2010–2011

EVALUATION SYNTHESIS REPORT

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UNEP

UNEP
United Nations Environment Programme

2010–2011
Evaluation Synthesis Report

Evaluation Office

December 2011

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Foreword

This report summarises the findings of the *Formative Evaluation of UNEP's Programme of work 2010* under UNEP's four year Medium Term Strategy. The report presents a summary of strategic evaluation findings and recommendations that are relevant at the organizational level and also highlights performance trends across many project-level evaluations, grouped by the six thematic subprogrammes.

It is fair to say that the evaluation broke new ground by analysing the design of UNEP's entire programme early in the biennium, providing substantive feedback and advice to improve both programme implementation and the design processes for the next MTS and programmes of work.

The report notes that 9% of the projects evaluated in the biennium, were rated "Highly Satisfactory", 51% as "Satisfactory", and 30% as "Moderately Satisfactory" in their overall performance. Only eleven per cent (11%) of the projects evaluated fell within the "unsatisfactory" range. In general, the projects were considered relevant to UNEP objectives and country needs; most have achieved their objectives and have a good chance of replication and/or up- scaling.

Specific shortcomings in project designs are specified in the report and were consistent with the findings from the formative evaluation. These lessons from evaluation are being used to positive effect by strengthening the guidance provided to UNEP staff on project design in the new programme manual.
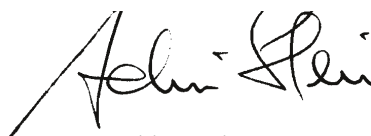
If there is too great a focus on 'accountability', for example through 'Terminal' evaluations of completed initiatives, there is an associated risk that the relevance and usefulness of evaluation to the current work of the organisation will be sub-optimal and opportunities to enhance learning will be missed.

It is pleasing to note that the Evaluation Office has responded to the challenge laid down by senior management in UNEP; namely to make its evaluations directly relevant to the on-going and future work of the organisation.

The Formative Evaluation is good example of this, as is their work to ensure that evaluations make a difference to project performance by rigorous follow-up of the implementation of evaluation recommendations. The implementation status of such recommendations is regularly reviewed by the UNEP Executive Office with the Division Directors and, as this report highlights, compliance levels have improved as a result.

Other work that will have both strategic importance and operational relevance for UNEP are the two on-going Sub-programme evaluations for 'Disasters and Conflicts' and 'Environmental Governance'. These evaluations will provide substantive input to the upcoming Mid-Term Evaluation of UNEP's Medium Term Strategy.

Finally, the Evaluation Office recently volunteered itself to be Peer Reviewed by an independent panel of experts from the OECD-DAC Evaluation Network and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). The findings of that review were extremely positive and noted that UNEP's Evaluation Office shows many attributes that are associated with international best practice.

Achim Steiner
UN Under-Secretary General and UNEP
Executive Director

Acknowledgements

Acronyms and abbreviations

10 YFP - SCP	The African 10-Year Framework Programme (10-YFP) on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)
APR	Annual Performance Report
CEIT	Countries with Economies in Transition
CFS	Critical Success Factors
CPR	Committee of Permanent Representatives
D&C	Disasters and Conflict
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EAs	Expected Accomplishments
EF	Environment Fund
EG	Environmental Governance
EO	Evaluation Office
ESTs	Environmentally Sound Technologies
FY	Financial Year
GEF	GLOBAL Environment Facility
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
HS &HW	Hazardous Substances and Hazardous Waste
ICT	Information Computer Technology
IEM	Integrated Ecosystems Management
IMIS	Integrated Management Information System
INGOs	International Non-Government Organizations
IoAs	Indicators of Achievements
IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management
KM	Knowledge Management
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEA	Multilateral Environment Agreements
MS	Moderately Satisfactory
MTEs	Mid-term evaluations
MTS	Mid Term Strategy

NFPs	National Focal Points
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
ODS	Ozone Depleting Substances
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIOS	Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)
OPS	Overall Performance Study
PAS	Performance Appraisal System
PIR	Implementation Review
PoW	Programme of Work
PPR	Programme Progress Report
PRC	Project Review Committee
QAS	Quality Assurance Section
RBM	Results Based Management
RMU	Resource Mobilisation Unit
ROs	Regional Offices
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable and Time-bound
SMT	Senior Management Team
SPCs	Sub-Programme Coordinators
SPE	Sub-Programme Evaluation
SPEs	Sub-programme Evaluations
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Environment Group
UNEG	United Nations Environment Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlement
UoM	Units of Measure
WB	World Bank
WIO-LaB	Addressing land-based Activities in the Western Indian Ocean

Executive summary

1.   This report presents analyses of information synthesized from one formative evaluation, one outcome and influence evaluation and thirty-seven in-depth project evaluations. It also presents a description of approaches to evaluating the subprogrammes of the Mid Term Strategy (MTS), and findings from internal and external assessments of the performance of the evaluation function which includes preliminary findings of a Peer Review of UNEP's Evaluation function. The report also contains, in a separate chapter, analyses of the compliance status of evaluation recommendations.

2.   The analysis of in-depth project evaluations has been undertaken within the context of six new strategic priorities for the organization, namely: Climate Change; Disasters and Conflicts; Ecosystems Management; Environmental Governance; Harmful Substances and Hazardous Waste; and Resources Efficiency (Sustainable Consumption and Production). As UNEP moves towards the development of a new MTS for 2014–2017, findings of the formative evaluation of the PoW and findings and lessons learned from in-depth evaluations can help to inform the design, planning and implementation of projects and programmes.

A.   Formative Evaluation of the Programme of Work — 2010–2011

3.   The formative evaluation of the UNEP Programme of Work for 2010–2011 was intended to provide findings early in the first biennium of the MTS, based on an analysis of the causal relationships embedded in the projects within each Programme Framework, to understand whether these projects are optimally linked to the Expected Accomplishments (EAs). The primary objective of the evaluation was to provide information to the respective subprogrammes on the appropriateness of design and delivery methods of the Programme of Work early in the process when changes or adaptations can be made to optimize the likelihood of success in achieving the Expected Accomplishments.

4.   In general, the evaluation finds that, to a large degree, the initial aims of the reform process have been achieved. It was always envisaged that the 'reform process' would not be complete in the first biennium of the Medium Term Strategy. As we approach the end of the 2010–2011 biennium, the evaluation finds that considerable time and effort has been invested and much has been achieved. There is considerable scope for UNEP to further improve and refine both its work planning and implementation processes. The 'reform' is firmly under way but it is not yet complete. UNEP needs to redouble its efforts to improve the processes and systems introduced to date if the potential efficiency gains from the reform process are to be realized.

5.   The strategic intent of the reform process has been clearly articulated in the Medium Term Strategy and programme documents and seem to be largely understood by staff especially Subprogramme Coordinators.

6.   A common vision statement and coherent programme logic with results orientation and focus on causality is clearly evident as a fundamental principle in the programme documents.

7.   The basic management structures and mechanisms as well as policy instruments (e.g. accountability framework, evaluation policy, monitoring policy, resource mobilization policy, science strategy, strategic presence policy paper, communication and capacity development strategy, partnership policy) have been put in place and steps have been taken to build capacity to deliver within the 'matrix' structure.

8.   The Evaluation Office believes that the introduction of a strong results focus into the PoW planning process was the right decision, and should be regarded as the most fundamental work-planning principle.

9.   For a more effective RBM framework, Expected Accomplishments should be defined at immediate outcome level where UNEP's performance can more readily be measured, and attributed. This should be considered as an issue of the highest priority in the development of the next UNEP Medium Term Strategy.

10.   In future programming cycles, there should be closer linkage between preparation of the MTS, the strategic frameworks and the PoW. In general, strategic planning processes need to better engage UNEP staff. In future Medium Term Strategies, the Expected Accomplishments and indicators should be formulated to better align with basic principles of Results Based Management. Performance measures should be 'SMART' (specific, measurable, achievable / attributable, relevant and time-bound). This would enhance both the ease of monitoring and the evaluability of the PoW.

11.   The Evaluation Office fully supports the position that the focus of reporting should be on measuring performance towards the achievement of results, and that performance in relation to higher level results should be addressed through evaluation. Performance monitoring is essential for RBM but such monitoring should take place at a level where the attribution of the results to the actions of the organisation is much more certain. UNEP monitoring and reporting to CPR should be revised to focus on progress towards the delivery of PoW Outputs and Expected Accomplishments. This would require monitoring of <u>objectively verifiable milestones</u> that track progress 'along' causal pathways to PoW Outputs and Expected Accomplishments.

12.   An iterative planning process where synergies are formally identified and encouraged across projects during the planning phase is required. An understanding of synergies from the 'bottom up' should be used to refine higher level results statements and their performance indicators. Programme Frameworks should focus at EA level and be developed early in the work planning process to identify synergies at project level and articulate causal links to higher level results. The evaluation also found the need to:
    • clarify results terminology and provide for consistency at results levels across the programme of work
    • ensure tighter alignment of resource mobilization efforts with PoW results
    • improve project design by presenting a clear "Theory of Change" in each project; clearly articulating synergies among projects; improve project governance and partnership arrangements, and study the extent to which gender has been mainstreamed in UNEP programme activities.

13.   The evaluation finds that there is need for clarity in assigning of authority, responsibility and accountability of the various divisions and staff members involved in the implementation

of sub-programmes. Reporting lines in the new matrix approach are complex and staff members are yet to learn how to implement a single programme cutting across the six divisions. While staff have complained about the "cumbersome" processes associated with the matrix structure, interviews with Subprogramme Coordinators did reveal a perception that the level of inter-divisional discussion and collaboration has markedly increased as a result of the reformed PoW planning.

14.   There is a further need for improved accountability framework by:
- revisiting the roles and responsibilities of Subprogramme Coordinators with the aim of redefining them to have subprogramme design and delivery at their core.
- limiting Divisional designations to Lead Division (for subprogrammes) and Managing Division (for projects)
- preparing Divisional work plans as a means to achieving transparency in resource allocation and programme delivery.

15.   To increase Regional Office engagement, regional strategies should become a critical input into the development of the next MTS and PoW

B.   Project Performance

16.   Projects evaluated in the biennium have delivered on UNEP's priority areas and objectives through various means of implementation including: assessments to provide sound science and policy advice for decision-making; awareness-raising and information exchange; capacity building and technical support; and cooperation through networks and partnerships.

17.   In terms of overall performance, 9% of the projects evaluated were rated "Highly Satisfactory", 51% as "Satisfactory", and 30% as "Moderately Satisfactory". Eleven per cent (11%) of the projects evaluated fell within the "unsatisfactory" range in overall performance.

18.   In general, the projects were considered relevant to UNEP objectives and country needs; most have achieved their objectives and have a good chance of replication and/or up- scaling. A majority of the projects evaluated have been successful in ensuring a strong stakeholder involvement through information sharing and consultation, and through active stakeholder participation in project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The supervision and backstopping role by UNEP was generally adequate and effective in a good number of the projects evaluated. However, it seems that projects would have benefited from more thorough design and preparation, with only approximately half of projects achieving a "Satisfactory" rating or higher in these parameters. The specific challenges in project design (which have indeed been confirmed by the formative evaluation of the 2010–2011 Programme of Work) include: poor design of project coordination and effective logistical arrangements, inadequate monitoring and evaluation plans, unrealistic project assumptions, risks and critical success factors, lack of clear description of synergies among projects, inadequate attention to planning the engagement of policy and decision-makers and poor articulation of outreach and dissemination strategies. There is a potential to further integrate 'sound science', in the form of comparative research approaches, into the design of UNEP 'pilot / demonstration' projects implemented in multiple locations. The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems of projects – the parameter with the lowest overall performance rating — were often found to be insufficiently designed to provide constructive feedback on performance to project management. The idea that monitoring is a key management responsibility that facilitates timely and adaptive decision-making needs to be fostered in UNEP.

