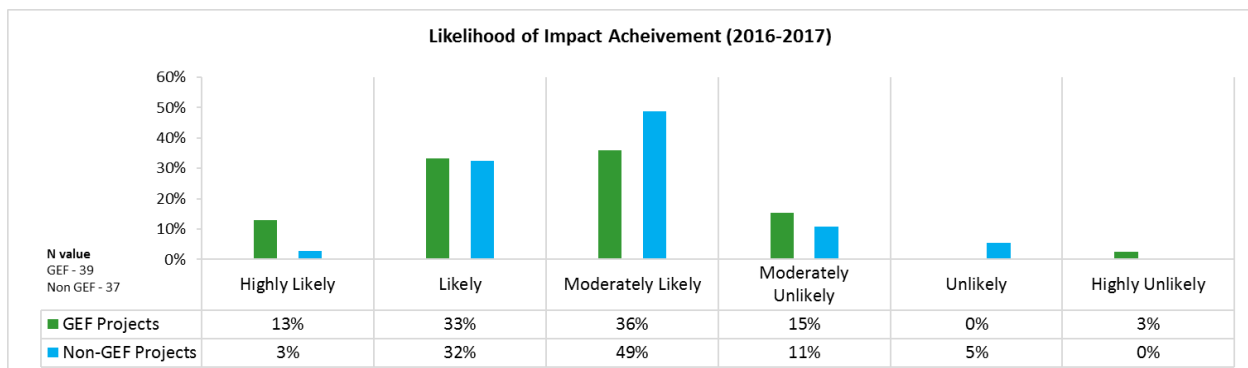
Figure 24. Likelihood of Impact by Sub-programme in 2016-17 Biennium

¹⁶ *Scaling up* refers to approaches being adopted on a much larger scale, but in a very similar context. Scaling up is often the longer-term objective of pilot initiatives. *Replication* refers to approaches being repeated, or lessons being explicitly applied in new/different contexts e.g. other geographic areas, different target group etc. Effective replication typically requires some form of revision or adaptation to the new context. It is possible to replicate at either the same or a different scale.



103. A comparison by funding modality for projects evaluated in 2016-17 (Figure 25) shows that 46% of the GEF funded projects were rated 'Highly Likely' or 'Likely' achieve impact, compared to 35% of Non-GEF funded projects in the same range performance range.

Figure 25. Comparison of Likelihood of Impact Assessment between GEF and non-GEF projects



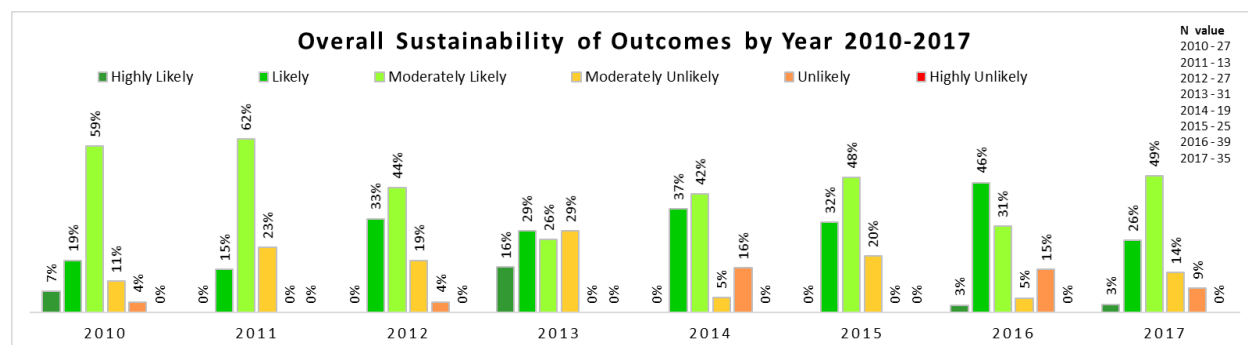
104. Projects with favourable assessments against this criterion are likely to be those where all direct outcomes and intermediate states have been (or are on the way to being) achieved, and the factors necessary to support the transition from direct outcomes to higher results levels (and impact) are well in place. They are also likely to be those that are supported by well-designed strategies that promote such forward progression.

105. In order to increase the likelihood of achieving impacts, therefore, it is important to improve project design (and implementation actions through adaptive management) to better articulate explicit linkages and causal processes between outputs, outcomes, intermediate states and intended impacts.

2.7 Sustainability

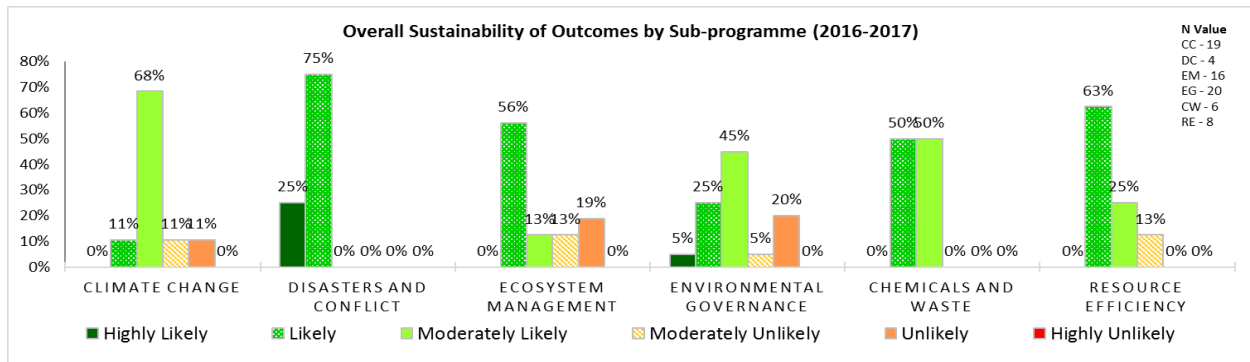
106. Evaluations also assess the probability of direct outcomes being maintained after the completion of a project, as well as the key factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence or enhancement of these outcomes over time. Four dimensions that may affect sustainability are normally assessed, namely: i) Financial, ii) Socio-political, iii) Institutional framework and governance and iv) Environmental.
- 107.
- 108.
- 109.
110. Figure 26 below is based on data across an 8-year period and shows the trend in projects' overall likelihood to sustain project-derived results. Project performance against this criterion has been quite varied over the years, nevertheless we observe a small increase in the average percentage of projects achieving a 'Likely' or higher rating in 2016-17 (39%) from the previous 2014-15 biennium (34.5%).

Figure 26. Assessment of Overall Sustainability of Project Outcomes by Year (2010-17)



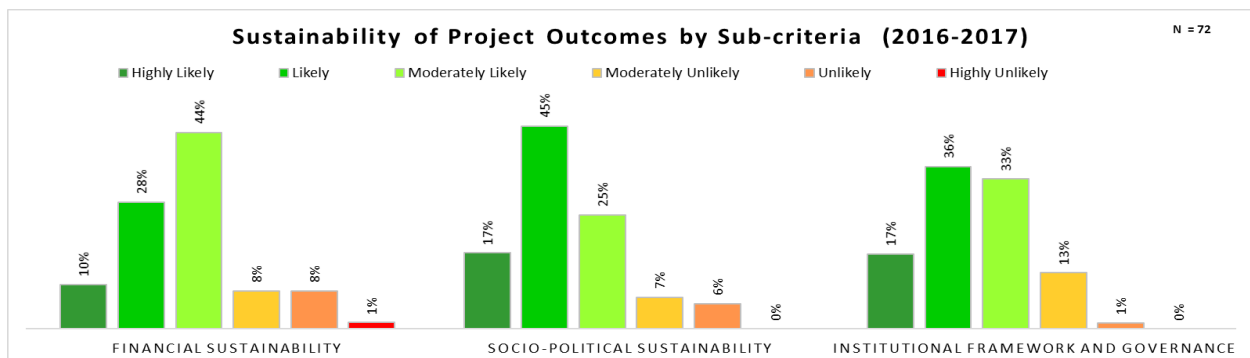
111. At sub-programme level in the 2016-17 biennium (Figure 27), projects in the Ecosystem Management and Environmental Governance sub-programmes were assessed as experiencing the greatest challenges to sustaining outcomes, with 32% and 25% projects, respectively, being rated as 'Moderately Likely' or 'Unlikely' to sustain their outcomes following the completion of the intervention. In other words, between a quarter and a third of projects in these sub-programmes (respectively) have faced challenges in sustaining project outcomes.

Figure 27. Sustainability of Project Outcomes by Sub-programme in the 2016-17 biennium



112. Whilst projects in the ‘Disasters and Conflict’ and the ‘Chemicals and Waste’ sub-programmes recorded 100% of projects having ‘Highly Likely’ or ‘Likely’ ratings for their overall sustainability of outcomes, this is based on a small number of evaluations.
113. For the socio-political dimension of sustainability, evaluations assess the extent to which social or political factors are required to support the continuation of direct outcomes, including the level of ownership, interest and commitment among government and other stakeholders to take the project achievements forwards, and to what extent the project has responded to these factors. The financial sustainability dimension assesses the extent to which the continuation of project results and the eventual impact of the project are dependent on financial resources. Evaluations also assess the likelihood that adequate financial resources¹⁷ will be or will become available to use capacities built by the project, and whether there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustaining of project results and onward progress towards impact The institutional framework component of sustainability considers the extent to which institutional structures (especially those supporting policies and legislation) and developed capacity are required to continue delivering the benefits associated with the outcomes beyond the completion of project activities and how robust the relevant institutional features are.

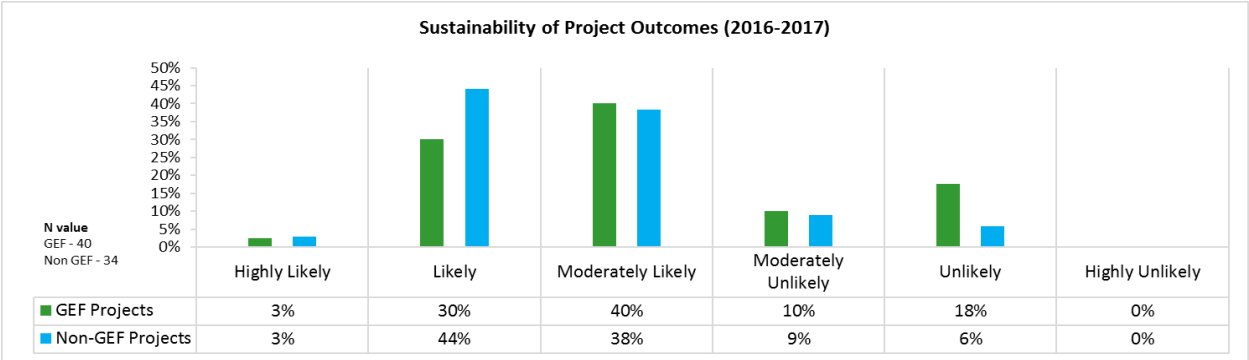
Figure 28. Sustainability of Project Outcomes by Sub-criteria in the 2016-17 biennium



¹⁷ Those resources can be from multiple sources, such as the national budget, public and private sectors, development assistance etc.

- 114. An assessment of these sustainability sub-criteria for projects evaluated in the biennium 2016-17, as shown in Figure 28 above, reveals that a greater percentage of projects were rated 'Highly Likely' or 'Likely' to be sustainable against **socio-political** factors (62%), than they were against **institutional framework and governance** factors (53%). These two sub-criteria have more to do with government-level buy-in and political commitment to safeguard the onward progression of outcomes towards impact; projects that performed well in this regard had engaged effectively with appropriate stakeholders and institutions to build ownership for project-led initiatives and the associated change processes.
- 115. **Financial** factors associated with the sustainability of outcomes have consistently been a challenge for most projects, based on evaluation findings from 2010 to date. In the biennium 2016-17 (Figure 28), only 38% of projects were rated 'Highly Likely' or 'Likely' to achieve financial sustainability on completion of external project funding. As pointed out in previous evaluation synthesis reports (2012-13 and 2014-15), the likelihood of stable and predictable funding is closely linked to political goodwill at national level and among the donor community. Private sector involvement to leverage financial resources at the country level also affects this dimension of sustainability. Some direct outcomes, once achieved, do not require further financial inputs; however, most outcomes will be dependent on a continuous flow of action that needs to be resourced for them to be maintained. For example, in projects where financial resources are critical to applying the developed capacities, financial constraints may threaten the onward progress of such outcomes towards impact.

Figure 29. Comparison of Overall Sustainability between GEF and non-GEF projects in 2016-17 biennium

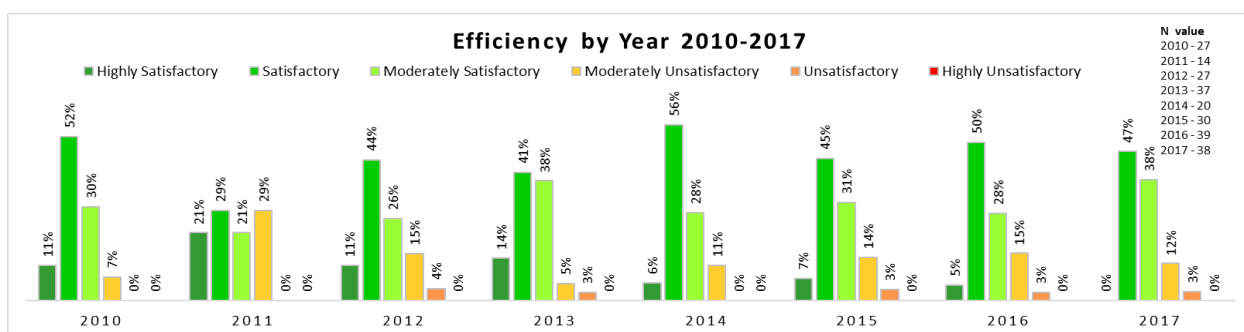


- 116. For projects evaluated in the 2016-17 biennium, the largest portion of GEF funded projects (40%) received a 'Moderately Likely' rating against the 'Overall Sustainability' criterion, whereas with Non-GEF funded projects most (44%) obtained a 'Likely' rating in the same parameter as shown in
- 117. Figure 29 above.

2.8 Efficiency

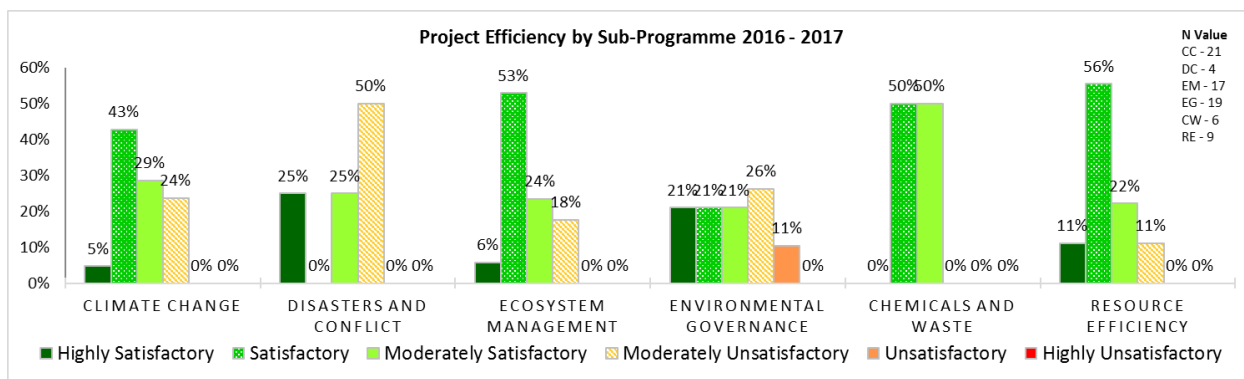
118. For this criterion, evaluations assess the extent to which a project has delivered maximum results using the available resources. Cost-effectiveness is assessed to determine the extent to which an intervention has achieved its results at the lowest possible cost; and timeliness is examined to establish whether planned activities were delivered within the expected timeframes and whether events were sequenced efficiently. Project extensions are assessed against the formally approved results frameworks (Project document) and evidence is sought to establish whether such extensions were justifiable. From among the projects evaluated in the biennium 2016-17, 49% were rated 'Satisfactory' or better for efficiency. We have however observed a decline in performance for this criterion compared to the data from previous biennia, with the percentage of projects in the 'satisfactory' range varying between from 54% in 2010-11, 63% in 2012-13 and 66% in 2014-15. Figure 30 below shows the assessment of efficiency in projects evaluated over the last eight years.

Figure 30. Assessment of Project Efficiency by Year (2010-17)



119. At the sub-programme level, the best performance in the efficiency parameter was by projects under the Chemicals and Waste Sub-programme with 100% projects achieving ratings in the 'satisfactory' range in the 2016-17 biennium. The Resource Efficiency Sub-programme had the highest percentage of projects (67%) rated 'Satisfactory' or better for this criterion, whereas 11% of the projects in the Environmental Governance Sub-programme were assessed as 'Unsatisfactory' (Figure 31).

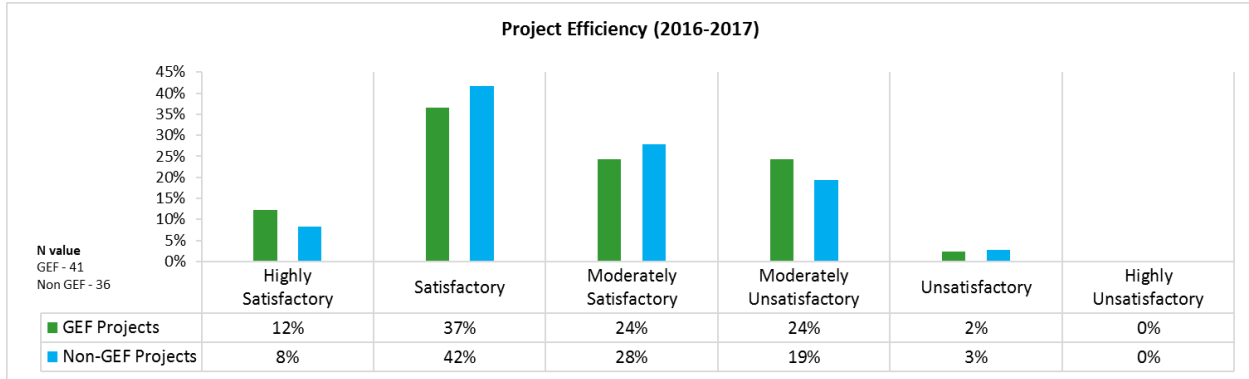
Figure 31. Assessment of Project Efficiency by Sub-programme in 2016-17 Biennium



120. From the 2016-17 data as shown in

121. Figure 32 below, GEF and Non-GEF funded projects showed no meaningful difference in performance, with the proportion of projects achieving a rating of 'Satisfactory' or better efficiency being 49% and 50% respectively.

Figure 32. Comparison of Project Efficiency between GEF and non-GEF projects 2016-17 Biennium



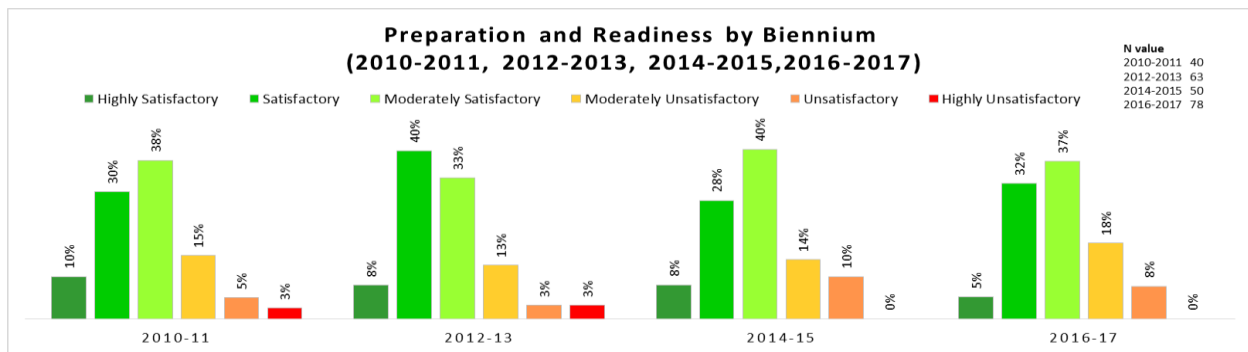
2.9 Factors Affecting Project Performance

2.9.1 Preparation and Readiness

122. This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project. The evaluation assesses whether appropriate measures were taken to either address weaknesses in the project design and/or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. In particular, the evaluation considers the nature and quality of engagement with stakeholder groups by the project team, the confirmation of partner capacity and development of partnership agreements as well as initial staffing and financing arrangements.