C.   Compliance with Evaluation Recommendations

19.   Over the period between 2006 and 2011, our analysis of the levels of compliance with reporting on evaluation recommendations show considerable improvement. Two hundred and eighteen (218) recommendations were issued from 30 evaluations in the biennium 2010–2011, of these, 161 (74%) were accepted, 22 (10%) partially accepted and 27 (13%) rejected. Five recommendations (2%) received no response and for three recommendations (1%), acceptance was not indicated in the response. Of the accepted recommendations 27% have so far been implemented while 45% remain open. Compliance has been facilitated through disclosure by the Evaluation Office of compliance levels and the direct intervention of the Executive Director to ensure regular discussions of such compliance are held with Division Directors.

D.   Approach to Evaluating the Subprogrammes of the MTS

20.   Sub-programme Evaluations (SPEs) aim to assess the relevance and delivery performance of UNEP's work expected to contribute to the set of Expected Accomplishments classified under a given Sub-programme. An SPE should help UNEP identify key lessons on strategic positioning, management arrangements and day-to-day programme implementation that will provide a useful basis for improved sub-programme design and delivery. An SPE assesses a Sub-programme through three areas of focus, corresponding to three distinct but strongly related levels of analysis.

21.   At the "macro" level, an SPE assesses the relevance and appropriateness of Sub-programme objectives and strategy. It analyses the clarity and coherence of the Sub-programme's vision, objectives and intervention strategy, within the changing global, regional and national context, and the evolving overall mandate and comparative advantages of UNEP.

22.   An SPE further assesses the overall performance of the Sub-programme in terms of effectiveness (i.e. achievement of outcomes), sustainability, up-scaling and catalytic effects. It also reviews the potential or likelihood that outcomes are leading towards impact. Outcomes will be assessed will be determined by a reconstruction of the Sub-programme's Theory of Change.

23.   Finally, an SPE will examine in more detail; intervention design issues, organisational aspects, partnerships and specific business processes that affect the overall performance of the Sub-programme. The Theory of Change of the Sub-programme should help identify which factors affecting the achievement of outcomes and potential of impact should receive particular attention of the evaluation.

E.   Internal and External Assessments of the Performance of the UNEP Evaluation Function

1.   Peer Review of the UNEP Evaluation Function

24.   The Evaluation Office is currently undergoing an independent external Peer Review being conducted under the auspices of United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in partnership with the OECD-DAC Evaluation Network and supported by contributions from the Belgian Government. The Peer Review will provide an assessment of the Evaluation Office of UNEP (and, in a separate report, the evaluation function of UN-Habitat) against United

Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards. The purpose of the peer review is summarized as follows:

- Enhancing knowledge about, confidence in and use of evaluations by governing bodies and senior management of each of the two agencies, and -in the case of UN-Habitat –may lead to informed decisions about increasing the independence of the evaluation office;
- Improving evaluation policy and practice, including stronger planning and resourcing of evaluation (also based on greater appreciation and support of evaluation by governing bodies and senior management), by sharing good practice and building internal capacity and confidence of the Evaluation Office; and
- Supporting the Evaluation Office's efforts to ensure greater acceptance and integration of evaluation findings in each agency's performance management system.

25. Based on extensive review of documents provided, interviews with Senior Managers, programme/project staff, evaluation focal points, members of the CPR, and a self- assessment undertaken by the evaluation function, the Review Panel made the following preliminary observations in their debriefing meeting.

2. Preliminary Findings

26. The review team found that UNEP follows UNEG norms and standards in evaluation, has a well-established evaluation function and a good separation between the planning, monitoring and evaluation functions seems to exist. The evaluation policy was an important step in clarifying roles and responsibilities for the conduct of evaluations in the organization and systems are in place for undertaking project evaluations following international standards. The Panel observed that the Evaluation Office contributes to enhancing the practice of evaluation in the UN system.

27. The team also found that the absence of an annual evaluation budget under the control of the evaluation office impedes its ability to choose evaluation subjects at strategic and thematic level. The linkage between project evaluations and normative work can be strengthened.

28. On **independence**, the Panel found that there is a direct reporting line to the Executive Director, evaluations are conducted transparently without interference of management and are seen as independent, and evaluation reports are available on the external web sites. They also found that the reporting segment to the Governing council/CPR created by the Evaluation policy has not been fully operationalized.

29. On **credibility,** the panel found evaluations to be technically sound and objective and that evaluations are conducted in a credible and transparent manner following international standards. They observed that evaluation report quality received high ratings by the GEF which coincides with the peer review panel's assessment. The professionalism of the staff is good and recognized. However, they also noted that there are areas of UNEP's work that have not been sufficiently evaluated (beyond GEF and environment fund). Limited resources for conducting evaluation present risks to their credibility and the increasing demand for evaluations raises concerns about the future capacity to deliver quality evaluations.

30. The **utility** of project evaluations in the organization is considered high. Results of evaluations are presented to direct stakeholders and senior management but in a limited manner to staff at large. Management responses to evaluations are used in performance assessments of Directors. The Panel further noted that the link between demonstrative projects and the normative work of the organizations has not been clearly established by evaluations; the evaluation programme of work does not sufficiently cover the strategic learning needs of

the organization and the growing demand and interest for impact evaluations has not been fulfilled due to limited resources. The Panel warned that timeliness of the evaluations will be an issue with increased demand for project evaluations.

31. The Panel made the following preliminary recommendations:
    - An appropriate balance between strategic/thematic evaluations and project evaluations should be sought.
    - Rules should be revised for project evaluations under responsibility of Evaluation Office (thresholds, relevance, etc.).
    - Secure predictability and adequacy of resources allocated for evaluation.
    - Establish mechanisms to systematically harvest lessons learned from evaluations with the aim to contribute to Knowledge Management.
    - Streamline the management response system highlighting the responsibility of management in implementing the recommendations.

3.   Benchmarking Performance of the Evaluation Function

32. Each year the independent GEF Evaluation Office assesses the performance of GEF Implementing Agencies against a number of performance measures. This is often reported in the GEF Annual performance Report. The performance of UNEP's Evaluation Office within the GEF compares very favourably against the World Bank and UNDP. For example, 100% of the UNEP Terminal Evaluations submitted in for FY 2010 were rated by the GEF Evaluation Office as 'moderately satisfactory' or better for quality, the equivalent performance for the World Bank and UNDP was 82% and 88% respectively.

4.   Quality of Evaluation reports

33. The assessment of quality of evaluation reports covers 37project evaluations conducted in 2010–2011.

34. The Evaluation Office's review and quality control processes are effective in achieving a minimum standard of quality for evaluation reports. In accordance with the GEF EO rating for UNEP-GEF projects,, 100% of all project evaluations are rated as "moderately satisfactory" or better for quality and <u>no</u> final evaluation reports have been rated in the 'unsatisfactory' range.

35. Continuing the trend established in the previous biennium, the quality of evaluation reports submitted to the Evaluation Office has improved as evidenced by the increase in the score and rating both in the individual criteria and the overall score attained in the draft reports as compared to that of the final evaluation reports, following Evaluation Office quality assurance processes.

36. The criterion with the greatest overall improvement following Evaluation Office quality assurance is the 'Quality of Recommendations' (from an average score of 4.25 'Moderately Satisfactory' at draft stage to an average score of 4.88 'Satisfactory'. Other criteria with relatively high improvements in the overall score in the final report include: 'Quality of the lessons', and 'Assessment of relevant outcomes and achievement of project objectives'.

37. The review and quality assessment processes undertaken by the Evaluation Office can, therefore, be said to have a value-adding effect to the quality of information presented in the final evaluation reports, and this may well translate in to improved utility to the respective projects/programmes, and their perceptions of the credibility of the Evaluation Office.

Introduction

A. Evaluation Office

38. The mandate for conducting, coordinating and overseeing evaluation in UNEP 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 UNEP under the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The Office conducts various types of evaluations and management studies, in accordance with the requirements of the United Nations General Assembly, the UNEP Governing Council, and the Norms and Standards for evaluation of the United Nations system.

39. The activities of the Evaluation Office comprise in-depth project evaluations, evaluations of the Programme of Work and the Medium Term strategy including sub-programme evaluations, project supervision reviews and management studies. The Office provides technical backstopping to project and programme managers in undertaking project reviews when requested and closely follows-up on the implementation of evaluation recommendations. The Office prepares Special Studies designed to provide decision making information and improve evaluation processes and procedures. Guidelines and practical approaches for conducting evaluations are elaborated in the UNEP Evaluation Manual which can be found on the UNEP Evaluation Web site at: www.unep.org/eou.

40. All UNEP projects, independent of their funding source, are subject to evaluation. Evaluation of projects takes two main forms:

    a) Mid-term and terminal evaluations conducted as desk or in-depth studies;
    b) Quality of project supervision reviews (in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Section)

41. UNEP sub-programmes are covered by in-depth evaluations conducted every four or five years. However, to improve the methodology, availability of supporting data and resource requirements used in assessing results achieved by sub-programmes during the course of the biennium, the Evaluation Office has often supported sub-programmes in the development of the mandatory self-assessment plans.

B. Mandate and mission

42. This evaluation synthesis report has been prepared as part of the mission of the UNEP Evaluation Office to provide strategic information to Governments, UNEP senior management and programme managers to enable them to review progress made by the organization and to reflect critically on the constraints and challenges of delivering a quality global environmental programme.

43. The mandate for undertaking evaluations has been stated in various General Assembly resolutions and UNEP Governing Council decisions. The Governing Council has recognized the importance of evaluation as an integral part of the programme planning cycle, while retaining its independence, and has 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 Council also requested the Executive Director to strengthen the UNEP oversight function. 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 purpose of the evaluation function is to facilitate the review of results achieved from programme implementation, examine the validity of programme orientation and determine whether there is need to change the direction of different programmes.

C. Scope and objectives of the Synthesis Report

44. This report is prepared as an inter-sessional document of the UNEP Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum and also serves as part of the input of UNEP to the Secretary-General's report on evaluation to the General Assembly. The report provides stakeholders such as Governments, UNEP senior management and UNEP partners with an evaluative assessment of UNEP programme and project performance in 2010–2011. The main objective of the report is to help UNEP reflect on its programme performance through evaluative evidence and lessons from programme and project design and implementation.

45. The report is based on evaluations conducted in 2010–2011 and utilizes information drawn from 1 formative evaluation of the UNEP Programme of Work for 2010–2011, one outcome and influence evaluation, and 37 in depth project evaluation reports. The report also contains a review of the status of implementation of evaluation recommendations and chapters on internal and external assessments of the UNEP Evaluation function, and UNEP's approach to evaluating the subprogrammes of the MTS.

D. Method

1. Analytical approach

46. The Evaluation Office conducts all evaluations in consultation with the relevant programme and project managers to ensure that, while United Nations and UNEP evaluation standards are followed, the views and concerns of the respective programmes and projects are adequately and fairly reflected. The same approach has been used in the preparation of this report and issues and questions that arose from the reviews and consultations have been further discussed with relevant divisions and circulated to all divisions in the form of a draft report.

47. The analysis and conclusions contained in the report are based on:
    (a) Review of in-depth evaluation reports;
    (b) Review of special studies;
    (c) Review of desk evaluation reports;
    (d) Review of implementation plans and management responses to the recommendations of the evaluation reports over the period 2002–2011;
    (e) Discussions with UNEP staff on subjects related to partnership framework agreements, implementation of evaluation recommendations and self-assessment reporting.

2. Evaluation parameters

48. The report is based on a review and assessment of the key evaluation parameters in four specific areas: first, 'relevance and appropriateness'; second, 'effectiveness and efficiency'; third, 'results and impacts'; and, fourth, 'sustainability'.

a) Relevance and appropriateness

49. The relevance and appropriateness of evaluated programme and project activities implemented under the mandate of UNEP (General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, the 1997 Nairobi Declaration, the 2000 Malmö Declaration and the 2002 Johannesburg Plan of Implementation) were examined by assessing the following parameters:
    i)   Relevance of activities and their contribution in such areas as promoting the development of international environmental law, implementing international norms and policy, conducting environmental assessments and providing policy advice and information, and raising awareness and facilitating effective cooperation between all sectors of society;
    ii) Relevance of activities and their contribution to providing policy and advisory services in key areas of institution-building to Governments and other institutions;
    iii) Relevance of activities and their contribution to strengthening the role of UNEP in coordinating environmental activities in the United Nations system and as a GEF implementing agency.

b) Effectiveness and efficiency

50. The review and assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of programmes and projects was based on in-depth evaluations and took into account the following factors:
    i)   Evaluation ratings, based on a summative analysis of 11 aspects of implementation for the projects that have been used since 2004;
    ii) Emerging lessons learned from project implementation and evaluation recommendations;

c) Results and impact.

51. The review and assessment of the results and impact of the evaluated activities largely focused on capacity-building in areas related to environmental information and assessment, monitoring of compliance with existing conventions and international agreements, supporting institution building and awareness-raising, and fostering improved linkages between the scientific community and policymakers.

d) Sustainability

52. The evaluation of project sustainability adopts a risk-based approach and identifies potential risks to the sustainability of outcomes across four areas: socio-political, financial sustainability, institutional framework, and governance and environmental sustainability.

3. Project evaluation rating

53. All project evaluations are assessed on a six-point scale with the following categories: "highly unsatisfactory" (1), "unsatisfactory" (2), "moderately unsatisfactory" (3), "moderately satisfactory" (4) "satisfactory" (5) and "highly satisfactory" (6), based on a qualitative analysis of project performance in evaluations. The rating system and evaluation quality control processes are consistent with the rating system used for GEF projects because a substantial number of the evaluations conducted by the Evaluation Office are for GEF-funded projects. The evaluation parameters include:
    a)   Relevance

b)   Achievement of Objectives and Results.
c)   Sustainability of Project Outcomes.
- Financial Sustainability.
- Social Political Sustainability.
- Institutional Framework and Governance.
- Environmental Sustainability.

d)   Country Ownership, Replicability and Catalytic Role of Projects.
e)   Achievement of Outputs and Activities.
f)   Factors Influencing Project Performance.
- Preparedness and Project Design.
- Financial Planning and Management.
- Project Management and Implementation Approach.
- Stakeholders Involvement.

g)   Monitoring and Evaluation.

54.   Project evaluations specifically assess the complementarity between the project outcomes/ objectives and the UNEP POW by examination of linkages to UNEP's Expected Accomplishments, document project contributions that are in-line with the Bali Strategic Plan, assess the extent to which gender is mainstreamed in UNEP projects and highlight any examples of South-South co-operation.

II. The Formative Evaluation of UNEP's Programme of Work 2010–2011

A.   Evaluation overview

55.   Formative evaluations are conducted in the early years of program/policy delivery in order to assess the degree to which programs, processes, and procedures have been put in place to ensure effective and efficient expenditure of resources. Formative evaluations are expected to promote corrective actions to be taken early in the programme/policy implementation process so that the likelihood of achieving expected outcomes is increased.

56.   The formative evaluation of UNEP's Programme of Work was intended to provide findings early in the first biennium, based on an analysis of the causal relationships embedded in UNEP planning documents. The primary objective of the formative evaluation was to provide information to the respective subprogrammes on the appropriateness of design and delivery methods of the Programme of Work early in the process when changes or adaptations can be made to optimize the likelihood of success in achieving the Expected Accomplishments. Projects within each Programme Framework were analysed to understand whether these projects were optimally linked to the Expected Accomplishments (EAs) in each of UNEP's Subprogrammes.

Figure 1. Relationships between UNEP Planning documents

Medium Term Strategy 2010–2013
- Vision
- Priorities
- Objectives with indicators
- Expected Accomplishments

Strategic Frameworks (by theme) 2010 – 2011 & 2012 – 2013
- Expected Accomplishments with indicators
- Thematic Strategies
- External Factors

Programmes of Work 2010 – 2011 & 2012 – 2013
- Outputs with indicators (Outcome level)
- External Factors
- Budget

Programme Frameworks
- Programme Framework
- Work Plan & costs
- Project Concepts
- Risk Analysis

Project Documents
- Justification & Approach
- Stakeholders / partnerships
- Critical success factors, LF
- Risks, Reporting, Evaluation
- Governance, Management

57.   By mapping out each project's causal pathways it became clear how these projects are likely to contribute to the EAs and whether the interventions utilize common actors, are mutually reinforcing and converge /synergize with one another. At the same time the analysis examined linkages from projects within a Programme Framework to other EAs.

58.   The evaluation was conducted as a desk study focusing on the processes and content of project / programme design and reporting on the Programme of Work for 2010–2011. The formative evaluation was "evidence-based"; conclusions and recommendations were based on objective and documented evidence to the extent possible. The collection of qualitative and quantitative data came from two key sources; namely programme and project document reviews and interviews with subprogramme coordinators, staff of managing divisions, strategic/programme planners and senior managers of the organization.

Figure 2. A single schematic 'impact pathway' showing intermediate states, assumptions and impact drivers
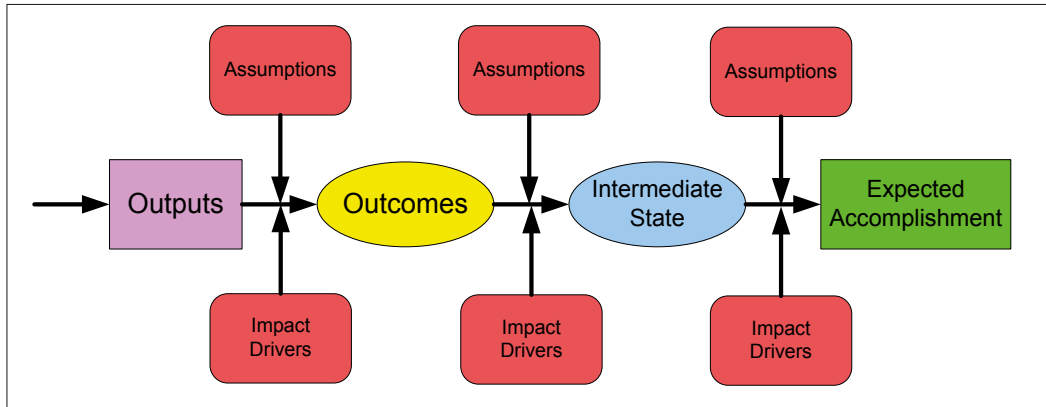
59.   The MTS, Strategic Framework, approved PoW 2010–11, Subprogramme strategies and Programme Frameworks were reviewed. The scope of the PoW, in terms of the total number of projects (and sub-projects) that it encompasses is large and therefore, a sample of projects and programme frameworks included in the UNEP PoW of 2010–2011 was selected for detailed study. One Expected Accomplishment was studied in detail for each thematic subprogramme, with the exception of the Climate Change and Harmful Substances and Hazardous Waste subprogrammes where two closely related EAs were studied in depth. EAs were selected in each subprogram where, at the end of 2010, a large proportion of the associated projects had been approved by the Project Review Committee.

60.   A review was undertaken of the six-monthly Programme Performance Reports of the organization to determine the consistency of reporting with the Results Framework that undergirds the PoW and that the reports, indeed, measure performance towards the achievement of results. The formative evaluation also included an assessment of the Expected Accomplishment result statements, their indicators of achievement, units of measure, baselines and targets to assess their quality and validity.

Figure 3. The relationships between Subprogrammes, EAs, Programme Frameworks, PoW Outputs, number of projects and UNEP Divisions for the 2010-2011 PoW (Programme Frameworks are depicted as yellow boxes)
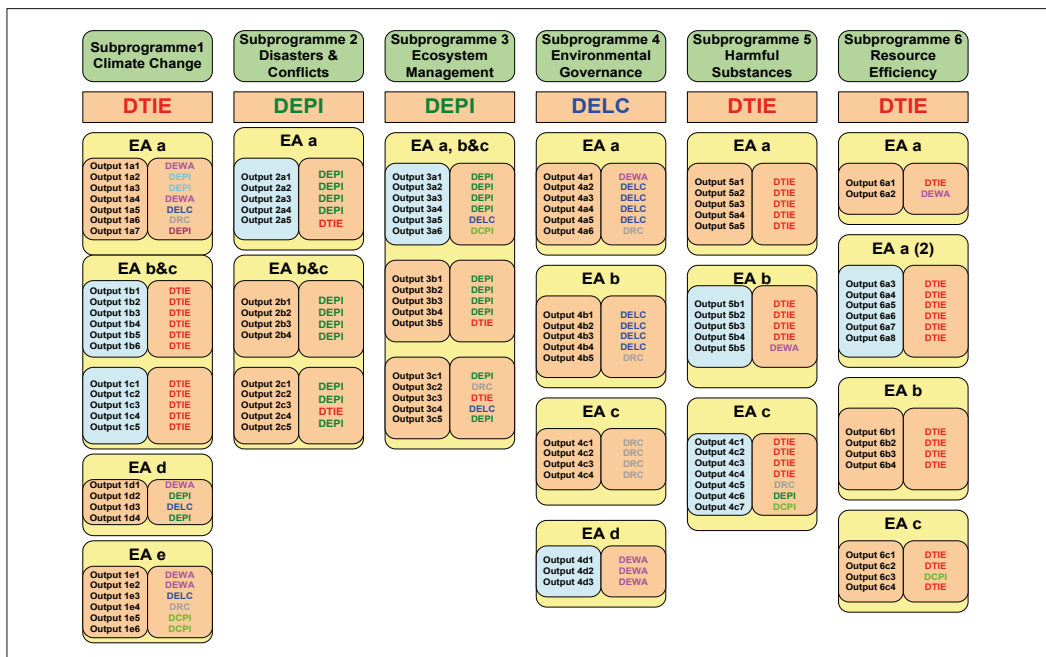
B.   General observations

61.   In general, the formative evaluation found that, to a large degree, the initial aims of the UNEP 'reform' process have been achieved. It was always envisaged that the reform process would not be complete in the first biennium of the Medium Term Strategy. The formative evaluation found that the "reform" is firmly under way, and that considerable time and effort has been invested and much has been achieved. However, there is no room for complacency. There is considerable scope for UNEP to further improve and refine both its work planning and implementation processes. UNEP needs to redouble its efforts to improve the processes and systems introduced to date if the potential efficiency gains from the reform process are to be fully realized.

62.   The strategic intent of the reform process has been clearly articulated in the Medium Term Strategy and programme documents and seem to be largely understood by staff especially Subprogramme Coordinators. A common vision statement and coherent programme logic with results orientation and focus on causality is clearly evident as a fundamental principle in the programme documents. This is a great improvement on previous PoW planning modalities.

63.   The basic management structures and mechanisms as well as policy instruments (e.g. accountability framework, evaluation policy, monitoring policy, resource mobilization policy, science strategy, strategic presence policy paper, communication and capacity development strategy, partnership policy) have been put in place and steps have been taken to build capacity to deliver within the 'matrix' structure.