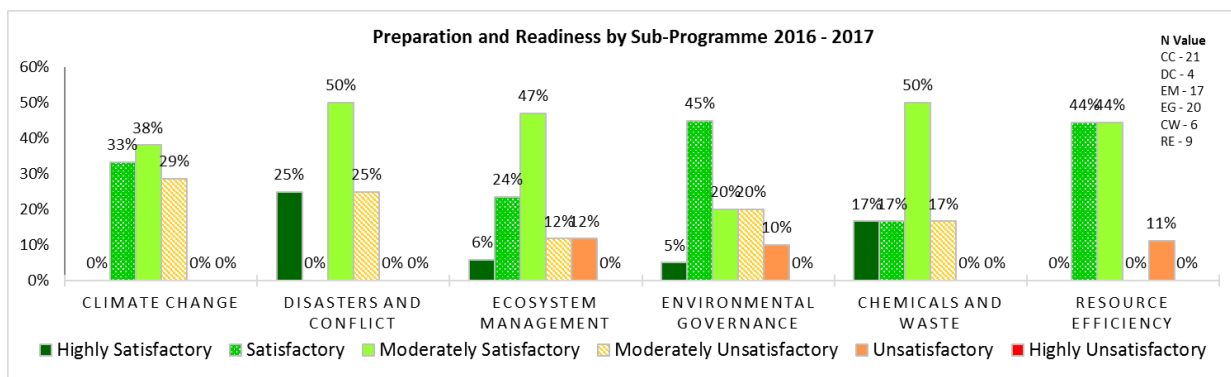
123. In the eight-year period 2010 to 2017, there has been no significant improvement in project performance ratings against this criterion. In the biennium 2016-17, there has been a slight decline in the proportion of projects that achieved ratings in the 'satisfactory' range, 70%, compared to 76% achieved in the previous biennium 2014-15.

Figure 33: Comparison of Preparation and Readiness by Year (2010-17)



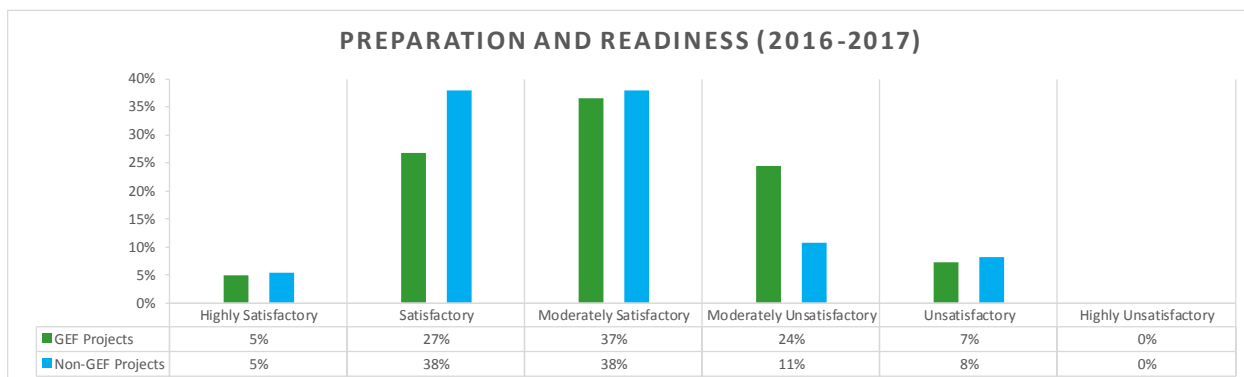
124. Across the sub-programmes, Climate Change and Environmental Governance have the lowest proportion of projects rated in the 'satisfactory' range, while the Ecosystem Management and Chemicals and Waste sub-programmes had a higher proportion of projects falling in the 'satisfactory' range.

Figure 34: Assessment of Preparation and Readiness by Sub-Programme for the Biennium 2016-17



125. Along with 'Monitoring and Evaluation', 'Preparation and Readiness' is one of the criteria against which projects frequently receive lower ratings.
126. For the biennia 2016-17, across non-GEF projects better ratings were awarded than for GEF projects against this criterion, with 81% (non-GEF) of projects falling in the 'satisfactory' range compared to 69% (GEF) as illustrated in the figure below. However, over the eight-year period from 2010 to 2017, there is no significant difference in the achievement ratings between GEF and non-GEF projects.

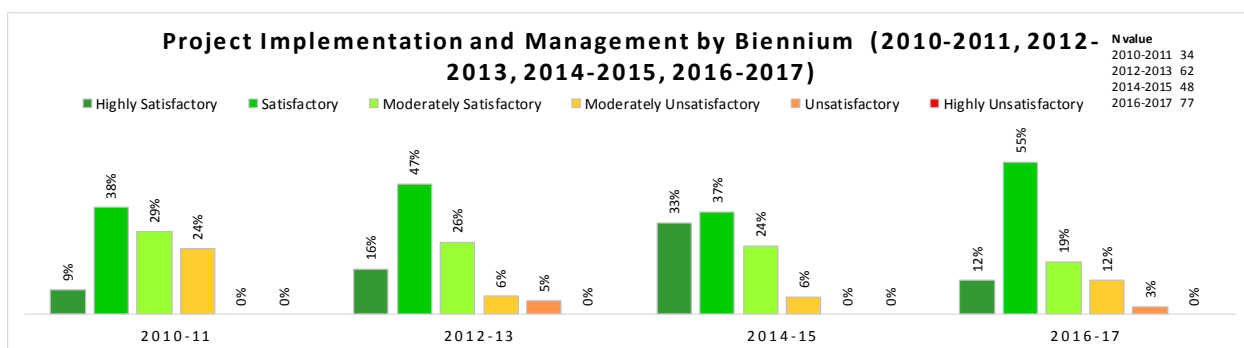
Figure 35: Comparison of GEF and Non-GEF projects for Preparation and Readiness for the Biennium 2016-17



2.9.2 Project Implementation and Management

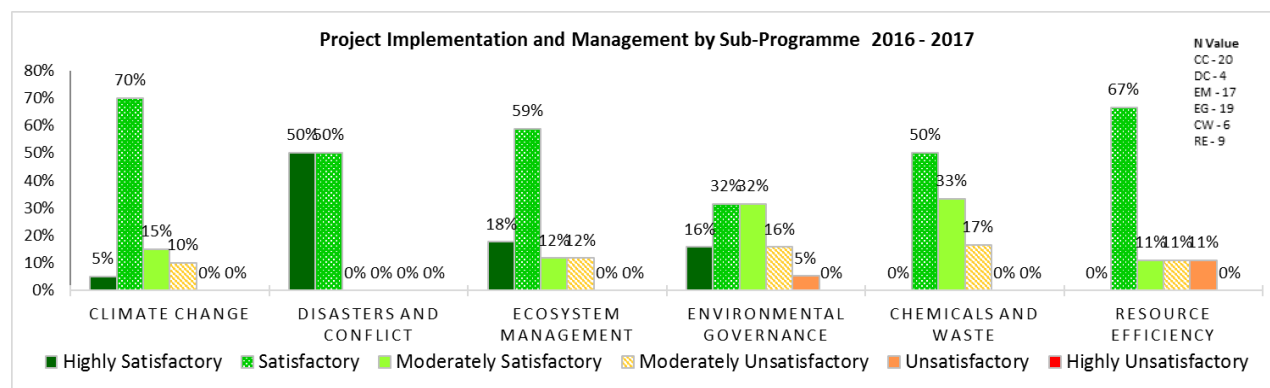
127. Terminal evaluations analyse the implementation approaches used by projects including: the management framework; adaptation to changing conditions and responses to changing risks (adaptive management); performance of the implementation arrangements and partnerships; relevance of changes in project design and overall performance in project management. The results for the projects evaluated in the 2016-17 biennium against this criterion show a reduction in the proportion achieving ratings in the 'satisfactory' range from 94% in 2014-2015 to 86%. In addition, there was a significant drop in the proportion attaining a 'Highly Satisfactory' rating for this criterion from 33% in the 2014-15 biennium to 12% in 2016-17.

Figure 36: Comparison of Project Implementation and Management ratings by Biennium



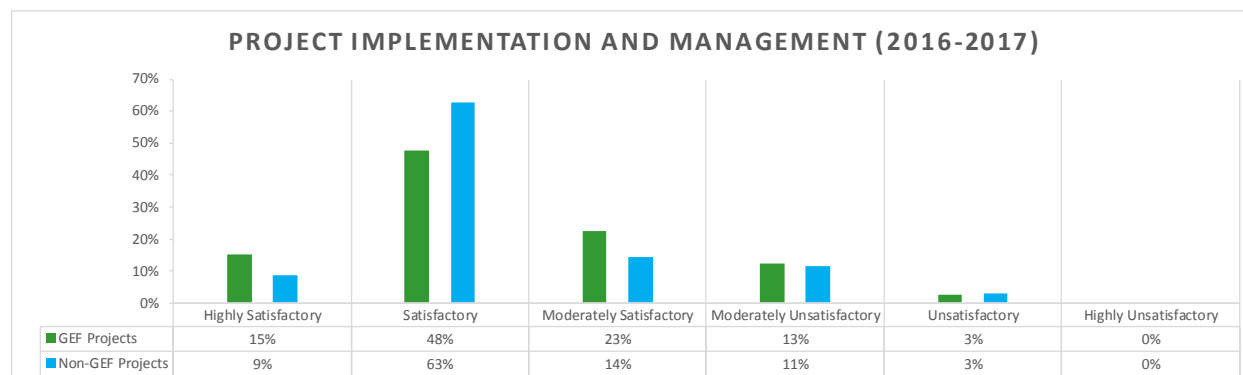
128. All of the four evaluated projects in the Disasters and Conflict sub-programme received a rating of 'Satisfactory' or better in implementation and management, despite having achieved a lower rating in project preparation and readiness. In all other sub-programmes, the trend for 'project implementation and management' mirrored that of the 'preparation and readiness' criterion.

Figure 37: Assessment of Implementation and Adaptive Management by Sub-Programme in the Biennium 2016-17



129. A greater proportion of GEF projects (20%) achieved a 'Highly Satisfactory' rating compared to 12% of non GEF projects in the period 2010-17. However, the total proportion being awarded a 'Satisfactory' or better rating is similar at 62% for GEF and 65% for non-GEF projects for the same period. There were no 'Highly Unsatisfactory' ratings awarded for this criterion.

Figure 38: Comparison of GEF and Non-GEF projects for Project Implementation and Management in the Biennium 2016-17



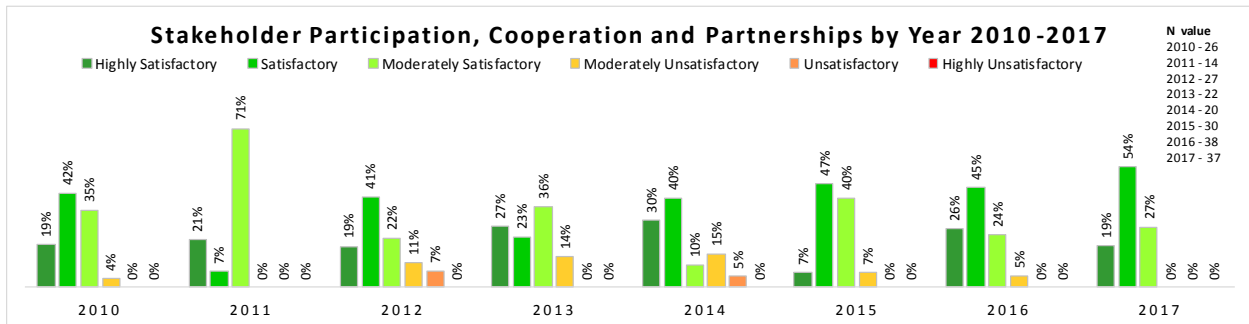
2.9.3 Stakeholders Participation, Cooperation and Partnerships

130. The assessment of this criterion considers the quality and effectiveness of all forms of communication and consultation with stakeholders throughout the project life and the support given to maximise collaboration and coherence between various stakeholders,

including sharing plans, pooling resources and exchanging learning and expertise. The inclusion and participation of all differentiated groups, including gender groups is also considered. The term 'stakeholder' is considered in a broad sense, encompassing all project partners, duty bearers with a role in delivering project outputs and target users of project outputs and any other collaborating agents external to UN Environment.

131. There was a consistent improvement year on year from 2010 to 2017 with no evaluation reports receiving a rating in the 'unsatisfactory' range in 2017. The biennium 2016-17 ratings were higher than the previous biennium with only 3% of projects being rated 'Moderately Unsatisfactory'.

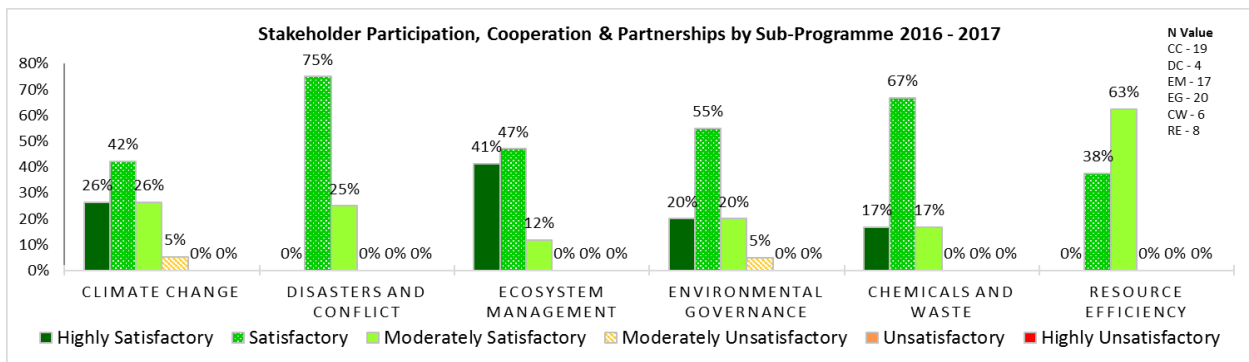
Figure 39: Assessment of Stakeholder Participation, Cooperation and Partnerships from 2010-17



132. From 2010–17, high ratings have been consistently awarded against this criterion across all sub-programmes, with less than 20% of evaluated projects falling in the 'unsatisfactory' range. The Chemicals and Waste, Resource Efficiency and Disaster and Conflicts Sub-programmes have no projects awarded ratings in the 'unsatisfactory' range while nineteen percent (19%) of Climate Change projects achieved a rating of 'Moderately Unsatisfactory'.

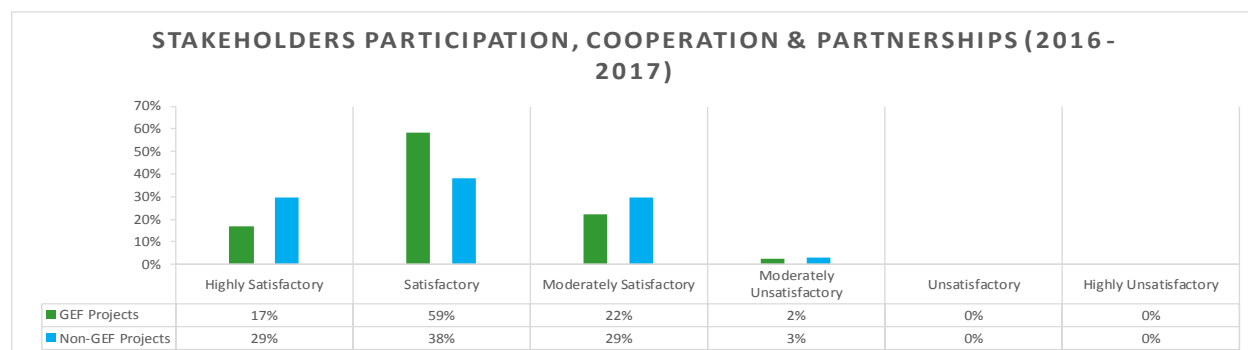
133. In the biennium 2016-17, 95% of all projects across the sub-programmes were in the 'satisfactory' range, where 'Moderately Satisfactory' ratings accounted for 12% – 26% of the ratings, except for the Resource Efficiency sub-programme, which had 63% of its projects rated in the 'Moderately Satisfactory' category suggesting that projects in that sub-programme need to pay more attention to their approach to stakeholder engagement.

Figure 40: Assessment of Stakeholder Participation by Sub Programme in biennium 2016-17



134. In the period 2010–17, GEF and non-GEF projects have a similar proportion of projects in each rating category, where a ‘Satisfactory’ rating was achieved in 40% of GEF projects and 38% in non-GEF projects. However, in the biennium 2016-17, GEF projects achieved higher ratings, with 76% of projects awarded ratings in the ‘Satisfactory’ or better categories compared to 67% of non-GEF projects.

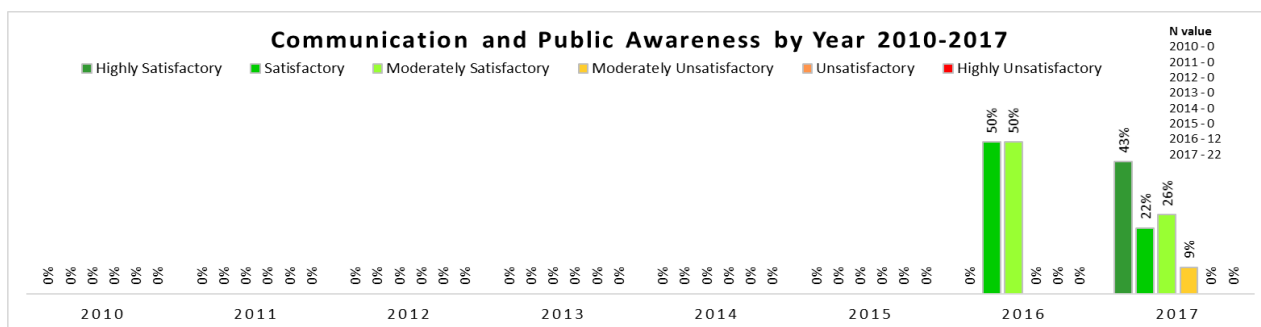
Figure 41: Comparison of GEF and non-GEF projects for Stakeholder Participation 2016-17



2.9.4 Communication and Public Awareness

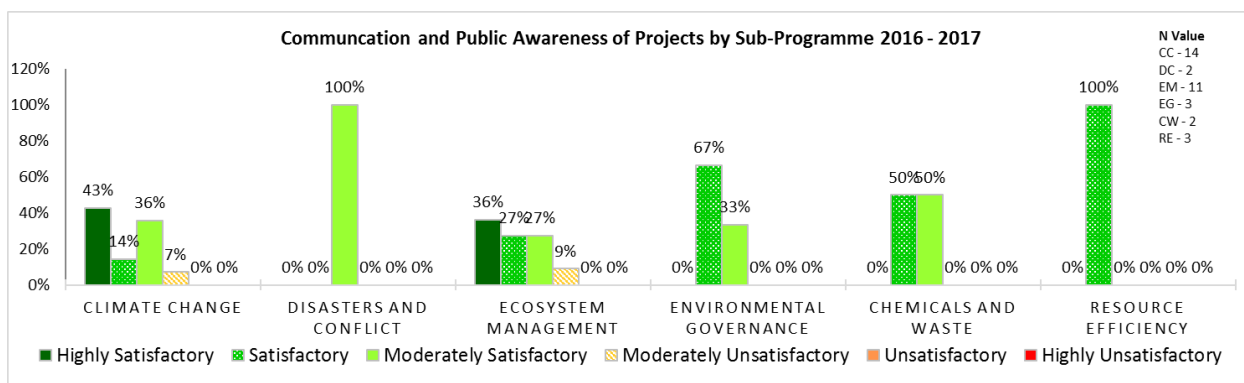
135. For this criterion, the evaluation assesses the effectiveness of: a) communication of learning and experience-sharing between project partners and interested groups arising from the project during its life and b) public awareness activities that were undertaken during the implementation of the project to influence attitudes or shape behaviour among wider communities and civil society at large.
136. The evaluation considers whether existing communication channels and networks were used effectively, including meeting the differentiated needs of gendered or marginalised groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project, the evaluation comments on the sustainability of the communication channel under either socio-political, institutional or financial sustainability, as appropriate.
137. Public Awareness was assessed under the Stakeholder Participation criterion until 2015. The data for this criterion starts in 2016, as evaluation reports initiated in 2015 were first brought to completion.
138. From the graph below, it can be seen that all evaluations received a rating in the ‘satisfactory’ range in 2016. In 2017, although a lower total proportion of the ratings were in the ‘satisfactory’ range there was an increase of 43% in the proportion attaining a ‘Highly Satisfactory’ rating. The number of evaluations rated for this criterion in 2017 was almost double that of 2016.