64.   The simultaneous introduction of results-oriented programming to the development of thematic subprogrammes that cut across the Divisional structure of the organisation added considerable complexity to work planning processes. The UN Secretariat's Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) found, in its 2010 audit of governance, that while the 'matrix' approach to programme management adopted by UNEP had in general been welcomed, including by Member States, there was a need for clarity as regards the "assigning of authority, responsibility and accountability of the various divisions and staff members involved in the implementation of sub-programmes". They also stated that "reporting lines in the new matrix approach are complex and staff members are yet to learn how to implement a single programme cutting across the six divisions". The veracity of those findings remains undiminished.

65.   While much has been made of the new 'matrix' approach in the PoW, the formative evaluation concluded that the management arrangements do not reflect true matrix management where an individual has two reporting superiors - one functional and one operational. Responsibility and authority is firmly vested in the Divisions. Sub-programme coordinators work across the Divisional structures but do not hold any authority over human or financial resources. It was always part of the design intent that the organisation should not create a 'power base' in the subprogrammes that would be at odds with the authority currently vested in Division Directors to avoid a situation where 'power struggles' or conflicts would impede smooth implementation of the PoW. Indeed, the formative evaluation found that while staff have complained about the "cumbersome" processes associated with the matrix structure, interviews with Subprogramme Coordinators did reveal a perception that the level of inter-divisional discussion and collaboration has markedly increased as a result of the reformed PoW planning.

66.   In spite of the faults and weaknesses that have been highlighted in PoW design, the Evaluation Office believes that introducing a strong results focus into the new PoW planning process was the right decision, and should still, be regarded as the most fundamental work-planning principle.

67.   The following summary has been synthesized from the detailed analysis and findings presented in the formative evaluation report[1].

C.   Examining the UNEP results framework

1.   Expected Accomplishments — a results level beyond UNEP's direct control

68.   There are a number of deficiencies and drawbacks with UNEP's Expected Accomplishments as currently formulated. In the context of Programme Performance within the UN Secretariat, Expected Accomplishments are intended to articulate the expected <u>direct outcomes</u> for a Programme of Work. The Evaluation Office observes that most of the Expected Accomplishments are pitched at a higher results level than direct outcomes and their achievement is beyond the exclusive control of UNEP. Consequently, the <u>EA performance indicators are frequently not measures of UNEP's sole performance</u>. In many cases several other actors may be contributing to the performance captured by the EA indicators and it is often unclear whether the results measured at this level are due to UNEP's intervention. Whilst changes in a particular performance indicator may be recorded, they might have 'happened anyway' — even in the absence of any UNEP intervention. In other words, there are substantial attribution issues.

69.   The fact that the indicators at Expected Accomplishment level are often not capturing UNEP's performance in PoW implementation seriously calls into question their use for progress reporting to the CPR / Governing Council.

70.   The role of UNEP in contributing to the changes captured by the current EA performance indicators is largely <u>assumed</u> in UNEP planning documents. The actual contribution made by UNEP at the level of the current EAs, in most cases, can only be established, at some later date, through an evaluative approach. Evaluations that address the challenging issue of causal attribution/contribution are time-consuming, expensive, usually done, *ex-post* and can only realistically be considered for a subset of UNEP's PoW activities. It is certainly not a viable approach to use the current EA performance indicators for frequent monitoring of UNEP's programmatic performance.

71.   The Evaluation Office believes that <u>performance monitoring is essential for RBM</u> but such monitoring should take place at a level where the attribution of the results to the actions of the organisation is much more certain. UNEP monitoring and reporting to CPR should be revised to focus on <u>progress towards the delivery of PoW Outputs and Expected Accomplishments</u>. This would require monitoring of verifiable milestones that track progress 'along' causal pathways to PoW Outputs and Expected Accomplishments.

72.   In future programming cycles, Expected Accomplishments should be defined at immediate outcome level where UNEP's performance can more readily be measured, and attributed. This should be considered as an issue of the <u>highest priority</u> in the development of the next UNEP Medium Term Strategy[2].

73.   A simple approach to revision of the EAs could be to work from the 'bottom up'. The intended immediate outcomes across major UNEP projects and programmes <u>that are well-</u>

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1   http://www.unep.org/eou/Portals/52/Formative_Evaluation_UNEP_POW_2010.pdf

2   The Evaluation Office understands that the first opportunity to revise EAs and their performance indicators will be in the formulation of the 2014–2017 MTS.

<u>aligned with UNEP's strategic</u> priorities should be analysed for 'causal convergence'; this would help in the selection of more appropriate and realistic EAs.

74.   Indicators of Achievement (IoAs) for EAs are mostly quantitative in nature e.g. they express increases in numbers. But what exactly will be counted is often very vague, for instance what policies or countries are aimed at or targeted is not specified and open to very broad interpretation. Additionally, many EAs are formulated in a way that incorporates the strategy or means by which UNEP intends to achieve or contribute to them (usually through outputs). Their IoA and Units of Measure (UoM) are then often indicating the delivery of these lower results rather than the extent to which the EA has been achieved.

75.   In developing future Medium Term Strategies, the Expected Accomplishments and indicators should be formulated to better align with basic principles of Results Based Management. Performance measures should be 'SMART' (specific, measurable, achievable / attributable, relevant and time-bound). This would enhance both the ease of monitoring and the evaluability of the PoW.

76.   While data sources for the measurement of indicators have been specified in most cases, the data collection methods were not specified as part of the PoW planning process. Baselines and targets presented in the 'units of measure' for EA indicators often present absolute values rather than trends or rates. It is unclear how baselines and targets have been determined and many baseline numbers are too "rounded" to be credible. Furthermore, there is no clear link between POW Output targets and EA targets. The purpose of good baselines is to help with establishment and definition of 'counterfactuals' (what would have happened anyway without the UNEP intervention). These issues are best addressed and defined during the design of <u>projects</u> when the Program of Work is being prepared. The Evaluation Office recommends that UNEP should explicitly plan and budget for the collection of baseline data for the EA indicators and for biennial progress assessment.

2.   PoW Outputs — defined at different results levels

77.   The formative evaluation analysed the results statements specified in UNEP's PoW Outputs and compared them with the common definitions used in results based management systems and the international evaluation community.

78.   International monitoring and evaluation practitioners regard <u>outputs</u> as operational changes including the provision of goods and services, tools / mechanisms, changes in knowledge and skills whereas <u>outcomes</u> are behavioural changes at individual or institutional levels e.g. changes in practices by individuals, or changes in institutional performance.

79.   The analysis showed that it is quite common for UNEP's PoW Outputs to be formulated at differing results levels (e.g. outputs and outcomes — according to OECD — DAC definitions) as shown in Figure 4. It is fundamental to good RBM practice to avoid mixing different types of results at a single level in a results planning framework.

Figure 4. The distribution of 2010-2011 PoW Outputs with respect to OECD – DAC definitions of results levels
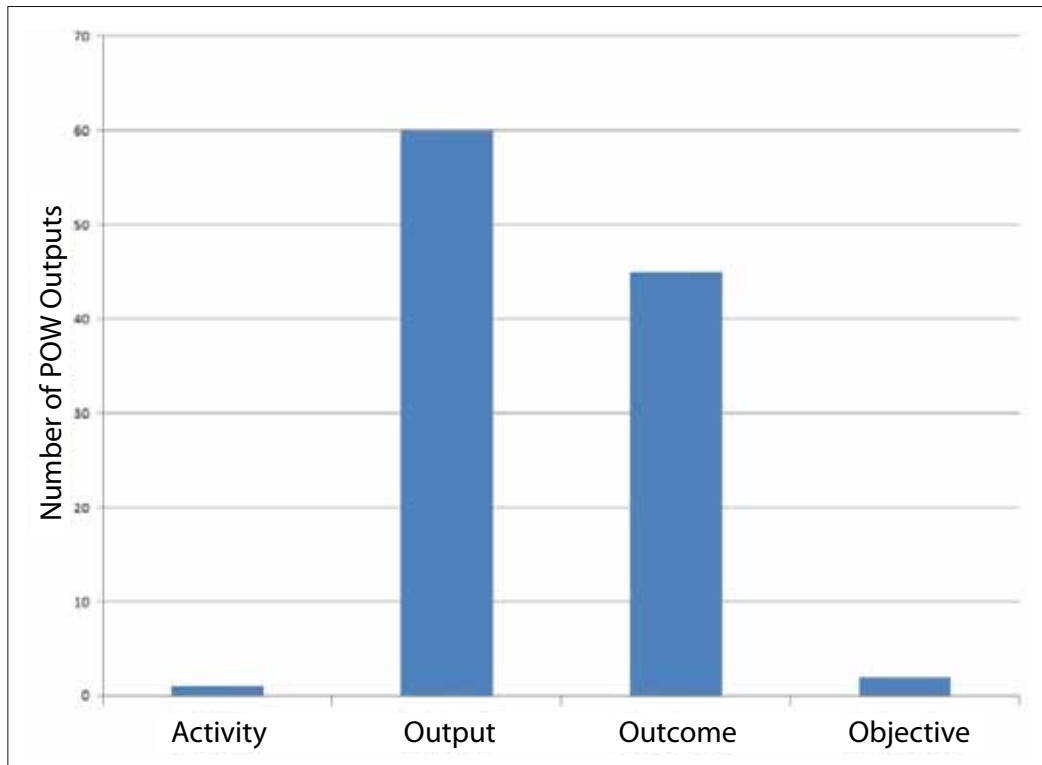
3. Terminology — a barrier to effective Programme Planning and Results-Based Management

80. Central to efficient and effective programme planning and results-based management, is clarity on the terms used. To reduce the terminological confusion frequently encountered in these areas, the OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) Working Party on Aid Evaluation developed a glossary of key terms in evaluation and results-based management. **The formative evaluation recommended the use of terms <u>consistent</u> with internationally recognised definitions** in UNEP Programme Planning documents. In other words, whilst the terminology UNEP uses in its planning documents can be retained, the definition for each of the terms needs to be specified in a way that is consistent with UN requirements and accepted international practices.

81. One of the key challenges in programme planning at the organisational level is to ensure project level interventions 'come together' to deliver the desired programmatic results, which in turn should make contributions to key organisational objectives and be in-line with the organisation's strategy, mandate and vision. The difficulty of this challenge can be magnified if ambiguous terminology is applied. (Figure 5).

82. Under the current PoW, Project level outcomes contribute to PoW outputs. This terminology causes confusion. In addition, the PoW Outputs themselves, are often articulated as either outcomes or outputs. Figure 5 shows that in the PoW for 2012–2013 there is a change in how PoW Outputs are defined; work by QAS has ensured they will become consistent with the OECD – DAC definition of outputs, however this will leave a 'gap', with no terms to describe programmatic outcomes. The PoW 2012–2013 will still sit within the MTS 2010–13 and UNEP Senior management has decided not to modify the formulation of the Expected Accomplishments.

Figure 5. Terminology used in the PoW for the two biennia under the current UNEP Medium Term Strategy, and that proposed for the 2014-2017 MTS
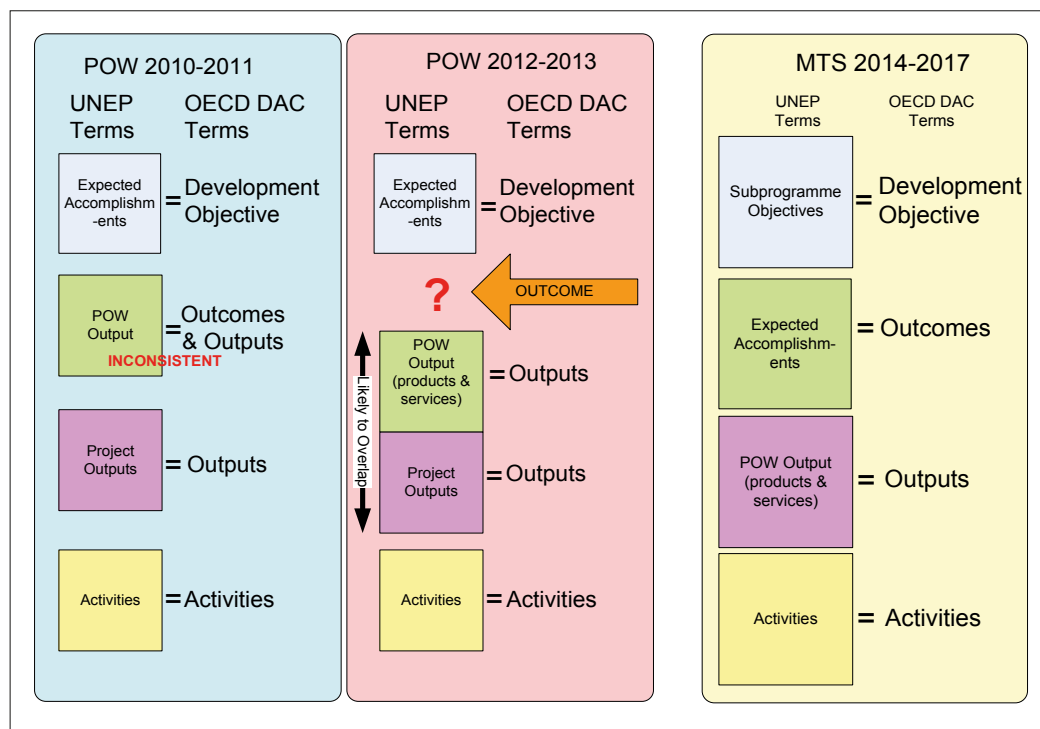
83. Figure 5 also shows the suggested relationship between OECD – DAC results definitions and UNEP results terminology to be used in the MTS and PoW for the period from 2014–2017. In general, this would require statements similar to those of the current Expected Accomplishments to be re-labelled as Subprogramme Objectives. Expected Accomplishments would be articulated as immediate outcomes in line with the UN Secretariat's definition and would thus be pitched at an outcome level that is broadly equivalent to the current PoW Outputs. The latter would continue, as proposed in the PoW for the 2012–13 biennium, to be defined at output level (in-line with OECD – DAC). Project terminology would use 'activities', 'outputs', and 'outcomes'. Project level outcomes would link to Expected Accomplishments; project level objectives would contribute to Subprogramme Objectives. It would be understood that objectively verifiable 'milestones' are formulated at key points in the causal pathways from Outputs to Expected Accomplishments and beyond.

4. Causality in UNEP's results framework

84. The formative evaluation reviewed sets of projects within each subprogramme that are envisaged to contribute to the same Expected Accomplishment or to several EAs under one Programme Framework. In general, analysis of the planning framework shows that the causal linkages between PoW Outputs and Expected Accomplishments are largely assumed – project documents, programme frameworks and subprogramme strategies do not discuss these causal links in sufficient detail. The processes by which PoW Outputs will lead to EAs need to be more clearly described in programme frameworks and project documents and the role of UNEP and project partners in helping this to happen needs to be made explicit. Programme Frameworks and project concepts must be able to demonstrate 'plausible causal linkages' to PoW Outputs and Expected Accomplishments. This should be used as a primary 'filter' for viable project designs.

85. The description of causal linkages between project activities and PoW Outputs is also variable. In some cases, the linkage between the activities described in project documents and the PoW Output is very clear and well-articulated. For other projects, the link appears to be artificial, with the general topic or theme described in the PoW Output being a convenient 'placeholder' or category under which a project idea was 'classified'.

86. There are several examples in the Programme of Work where projects have a 'thematic link' to the PoW Output or EA but where the causal logic between the project intervention and the results statement in the PoW Output or EA is highly questionable. Most Programme Frameworks also seem to have their "parking lot" of projects in which ongoing activities or seemingly unrelated new ideas, for which it was probably not considered worth the effort to design separate projects, have been "parked".

87. There is therefore inconsistency in what constitutes a project across subprogrammes. Some are large-scale 'umbrella' projects while others are specified at a smaller scale and in more detail to guide implementation.

a) Programme Frameworks — an opportunity to plan linkages to higher results levels

88. Programme Frameworks are planning documents expected to "show the different sets of activities across all Divisions and Regional Offices necessary to achieve a given subprogramme objective or an Expected Accomplishment" (UNEP SMT, 2009). Programme Frameworks vary in terms of the number of EAs and projects they encompass. Despite their intended purpose, Programme Frameworks limit themselves to listing PoW Outputs at the beginning of the document, then describe how projects (and project activities) will contribute to EA(s). Only rarely is the causality for delivering the outputs explained.

89. As a construct within the UNEP PoW, Programme Frameworks do not represent a coherent 'results level'. They were introduced to aid the PoW project preparation process, and they play no meaningful role in implementation, monitoring or reporting.

90. Despite the redundancy as 'results construct', the <u>Programme Frameworks were useful in the design of the PoW</u> as, according to many Sub-programme Coordinators, they promoted interdivisional cooperation and joint planning in the preparation of sets of related project concepts. If collections of project concepts were presented in an <u>"EA Framework"</u> this collaborative planning benefit could be retained, and a 'framework approach' could be used as a design tool to strengthen the causal logic, and plan for greater synergy, among collections of projects in relation to the achievement of Expected Accomplishments. <u>The causal logic, upon which the PoW should be built, needs to be examined early in the MTS and PoW preparation process before higher results levels are formalized (and thereby fixed) in the broader UN work planning approvals process.</u> "EA Frameworks" should form the basis for collaborative planning across organizational structures (Division/Branches/Units) and identify any key strategic partnerships relevant across projects that help realize the achievement of the EA.

b) Lost opportunities for synergy

91. Separate project interventions <u>are</u> often intended to contribute to the same higher level result, yet opportunities for efficiency gains where causal pathways converge are seldom identified either in project or higher level planning documents. Whilst it is envisaged that PoW activities are implemented across UNEP Divisions, it seems that many projects have largely been designed within Divisions as stand-alone interventions. Whilst the benefits of collaborative, cross-divisional development of project concepts were noted, it seems that opportunities to

design full project documents in a consultative manner were less common perhaps due to the intense time pressure that characterized much of the process. If synergies do exist they are not evident from the analysis of UNEP's planning documents.

92. A common finding across project documents in all subprogrammes was that links to multiple Expected Accomplishments or PoW Outputs were often specified in Logical framework tables but were seldom properly (or at all) described in the project narratives. Synergies among multiple projects contributing to one EA or PoW Output were not adequately described either. Whilst linkages might exist in reality, project design and subprogramme strategy documents do not properly capture these.

93. Opportunities to strengthen cross-divisional synergies have often been lost. This is partly due to the sequencing of the PoW planning process. Project designs were required to align with the PoW Outputs and EAs that were set earlier in the process, with each project (or sub-project) being designed and considered for approval on its individual merits. It also appears to be more common for a project to be designed for implementation largely within a Division, especially when the thematic focus of a subprogramme coincides with the work of a particular Divisional branch e.g. HS & HW, and RE projects.

94. Synergies among interventions under different Programme Frameworks or Expected Accomplishments are mentioned both in the Subprogramme strategy documents and in the Programme Frameworks. However, details are seldom spelled out and even when they are, (e.g. the RE scientific assessment will contribute to UNEP work on GEO), the link is defined at the level of activities that lead to outputs. The Evaluation Office believes that there is often considerable scope for synergies between projects in the processes that lead to higher level results (PoW Outputs and Expected Accomplishments), since this is the level at which the causal pathways of individual projects would be expected to converge.

95. Despite these shortcomings, interviews with Subprogramme Coordinators did reveal a perception that the level of inter-divisional discussion and collaboration has markedly increased as a result of the reformed PoW planning process. There is also a perception that this enhanced collaboration and cooperation, where it occurs, has often happened despite the rather complex and time-constrained planning processes. It was often noted that the efforts of key individuals seeking to make collaborative arrangements work were a key factor. In other words, there has been a response to the intent of the new planning process to enhance cross-divisional work, but the 'mechanics' and time-constraints of the planning process did not make this very easy.

96. Collaboration should be pursued, not for its own sake, but to capture efficiency gains or improvements in effectiveness in programme implementation. An iterative planning process where such synergies are formally identified and encouraged during the planning phase is needed and is a key to the successful co-ordination of activities within a subprogramme during implementation. This coordinated planning makes the most sense for clusters of projects and activities that come together to deliver at the Expected Accomplishment level.

97. All of the above suggests that, in future, a Theory of Change (causal pathways) should be more explicitly mapped out in Expected Accomplishment Frameworks to help identify interventions that are likely to have real synergies in terms of their implementation and realization of higher level results. Project design processes also need time for collaborative planning to ensure that actions to promote the achievement of higher level results are planned in a manner that promotes effectiveness.

c) Issues with monitoring performance at PoW Output level

98.   The current PoW Output performance indicators are defined within project documents, not within the PoW itself. Since the projects were designed separately, several indicators may exist for a given PoW Output. Because these project-specific indicators usually have quite different 'metrics', they do not offer a credible means of capturing the <u>aggregate</u> performance of all projects contributing to a PoW Output.

99.   From both a monitoring and an accountability perspective, this implies that <u>PoW Output indicators cannot be specified to capture the aggregate performance of all contributing projects</u>.

100.   In addition, since a large proportion of PoW Outputs are defined at outcome level, there are temporal problems in using these indicators to monitor progress in programme implementation. It is often the case that the achievement of project-level outcomes is not linear and incremental. For example, a change in a national policy is a discrete event not one that gradually accrues over time. Monitoring such an outcome would repeatedly record 'no change' until such time as a policy change occurred — often towards the end of (or considerably beyond!) project implementation. The utility of such monitoring information for accountability or as results-based feedback into management processes is extremely limited. This is another rationale for monitoring to focus on verifiable milestones.

101.   In the context of UNEP's Results-Based Management approach, these findings are of considerable importance. Earlier, we have argued that performance monitoring at Expected Accomplishment level does not properly capture UNEP's performance, and here we note that implementation progress in relation to PoW Outputs is not currently captured at an aggregate level in a reliable or verifiable manner. As a consequence, <u>at two key results levels in the PoW RBM framework, Expected Accomplishments and PoW Outputs, UNEP does not have reliable performance indicators.</u>

102.   A better, and more pragmatic, approach for monitoring performance in PoW implementation is to capture progress towards the delivery of PoW outputs and Expected Accomplishments, through the achievement of verifiable milestones.

103.   Project milestones should be used to track the progress of project implementation through outputs and onwards to outcome and Expected Accomplishment level. The Evaluation Office believes that the intent behind the use of milestones in the current PoW planning process was to capture progress up to and beyond output level. However, our analysis found that <u>the overwhelming majority of project milestones in approved project documents were pitched at or below the output level.</u> In a few cases, milestones refer to external events which would have happened anyway. Few milestones captured processes and achievements 'further along' the intended causal pathways towards PoW Outputs and Expected Accomplishments.

104.   Improvements in the articulation of project milestones to better capture the intended project causality, coupled with monitoring of the achievement of project milestones scheduled in any given reporting period, would yield a robust and objectively verifiable reporting approach that would be easily incorporated into the approach used in current PPR process.

5.   Further observed trends in project design

105.   Projects were designed under sub-optimal conditions. There were serious time and resource constraints for the preparation of the PoW. QAS did provide project document templates

and useful feedback on draft project design documents. QAS also facilitated an important project review process to raise project quality at 'entry'. However, there was no up-to-date programme manual to serve as a reference to project designers and training for staff involved in project design was found inadequate. These factors might all have contributed to the high heterogeneity in the quality of the project design documents reviewed by this evaluation.