Figure 42: Assessment of Communication and Public Awareness by year 2010-17



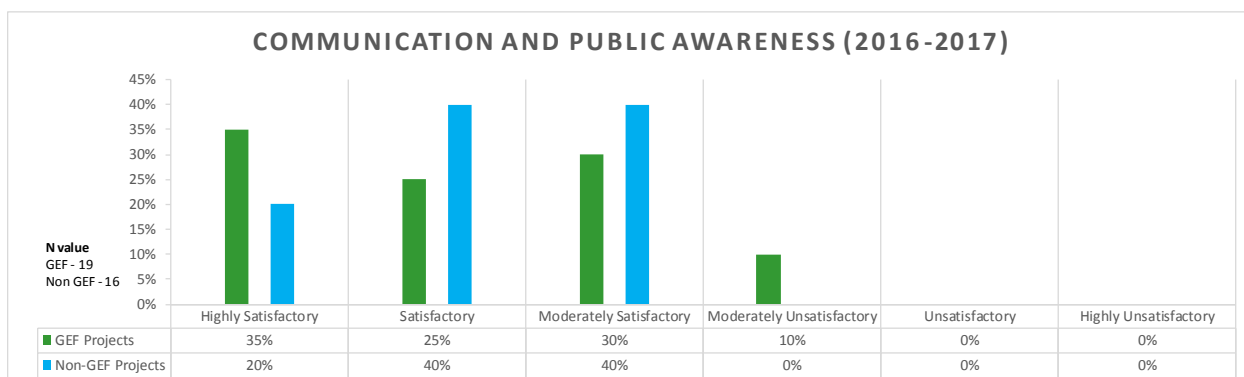
139. All sub programmes performed well against this criterion with the Climate Change sub-programme receiving a 'Highly Satisfactory' rating for 43% of its evaluated projects, followed by Ecosystem Management with 36%. All (100%) of Chemicals and Waste, 67% of Environmental Governance and 50% of Resource Efficiency projects were rated in the 'Satisfactory' category.

Figure 43. Communication and Public Awareness by Sub-programme in 2016–17 Biennium



140. In the period 2010–17 and in the biennium 2016-17, non-GEF projects performed better than GEF projects with no projects falling in the 'Unsatisfactory' range of ratings. While GEF projects had a higher proportion of projects with a 'Highly Satisfactory' rating, it also had 10% of projects evaluated attaining a of 'Moderately Unsatisfactory' rating.

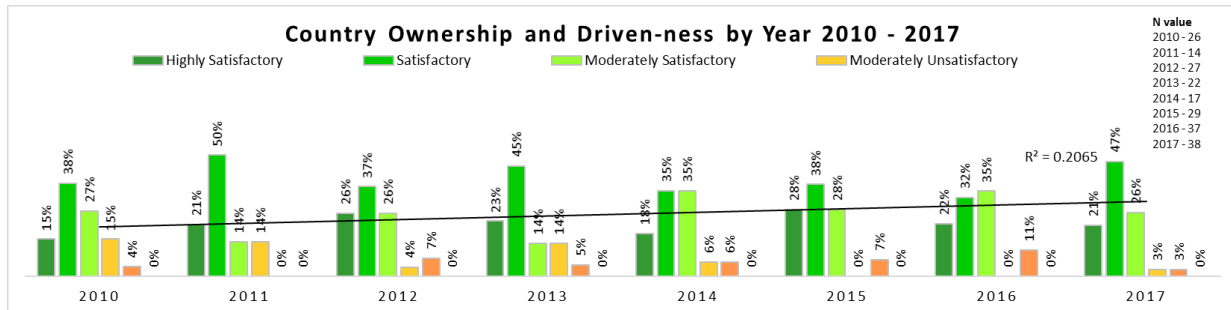
Figure 44: Comparison of GEF and Non GEF Communication and Public Awareness 2016-17



2.9.5 Country Ownership and Driven-ness

141. Project evaluations assess the quality and degree of engagement of government / public sector agencies in the intervention. While there is some overlap between Country Ownership and Institutional Sustainability, this criterion focuses primarily on the forward momentum of the intended projects results, i.e. either a) moving forwards from outputs to direct outcomes or b) moving forward from direct outcomes towards intermediate states.
142. The evaluation considers the involvement not only of those directly involved in project execution and those participating in technical or leadership groups, but also those official representatives whose cooperation is needed for change to be embedded in their respective institutions and offices. This factor is concerned with the level of ownership generated by the project over outputs and outcomes that is necessary for long term impact to be realised. This ownership should adequately represent the needs of interest of all gendered and marginalised groups.

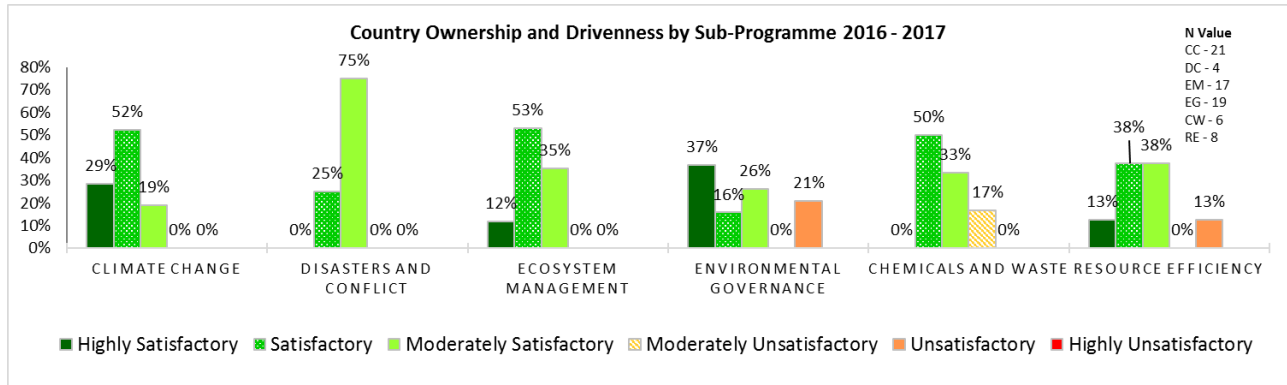
Figure 45: Assessment of Country Ownership and Driven-ness 2010-17



143. Over the period 2010-17 there has been a slight improvement in the ratings for this criterion. The proportion of evaluations receiving an 'Unsatisfactory' rating halved in 2017 compared to 2016 and 2015, although a similar proportion remains in the 'unsatisfactory' range of ratings. There are no significant improvements in the ratings for the biennium 2016-17 and 2014-15, though the number of evaluations completed had almost doubled in this biennium.
144. The Disaster and Conflicts and Environment under Review sub-programmes have had all their projects fall within the 'Satisfactory' range in the period 2010-17 (although this is for very few evaluations). The Chemicals and Waste sub-programme had the highest proportion of projects in the 'Highly Satisfactory' rating at 31% followed closely by Environmental Governance at 28%. Ecosystem Management and Chemicals and Waste have the highest proportion of projects within the 'Satisfactory' range of ratings at 92%, Climate Change at 86% and Environmental Governance at 85%.
145. In the biennium 2016-17, the Climate Change, Disasters and Conflicts and Ecosystem Management sub-programmes had no projects with a rating lower than 'Moderately

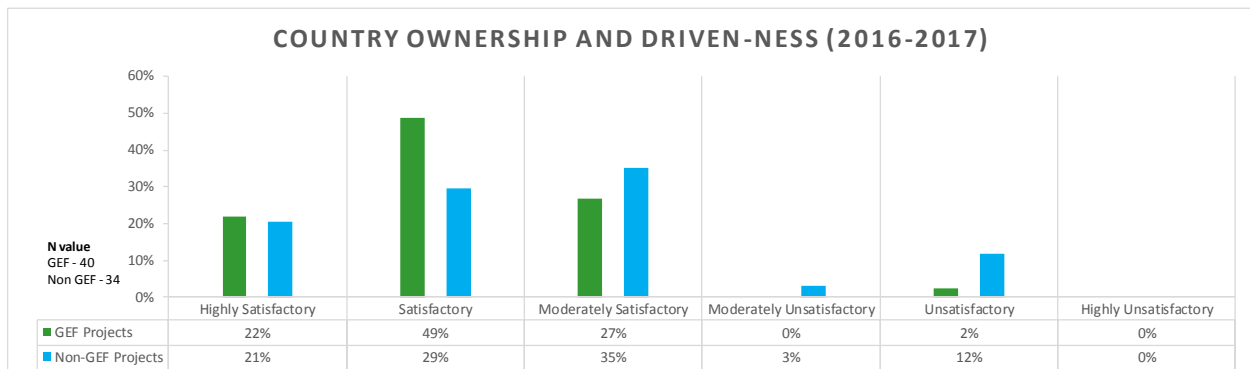
Satisfactory'. Climate Change had the highest proportion (81%) of projects with a 'Satisfactory' or 'Highly Satisfactory' rating. Although Environmental Governance had the highest proportion of projects with a 'Highly Satisfactory' rating, it also had the highest proportion of projects with an 'Unsatisfactory' rating when compared to the other sub-programmes. There were no projects rated in the Environment under Review sub-programme for the 2016-17 biennium.

Figure 46: Comparison of Country Ownership and Driven-ness by Sub-programme 2016-17



146. In the period 2010-17, GEF projects performed slightly better than non-GEF projects. 24% of GEF projects achieved a 'Highly Satisfactory' rating compared to 17% of non-GEF projects, and 4% of GEF projects achieved an 'Unsatisfactory' rating compared to 8% of non-GEF projects in the same category.

Figure 47: Comparison of GEF and non GEF projects for Country Ownership and Driven-ness 2016-17

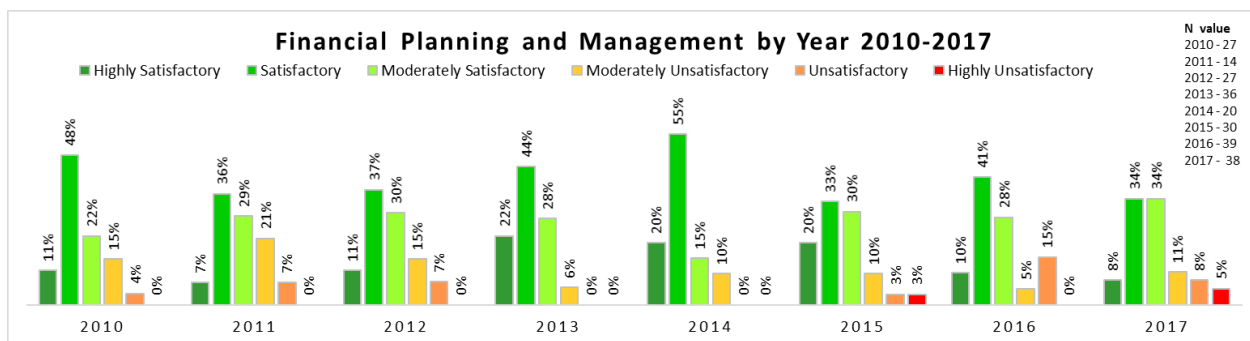


147. In the biennium 2016-17, GEF projects performed consistently better than non-GEF projects. 71% of GEF projects achieved a 'Satisfactory' or better rating compared to 50% of non-GEF in the same range. Only 2% of GEF projects received a rating in the 'unsatisfactory' range compared to 15% of non-GEF projects.

2.9.6 Financial Planning and Management

148. 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 looks at actual project costs by activities compared to budget (variances), financial management (including disbursement issues), and co-financing.
149. The evaluation verifies the application of proper standards and timeliness of financial planning, management and reporting; assesses other administrative processes such as recruitment and procurement; presents the extent to which financing from different sources has materialised as expected at project approval and describes the resources the project has leveraged since inception and indicates how these resources are contributing to the project's expected outcomes and impacts; analyses the effects on project performance of any irregularities in procurement, use of financial resources and human resource management and the measures taken by UN Environment to prevent such irregularities in the future and whether the measures taken were adequate.
150. There has been no significant improvement in the ratings for this criterion in the period 2010-17. At its peak in 2013, 94% of evaluated projects were in the 'satisfactory' range, decreasing each year by 3 – 7% each year to 76% of projects evaluated in 2017. The 2016-17 biennium data shows an increasing proportion of projects (23%) falling in the 'unsatisfactory' range of the ratings compared to the previous biennium (14%). A new financial system, UMOJA, was introduced in June 2015 across the UN Secretariat. Problems experienced by many projects in the transition to the new UMOJA financial management system may have contributed to this trend.

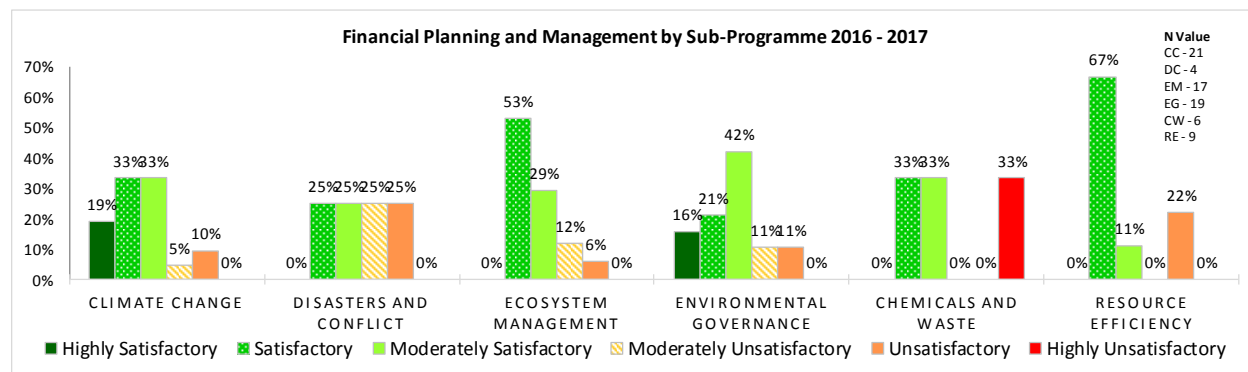
Figure 48: Assessment of Financial Planning and Management from 2010–17



151. The Chemicals and Waste sub-programme had 2 projects out of 13 with a rating of 'Highly Unsatisfactory', which accounts for 15% of its projects. However, it also had the highest proportion of projects with a 'Highly Satisfactory' rating at 23%. Environmental Governance performed the best from all the sub-programmes, followed closely by Chemicals and Waste, Ecosystem Management and Climate Change. Disasters and Conflict and Resource Efficiency had 50% of their projects fall in the 'satisfactory' range, while Environment under Review had the same proportion with a 'Moderately Unsatisfactory' rating.

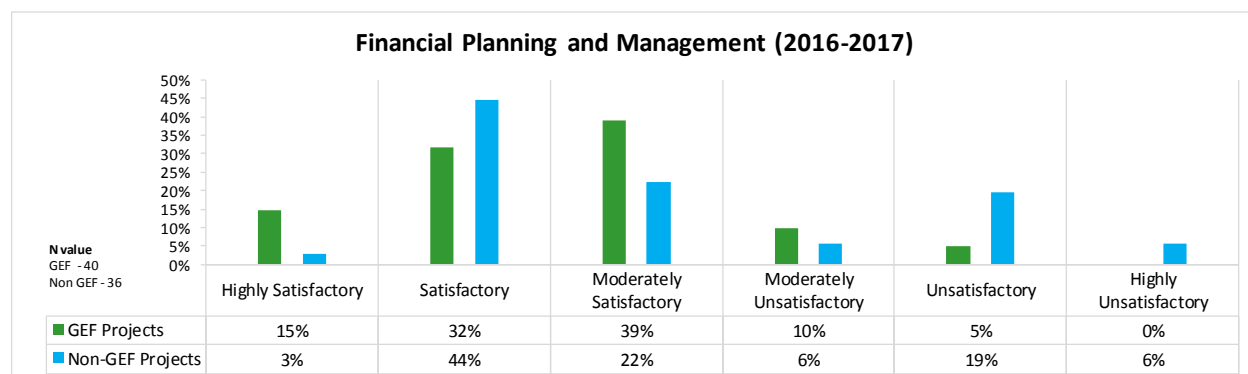
152. The 2016-2017 biennium shows a similar trend across the sub-programmes, although 33% of Chemicals and Waste projects were rated 'Highly Unsatisfactory', a significantly higher proportion when compared to the previous years.

Figure 49: Comparison across sub programmes in Financial Planning and Management in the Biennium 2016-17



153. 84% of GEF projects had a rating in the 'satisfactory' range compared to 77% of non GEF projects in the period 2010-17. The 2016-17 biennium shows an increase in this range with 86% of GEF projects falling in the 'satisfactory' range compared to 69% of non GEF projects.

Figure 50: Comparison of GEF and non GEF projects in Financial Planning and Management 2016-17



2.9.7 UN Environment Supervision, Guidance and Technical Backstopping

154. For this criterion, the evaluation assesses the effectiveness of project management with regard to: providing leadership towards achieving the planned outcomes; managing team structures; maintaining productive partner relationships (including Steering Committees etc.); communication and collaboration with UN Environment colleagues; risk management; use of problem-solving; project adaptation and overall project execution. Evidence of adaptive management is highlighted.
155. In some cases, 'project management and supervision' refers to the supervision and guidance provided by UN Environment to implementing partners and national

governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it refers to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping and supervision provided by UN Environment.

156. There is a general decline in the performance ratings over the years between 2010 and 2017. 2016 had 18% of the projects in the 'unsatisfactory' range compared to 3% in 2015 and 6% in 2014. Although the proportion of projects in 2017 in the 'unsatisfactory' range went down by a third compared to the previous year, the 2016-17 biennium has 88% of projects evaluated in the 'satisfactory' range compared to 96% in the previous biennium 2014-2015.

Figure 51: Assessment of UN Environment Supervision and Technical Backstopping 2010-17

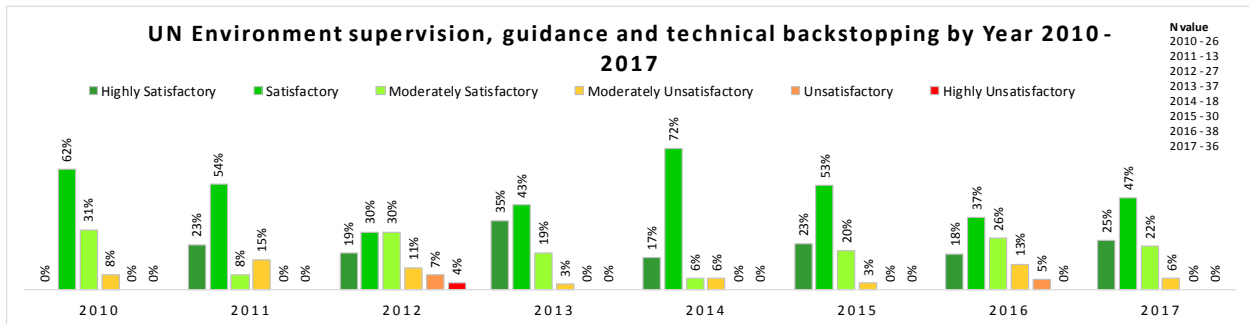
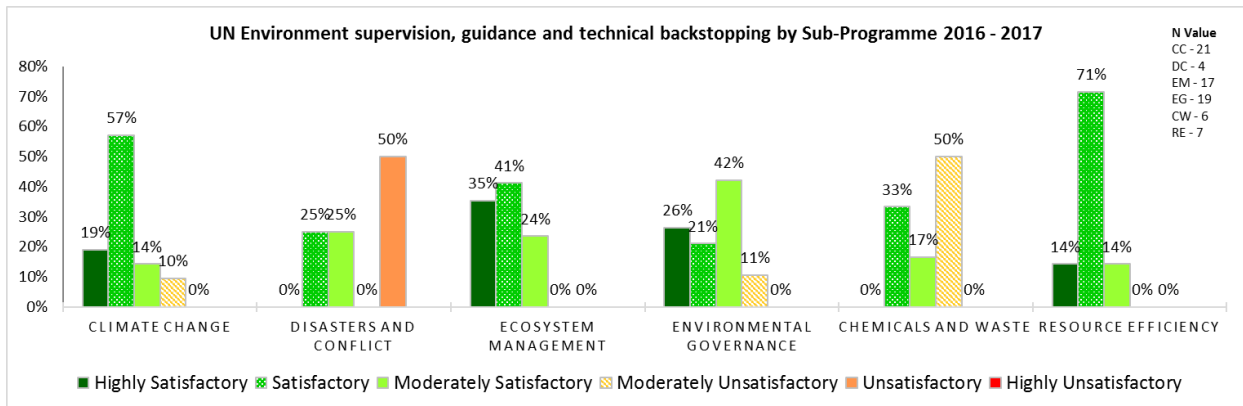


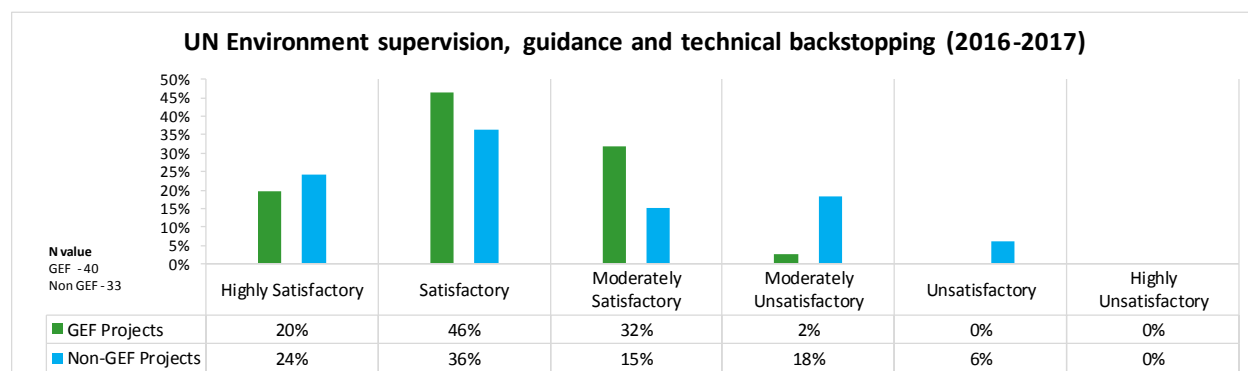
Figure 52: Comparison of Sub-Programmes against Supervision and Technical Backstopping in the Biennium 2016-17



157. The Ecosystem Management sub-programme has the highest proportion of favourable ratings against this criterion with 23% 'Highly Satisfactory', 56% 'Satisfactory', 18% 'Moderately Satisfactory' and just 4% in the 'unsatisfactory' range, followed closely by Environmental Governance, Resource Efficiency and Climate Change sub programmes. The Chemicals and Waste sub-programme had 50% of its evaluated projects awarded an evaluation rating of 'Moderately Unsatisfactory' while Disasters and Conflict had 50% of its projects with an 'Unsatisfactory' rating. All projects evaluated in Ecosystem Management and Resource Efficiency sub-programmes had their projects fall in the 'satisfactory' range, while Climate Change and Environmental Governance had 10% and 11%, respectively in the 'Moderately Unsatisfactory' rating category.

158. In the period 2010-17, GEF projects performed marginally better with 95% of projects achieving a rating in the 'satisfactory' range compared to 81% of non GEF projects. In the biennium 2016-17, GEF projects had a much higher rating with only 2% of projects in the 'unsatisfactory' range compared to 24% of non GEF projects.

Figure 53: Comparison of GEF and Non GEF projects - UN Environment supervision and backstopping 2016-17



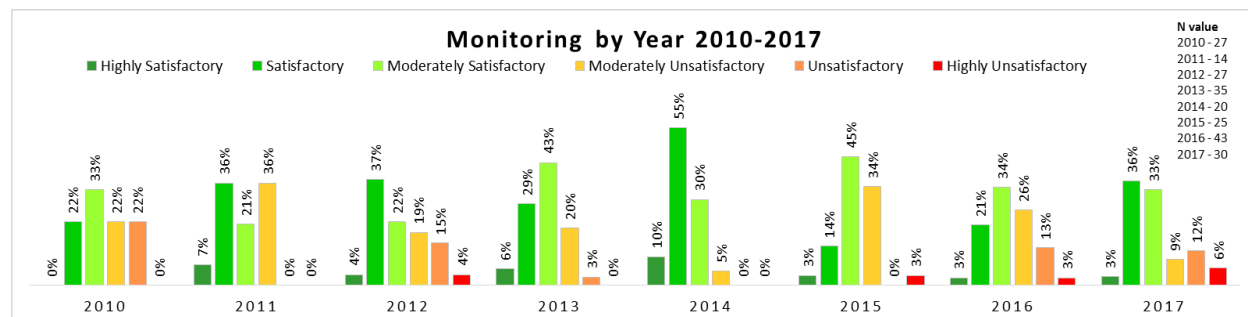
2.9.8 Monitoring and Reporting

159. The evaluation includes 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 assesses how information generated by the monitoring system during project implementation was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensuring sustainability. Monitoring is assessed on three levels: M&E Design, M&E Plan Implementation and M&E Budgeting and Funding.
160. Under design, the evaluation assesses whether there was a sound monitoring with SMART¹⁸ indicators and evaluation plan to monitor results, track progress and clear defined responsibilities; data source and collection instruments are appropriate; adequate baseline data information is collected and presented in a clear manner; whether key stakeholders were engaged in the design of monitoring and evaluation plans; and whether adequate provisions in legal instruments binding project partners to fully collaborate in evaluations were made.
161. Under Implementation, the evaluation verifies the monitoring and evaluation system was operational and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards project objectives throughout the implementation period; PIR reports were prepared; half yearly progress and financial reports were complete and accurate; and information provided by the monitoring and evaluation system was used during the project to adapt to changing needs and improve project performance.

¹⁸ SMART refers to indicators that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-specific.

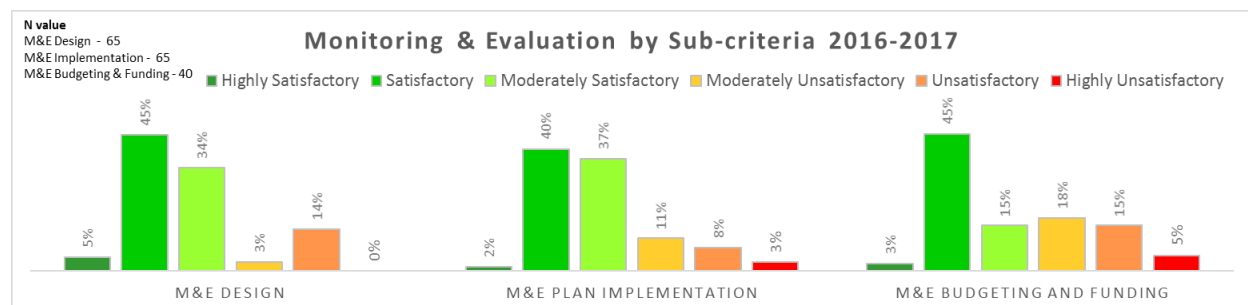
162. Under Budgeting and Funding, the evaluation determines support for monitoring was adequately budgeted for; funded in a timely manner; and assesses the level and realism of GEF tracking tools.
163. Along with Preparation and Readiness and Financial Planning and Management, 'Monitoring' was one criteria against which performance was deemed to be poor, with a higher proportion of projects falling in the 'unsatisfactory' range compared to the other criteria.

Figure 54: Assessment of Overall Monitoring Criterion 2010-17



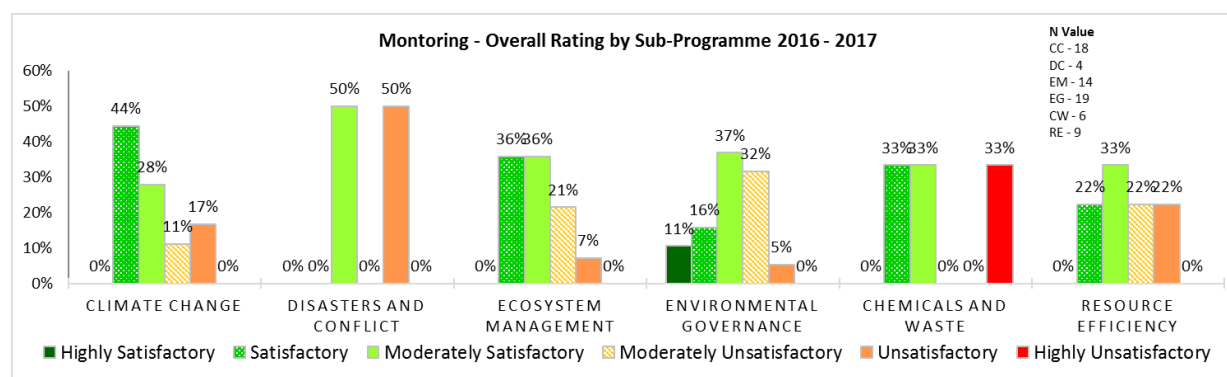
164. Compared to the previous biennium 2014-15, projects evaluated in 2016-17 had a lower proportion of ratings in the 'satisfactory' range, with 86% in 2014-15 and 78% in 2016-17. However, an improvement in the proportion of projects in the 'satisfactory' range can be observed with 72% in 2017 compared to 58% in 2016. When broken down by category, M&E Design had 82% of projects evaluated in the 'satisfactory' range, 79% in M&E Implementation and 63% in Budgeting and Funding for the 2016-17 biennium.

Figure 55: Comparison of Monitoring by Sub Criteria 2016-17



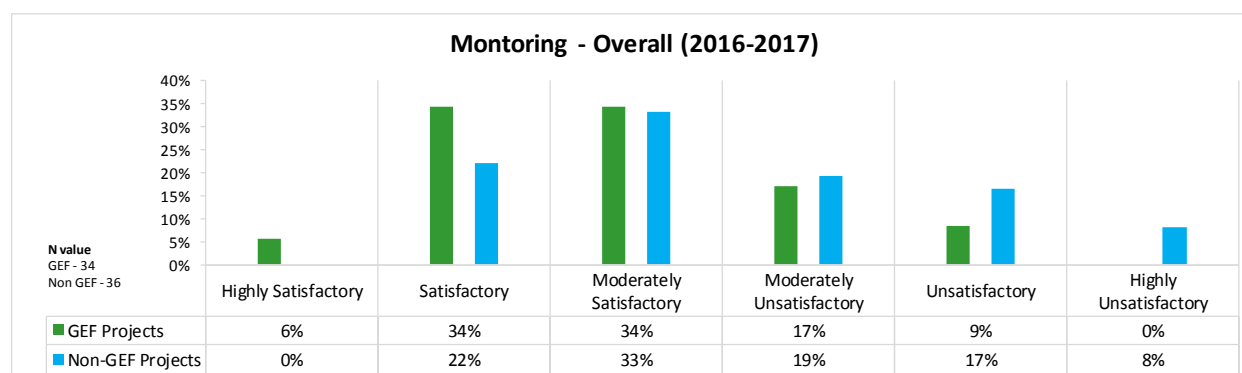
165. Although 85% of projects in Chemicals and Waste sub-programme were in the 'satisfactory' range, 15% were rated 'Highly Unsatisfactory' in the 2010-17 period. This accounts for the highest proportion in either category. 70% of Ecosystem Management, 67% of Environmental Governance and Climate Change and 58% of Resource Efficiency projects were rated in the 'satisfactory' range. Only 50% of Disasters and Conflicts projects were rated in the 'satisfactory' range.

Figure 56: Comparison across sub-programmes - Overall Monitoring in the Biennium 2016-17



166. In the biennium 2016-17, the proportion of projects in the ‘satisfactory’ range for the Chemicals and Waste sub-programme dropped significantly to 66% compared to the longer-term average. All other sub programmes had little to no change in the proportion of projects in the ‘satisfactory’ range.
167. From the figure below, it can be observed that almost twice the proportion of GEF projects, 39%, achieved a rating of ‘Satisfactory’ or ‘Highly Satisfactory’ compared to 22% of non GEF projects. In addition, no GEF project had a ‘Highly Unsatisfactory’ rating between 2010 to 2017 compared to 7% of non GEF projects. In the biennium 2016-17, no non-GEF projects were rated as ‘Highly Unsatisfactory’, with 55% in the ‘satisfactory’ range compared to 74% GEF projects in the same range.

Figure 57: Comparison of GEF and Non GEF projects - Monitoring in the Biennium 2016-17



2.10 Improving Comparability Across Project Evaluations

168. The Evaluation Office is continually aiming to improve the objectivity and comparability of its evaluation approach across UN Environment projects. Standard Terms of Reference for project evaluations and detailed guidance on evaluation processes, report structure, content and quality are routinely provided to independent evaluation consultants help to ensure a consistent approach to project evaluations.

169. Nevertheless, evaluation ratings depend on expert judgements from evaluation consultants. Since project interventions are very diverse thematically, geographically and in terms of their resource envelopes it is difficult to ensure that judgements are being made uniformly. Without guidance to help 'benchmark' evaluation ratings it is optimistic to assume that different independent evaluators would assess an intervention identically, even if they were presented with the same set of verifiable evidence.
170. To reduce the variability that can be introduced through 'expert judgement' across a large number of individual evaluation consultants, the Evaluation Office, during 2017, worked on an 'Matrix for evaluation criteria' the matrix makes the basis for awarding evaluation ratings explicit for each criterion and each performance level, thus improving the consistency and objectivity of evaluative judgements. All project evaluations will, from 2018 onwards, be benchmarked against this matrix.

3 KEY FINDINGS FROM STRATEGIC EVALUATIONS

171. A number of evaluations undertaken during the biennium were considered to be of high strategic importance to the organization. Brief summaries of these evaluations are presented below. The web links to the full reports on the document repository are also given.

3.1 UN Environment Finance Initiative

172. UN Environment Finance Initiative was established in 1992 following the Earth Summit in Rio to engage the private sector, and in particular the global financial sector, in support of sustainable development. This evaluation of UN Environment Finance Initiative was the first independent evaluation since its inception. Lessons and recommendations for future project formulation and implementation and on the role of UN Environment Finance Initiative within the wider framework of the UN Environment finance-related initiatives were provided to help inform UN Environment Finance Initiative and Senior Management thinking on the way forward.
173. The Evaluation concluded that UN Environment Finance Initiative mission "changing finance, financing change" is an important and relevant goal for UN Environment, the private financial sector, and the wider sustainable development community. UN Environment Finance Initiative has been a key player in this space for over two decades and is credited for launching or inspiring many of the key initiatives that have emerged in this community of practice over this period.
174. UN Environment Finance Initiative has and continues to be a centre for innovation – this remains its core strength. One need only look at the key announcements of the first week of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP21): (i) special sessions on the role of private sector financing, (ii) President Obama's pledge of USD 30 million towards climate risk insurance, (iii) private sector focus and commitments towards energy efficiency and renewable energy, and (iv) portfolio decarbonisation commitments.
175. Some important results have been reached, whilst not all the outcomes were fully achieved. Led by UN Environment Finance Initiative membership, the global financial sector has incorporated Environmental, Social and Governance standards in their decision making resulting in changes in what is financed, e.g. decarbonized investment portfolios, investments in renewable energy and climate risk related insurance instruments. As an outcome of training and capacity building, member institutions have been implementing Environmental, Social and Governance positive approaches across their institutions. Tools are adopted and implemented resulting in green finance solutions and member organizations are reporting on their sustainable development outcomes. Through improved standards and greater accountability, UN Environment Finance Initiative and its membership are financing change. Finally, implementation of pro- green economy regulations for the financial sector in a number of countries has resulted in reduced emissions and better ESG standards.

176. There is some indication that UN Environment Finance Initiative is changing finance, which will lead to financing change, but with a very limited group. Evidence of a shift across the industry is lacking and UN Environment Finance Initiative lacks tools such as real time impact evaluation to access change. UN Environment Finance Initiative ability to initiate, retain ownership over and deliver catalytic, transformational impact in recent years has been somewhat inconsistent (due in part to a maturing and diversifying sector) and has not necessarily kept pace with the opportunities and needs created by the rapid acceleration of the global sustainable finance agenda.
177. If not addressed (including by measures set out in this evaluation's recommendations), this may undermine the relevance and distinctiveness of UN Environment Finance Initiative in its wider community of practice and lead to progressive displacement by other organisations and initiatives. The Evaluation concluded that UN Environment Finance Initiative should be rated as "Satisfactory" and "Moderately Likely" to achieve its expected impact.
178. Three main factors which have prevented UN Environment Finance Initiative from achieving the highest evaluation rating, include; 1) Insufficient time and resources provided for monitoring and evaluation of outcomes and impacts due to resource constraints and the Global Steering Committee's lack of emphasis on Monitoring and Evaluation oversight; 2) leadership gaps in program management and implementation; human resource constraints in the Secretariat; and the unsuitable way that the UMOJA management information and financial control system has been applied to UN Environment Finance Initiative; and 3) weak strategic planning and unrealized synergies between UN Environment FI and the rest of UN Environment, including Medium Term Strategy and Programme of Work documents, arising from insufficient alignment, exacerbated by a lack of clarity and decisiveness on the UN Environment side with respect to the principle and practice of private sector partnership, including the absence of an overall strategy for private sector engagement in general and UN Environment's strategic thinking and operational configuration in relation to the mission of aligning financial markets with the needs of sustainable development.

3.1.1 Summary of Key Recommendations

- UN Environment senior management should seek to come to a clear and well-communicated long-term (3-5 year) view on UN Environment Finance Initiative.
- UN Environment senior management should continue to use best efforts to ensure that the UN Environment Finance Initiative Secretariat is provided with a suitable permanent leader.
- UN Environment senior management should request the UN Environment FI Secretariat to coordinate with the Global Steering Committee and UN Environment's Sub-Programme Coordinators on the preparation of a single overarching project document, covering the next 4-year window (with a mid-term review), for joint review and approval.