106. While collaborative, cross-divisional development of project concepts were noted, it seems that opportunities to design full project documents in a similar manner were less common perhaps due to the intense time pressure that characterized much of the process.

107. Similar to the finding above, synergies among multiple projects contributing to one EA or PoW Output were not adequately described. Whilst linkages might exist in reality, project design and subprogramme strategy documents do not properly capture these. Also, some PoW Outputs clearly contribute to multiple EAs but the linkages are not articulated in any of the planning documents

108. Project documents often noted Critical Success Factors (CFS) that either implied or described project actions or activities. The narrative description and logframes presented in the project document frequently made no mention of the activities that were listed as CSFs. Sometimes, important risks were presented as Critical Success Factors (and vice versa).

109. Approved PoW projects lack adequate detail on the strategies to be employed to sustain project outcomes. Exit strategies are either ignored or implicit, and this is a serious shortcoming.

110. When organigrammes are included in project documents, institutional relationships are presented in a fairly clear way and are often supported by narrative text. The governance models for PoW projects generally suffer from being a juxtaposition of new and pre-existing activities. It is evident from descriptions of project governance and management arrangements that the 'Silos' culture is still evident within UNEP. Linkages among UNEP divisions and activities are often weak with the role and contribution to the projects by units other than the lead one remaining unclear.

111. The good practice of ensuring a 'firewall' between project supervision (oversight) and management is largely absent and roles are blurred. In this regard UNEP needs to pay greater attention to the separation of managerial and supervisory roles in project implementation. Whilst is not feasible to have a structural separation between these roles, it is possible to better define managerial and supervisory responsibilities and to design projects that clearly articulate these. The UNEP project/programme manual and PRC review guidelines must be revised to specifically require clearer governance arrangements and a clearly defined roles and responsibilities for project oversight and management.

a) Partnerships and stakeholder analysis

112. Analysis of stakeholder needs and how they may be affected by, or contribute to, the project is often weak or absent. A common weakness is inadequate attention paid to the engagement of policy and decision-makers among stakeholders. A lack of detail in project documents on stakeholders often goes hand-in-hand with poorly articulated outreach and dissemination strategies. It is also important to note that project designs often articulate the intent to hire new staff for constituting the project management teams instead of relying on staff available in partner institutions.

113.   Partnership arrangements commonly take the form of a listing. Science partners are almost always from Europe/North America, while scientific institutions from developing countries are more frequently regarded as beneficiaries. Whilst private sector partnerships are frequently mentioned, it is often in a superficial manner. How the private sector will be engaged often remains unclear.

b) Gender and South-South Cooperation

114.   Many of the project documents reviewed acknowledge the importance and relevance of promoting gender equity but hardly any of them consider gender issues in activities' planning and implementation. Gender aspects rarely feature in performance indicators or monitoring plans. The treatment of gender and South-South co-operation in project documents has been relegated to statements of political correctness made to ensure that project documents fulfill the PRC approval requirements in relation to these issues. The Executive Director should commission a study on the extent to which gender has been mainstreamed in UNEP programme activities and make recommendations on how current gender mainstreaming efforts could be improved.

c) Financial planning

115.   From a financial standpoint many of the projects appear speculative. At the time of project approval, a significant number of projects had mobilized none, or very small proportions, of the required project funds. The single most important deficiency is the absence of any quantification of Environment Fund financial or staff resources that will be required for project implementation. This deficiency is because the UN accounting systems (IMIS) cannot handle allocating Environment Fund (EF) resources to projects. The idea of allocating EF in projects was part of the original plan but had to be abandoned. This evaluation recommends the allocation of Environment Fund resources to projects should be made available to UNEP staff as a matter of high priority., If UNEP is to be able to gauge its own efficiency, allocations to projects must be made explicit. Corporate Services Section of UNEP should re-visit the problem and suggest how the EF allocation to projects can best be captured.

d) Sustainability and replication

116.   Sustainability of normative work often means that 'drivers' need to be in place to move project outputs towards sustainable outcomes and impact after the project's end. This is rarely the case. For example, the expected outcome of UNEP assessment work is often policy change, however the intermediary steps and drivers needed to translate assessment results into policy changes are generally absent in project documents. Replication of project results is most often expected to happen simply through communication and awareness raising (websites, policy briefs, lessons learned papers etc.). Those activities are, in most cases, poorly spelled out and insufficiently resourced for replication to stand a good chance of success.

e) Monitoring, Evaluation and Knowledge Management

117.   It is very common for project documents to 'lump' monitoring systems with evaluation processes as 'M&E'. It is often unclear whether there is a good understanding that monitoring is a project/programme management responsibility and that evaluation of project performance should happen independently of project management. Most project designs lack adequate baselines and very few specify activities to establish baselines and conduct recurrent monitoring. Milestones that capture progress to higher results levels are usually missing. Evaluation activities are often under-budgeted, and monitoring costs seldom appear in project budgets.

118.   Although knowledge management clearly cuts across the entire PoW, it is not dealt with systematically and coherent. KM approaches within the RBM framework of the PoW are not apparent. It appears to have frequently been overlooked in the discrete project design processes that took place in the Divisions.

## D.   The implications of PoW design and planning processes for implementation

119.   The scope of the formative evaluation did not extend to assessment of efficiency or effectiveness in PoW implementation. It did, however, look at implications for implementation that stem from an analysis of the design of the programme, an understanding of the associated PoW preparation process, and discussions with Sub-Programme Coordinators.

120.   Despite the faults and weaknesses that have been highlighted in PoW design the Evaluation Office believes that introducing a strong results focus into the PoW planning process was, and should still, be regarded as the most fundamental work-planning principle. As such, it is worthy of the organisation's continued support. This represents a considerable improvement on previous planning modalities.

121.   The PoW planning process has promoted much higher levels of collaboration across Divisions than was previously the case. The work planning process has raised awareness among staff of the scope of the organisation's work.

1.   Learning from the 2010–2011 PoW Planning Processes

122.   Those closely involved in the preparation of the 2010–11 PoW acknowledge that the PoW preparation process suffered from a number of deficiencies. The following observations and issues were noted and are presented for the purposes of identifying lessons for future improvement of PoW planning processes. Views on the preparation of the PoW differ from one person to the next, depending on how they experienced the process. We summarise commonly voiced opinions, comments and observations below.

123.   The implications of the MTS process for PoW preparation were not fully realised. Many staff involved in PoW preparation, including subprogramme coordinators, did not play an active role in the preparation of the MTS. A commonly voiced opinion was that the MTS was prepared without meaningful in-house consultation. Whilst we are aware that Divisional consultations took place in the development of the MTS it would seem that only a small proportion of staff were engaged and that 'ownership' of the process was not broad-based. The focus of consultation in the development of the MTS was with Governments, MEA Secretariats, civil society, the private sector and selected Senior UNEP staff. In future programming cycles, there should be a closer linkage between preparation of the MTS, the strategic frameworks and the PoW. In general, strategic planning processes need to better engage UNEP staff.

124.   The Expected Accomplishments specified in the PoW were drawn directly from the MTS. The strategic framework further elaborated the EAs and specified indicators of achievement.

125.   The determination of the Expected Accomplishments, their indicators of achievement and the PoW Outputs early in the process meant that all subsequent design activities had to take these 'as given'. There were no opportunities to engage in iterative planning and design where

Figure 6. A schematic representation of the MTS and PoW planning processes
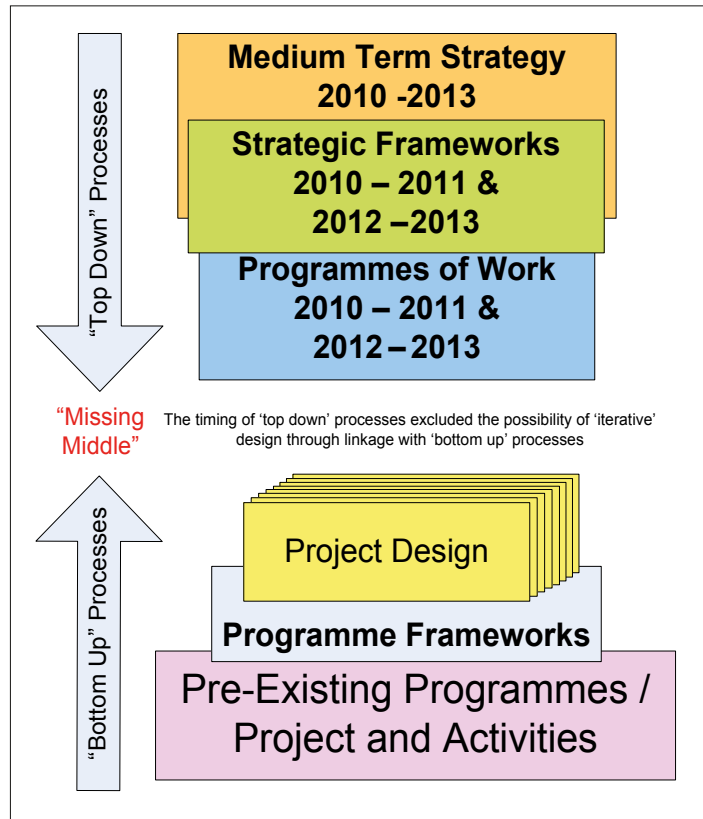
the sets of activities proposed at the project level could be considered in terms of their casual convergence and results statements at PoW Outputs and Expected Accomplishment levels fine-tuned to better reflect the work they encompass. Fixing PoW Outputs and EAs inevitably resulted in their use as 'domains' under which new and existing projects and initiatives were 'classified'. In many instances this undermined the causal logic of the PoW results framework that was the central design principle. Thus the MTS / PoW planning process can, in simple terms, be regarded as having two main phases – a 'top-down' phase and a 'bottom-up' phase (Figure 6). These terms are used in the context of level of the results, and are not intended to describe the inclusiveness of the preparation processes. The timing of the approvals process for the 'top down' phase acted as a barrier to better formulation of results statements that a more detailed understanding of programmed activities could have yielded.

126. The PoW preparation process evolved as it proceeded, many UNEP staff involved in its preparation remarked that the process ended up being too complicated, time-consuming and involved a huge amount of paperwork, some of it repetitive. There is a general consensus that PoW planning processes need to be simplified.

2. Project approvals — incompatible priorities in QAS

127. The Quality Assurance Section was charged with the role of ensuring that the PoW preparation process stayed on track and on time. It was also charged with responsibility of ensuring that project designs were of high quality. Whilst many shortcomings in project design were noted in Sections III A 6 & III A 7 above, great strides were made to enhance the quality of project design by the introduction of a common project template to be used for all PoW projects. QAS also facilitated an important project review process to raise quality at entry. However, there was no up-to-date programme manual to serve as a reference to

project designers and only brief trainings for a restricted group of people involved in project design were organized. These factors might all have contributed to the high heterogeneity in the quality of the project design documents reviewed by this evaluation.

128. QAS and Project Review Committee (PRC) comments on project designs were generally thorough and supported by the Evaluation Office[3]. Review of PRC reports and approved project documents showed that PRC and QAS comments were responded to thoroughly. However, responses to comments, in terms of revisions to project designs were often inadequately reflected in the final project documents. In order to keep the PoW preparation process on track, many projects were approved by the PRC despite their recognized shortcomings inthe quality of design. QAS was placed in the difficult situation of ensuring that project design quality was enhanced without hindering the pace of the project approval process. The priorities were somewhat incompatible.

129. It was always acknowledged that it would be difficult for the quality of PoW project design to be raised to meet a new and much higher standard in the short space of time demanded by the PoW preparation timeline, and with no assurance about resources available. Projects under this PoW were designed (or re-designed in the case of pre-existing activities) under sub-optimal conditions. As UNEP moves into the next planning cycle, improvements in project design can be (and are being) promoted through the provision of better guidance in the form of the project / programme manuals, and the revision of design templates to address the deficiencies noted by this evaluation. However, these approaches need to be complemented by in-house training, in order to maintain a trajectory of improvement in the quality of project design for the next planning cycle.

3.   The need for transparent resource allocation with a stronger thematic focus

130. Resource allocation processes associated with the PoW are not clearly presented in planning documents or understood by UNEP staff. At a strategic level, there does not appear to be any transparent process or method that guides the allocation of UNEP's human and financial resources across, and within, the different subprogrammes. It appears that the resource allocation trends associated with the former divisional structure prior to 2010 have been used to guide allocation of the Environment Fund. These patterns are largely being preserved and rolled forward for the 2012–2013 PoW, justification in terms of thematic priorities remains obscure. In essence, human and financial resources are both managed and allocated along the Divisional 'axis' of the 'matrix'. Relative priorities across thematic Subprogrammes, Expected Accomplishments and PoW Outputs are difficult to discern and written justification or analysis that might guide resource allocation decisions is lacking. It may be that current resource allocation patterns are entirely appropriate; however, there is currently an absence of information and analysis to inform an objective judgment. There is still a large amount of on-going work in UNEP that was initiated prior to the 2010–2011 PoW that has yet to be meaningfully linked to the organization's higher level results; the extent to which this work commits Environment Fund Resources is either not known or is not readily available information.

131. The lack of information on the alignment of environment fund resources to PoW priorities is also evident from an examination of approved project documents; no figures for the environment fund resources (either staff or financial) required for project implementation are given. This should not be the case for the PoW 2012–2013 PoW.

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3   QAS reports that some projects were reviewed and sent back to proponents even before they were submitted to the PRC. In other cases, projects were sent back to proponents by QAS and were not resubmitted for review.

132. There are also practical difficulties in capturing the realities of staff resource allocation. UNEP staff work may on several projects across different subprogrammes (for example). Apparently, UNEP's financial systems (IMIS) cannot currently cope with this level of complexity in budgeting and reporting and so staff costs may be applied to a single project as a simplifying assumption. These practical limitations hinder accurate reporting of resource expenditure in connection to the progress made towards delivery of PoW outputs.

133. Problems have also been identified in relation to the allocation of extra-budgetary and earmarked resources. Difficulties have been experienced in reaching agreement on the allocation of resources among divisions within a subprogramme : as it occurred with the SP on Environmental Governance, such resources are reportedly split evenly among Divisions to avoid disputes. Subprogramme coordinators currently play little or no role in discussions with UNEP's larger donors and related resource allocation decisions.

E. Resource mobilisation – tighter alignment with PoW results

134. The 2010–2011 PoW preparation process resulted in the completion of a large number of project documents, the majority of which required extra-budgetary resources that had yet to be secured. From a resource mobilisation perspective, this presented a significant challenge. The central Resource Mobilisation Unit (RMU) clearly has an important coordination role in discussions with major donors to secure funds to support corporate funding (e.g. Norway). However, the roles and responsibilities of Subprogramme Coordinators, Divisions, and project managers remain somewhat unclear.

135. It is also obvious, given the scale of the challenge and the technical expertise that is often required to 'sell' project ideas, that Sub-programme Coordinators (SPCs) and technical staff must play an active role in project-specific resource mobilisation. The central RMU should be kept informed, assist the coordination of fund-raising efforts and make information available to UNEP staff on the status of fund-raising efforts, both at corporate / 'partnership agreement' and project levels.

136. The wisdom of approving unfunded projects as a large proportion of the PoW has often been questioned by UNEP staff, not least because of the challenge of planning without knowing the level of resources which would be available and the risks associated with timely implementation of projects that need to secure funding before meaningful inception. However, having approved, but unfunded, sets of projects helps to focus funding from prospective donors onto project interventions that are part of UNEP's strategic focus. This reduces *ad hoc* responses to donor interests that may or may not be aligned with the core focus of UNEP's subprogrammes.

137. UNEP needs to phase out work initiated prior to the 2010–2011 PoW that has little meaningful linkage to the organization's higher level results, and pursue a situation where all UNEP work has a strong connection to the results framework. To achieve this, resource mobilisation efforts need to be fully aligned to PoW results; topics that form part of the agenda for thematic subprogrammes must be afforded a higher priority than topics that lack such a linkage but have been ongoing in UNEP for some years. Again this argues for a strengthened role for Sub-programme Coordinators.

1. The appropriate locus of cross-cutting services 'corporate activities' and indirect support costs

138. A number of additional issues remain problematic and unresolved. Management, administration and representational activities are not captured in the PoW activities because they do not directly relate, through a project modality, to the achievement of programmatic results.

139. During PoW preparation process the idea of 'framework projects' was proposed to capture all the cross-cutting or corporate work and support costs associated with each thematic sub programme. This approach was later abandoned and such work was either incorporated into the subprogrammes or excluded for later capture in Divisional workplans.

140. Since management authority still rests largely with Divisions, it would make sense to present UNEP's PoW by subprogramme but also present biennial Divisional Workplans to show how the PoW operationalized at the Divisional level. As suggested by QAS during the PoW preparation process, Divisional and Regional Office workplans should present:
    - activities needed to achieve the results (including partnerships with external agencies) showing responsible staff member
    - time line and milestones for each set of activities
    - allocation of staff time for each set of activities
    - budget allocation at IMIS object code level for Environment Fund and Extra-budgetary funds per activity
    - management activities with allocation of staff time and budget
    - standalone activities and indirect costs
    - resource mobilisation needs

141. The workplans therefore capture all the results the Division or Regional Office is committed to deliver, articulate the allocation of human and financial resources to achieve those results and form the basis for Performance Appraisal System (PAS) plans, so that individual work plans become better aligned with the PoW. It is not clear whether these workplans were ever developed, but they should be regarded as key planning documents for UNEP.

2. The role of Subprogramme Coordinators

142. The Terms of Reference[4] for SPCs indicated that they would be "primarily responsible for facilitating the development of a Programme of Work that cuts across all Divisions in UNEP in the relevant priority area and subsequently facilitate a more coherent implementation of activities across divisions to achieve measurable results for the subprogramme" and "work under the supervision of the Director of the Division assigned in UNEP to serve as the Lead for a given thematic priority area; however their work will span across all Divisions to ensure an integrated and strategic approach to programme development"[5]. A number of expected roles for SPCs were specified for stages in the development and implementation of the PoW :a) Programme strategy and programme development; b) programme approval, and; c) programme implementation. Responsibilities and expected duties for the latter stage were never specified in detail but did feature in general terms in UNEP's accountability framework[6] which also states that they are accountable for:

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4   Terms of Reference for Co-ordinators of UNEP Sub-programmes for the Development and Implementation of the UNEP Programme of Work (2010–2011) (Revised 21 April 08).

5   The April 2010 Coordinators meeting came to a similar conclusion based on their experiences with initial PoW implementation, "the titles of lead, coordinating, accountable Division, managing Divisions and responsible Divisions will be removed. The PoW process can still remain intact without these titles.

6   The UNEP Programme Accountability Framework, 26 April 2010.

- the technical quality of programme frameworks and projects
- monitoring the overall progress of the subprogramme.
- managing risks to a subprogramme by flagging risks regarding achievement of subprogramme objectives and supporting the Lead Division Director in managing those risks.

143. Coordinators played a crucial role in the development of the programme of work. Currently, the specific details of their roles vary from one subprogramme to the next, but in general, they:
- perform an on-going advisory role on subprogramme coherence and in project planning and design
- recommend resource allocation across PoW Outputs in planning
- play an active role in resource mobilisation, most commonly at a project level not for larger 'corporate' level donor contributions
- facilitate exchange of information within the subprogramme but across Divisions, and Regional Offices.
- gather, analyse and process monitoring information on milestone compliance and project outcome delivery status to support QAS in the preparation of the Programme Performance Report
- monitor 'corporate risks' to the subprogramme and suggest corrective measures.

144. The current role of Subprogramme Coordinators is one of '<u>facilitation</u>' rather than <u>coordination,</u> in the sense that the managerial authority vested in the position is minimal. This lack of authority can; impede SPCs from getting access to progress information from other divisions, limit their ability to influence project and programme design processes and constrain their influence on resource allocation decisions to pursue alignment with subprogramme priorities. Their ability to ensure that actions are taken to mitigate corporate risks to subprogramme implementation is also weak, especially when actions are required beyond the Lead Division. SPCs currently lack access to budgetary resources to perform coordination duties unless they happen to hold other substantive responsibilities that can afford them some flexibility in this regard.

145. There is an imbalance in the time availability and overall workload of SPCs across subprogrammes because several SPCs have to carry out their subprogramme coordination tasks in addition to their existing job within their Division (at least three SPCs are branch heads or deputy branch heads and one is a legal advisor to MEAs), and also because the scope and complexity of subprogrammes varies greatly.

146. SPCs report to the Director of their respective Lead Division. In the 'matrix' of Subprogrammes and Divisions, this may create 'conflicts of Divisional and Subprogramme interest'. Situations where a Subprogramme Coordinator may advocate, for example, resource allocations that are in-line with the priorities and interests of a Subprogramme, but that shift resources (staff and budget) away from the immediate control of a Division. Similar situations may prevail in relation to resource mobilisation priorities.

147. The roles and responsibilities of Subprogramme Coordinators need to be carefully considered as UNEP moves forward to consolidate the 'reform' process. Whilst UNEP seeks to avoid having two conflicting 'axes of power' in its current matrix approach, serious consideration is needed in terms of strengthening the <u>influence</u> of the 'Subprogramme axis' in relation to that of the structural axis (Divisions). This can be achieved by careful consideration of appropriate checks and balances which will require minor changes to reporting lines and the

introduction of PoW performance measures that have Subprogramme design and delivery priorities at their core.

148. The Evaluation Office recommends that the roles and responsibilities of Subprogramme Coordinators be clarified and their current reporting lines reviewed. For Subprogramme Coordinators to be able to effectively 'champion' optimal design and implementation of Subprogrammes across Divisions, and be considered as 'honest brokers' by all stakeholders, a measure of independence from Divisions may be required. This could be achieved if SPCs reported to the Deputy Executive Director.

149. The future role of Subprogramme Coordinators would retain the focus on advisory services for programme coherence, enhancing the technical quality of planning frameworks and projects, monitoring the overall progress of the subprogram, flagging implementation risks and supporting their mitigation. Advisory roles in resource allocation decisions and resource mobilisation processes would be strengthened. A budgetary provision for the coordination and facilitation work of the SPCs would be made explicit.

3. Performance expectations and reporting

150 The Programme of Work presents not only a workplan but also a set of performance targets, at Expected Accomplishment level, to which UNEP has committed within the two-year period that it covers. Each EA has associated indicator(s) of achievement with defined baselines, targets and means of measurement. It is clear from detailed analysis of the EAs, and the causal pathways intended to deliver them, that any changes in EA performance indicators are, in most cases, unlikely to be caused by work initiated during a current PoW period. This is because EAs have been defined at a high level, may capture changes due to other actors, and insufficient elapsed time is programmed for any causal effects to have materialized via PoW Outputs. It should also be noted that many PoW Outputs have a planned delivery late in the biennium.

151. EAs are set at a level higher than 'immediate outcomes' of UNEP work and as such do not measure UNEP's sole performance. These factors inevitably lead to the conclusion that performance expectations specified within the PoW are overly optimistic and are specified a too high a results level.