<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11822/7380>

3.2 Green Economy Initiative

179. The Green Economy Umbrella Project formed the Green Economy Initiative (GEI) during the period 2010-2014. This evaluation had two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing among UN Environment and key project partners, and to identify lessons especially for the ongoing phase of the follow up project and for the structure, vision and mission of the Green Economy Initiative as a whole. The evaluation was conducted by a participatory evaluation of the sub-projects and an external evaluation of the Green Economy umbrella project.
180. The evaluation concluded that the Green Economy Initiative can be considered one of UN Environment's most visible contributions to the global environmental debate during the past decade. The positive narrative, showing win-win solutions instead of trade-offs in the environment-development debate, triggered the interest of countries in the Green Economy. This positive attitude helped to stimulate their commitment to collaborate with UN Environment and contributed to achievement of project outputs. The prominent inclusion of Green Economy in the final text of the Rio+20 is a major achievement of what was, at that moment, a relatively new concept promoted by a modest project in terms of budget and staffing. The Green Economy Project was successful in bringing the Green Economy Initiative to another level: starting as an innovative concept that was promoted in the international development debate, it transitioned into a global project that assisted approximately 50 countries, branched out to several new UN Environment initiatives, inspired others and established global partnerships. However, as UN Environment managed to present Green Economy as a leading paradigm for sustainable development around Rio+20, it became embedded, with much lower visibility, in the Sustainable Development Goals. While this can be seen as a natural process, it should now consider the risk that the momentum is passing over and interest of countries, donors and development partners might move away from Green Economy.
181. The project's innovative character, the high relevance of the concept of Green Economy, ownership by many countries and collaboration with key international organizations, effective mobilization of funds for the umbrella project, and the overall efficient project delivery are the main reasons for the success of the project in producing its different outputs and outcomes.
182. The project was well managed by highly capable staff that applied positive adaptive management and flexible implementation of activities. The combination of relatively unrestricted funds for more general project activities and larger, but more restricted funds for full-fledged sub-projects supporting country activities, made this umbrella project a successful structure. Good oversight provided by project management and donors allowing that activities of different subproject could be executed jointly or even merged, added to this effectiveness. However, the umbrella project structure did form challenge for attribution, planning and monitoring.
183. The achievement of outcomes and objectives at global and regional level was notably higher than at country level, where the project had to deal with many more implementation challenges. Nonetheless, also at country level there was ownership and

a clear change in attitude of different partners. Therefore, although the project partially achieved outcomes at national level, the sustainability and likelihood of impact was nevertheless positive. Factors which resulted in the incomplete achievement of outcomes at a national level, and moderate likelihood of final impact include: the lack of UN Environment's country presence, its high staff turnover, changes in national governments (including focal points for UN Environment work), political and economic inertia and opposition to change, incomplete stakeholder involvement, and insufficient funds at national level for investment to implement Green Economy recommendations.

3.2.1 Summary of Key Recommendations

- UN Environment Senior Management should develop a clear, well-articulated organization-wide private sector engagement strategy to support the Green Economy Initiative and other related initiatives aiming at promoting an economic transformation.
- UN Environment needs to keep its position as custodian of the Green Economy concept and strengthen its academic leadership.
- Although the concept of Green Economy has managed to include important aspects of environmental and social sustainability into macro-economic planning, UN Environment and partners should take additional elements further on board to strengthen inclusive aspects of Green Economy.
- UN Environment should implement the Green Economy Initiative at national level even more in collaboration with agencies that are more embedded in the national context, reach more easily beyond the environment sector and have more convening power for the private sector.
- The different UN Environment divisions that implement projects related to Green Economy Initiative should define boundaries between the different projects to establish clear collaboration, complementariness and responsibilities by different staff members.
- To increase implementation of the policies and plans that UN Environment helped to develop at country level, UN Environment should consider that Green Economy Initiative activities in the future should focus on the feasibility of implementation.
- While the Green Economy Project has established positive partnerships with other organizations at global level, UN Environment should ensure that these partnerships are mobilized by direct involvement in future project activities to overcome some key barriers: promote inclusiveness, increase investments and enhance the information basis and the quality of studies.
- Green Economy Initiative should develop an Asian regional strategy as much as it developed an African, Caribbean and (to a lesser extent) South American regional presence.

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3.3 The International Resource Panel

184. The mission of the International Resource Panel (IRP) is to provide independent, coherent and authoritative scientific assessments of policy relevance on the sustainable use of natural resources and, in particular, their environmental impacts over the full life-cycle; and to contribute to a better understanding of how to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation.
185. The International Resource Panel is structured around the scientific panel, steering committee and secretariat. The secretariat is hosted by UN Environment and located within the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics. The main funding source of the International Resources Panel is the European Commission together with voluntary contributions from the donor countries also members of the steering committee.
186. The assessments produced by the International Resource Panel cover nine assessment areas and to the end of 2015 fifteen major assessment reports have been produced roughly at the impressive pace of one report per quarter. Also synthesis reports and targeted papers, such as on lessons from climate change and on the Sustainable Development Goals, have been produced.
187. This evaluation focuses on the work of the International Resource Panel over the 2010-15 period. It assesses International Resource Panel's performance in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. As continuing support for the Panel has been approved this evaluation also addresses lessons of operational relevance for future implementation of the activities and the related UN Environment project. Evaluation sources included document reviews, extensive interviews, analysis of relevant existing data on impacts, and surveys of experts in the field of science knowledge and policy, the scientific panel and secretariat and other contributors to assessment reports.
188. The primary messages from this evaluation are that the work of the International Resource Panel is critically important and goes to the core of achieving a sustainable future; that the work has and is making observable contributions to policy at all levels; that the scientific panel and steering committee and report contributors, the secretariat and co-chairs are all making significant contributions to the work of the International Resource Panel resulting in a very impressive number of assessments and reports; and that the Panel should immediately and as an urgent priority reflect on and revise the current approach to reaching policy venues with their work and messages. This includes adopting processes to gain significant participation of decision making interests in the development of reports and to the deliberations of the International Resource Panel.
189. The overall evaluative assessment of the work of the International Resource Panel is that it is 'satisfactory'. The strengths and more highly rated areas were on relevance and sustainability; areas receiving a lower than 'satisfactory' rating included achieving policy contributions and the approach for this, efficiency and the monitoring and evaluation efforts of the project.
190. The evaluation team regards the work of the International Resource Panel as providing important and high quality contributions to understanding sustainability, identifying critical issues and pointing to solutions. We are highly impressed with the level of effort

of all involved with the Panel and are pleased that the primary donors retain their commitment to this work. With enhancements to the assessment processes by engaging policy interests in a joint knowledge process with the Panel and authors the work of the International Resource Panel will have solid prospects of reaching and influencing key policy interests.

3.3.1 Summary of Key Recommendations

191. The following are the main recommendations that have been generated from the evaluation findings. They call for reflection and review to build on the achievements of the International Resource Panel and improve the effectiveness of contributions to informing and shaping policies at all levels.
192. Rather than point to specific changes the recommendations as a package suggest that a serious effort to review key elements of the International Resource Panel can provide the dialogues and decisions that can enable the Panel to become an influential and recognised voice in emerging sustainability agendas including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
 - **Recommendation 1:** The International Resource Panel should undertake a systematic and vigorous critical review of key elements of the processes and assumptions employing a use-seeking¹⁹ perspective. The key elements that should be included are: the assumptions of the International Resource Panel of how science assessments influence and contribute to policy, the use-seeking suitability of the current composition and procedures of the panel and steering committee, the possibility of addressing agenda-setting policy targets as well as established policy venues.
 - **Recommendation 2:** The International Resource Panel needs to ensure that it respects the very significant contributions of pro bono time from the members and their host institutions by ensuring these are efficiently utilised and acknowledged. An internal collaborative review and adaption effort could identify and scope potential improvements.
 - **Recommendation 3:** The communications and outreach efforts need to be more vigorous and results-focused and better resourced. This is warranted by the importance of the International Resource Panel endeavours and of communications and outreach to these endeavours. The levels of UN Environment support for communications and outreach were insufficient, and the requirement to draw on (UN Environment's communications unit) adversely affected the communications effort. The International Resource Panel has now received enhanced resources and need to ensure that these are focused on results applying contemporary good approaches.
 - **Recommendation 4:** It is plausible that the International Resource Panel has reached a threshold where it has an acknowledged presence and role but has to rapidly expand its

¹⁹ Use-seeking is used as a term for science assessments and research that pursue use in decisions or to influence decisions to shape, affect, support and change natural resources status and trends at any level and including policy and resource management and use.

influence and the use of its outputs and knowledge. This likely requires a shift in the culture of the International Resource Panel as well as the practices addressed by the first three recommendations. This is a challenge that comes with initial success “we survived and have a place, now how to we grow (our influence)”. The International Resource Panel knowledge is at the frontiers of current policy structures which are changing rapidly due to the emphasis on sustainability. The International Resource Panel would benefit from a solid systematic assessment of future opportunities in this changing policy world. The first three recommendations address how International Resource Panel can become better at what it currently does, this recommendation addresses the future and how it can become an influential voice to help shape it.

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3.4 UN Environment-European Commission Strategic Cooperation Agreements

193. In line with the contractual arrangements concerned, the Evaluation Office of the UN Environment Programme commissioned, in 2015, an evaluation study of the Strategic Cooperation Agreements (SCAs) between the European Commission and UN Environment. The SCAs fall under the Thematic Programme for Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources, including Energy (ENRTP) of the European Union Development Cooperation Instrument.
194. The evaluation aimed to answer the question whether the Strategic Cooperation Agreements approach developed under the ENRTP provides an effective way of conducting European Commission- UN Environment programmatic cooperation.
195. A governance and management system common to the two Strategic Cooperation Agreements concluded between UN Environment and the European Commission (EC), respectively with Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV) and Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO), has been set up. The system has been instrumental in developing a joint portfolio of 57 projects, and thereby in allocating the full budget foreseen for this component, and in monitoring the implementation of these projects. To date, the implementation of a good number of the portfolio projects has been completed.
196. The analysis has confirmed the existence of significant common grounds between UN Environment, European Commission strategic frameworks and objectives, thus warranting an umbrella cooperation agreement, such as the Strategic Cooperation Agreements.
197. The main deficiencies identified are linked to efficiency aspects of the set-up of the SCAs operational mechanism, the management of the project portfolio and the implementation of the individual projects. The recommendations provided therefore aim to suggest ways to improve transparency and efficiency within the framework of similar Strategic Cooperation Agreements, particularly through the development of clear and transparent criteria for the allocation of funds, specific and uniform guidance for the entire project portfolio and the establishment of better communication channels.

3.5 Biosafety Portfolio Evaluation

198. Following the adoption of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB) in 2000, UN Environment was asked to conceive and implement a full package of projects covering a global GEF programme, namely “to assist the whole of GEF eligible countries to prepare for the entry into force of the Protocol”. In that context, the project “Development of National Biosafety Frameworks” was conceived and gradually implemented in 123 countries through national, regional and global activities guided by the decisions of the parties through Conference of the Parties / Meeting of the Parties. The main expected project outcome at country level was the preparation of the National Biosafety Framework, a combination of policy, legal, administrative and technical instruments for managing the safe transfer, handling and use of Living Modified Organisms from modern biotechnology.
199. The project started in June 2001 with an estimated original duration of three and half years (42 months) and the perspective to benefit 100 eligible countries. The initial budget was supplemented by two further GEF allocations as indicated in Table 7 below, in order to integrate additional countries (123 by the end of the project).

Table 7. Planned Project Budget for Development of National Biosafety Frameworks

	GEF Allocation USD	UN Environment & Countries Co-financing USD	Total Budget USD
Initial Allocation (2001)	26,092,083	12,341,463	38,433,546
2 nd Allocation (2003)	5,218,420	-	5,218,420
3 rd Allocation (2005)	2,609,208	-	2,609,208
TOTAL	33,919,711	12,341,463	46,261,174

200. The project was grounded in the GEF “Initial Strategy for assisting countries to prepare for the entry into force of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety” (2000) and was conceived with two main Components plus a third Component of Global Support:

- Component 1 Promoting Regional and Sub-regional collaboration and exchanges of experience
- Component 2 Preparation of National Biosafety Frameworks (NBF)
- Component 3 Global Support Component

201. The project has quite successfully supported the countries to prepare their National Biosafety Framework to the best of their capacities, which were, in fact, very dissimilar. The variable baseline situation has led to uneven results in terms of quality and follow-up of the National Biosafety Framework produced. The analysis of 37 sample National Biosafety Frameworks shows that, while many countries produced a pretty workable framework, though to a variable extent, others did not succeed in doing so. Reasons for that have are found in the lack of previous experience in biotechnologies and biosafety, the scarce availability of national skilled human resources and the complexity or weakness (fragmentation and dispersion) of the institutional framework.

202. The initial asymmetry between countries is also at the foundation of their uneven progress in National Biosafety Framework implementation and eventually in the pathway towards project impact. As a result, acknowledging generalisation, some 25-30% of the countries have moved quite steadily towards National Biosafety Framework implementation and to higher levels of results (improved decision-making and biosafety governance at national level), another 25-30% have remained well behind (no significant steps towards National Biosafety Framework implementation), whereas the majority of the countries (40-50%) has progressed somewhat in setting the National Biosafety Framework (e.g. a national law, a National Competent Authority in place), yet cannot claim to have it fully operational due to evident flaws (e.g. lack of regulations and administrative procedures, insufficient institutional up-take and stakeholders participation, etc.).
203. Similarly, and as a consequence of the above, the sustainability of the results achieved so far is also uneven. Socio-political sustainability is particularly challenged by the controversial nature of Biosafety and by the objective difficulty in taking on board different strategic visions and sociological “discourses”, as well as varied and somewhat diverging economic interests around Genetically Modified Organism development.
204. Overall, the setting and consolidation of the National Competent Authorities is quite ‘satisfactory’ but there is room for improving the institutional uptake of national stakeholders by expanding their participation both in the National Coordinating Committees and in other cooperative instruments (e.g. technical committees, working groups, etc.). While alternative forms of participation (e.g. social mobilisation, lobby and advocacy) are absolutely legitimate, the institutional involvement of national stakeholders in formal and inclusive biosafety decision-making bodies is an objective to be firmly pursued if socio-political sustainability is to be improved.
205. The setting of a national legal framework has proved to be a burdensome task in many developing countries for several reasons: the character of Biosafety (involving many key-players), long and heavy institutional mechanisms of decision-making, contrasting views and conflicting interests, governmental changes, lack of knowledge among Parliaments’ members and other decision-makers, among others. Solid systems for handling applications and for monitoring and enforcement have still to be achieved in most of the countries.
206. The project has hugely increased public awareness and information, yet public participation needs to be improved, particularly around the process of decision-making regarding Genetically Modified Organisms for Field Trials, for Deliberate Release and for FFP (Food, Feed and Processing). In many cases, the information is irregularly and unevenly uploaded by the countries to the Biosafety Clearing House, which is evidently an area of concern, as far as transparency and public information are concerned.
207. Capacity building actions have largely contributed to enhance national awareness and information and, to some extent, technical capacities. However, specific priority needs have to be assessed and matched by focussed actions such as more practical trainings, particularly in Risk Assessment and Risk Management. Risk Communication is also an area with considerable room for improvement, namely in countries already exposed to Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), in order to provide decision-makers at different

levels (Politicians, Managers, Farmers, Consumers) with more neutral and scientifically-sound information.

208. Moreover, socio-political and institutional sustainability has to prove effective and inclusive under more challenging situations, i.e. when real decision-making processes have to be implemented in response to concrete Genetically Modified Organisms applications, which, so far, has happened only in 28 countries out of the 147 GEF eligible Parties, with a strong concentration (93% of decisions on applications) in just 10 countries: Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Malaysia, Mexico, Philippines, South Africa, Turkey, Uruguay and Vietnam.
209. The integration of Biosafety in National Biodiversity Strategies and in the mainstream of Sustainable Development is timidly visible. Gender and Human Rights issues, substantive parts of both Sustainable Development and Genetically Modified Organisms development (due to its bearing on equity and transparency in decision-making process), were absent in virtually all the National Biosafety Framework Development and Implementation projects, though, admittedly, the issue falls under article 26, which is still under review and discussions, including conceptual clarity. For instance, GEF implementation projects under GEF 4 are not approved without linkages to the NBSAPs and in GEF 6 gender issues are highlighted for integration.
210. Biosafety financial sustainability is a growing concern, particularly, but not only, in developing countries, where having a fully operational National Biosafety Framework (creating biosafety legislation and institutions, monitoring and inspection systems, etc.) can bring about relevant opportunity-costs and trade-offs with other national priorities.
211. The Regional and sub-regional dimension is one of the pillar of GEF “Initial Strategy” on Biosafety (2000) and one of the component of the National Biosafety Framework Development Projects. Regional and sub-regional workshops have been a relevant tool of the project for increasing and improving countries’ capacities in a quite novel subject like biosafety. The National Biosafety Framework Implementation Projects have equally fostered this dimension through sub-regional meetings and workshops, as well as other instruments of exchange and collaboration (e.g. study tours, exchange of training and awareness material). UN Environment has also formulated several Regional Projects and submitted to GEF, of which, eventually, only one is on-going in the Caribbean Sub-region. Overall, there is surely room for exploring more incisive and flexible forms of multi-country initiatives at sub-regional level focussing on specific subjects (e.g. the on-going network of Genetically Modified Organisms detection laboratories in Southern Africa) and emphasizing South-South Cooperation, so far quite modestly represented in the Biosafety Programme. Regional and sub-regional approach is in fact also challenged by the mechanism of GEF System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (national allocations).
212. The growing interest for Genetically Modified Organisms development worldwide and particularly in developing countries, calls for more incisive actions to enhance the global capacity to effectively implement the Protocol. GEF-UN Environment support has been so far pivotal to create the overall groundwork, which is now in need of more impact-oriented actions emphasising the “programming” dimension, limiting risks of dispersion and fragmentation in a growing number of national projects and improving cost-

effectiveness and overall efficiency. The classification of the countries according to their progress in the implementation of the National Biosafety Frameworks could be helpful in assessing homogeneous needs and priorities and matching them through specific “gap-filling” actions.

213. The sustainability of UN Environment Biosafety Strategy presents elements of concern in need to be worked out. Biosafety is generally under-represented in UN Environment Medium-term Strategies and Programmes of Work despite the relevant portfolio of projects implemented. The channels of communication and coordination with the related cross-cutting Sub programmes (e.g. Environmental Governance) are also flawed. The human resources devoted to Biosafety is actually too little to cope with the growing needs proceeding from the large and diversified portfolio of Projects and initiatives. At decentralised level, there is only one Regional Office (ROLAC / Panama) with a dedicated Biosafety Task Manager.
214. In the framework of the Programming Exercise suggested above, it is necessary to strengthen and “reset” Biosafety Human Resources through a more strategic role of the Biosafety Unit in Nairobi and its increased decentralization at regional level, particularly in Asia-Pacific Region, but probably also at some sub-regional level in Africa and elsewhere. The shaping of a more strategic programming approach and a more solid institutional anchorage of Biosafety within UN Environment strategy, is central in the Recommendations of the Evaluation.
215. The role of UN Environment and other UN agencies directly involved in Genetically Modified Organisms (e.g. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) as “neutral broker” and “knowledge organisation” is strongly challenged, as far as biosafety is concerned. Overall, stronger partnerships have to be pursued to gain credibility and acceptability among national and international stakeholders. More structured forms of cooperation between UN Environment and FAO are needed to harmonise their initiatives. The partnership with the international research centres of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and other partners (e.g. International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB)) must also be consolidated. There is also room for a more effective inclusion of Genetically Modified Organisms and biosafety agenda in the UN Global Compact on Corporate Social Responsibility.

<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11822/7373>

3.6 China Trust Fund

216. The China Trust Fund was established under the Framework Agreement on Strategic Cooperation signed in December 2012 by the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) of the People’s Republic of China and UN Environment. The China Trust Fund is the first portfolio level commitment agreed between the Ministry of Environmental Protection and an international organization, and one of UN Environment’s first experiences working in a triangular cooperation mode. Coordination and management of the China Trust Fund is overseen by the Donor Partnerships and Contributions Section of the current Corporate Services Division of UN Environment.

217. The evaluation, undertaken in the last quarter of 2016, had a dual purpose: i) to provide a basis for accountability of the China Trust Fund management towards the Ministry of Environmental Protection and UN Environment; and ii) to draw lessons and recommendations from experience on ways to improve existing cooperation modalities between the China-MEP and UN Environment. The evaluation assessed how the fund structure, management arrangements and processes affected the strategic relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness and sustainability of the results of the China Trust Fund-funded project portfolio implemented by UN Environment.
218. The agreement provided a total of USD 6,000,000 in earmarked funding for the 18 projects, split into three annual tranches of USD 2,000,000 received in 2013, 2014, and 2015. Six projects were identified for funding in each year, with individual budgets between USD 300,000 and US\$ 400,000. The intended duration of each project was up to two years and the portfolio was intended to be fully delivered by the end of 2017.
219. The management arrangements and processes put in place for the agreement and related trust fund have enabled the identification, development and launch of 18 projects that are broadly aligned with, and contribute to, the UN Environment Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-17 as well as to the priority areas identified in the Strategic Cooperation Agreement. The projects contribute strongly to UN Environment's cross cutting priorities, especially implementation of the 2005 Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building which aims to strengthen UN Environment's technology support and capacity building for developing countries and the South-South Cooperation Approach.
220. The evaluation identified two concerns related to relevance. The first is the limited alignment of some of the selected projects to the UN Environment Programme of Work that led to a need to revise many of the selected projects in line with the organization-wide commitment to results based management. The second was the limited consideration of beneficiary needs during project identification that, in a few cases, led to issues of ownership.
221. With regard to efficiency, many projects started later than anticipated owing to the need for an extended quality control process and some projects experienced operational delays associated with the UN Environment's adoption of the UN Secretariat's enterprise resource planning system. Projects also experienced a range of implementation issues with the two-year time frame frequently proving overambitious. These delays have generated a credibility issue for UN Environment, with the Ministry of Environmental Protection understandably concerned to be able to demonstrate progress and results to decision-makers in China. The Trust Fund structure, with many small projects of short duration, generated relatively high transaction costs associated with project identification, development and reporting on individually identified projects.
222. The evaluation identified potential advantages of integrating the Strategic Cooperation Agreement projects into larger UN Environment projects in support of the Programme of Work rather than implementing them as stand-alone projects, including more comprehensive delivery and improved ability to demonstrate results, opportunities for broader engagement of partners in a broader set of project outputs, greater project and donor visibility, and reduced transaction costs.

223. The evaluation recommendations were intended to address identified weaknesses in the China Trust Fund structure, management arrangements and processes that have affected relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability.

3.6.1 Structure of Funding

224. The China Trust Fund structure is associated with a large number of relatively small projects. The broad scope and ultimately fragmented nature of interventions, together with the process orientation of the priority areas, has made it difficult to determine results of the China Trust Fund support and to demonstrate impact. The approach has incurred significant transaction costs associated with the wide scope of the call and the need to identify, develop and approve individual projects.
225. A more focused set of priorities would provide a stronger identity for the portfolio, would increase the potential for attributable outcomes, and would facilitate communications and visibility. There are also opportunities to better synchronize delivery with UN Environment's programme cycle, and to support emerging trends in UN Environment's delivery including strengthening of UN Environment's regional presences and development of practice hubs to consolidate work on emerging themes.

3.6.2 Management Arrangements

226. While the Donor Partnerships and Contributions Section has been largely able to deliver on its expected roles and responsibilities, there is scope to reinforce capacity in order to enable a more proactive liaison role with the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China, and other partners in China and to monitor project issues and opportunities, including related to communications and visibility.
227. The evaluation identified some discontinuities and gaps in institutional memory related to UN Environment's engagement with the China Trust Fund including changeover in senior representation at the Annual Consultations and the absence of a central repository for documentation related to the Trust Fund.

3.6.3 Management Processes

228. The recommendations related to management processes are based on issues that have arisen based on the prevailing arrangements. Several of them have their origins in the structure of the fund and the approach should be amended in line with the outcomes of the proposed dialogue with China.

<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11822/22402>

3.7 Selected Key Lessons Learnt

International Resource Panel: Key Lessons on the Science-Policy Interface

STAKEHOLDERS WITH POLICY INTEREST NEED TO BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

229. According to contemporary knowledge regarding policy influence, a key approach is to identify the intended audiences for the assessment findings and involve them throughout the assessment process. The evaluation highlighted that ‘quality reports + communication efforts = policy use’ is not a sufficient approach to have policy impact. Stakeholders with relevant policy interests need to have an opportunity to engage in key decision-making points of the assessment process (such as defining the issues and assessment questions) and, contrary to common practice, giving them only a formal role on a steering committee is not necessarily a sufficient way ensure this. A participatory and thorough stakeholder analysis, needs assessment and identification of the targeted policy decisions is vital from the outset of an assessment process. Stakeholders should comprise not only those directly involved in policy processes, but also the diverse groups and industries that can influence policy processes indirectly (not only environmental authorities).

COMMUNICATION MUST BE SEEN AS CENTRAL TO THE SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS

230. As mentioned (lesson 1) an efficient assessment process should closely involve the decision-making interest from the outset. This approach should be supported by effective communications’ efforts as well as outreach. This requires that communications and outreach are seen as central to the assessment process, not as an add-on after the science product has been published. The operationalization of communication strategies for assessment projects could be enhanced by the following suggestions²⁰: 1) support the communication capacity of scientists/authors to reach policy makers, 2) share knowledge/findings frequently throughout the process – not only after the final product is produced, 3) ensure there is sufficient identification of user communities and opinion leaders from the beginning of the assessment process, and 4) beyond identifying different user groups, communications strategies of assessment projects need to also provide guidelines

ASSESSING THE POLICY IMPACT OF ASSESSMENT INITIATIVES SHOULD BE MORE ROBUST

231. Citations, together with web downloads, are typically used to assess whether a science product has impact (used as a proxy indicator for policy impact). The IRP evaluation argues that although a lack of any citations would be a negative sign in terms of potential policy impact, citations themselves only indicate that ‘something might have happened’. Despite the citation count being widely used and considered as an easy-to-measure indicator, it does not represent a robust indication of actual use of the information in policy processes. Better targeted verification and assessment measures

²⁰ Source: expert survey during of the IRP evaluation and National Research Council (2007)

are necessary to understand the policy impact of normative products produced by UN Environment. UN Environment should allocate further resources to measure the actual policy impact of its normative initiatives instead of using solely anecdotal evidence or citation data. Science-policy impact is a growing discipline and experts in that field can provide useful tools and guidance on how to enhance UN Environment's approaches.

BOUNDARY ORGANIZATIONS AT THE SCIENCE-POLICY INTERFACE SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED AND SELECTED CAREFULLY

232. The International Resource Panel evaluation highlighted the importance of 'boundary organizations' that can help reaching the relevant policy arenas. One evident boundary organization is UN Environment itself. While the evaluation argues that decision-makers should be brought into the core of the assessment process (lesson 1) to ensure the uptake and application of findings, the literature shows that a boundary organization such as UN Environment can ensure the credibility and legitimacy of the scientific process despite the close involvement of decision-making interest in the assessment process. At the same time, UN Environment and its Environment Assembly (UNEA) are key channels for linking the assessment findings with the interest of environmental authorities.
233. However, the International Resource Panel evaluation underlines that the environmental domain is not the only policy interest to be reached by UN Environment's scientific products. The evaluation points out that the UN Environment assessment processes should identify boundary organizations that can provide useful bridges to the industry sectors and associated ministries covering other areas than environment. This is closely linked with the need for a thorough stakeholder analysis, needs assessment and identification of the targeted policy decisions (lesson 1) at early stages of the assessment process.

<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11822/17236>

UN Environment Finance Initiative

SETTING PRINCIPLES CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

234. The various activities under UN Environment Finance Initiative are all built around a common approach. A set of guiding principles are established to which the Financial Sector signs up to. This creates an impetus for change. As the membership increases, competition sets in to advance change. The application of this voluntary principles approach should continue to be applied to new initiatives as it works.²¹

²¹ At the same time, it should be noted that "principles fatigue" is increasing and therefore new approaches may also be necessary. As an example, the positive impact principles that are planned to be released will not be a set of principles to show goodwill against but a set of actionable and verifiable guidelines against which third party assurance and auditing can be secured.

BROADEN THE FUND-RAISING BASE - THE POTENTIAL OF FOUNDATION RESOURCES

235. Substantial grant funding for UN Environment Finance Initiative strategy is potentially available from foundations and other non-governmental sources, and UN Environment Finance Initiative is capable of successfully mobilising such opportunities. Key ingredients for success include partnership with the right organisations before embarking on such fund-raising negotiations; extensive homework to demonstrate an in-depth familiarity with the subject matter; building on previous work to demonstrate track record and capacity; a detailed appreciation of the potential donor's objectives and thinking to ensure close alignment of interests; and structured ways for the donor to actively participate in the work where it is appropriate.

<https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/7380>

Project for Ecosystem Services (ProEcoServ)

'RISK' CAN BE A COMMON ENTRY POINT TO CONVENE MULTIPLE ACTORS

236. The ProEcoServ - South Africa team had significant success with their work at Eden District focusing on addressing the use of ecosystem-based management to address disaster risk (mostly from drought, wild fire, storms, floods).
237. Lesson: The use of the concept of 'risk' can be very effective in helping to bring together a diverse range of stakeholders who would not normally collaborate, including, for instance, in South Africa, the insurance industry, government authorities, researchers and those concerned with disaster risk management, to understand the value of incorporating ecosystem based management strategies into decision making, and co-design response strategies to enhance the resilience of ecosystems to natural hazards.

'ECOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE' CAN BE USED AS A CONCEPT TO BRING TOGETHER NATIONAL ACTORS

238. The ProEcoServ- South Africa team chose to focus on the concept of ecological infrastructure which found traction in two major national development planning processes - national development planning and national water resource management.
239. The use of the concept of 'ecological infrastructure' can be very effective in promoting ecosystem service approaches to stakeholders involved in infrastructure and development planning, In South Africa, for instance, they aligned strongly with national development goals, and the emphasis on labour-intensive ecosystem management resonated with national goals of job creation and poverty alleviation. These 'non-financial' values of ecosystem services need to be stressed more by UN Environment.

'CONSCIOUS OPPORTUNISM' TO INFLUENCE DECISION-MAKING - A KEY FACET OF ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

240. A number of opportunities came up during implementation of the ProEcoServ project to promote the uptake of the ecosystem services approaches, assessments and tools,

which had not existed during the design phase, e.g. entry points in planning processes. The project would not have been as successful as it had been without the flexibility to respond to (and seek out) these opportunities.

241. Lesson: It is necessary to take an opportunistic approach to targeting entry points in decision-making processes. Projects seeking to mainstream ecosystem services into decision-making need to be flexible enough to be able to take advantage of opportunities as they arise (which can be unpredictable), leverage personal connections/relationships in order to catalyse discussions with decision-makers, and identify and secure champions to promote uptake of ecosystem services management messages at the highest levels e.g. through Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, or senior Technical Advisors.

EFFECTIVE MAINSTREAMING REQUIRES A ROBUST TARGETING STRATEGY FROM THE OUTSET TO REACH BEYOND THE ENVIRONMENT SECTOR

242. Finding The project had good success mainstreaming project messages and results into environment sector agencies, but much less influence and traction with ministries of finance and the private sector. The non-environment sectors/agencies, particularly finance, investment and planning are the key stakeholder groups for mainstreaming of ecosystem services (environmental agencies are already 'converted').
243. Lesson Project designers and executing bodies need to have better identification at the design stage (certainly by inception stage) of the most important institutions to target for mainstreaming, particularly within government (planning, investment, business, finance and economics), and alliances established with them, as environment ministries and associated national scientific research centres/institutes are generally not the key decision-makers when deciding on national development policy. Along with this there needs to be a better appreciation of the concerns of the target audiences, e.g. economists in the ministry of finance, and the 'language' they use, e.g. contribution to GDP, jobs created, etc, and a better understanding of the demand for what the project can offer/create, which means key individuals from target audiences need to be engaged in the design process of a mainstreaming project from the very beginning, and ideally, should be part of the executing team. Mapping of ecosystem services and use of infographics appears to be particularly useful forms for informing decision-makers and the former is considered an essential tool for those concerned with planning.

<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11822/20796>

Green Economy Initiative

MACRO-ECONOMIC ISSUES PIVOTAL FOR CROSS-CUTTING GOVERNMENTAL ENGAGEMENT

244. Macroeconomic issues proved pivotal for convening different sectors of government than environmental issues; Ministries of Environment seldom have the convening power to coordinate inter-sectorial actions that can influence economic policies. Focusing on a compelling theme that goes far beyond 'environmental conservation' as such, proved to

be a good strategy for UN Environment to attain a central role in the global development debate. By dealing with the economy of countries, UN Environment started to speak the language of the major development partners, which is key to obtain a prominent position in international forums.

WIN-WIN RATHER THAN TRADE-OFF NARRATIVES STIMULATED INTEREST IN TRANSITION TO GREEN ECONOMIES

245. The positive narrative, showing win-win solutions instead of trade-offs in the environment-development debate, triggered interest of countries in the Green Economy. This positive attitude helped to stimulate their commitment to collaborate with UN Environment and contributed to achievement of project outputs. Transition to Green Economy at country level is a long-term process, which needs national leadership at central level, strong inter-sectorial coordination (governed by finance or planning ministries) and integration of sub-national levels, private sector and civil society organizations; a time horizon that goes beyond the project.

GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT NECESSARY BUT NOT SUFFICIENT – INCREASE EMPHASIS ON PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT

246. For actual implementation at scale of Green Economy, investments are needed from both public and private sector. Provided that in most countries, 70-80% of GDP is generated by the private sector, their role in mobilizing the green economy cannot be underestimated. By considering governments as its "natural partner", targeting principally public policies and convening working groups and debated through ministries of environment, UN Environment has not managed to engage the private sector with Green Economy Initiative. **Efforts to better engage the private sector are a priority.**
247. Only in a few countries, is UN Environment the best-positioned agency to steer a process of economic transition. UN Environment has staff all over the world in regional and country offices, and project staff and consultants in offices of other agencies. Although the Green Economy Project mobilized this human capital adequately to direct studies and provide advisory services, this was not enough to accompany a change process at country level.

ADVISORY BODIES CAN HELP FORGE PARTNERSHIPS

248. A formal backstopping body (advisory group, steering committee or similar) for the Green Economy Project would not only have supported project supervision but also could have helped to formalize collaboration agreements beyond the informal (voluntary) contacts, to stimulate more contact time between lead academic thinkers and to better position global strategy development.

<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11822/20801>

4 COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

249. This section reports on the formal response to evaluations and the implementation of evaluation recommendations issued. UN-Environment undertakes robust independent evaluations that are followed by a recommendation compliance process. At the end of each evaluation an implementation plan is sent and return is expected within 3 to 4 weeks.
250. Evaluations aim to promote accountability and learning. The formal evaluation recommendation compliance system also reinforces the positive feedback and learning opportunities that evaluations can provide to the organization. There can be considerable 'process benefits' from evaluation work in terms of encouraging staff, partners and other stakeholders to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of past performance, and to integrate existing good practices and ideas for improvement into future programme strategies, intervention designs and management actions.
251. One hundred and one (101) evaluation recommendation implementation plans were issued during the Medium-Term Strategy period 2014-17. Out of the 101 plans sent to UN Environment substantive offices, 40% provided a formal response to the recommendation implementation plan. 29% were returned within 6 months, 13% between 7 to 12 months, and 2% after more than 1 year. Seventeen recommendation implementation plans were not responded to. Table 8 below shows compliance status by the Divisions responsible. It is worth noting that the Economy Division achieved 100% compliance, while also having a relatively high number of recommendation implementation plans.

Table 8. Compliance on submission of implementation plans by UN Environment Divisions

Division	Met requirement	2- 6 months	7- 12 months	More than 1 Year	Did not Respond in 18 months	Total
Ecosystems	21	13	11	0	16	61
Economy	16	10	2	0	0	28
Law	1	2	0	0	0	3
Policy and Programmes	0	2	0	1	1	4
Science	1	1	0	0	0	2
Communication	0	1	0	0	0	1
Corporate	1	0	0	1	0	2
Total	40	29	13	2	17	101
Percent	40%	29%	13%	2%	17%	100%

252. In the 2016-17 biennium, sixty-five (65) implementation plans for evaluation recommendations were sent to UN Environment substantive offices by December 2017. Eight (8) evaluations either did not have recommendations or were special evaluations whose tracking of implementation was beyond the mandate / purview of the Evaluation Office. Implementation plans for seven (7) evaluations had yet to be sent out at the closure of the reporting period (mid December 2017) and compliance reporting for these will be carried forward to the next biennium.

253. Out of the 65 implementation plans sent to UN Environment substantive offices, 49 (75%) provided a management response, while 16 (25%) failed to complete evaluation implementation plans within the prescribed time. Completion of a formal response to an evaluation report in the form of a recommendation implementation plan is a requirement of the UN Environment Evaluation Policy. Table 9 below shows the evaluation recommendation implementation plans by UN Environment Division.

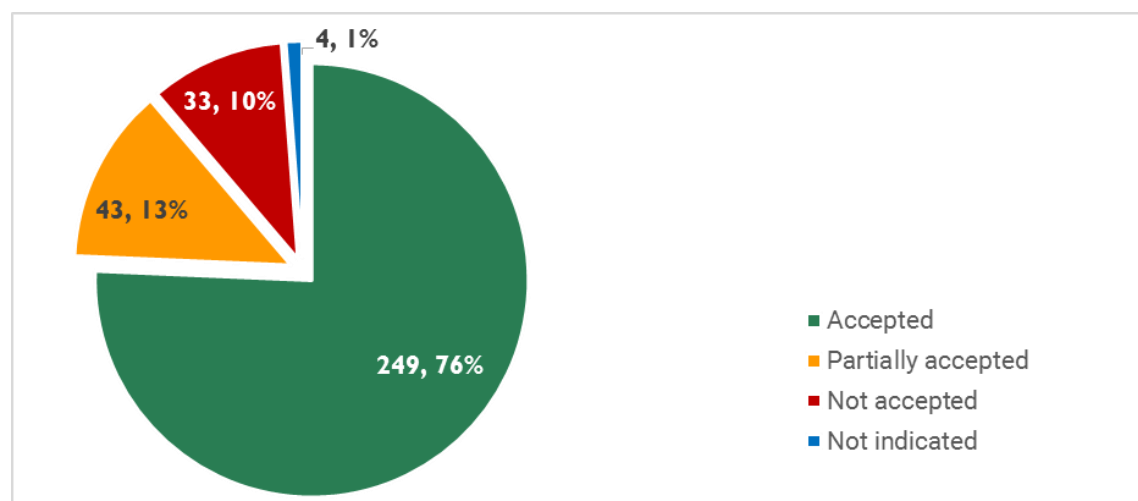
Table 9. Evaluation Implementation Plans Issued in the 2016-17 Biennium

Division	Number Sent	Number Returned	Number not returned
Ecosystems	37	23	14
Economy	19	19	0
Law	2	1	1
Policy and Programme (former Division of Regional Coordination)	4	3	1
Communication	1	1	0
Corporate services	2	2	0
Total	65	49	16

4.1 Acceptance of Evaluation Recommendations

254. During the MTS period 2014-17, Seven hundred and fifty seven (757) recommendations were issued, of which, 629 had responses provided while 129 were still outstanding as of December 2017. During the 2016-17 biennium, a total of 441 recommendations were issued. The Evaluation Office received management responses for 329 (75%) of those recommendations, while no formal management response was received for the remaining 112 recommendations (25%). From these 329 formal management responses received, 76% were accepted, 11% were rejected, 13% were partially accepted, and 1% had no acceptance status indicated (Figure 58).

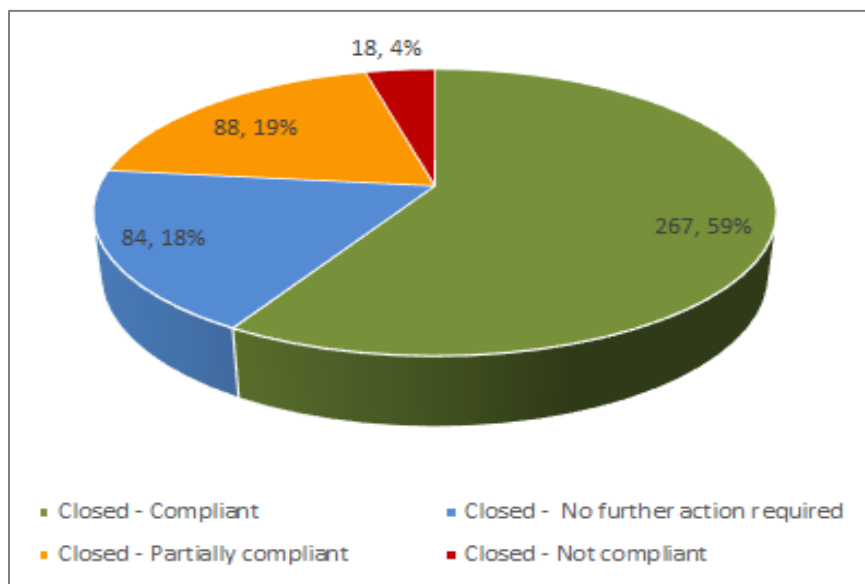
Figure 58. Acceptance of Recommendations in Evaluations Completed in 2016-17 Biennium



4.2 Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations

255. The Evaluation Office reviews the reasons given for the formal rejection of recommendations made and determines whether such recommendations should be closed with no further action required or whether the recommendation should be amended for implementation, with the future course of action being agreed between the Evaluation Office and the staff responsible.
256. Implementation of accepted evaluation recommendations is tracked for 18 months during which time their compliance status recorded. The period for which recommendations may remain open often spans over more than one biennium.
257. In the 2014-17 MTS period, 267 (59%) recommendations were fully implemented and 88 (19%) were 'partially compliant'. 84 (18%) recommendations had 'no further action required' either because they were rejected with adequate justification or they were outside the purview of UN Environment. Up to 18 (4%) of the recommendations were closed while being non-compliant (see Figure 59).

Figure 59. Evaluation Recommendation Implementation Compliance 2014 – 2017

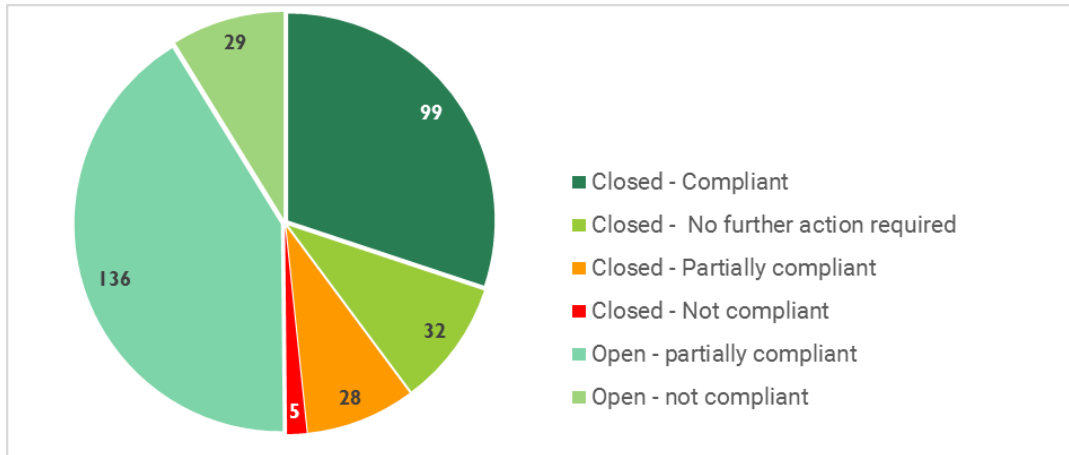


258.

259.

260. Figure 60 below depicts the implementation status of recommendations at the close of the 2016-17 biennium. The proportion of recommendations that were yet to reach their implementation completion deadlines at the end of 2017 was 43%. Implementation compliance monitoring for these recommendations will be carried forward to the 2018-19 biennium.

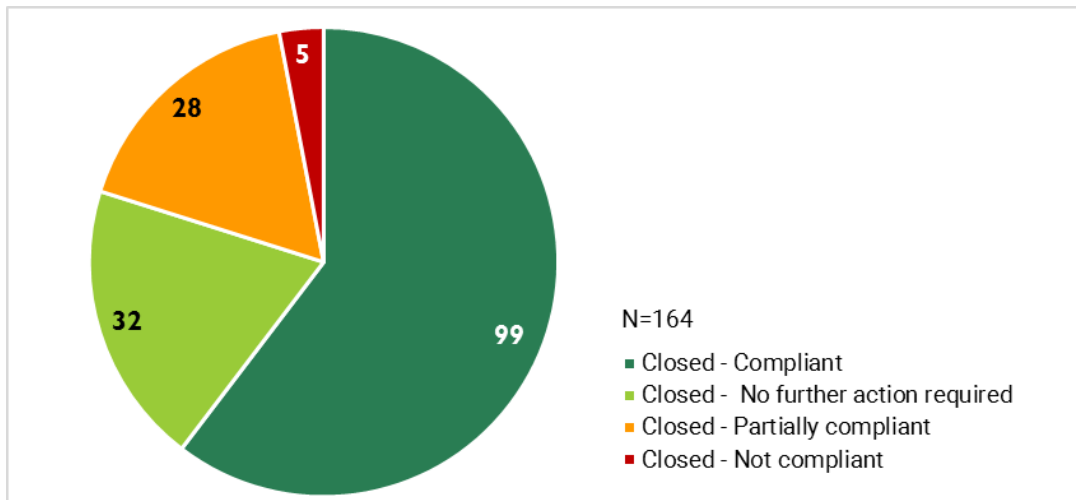
Figure 60. Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations by the close of 2016-2017



Evaluation Recommendations Due for Completion in 2016 - 2017 Biennium

261. A total of 329 recommendations were issued in the 2016-17 biennium. During the same period a total of 164 recommendations reached their deadlines for implementation completion. Within this cohort of 164 evaluation recommendations, 32 (20%) required no further implementation action as conditions or contexts had changed, making further implementation unnecessary. Of the remaining 132 evaluation recommendations, 99 (75%) were fully implemented, 28 (21%) were partially implemented and only 5 (4%) were registered as ‘not compliant’ (i.e. they were accepted but not implemented).

Figure 61. Implementation Status of Recommendations due for Completion in 2016-2017 Biennium



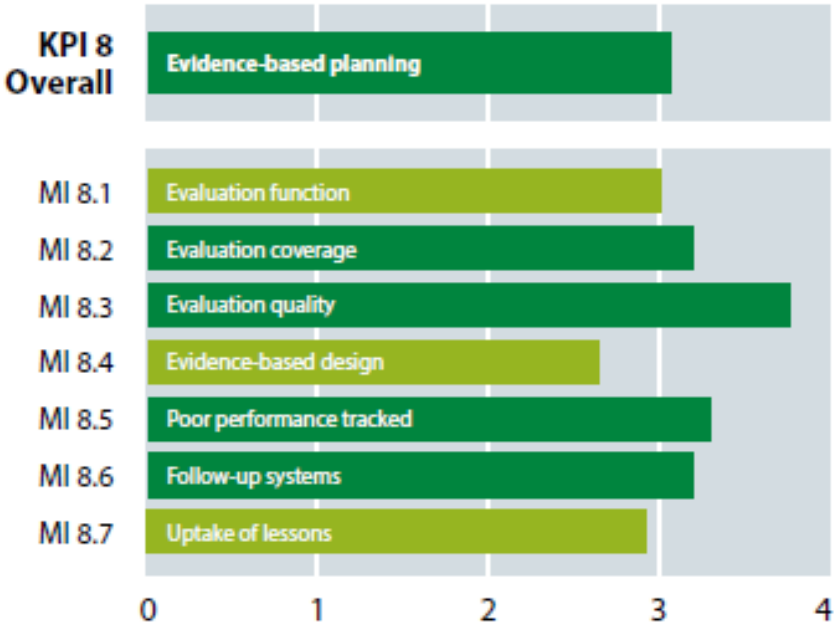
262. The evaluation compliance system still relies on communication by email for the collation of responses. It is hoped that during the 2018-19 biennium, the introduction of an UMOJA-based 'Evaluation Module' will facilitate a more efficient evaluation response mechanism through an online workflow application.

5 PERFORMANCE OF THE EVALUATION OFFICE AND EVALUATION QUALITY

5.1 Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network

263. The Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) Assessment of UN Environment stated “that Independent corporate evaluation function exists and operates effectively. Recent external assessments have rated the quality of independent evaluations conducted by UN Environment’s Evaluation Office as good to very good. Appropriate evaluation quality assurance systems are in place and operate effectively, although the independence of the Evaluation Office could be further improved by more regular and systemic reporting to governing bodies.”

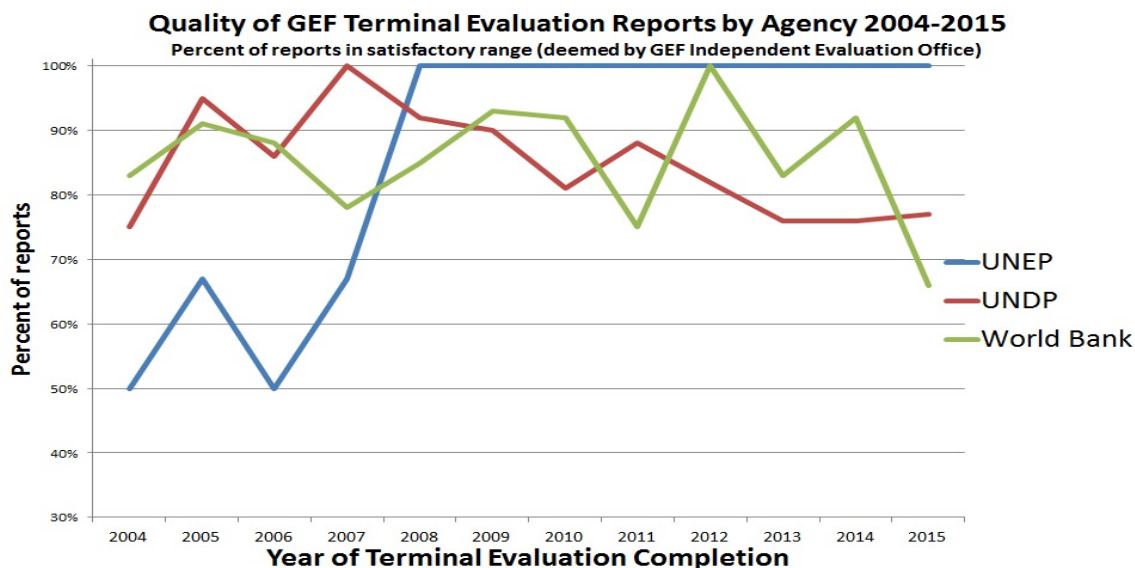
Figure 62. MOPAN Assessment covering the UN Environment evaluation function



5.2 GEF Independent Evaluation Office Assessment of the Quality of UN Environment Evaluation Reports

264. The Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF published its annual comparative assessment of the performance of GEF projects and the quality of Evaluation Reports received from GEF Agencies in August 2017. UN Environment project performance compared favourably against other GEF agencies and assessment of the performance of the UN Environment Evaluation Office continues to be strong. In the 2015 GEF APR, **100% of UN Environment evaluation reports** of GEF projects were assessed as being of ‘Moderately Satisfactory’ or better for quality, as compared to 66% and 75% for the World Bank and UNDP respectively.

Figure 63. Quality of GEF Terminal Evaluation Reports by Agency (2004-15)



5.3 The OIOS Evaluation Dashboard study of UN Environment Evaluation Office

- 265. The UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) undertook a study covering all Secretariat evaluation functions. The purpose of the Evaluation Dashboard is to provide an assessment of evaluation – including framework, resources, reports and their quality. The goal is to support the strengthening of the evaluation function across the Secretariat, by providing the data that management need to determine which aspects of the evaluation function are operating well, and where there is room for improvement, while giving due consideration to their evaluation resources both in absolute terms as well as in proportion to the total programme budget.
- 266. The UN Environment Evaluation Office performed well in the assessment scoring top marks in 6 out of 8 rated criteria. The Evaluation Office was the most productive secretariat evaluation function in terms of evaluation report delivery producing 52 reports in the biennium assessed compared to a Secretariat average of 12 reports.

5.4 UN System Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP)

- 267. Performance standards for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women were introduced across the UN network in 2014. UN Environment, along with most other UN entities, is expected to meet all the performance standards by the end of 2017. In 2016 UN Environment has ‘met’ or ‘exceeded’ the requirements in 11 out of 15 performance indicators and in 2017 the organisation reached this level in 12 indicators. The method of measuring performance is currently under revision and a new set of indicators will be applied in the 2018 assessment process, referred to as UN System Wide Action Plan 2.0.

268. There are a total of 15 Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women performance standards, 14 of which look at the progress made within the institution in mainstreaming gender responsive strategies and systems (e.g. 'is a Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women policy up-to-date and being implemented?'; 'is gender analysis included in the central planning document?'; 'is gender included in the annual audit process?'; 'is there a mechanism to track financial spend from a gender perspective?' etc.). The evaluand for these indicators is the institution itself, its systems and the actions it has taken to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. The scores are based on a self-assessment guided by a common approach developed by UN Women, in conjunction with the UN Evaluation Group.
269. The one exception within the set of 15 indicators is the Evaluation Performance Indicator, which is assessed by an external consultant who reviews the coverage of Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women in all the evaluation reports completed in the preceding year. Performance against this indicator can only be improved if a) interventions themselves have integrated Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women fully into their project design and implementation and b) Evaluation Consultants report effectively on the Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women dimensions of projects. It is not surprising to see a time lag between improved performance at an institutional level, reflected in the 14 other performance indicators, and the Evaluation Performance Indicator, which assesses the application of a stronger Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women approach as evidenced in evaluations of UN Environment interventions. In 2016 UN Environment scored 3.7 on the Evaluation Performance Indicator and improved this to 5.3 in 2017. Both scores are classified as 'approaching requirements'.
270. During 2016-17 the work on gender within UN Environment has been guided by the 2014-17 Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment and a new policy will be developed in 2018 with a stronger alignment to the Sustainable Development Goals. The Gender Marker Score system has been integrated into the project review process and the Gender Support Unit will now focus on the project monitoring of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Further work is still anticipated on a financial resource tracker.
271. Looking specifically at the Evaluation Function, the 2015 UN System Wide Action Plan process identified the following three actions to improve performance:
- i. integrate Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women more comprehensively into evaluation Terms of Reference templates;
 - ii. strengthen the Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women expertise among Evaluation Teams either by selecting consultants with gender experience or providing support for non-specialists in gender to incorporate a gender perspective in their evaluations and;
 - iii. strengthen gender expertise amongst Evaluation Managers.
272. In order to assess compliance with the first two recommended actions, the Evaluation Office included a review of its evaluation systems, approaches, tools and evaluation teams in the Terms of Reference for the evaluation consultant in 2017. The external

consultant confirmed the Evaluation Office systems 'reflect a very sound understanding of UN Evaluation Group norms and standards' regarding Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. Substantial progress has been made in the first area, which needs to be continued, and a Guidance Note for evaluation consultants and managers has been developed in response to the second two recommendations. A detailed review of the Evaluation Office guidelines, tools and templates was undertaken and some areas for further improvement have been noted.

273. Moving forward, a number of key recommendations have been made in the 2017 UN System Wide Action Plan evaluation:
- i. Review the alignment of approaches towards Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women at all stages of the project cycle, especially at design, during monitoring and within the evaluation process;
 - ii. Ensure the gender aspects of all evaluation tools and templates are applied appropriately during the evaluation process and in evaluation reports;
 - iii. Strengthen the technical gender capacity of evaluation teams;
 - iv. Ensure recommendations relevant to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women are included in the appropriate sections of evaluation reports; and
 - v. Deepen the institutional understanding of the value of a Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women focus especially in terms of its application to empowerment, equality, inclusion, participation and transformation, so that projects are designed, implemented and monitored in a meaningful way.

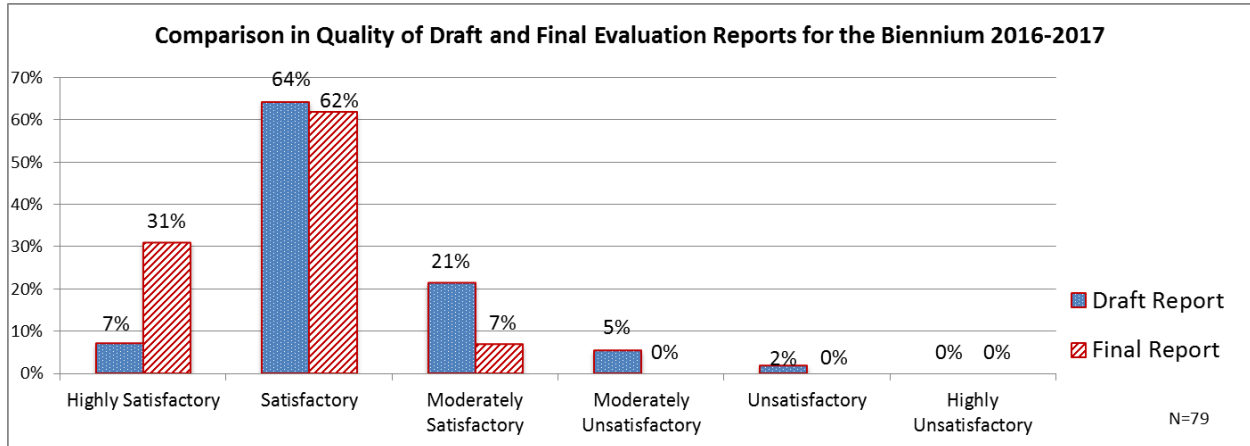
5.5 Evaluation Report Quality assurance and assessment

274. All UN Environment evaluations are subject to both quality assurance and quality assessment of the evaluation product (i.e. evaluation report). The quality of the final report and is dependent on more than the consultant's efforts and skills. Quality assurance processes begin with the development of standard evaluation Terms of Reference, the selection, by the Evaluation Office of credible evaluators and the provision of comprehensive verbal and written guidance for the preparation of a UN Environment evaluation report. Quality assurance processes include review of inception and draft evaluation reports by the Evaluation Manager and a peer staff member in the Evaluation Office. A bespoke quality assessment tool is used to provide structured feedback to evaluation consultants (especially at draft report stage), and to support consistency in overall report quality. All evaluation reports must meet a minimum standard for quality before they are finalized and publicly disclosed.
275. UN Environment evaluation reports are independently assessed for quality by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office annually and additionally, an external evaluator conducts a report quality assessment each biennium to help benchmark internal quality standards. Over the period for which the quality of GEF evaluations have been formally assessed (since 2004), the performance of the Evaluation Office of UN Environment has historically been assessed favourably against the World Bank and United Nations Development Programme. Another reason for assessing the quality of the evaluation

reports at draft and final stages is for the Evaluation Office to gauge the value-addition by the office to the overall quality of the evaluation product.

276. Figure 64 below shows a comparison of draft and final report quality assessments based on eight years of data. The office aspires to see a low percentage of final reports in the range of 'Moderately Satisfactory' or below for quality, and a significantly higher percentage of final reports achieving 'Satisfactory' or better ratings for their overall quality.

Figure 64. Quality of Draft and Final Evaluation Reports for the Biennium 2016-17



277. The Evaluation Office has developed a report quality assessment tool to ensure that reports will meet minimum quality requirements before the draft report may be circulated to stakeholders for their review and feedback. Final reports from the Evaluation Office are eventually made available to the public online through the Evaluation Office website as well as the UN Environment document repository. The data shown in Figure 64 above, for the biennium 2016-17, is encouraging; 93% of all final evaluation reports were rated 'Satisfactory' or better for overall quality, as compared to 71% reports at draft stage. No final reports were rated in the 'unsatisfactory' range.

Annex I: List of evaluations finalised in the 2016-2017 Biennium

1. Terminal Evaluation of project GF/2328-2712-4B62 (4256) Making Ocean Life Count By Mr. James Berdach (Consultant), December 2015
2. ABS Portfolio - Strengthening the Implementation of the Biological Diversity Act and Rules with Focus on its Access and Benefit Sharing Provisions (India), By Patricia Moore (Consultant), November 2015
3. ABS Portfolio - Building Capacity for Regionally Harmonized National Processes for Implementing CBD Provisions on Access to Genetic Resources and Sharing Benefits (ASEAN Project), By Patricia Moore (Consultant), December 2015
4. Terminal Evaluation of the 2nd Long-Term Strategy on Engagement and Involvement of Young People in Environmental Issues (Tunza Strategy), Mr. Stephen Powell (Consultant), December 2015
5. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project GFL/2328-2740-4B64 GEF Id. 3813: "Integrating Trade-offs Between Supply of Ecosystem Services and Land Use Options into Poverty Alleviation Efforts and Development Planning in Mixteca" Mr. Robert Hofstede (Consultant), November 2015
6. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment /GEF Project GFL/2328-4B30-2715 GEF ID. 3682 on "Developing an Experimental Methodology for Testing Effectiveness of Payment for Ecosystem Services to Enhance Conservation in Production Landscapes in Uganda", Mr. Nigel Varty (Consultant), November 2015
7. Terminal Evaluation of the UNDA 7th Funded UN Environment Project "Capacity Building in National Planning for Food Security" Imis No. 1574, PIMs No. 01582, By Ms. Maureen Wang'ati (Consultant), March 2016.
8. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project "Spain – UN Environment Partnership for LifeWeb Initiative", Mr. Tilman Jaeger (Consultant) and Mr. David Brugiere (Company contract – BRLi Consulting Firm), May 2016
9. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Projects 41-P3 and 433-1, Imis no. 3B16 and 2M15 "Support to Regional and Sub-Regional Ministerial Forums for Policy Exchange and Priority Settings on Key Environmental Issues/Environmental Governance, By Ms. Johannah Bernstein, (Consultant), August 2016
10. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project "Engaging Major Groups and Stakeholders for Policy Dialogue 42-P2 (01047) Imis No. 2012/13-426" by Ms. Johannah Bernstein (Consultant), January 2016
11. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment /GEF projects Capacity building for the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Albania - GFL/2328-2716-4B76; Capacity Building for the Development of the National Biosafety Framework of Macedonia - GFL/2328-2716-4954 by Camillo Risoli (Consultant), January 2016
12. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project 53-P5 (01045) Imis No. 3B72, "Managing Harmful Substance and Hazardous Waste through the Global Programme of Action in Support of Regional Seas Agreements", by Sarah Humphrey (Consultant), May 2016

13. Evaluation of the UN Environment Finance Initiative (62-P2 Imis No. 2G47), including the terminal evaluation of the projects “Mobilising financial markets to catalyse financing and investment opportunities for resource efficient technologies and business practices” (33-P13 2822) and “Integrating Ecosystems into financial sector operations” (Pims No. 1769; Imis No. 2C51) and the mid-term evaluation of the UN Environment FI contribution to the projects “UN Environment in UN REDD – Tools and Approaches to support countries in incorporating multiple benefits, green economy and green investment in REDD+ planning” and “Creating Enabling conditions for renewable energy and energy efficiency investment” Pims No. 1715 and Imis No. 3F37), by Arthur Dennis Long and Daniel Sidy (Consultants), June 2016
14. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project: “63-P4 Pims No. 0177, Imis No. 3726 Sustainable United Nations (SUN) Facility”, by Manuel Blasco (Consultant), May 2016
15. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project GFL/2732-02-4572 Gef Project Id. 1420, “Reducing Dependence on POPs and other Agro-Chemicals in the Senegal and Niger River Basins through Integrated Production, Pest and Pollution Management”, by Alexandre Diouf (Consultant), May 2016
16. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project GFL/2328-2770-4A79 “Stimulating Community Initiatives in Sustainable Land Management (SCI-SLM)”, Gef Project Id 2184, by Justine Braby (Consultant), March 2016
17. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project GFL/2328-2713-4B10 “Piloting Integrated Processes and Approaches to Facilitate National Reporting to Rio Conventions (FNR-Rio)”, Gef Project Id. 3707, by Justine Braby (Consultant), March 2016
18. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment /GEF Project on Development of National Biosafety Frameworks (NBF Development project), Mr. Camillo Risoli and Ms. Julia Niggebrugge (Consultants), May 2016
19. Professional Peer Review of the Evaluation Function of the United Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Ms. Tullia Aiazzi (Consultant), April 2016
20. Terminal Evaluation of UN Environment /GEF project “Assisting Least Developed Countries (LDCs) with country driven processes to advance National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) IMIS No. LDL-5060-2724-4E07, Ms. Joana Talafre, (Consultant), April 2016
21. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project on Human Rights and the Environment: Good Practices, Ms. Johannah Bernstein (Consultant), April 2016
22. Final Programme Evaluation of the Poverty Environment Initiative Scale-Up Phase Joint Evaluation UN Environment /UNDP, Carmen Tavera, Neda Nordin and Claudia Alderman (Consultants), June 2016
23. ABS Portfolio - Strengthening the Implementation of Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-Sharing Regimes in Latin America and the Caribbean (ABS LAC), Mr. Mario Arturo Escobedo Lopez (Consultant), September 2016
24. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project GFL/2328-2731-4957 - “Addressing Transboundary Concerns in the Volta River Basin and its Downstream Coastal Area”, GEF ID 1111, Ms. Sherry Heileman and Ms. Sylvana Rudith King (Consultants), March 2016

25. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project "Environmental Cooperation for Peacebuilding (ECP) Phase 2" Imis No. 632 and Mid-term Evaluation of the UN Environment Project "Environmental Cooperation for Peacebuilding (ECP) Phase 3" Imis no 1552, by Mr. Emery Brusset (Consultant), July 2016
26. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment projects "Project 12/3-P1 – Support for Integrated Analysis and Development of Framework Policies for Greenhouse Gas Mitigation" and "Project 12/3-P2 – Support for the Deployment of Renewable Energy and Energy-efficient Technologies in Developing Countries" by Christine Woerlen, (Consultant), October 2016
27. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project GEF project Id 3907 "Technology Need Assessment Phase I" by Mr. Amitav Rath, Ms. Walaitat Worakul, Mr. Mario Bazan, Mr. Jerome Gandin (Consultants), November 2016
28. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment /GEF Projects GFL/2328-2740-4A20 "Gambia – Adoption of Ecosystem Approach for Integrated Implementation of MEAs at National and Divisional Levels"; GFL/2328-4A13 - "Data Flow System and Indicators to Enhance Integrated Management of Global Environmental Issues in Croatia"; GFL/2328-2740-4A16 - "Enhanced Regulatory and Information Systems for Integrated Implementation of MEAs" in Kenya, by Mr. Hugo Navajas (Consultant), July 2016
29. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment /GEF Project GFL/2322-4A05-2731 GEF Project Id 2600; "Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem – Regional Component: Implementation of agreed actions for the protection of the environmental resources of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal areas", by Ms. Sherry Heileman (Consultant) June 2016
30. Integration of Climatic Variability and Change into National Strategies to Implement the ICZM Protocol in the Mediterranean" GFL/2322-4B32-2731 Gef project Id. 3990, by Ms. Suzan Kholeif (Consultant), May 2016
31. Evaluation of the EC- UN Environment Strategic Cooperation Agreements under the EU Thematic Programme for Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy (ENRTP), by Karla Van Eynde (Consultant), May 2016
32. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project "Science Policy Interface in Support of Resource Efficiency", Mr. Andy Rowe (Consultant), November 2016
33. Terminal Evaluation of UN Environment /GEF Project on "Project for Ecosystem Services (ProEcoServ), Mr Nigel Varty (Consultant), October 2016
34. Portfolio Evaluation of the UN Environment Projects – "Support for Implementation of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem and the Chemicals and Waste Cluster of Multilateral Environmental Agreements" 01543 Imis No. 3C82; "Law and Environment Outlook: Web-Tools for the Implementation and Enforcement of International Environmental Law and Internationally Agreed Goals and Targets (LEO Project) – 01651 Imis No. 3E78" and "Improving the Effectiveness of and Cooperation among Biodiversity-Related Conventions and Exploring Opportunities or Further Synergies 01678", By Linda Ghanime, (Lead Consultant), October 2016
35. UN-SWAP Report and Quality Assessment of Evaluation Reports, Julia Niggebrugge (Consultant), July 2016
36. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project "UN Environment Global Mercury Partnership and Mercury Programme", Mr. Ivan Holoubek (Consultant), October 2016

37. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Projects in the Haiti Cote Sud Initiative Portfolio – Evaluation of the Gouvernance Sud Project and Review of the Portfolio, By Yves Renard and Erum Hasan (Consultants), November 2016
38. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Projects in the Haiti Cote Sud Initiative Portfolio – Evaluation of the Mer Sud and Terre Sud Projects, by Erum Hasan and Yves Renard (Consultants), November 2016
39. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project Mainstreaming Ecosystem Services into Country's Sectoral and Macroeconomic Programmes and its UNDA 8th Tranche-funded sub component, By Justine Braby (Consultant), September 2016
40. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project Strengthening Ecosystems and Development Linkages Through Innovative Economic Approaches for Green Growth, By Justine Braby (Consultant), August 2016
41. Case Study for the Joint UN Environment -UNIDO Programme to host and Manage the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) -contributing to Terminal Evaluation of “Project 12/3-P1 – Support for Integrated Analysis and Development of Framework Policies for Greenhouse Gas Mitigation” and “Project 12/3-P2 – Support for the Deployment of Renewable Energy and Energy-efficient Technologies in Developing Countries”, By Christine Woerlen (Consultant), October 2016
42. Case Study for the F I R M project - Facilitating Implementation and Readiness for Mitigation contributing to Terminal Evaluation of “Project 12/3-P1 – Support for Integrated Analysis and Development of Framework Policies for Greenhouse Gas Mitigation” And “Project 12/3-P2 – Support for the Deployment of Renewable Energy and Energy-efficient Technologies in Developing Countries”, By Christine Woerlen, (Consultant), October 2016
43. Case Study on Regional Gateway for Climate Technology and Policy Innovation in Latin America and the Caribbean (REGATTA) contributing to Terminal Evaluation of “Project 12/3-P1 – Support for Integrated Analysis and Development of Framework Policies for Greenhouse Gas Mitigation” and “Project 12/3-P2 – Support for the Deployment of Renewable Energy and Energy-efficient Technologies in Developing Countries”, By Michelle Libby-Tewis (Consultant), October 2016
44. Case Study on Southeast Asia Knowledge Network of Climate Change Offices (SEAN-CC Phase II) contributing to Terminal Evaluation of “Project 12/3-P1 – Support for Integrated Analysis and Development of Framework Policies for Greenhouse Gas Mitigation” And “Project 12/3-P2 – Support for the Deployment of Renewable Energy and Energy-efficient Technologies in Developing Countries”, By Michelle Libby Tewis (Consultant), October 2016
45. Case Study on Share the Road: Promoting Investments in Walking and Cycling Road Infrastructure in Africa contributing to Terminal Evaluation of “Project 12/3-P1 – Support for Integrated Analysis and Development of Framework Policies for Greenhouse Gas Mitigation” And “Project 12/3-P2 – Support for the Deployment of Renewable Energy and Energy-efficient Technologies in Developing Countries”, By Oliver Lah (Consultant), October 2016
46. Case Study on Low Carbon Transport in India contributing to Terminal Evaluation of “Project 12/3-P1 – Support for Integrated Analysis and Development of Framework Policies for Greenhouse Gas Mitigation” And “Project 12/3-P2 – Support for the Deployment of Renewable Energy and Energy-efficient Technologies in Developing Countries”, By Oliver Lah (Consultant), October 2016

47. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project “Policy, Macro-Economic Assessments and Instruments to Empower Governments and Business to Advance Resource Efficiency and Move Towards a Green Economy” (Umbrella project), including an Assessment of the Design of the project “Enhancing Knowledge and Capacity for Inclusive Green Economies” based on the evaluation findings (follow-up project), 688 Imis no. 1227, By Mr. Robert Hofstede Consultant), January 2017
48. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment /GEF project “Global Solar Water Heating Market Transformation and Strengthening Initiative, (GSWH project) GFL-5070-2721-4A54) GEF Id 2939, By Roland Wong, Ms. Nadia Bechraoui and Ms. Amandine Gal (Consultants), March 2017
49. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project “SWITCH to Sustainable Policies and Innovation to Resource Efficiency In Asia – Regional Policy Support Component (SWITCH Asia RSPC), By Mr. Andy Rowe and Mr. Dick Van Beers (Consultants), January 2017
50. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment /GEF Project “The Global Fuel Economy Initiative Phase I and the Global Automotive Fuel Economy Campaign of the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV) Managing Vehicle Growth in 8 transitional Countries”, By Mr. Oliver Lah and Mr. Carlos Felipe Pardo Velez, (Consultants), February 2017
51. Mid-Term Evaluation of the UN Environment Project "Building Adaptive Capacity and Resilience to Climate Change in Afghanistan 2014-2018", by Mr. Kris Borring Prasada Rao and Ms. Doulat Bibi Aliyar (Consultants), January 2017
52. Terminal Evaluation of UN Environment Project Vulnerability and Adaptation Programme for Climate Change in the Coastal Zone, of Cambodia Considering Livelihood Improvements and Ecosystems, By Mr. Jonathan McCue (Consultant), February 2017
53. UN SWAP Review 2016, Ms. Julia Klever (Consultant), January 2017
54. Terminal Evaluation of the Project Entitled: 'Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species in the Pacific Islands.' Known as Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Project GFL4C16 IAS Pacific, By Tierra Mar (Peter Thomas), Consulting Company, March 2017
55. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment /GEF project “Completion and Strengthening of the National Biosafety Framework of Cuba for the Effective Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol”, By Mr. Hugo Navajas (Consultant), March 2017
56. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project "Global Platform for Action on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP): Supporting the implementation of the 10 Tear Framework of Programmes on SCP 10YFP, Ms. Margareta de Goys and Ms. Suman Lederer, (Consultants), March 2017
57. ABS – Portfolio Evaluation: Final Evaluation of five UN Environment /GEF projects on “Access and Benefit Sharing” - Capacity building for the early entry into force of the Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS Global) – Patricia Moore (Consultant), February 2017
58. Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the UN Environment -ILO-UNDP-UNIDO-UNITAR Project “Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE)”, By Camille Bann, Mr. Mario Bazan, Mr. Alioune Seydi, Ms. Narangerel Yansanjav, Mr. Xuebing Sun (Consultants), April 2017

59. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment /GEF Project "In Situ/On-Farm Conservation and Use of Agricultural Biodiversity (Horticultural Crops and Wild Fruit Species) in Central Asia", Mr. Patrick Mulvany (Consultant), March 2017
60. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project 'Micronesia Challenge: Sustainable Finance Systems for Island Protected Area Management (PAS)' By Mr. Nigel Varty (Consultant), May 2017
61. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) for Mountain Ecosystems, By Revocatus Twinomuhangi and Mariana Clemencia Vela Witt, May 2017
62. ABS Portfolio - Supporting the development and implementation Of Access and Benefit Sharing policies in Africa (ABS Africa), By Adeyemi Franck Attere (Consultant), June 2017
63. Terminal Evaluation of the Project Entitled: 'Implementing the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by Integrating the conservation management of Island biodiversity (known as Integrated Island Biodiversity (IIB) project) GFL4B50, By Tierra Mar (Peter Thomas), Consulting Company, June 2017
64. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project "53-P2 Addressing Risks Posed by Exposure to Lead and Cadmium", By Mr. Segbedzi Norgbey (Consultant), August 2017
65. Terminal Evaluation of GEF project "Protected Areas Resilient to Climate Change (PARCC West Africa), officially known as "Evolution of Protected Area systems with regard to Climate Change in West Africa, By Ms. Julianne Zeidler and Ms. Aida Cuni Sanchez (Consultants), August 2017
66. Evaluation of the UN Environment project "Green Growth Knowledge Platform", by Mr. Patrick Breard (Consultant), July 2017
67. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project Entitled: 'PAS: Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA)' GFL4C29 PIPA, By Tierra Mar (Peter Thomas), Consulting Company, August 2017
68. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment /GEF Project "Pilot Project on the Development of a Mercury Inventory in China", By Mr. Nee Sun Choong Kwet Yive (Consultant), September 2017
69. UNEG Peer Review of the Evaluation Function of UNICEF, by Ms. Tulia Aiazzi and Mr. Shiva Kumar (Consultants), June 2017
70. Terminal evaluation of a project "Removing Barriers to Invasive Species Management in Production and Protection Forests in South East Asia" (IAS SE Asia), By TierraMar Consulting Co. Anissa Lawrence (Company Contract), August 2017
71. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment/GEF Project "Implementing NAPA Priority Interventions to Build Resilience in the most Vulnerable Coastal Zones in Djibouti", by Ms. Marie Helene Louise Grenier (Consultant), September 2017
72. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project "Building Capacity for Coastal Ecosystem-Based Adaptation in SIDS", By Mr. Yves Renard (Consultant), October 2017
73. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project "Global Market Transformation for Efficient Lighting (en.lighten initiative), GFL-5070-2720-4EF1, By Mr. Amitav Rath (Consultant), October 2017

74. Evaluation of the Management Arrangements and Processes of the China Trust Fund Under the China-MEP and UN Environment Framework Agreement on Strategic Cooperation 2013-2015, By Ms. Sarah Humphrey (Consultant), October 2017
75. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project "Sustainable Forest Management in the Transboundary Gran Chaco Americano Ecosystems, By Mr. Hugo Navajas (Consultant), November 2017
76. Terminal Evaluation of the UNDP/ UN Environment Project "Adapting Water Resource Management in the Comoros to Expected Climate Change, PemConsult (Company Contract), October 2017
77. 524.2: Project ID: 01823; Project title: Terminal Evaluation for the UN Environment project - Support to implementation of the chemicals and waste MEAs (Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, Ms. Teresa Cristina Noguiera Amador De Bettencourt (Consultant), November 2017
78. 522.1: Project ID: 01864; Project title: Mid Term Evaluation of the UN Environment project on Chemicals management needs and priorities: national dioxin/furan inventories and POPs global monitoring, Ms. Teresa Cristina Noguiera Amador De Bettencourt (Consultant), November 2017
79. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project: "Resource Efficiency and Eco-Innovation in Developing and Transition Economies" (Referred to as the "Eco-Innovation Project") By Ms. Joyce Miller (Consultant), November 2017
80. Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment/GEF project "Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework Under the Biosafety Program- Peru", Mr. Hugo Navajas (Consultant), December 2017