152. The first six monthly UNEP Programme Progress Report (PPR), contained a lengthy overview of 'highlights from UNEP initiatives' and a second section presenting progress in PoW implementation by subprogramme, EA and PoW Outputs. The vast majority of the progress, outputs and achievements documented in the first section related to work that was on-going or came to fruition during the current biennium, but that was initiated in earlier planning cycles.

153. The second PPR report built on the positive aspects of the first report, it was a more concise document that focused on progress on PoW Implementation. The 2nd PPR states:

154. *"The focus of the report is on performance measurement towards achieving results and not results measurement per se. Thus, even though this report does show some actual results achieved, evaluation is necessary for an objective verification of these results and the degree to which they can be attributed to UNEP. To this end, an evaluation plan for the duration of the Medium Term Strategy has been defined to be implemented by the UNEP Evaluation Office. This measure ensures that performance measurement is supplemented by independent evaluations of the achievement of objectives and planned results."*

155.   The Evaluation Office fully supports the position that UNEP's monitoring focus should be on measuring progress towards the achievement of results, and that performance in relation to higher level results should be addressed through evaluation.

156.   The first PPR report cites *delays* in the receipt of funding as an important factor affecting the delivery of results "*Results from UNEP's work must be achieved in the biennium to which the results were planned despite the late arrival of donor funding: This report shows that a challenge UNEP faces is to deliver results planned for one biennium in that biennium. While many results are not achievable in one single biennium, there are nevertheless results planned in a biennium that must be achieved either in that biennium or the next. Yet, several results can only be achieved in a subsequent biennium as donor funding to achieve the results planned does often come late. UNEP has to identify ways of reducing its vulnerability to the risk that it cannot deliver a result planned for a given biennium.*"

157.   Whilst the above may be true, a more fundamental problem is that realistic timeframes for achievement of results at the level currently articulated in UNEP's Expected Accomplishments are much longer than two years. Expectations regarding rates of progress towards higher level results need to be more realistic and better communicated to UNEP stakeholders.

158.   Another obvious deficiency in the performance monitoring system is that the linkage between progress made and resources expended in is lacking. Currently, the Environment Fund (staff and money) resources associated with each PoW Output, in terms of both allocation and expenditure are not known. Extra-budgetary funding information is more readily available, but is in a disaggregated form and not routinely reported.

4.   Summary of requirements for future planning process PoW 2012–13 and MTS 2014–17

159.   The UNEP Planning framework needs to be simplified by:
- Simplifying terminology consistent with OECD-DAC terminology
- Ensuring that results statements are consistent with PoW results levels and across subprogrammes
- Programme Frameworks should ideally be used as a basis for refining EAs and Outputs in the PoW
- Performance monitoring focuses on objectively verifiable milestones that track progress to higher results levels
- Phase out activities that have little meaningful linkage to the organization's higher level results
- An updated programme manual needs to be made available to all staff as soon as possible.
- Project documents should present a clear Theory of Change.

160.   UNEP staff need training on project and programme design including Theory of Change and designing indicators and results statements at all levels in the results framework. There is a clear need for an improved accountability framework:
- The roles and responsibilities of Subprogramme Coordinators need to be carefully considered and redefined to have subprogramme design and delivery approaches at their core.
- Limiting Divisional designations to Lead Division (for subprogrammes) and Managing Division (for projects)
- Divisional work plans are key to achieving transparency in resource allocation and programme delivery and should be prepared.

161.   Regional Strategies should become a critical input into the development of the next MTS and PoW, as these should inform MTS and PoW development from the bottom-up, reflecting priorities and requests of stakeholders in the regions making UNEP's work more demand-driven. Regional Strategies will also dramatically increase Regional Office engagement in the MTS and PoW development processes.

III.   Analysis of Project Performance and Lessons Learnt

Overview

162.   In the biennium 2010–11, the Evaluation Office rated the performance of 37 projects through in-depth evaluations. The evaluations included projects that contribute towards the strategic direction articulated in the MTS and UNEP's programme of work across these thematic areas: i) Environmental Governance; ii)Ecosystem Management; iii) Resource Efficiency; iv) Climate Change; v) Harmful substances and Hazardous Waste; and vi) Disasters and Conflicts. These projects have delivered on UNEP's priority areas and objectives through various means of implementation including: assessments to provide sound science and policy advice for decision making; awareness raising and information exchange; capacity building and technical support; and cooperation through networks and partnerships.

163.   In terms of overall performance, 9% of the projects evaluated were rated "Highly Satisfactory", 51% as "Satisfactory", and 30% as "Moderately Satisfactory". 11% of the projects evaluated fell within the "Unsatisfactory" range in overall performance.

164.   Overall, the projects were considered relevant to UNEP objectives and country needs; most have achieved their objectives and have a good chance of replication and/or up-scaling. A majority of the projects evaluated have been successful in ensuring a strong stakeholder involvement through information sharing and consultation, and through the stakeholders' participation in project implementation. The supervision and backstopping role by UNEP was also generally adequate and effective in a good number of the projects evaluated. However, it seems that projects would have benefited from more thorough design and preparation, with only just about half of projects achieving a "Satisfactory" rating and higher in these parameters. The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems of projects – the parameter with the lowest overall performance rating — were often found to be insufficiently designed to provide constructive feedback on performance to project management.

165.   Figure 7 overleaf presents the overall performance of all the UNEP projects evaluated in the 2010–2011 period, taking into account their rating in the evaluation criteria listed, each of which is discussed in greater detail in this chapter.

Figure 7: Analysis of Overall Project Performance in the period 2010-2011
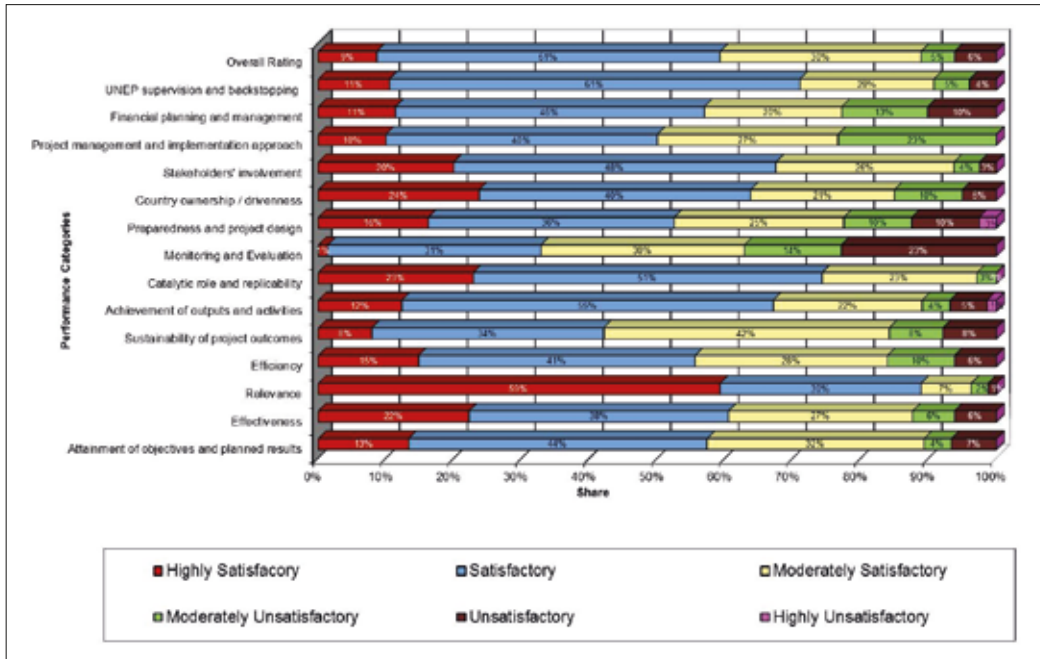
A. Achievement of Objectives and Planned Results

166. The evaluations sought to determine the extent to which the projects' major objectives were achieved, or were expected to be achieved (in the case of MTEs), taking into account their performance in relation to the following parameters: i) Relevance (consistency of project outcomes with organisational/programme focal areas and regional and country priorities); ii) Effectiveness (how well and to what extent stated outcomes and objectives have been met); and iii) Efficiency (achievement of project objectives and outputs in relation to inputs, costs and implementation timelines). Figure 8 below shows projects performance in the achievement of objectives and results.

Figure 8: Overall Rating in Achievement of Project Objectives and Results
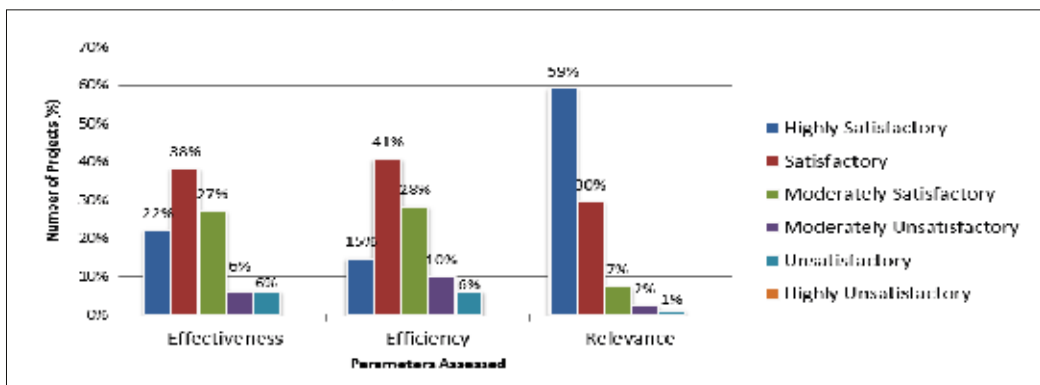
167. Of the total number of projects evaluated, 89% were rated "satisfactory" or higher in terms of their relevance to stakeholders including governments, UN agencies, and other organisations. The highest performance ratings in "Relevance" as a parameter were mostly given to projects related to: climate change (particularly projects dealing with energy efficiency and the phasing out of Ozone Depleting Substances); sustainable management of natural resources (particularly projects dealing with water resources, biodiversity and ecosystems management), and focusing on institutional strengthening and capacity building.

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168. Successful projects were implemented at a relevant time for the countries involved and were adequately followed-through with careful consideration of the involvement of relevant stakeholders. Coordination among different project components and with capacity development efforts often extended to the organizational and enabling-environment level, with national political support sought at the highest levels. An example of this is in the project *"GEF-funded UNEP and UNDP projects that phased out ozone-depleting substances in countries with economies in transition (CEIT)"* which consisted of 46 separate country interventions. GEF funding was provided at an opportune time when the participating countries were recovering from poor economic conditions following their independence from the Soviet Union and the introduction of free market economies. The project aimed at preventing a return to 'business-as-usual' practices in the use of Ozone Depleting Substances in these countries; all the outputs and outcomes of the project were in agreement with both the GEF strategy for reducing ozone layer depletion in response to the Montreal Protocol, as well as Government strategies and priorities.

169. Of the projects evaluated about 89% succeeded in delivering activities and achieving outputs as planned – with a performance rating of "Moderately Satisfactory" and higher. Project outputs have included the set-up of (national and regional) coordination mechanisms and working groups, awareness and capacity building initiatives, development and/or review of relevant policy and legislative frameworks, feasibility studies, data bases, publications, websites, radio broadcasts, among others. Yet, project performance in terms of "effectiveness" and "efficiency" was less positively rated. 60% of the projects were said to have effectively achieved their objectives, and 56% of them did so in an efficient way. Time delays affected a number of projects in the achievement of planned outputs and activities; in some cases, project timeframes were deemed too limited and efforts to disseminate the information produced regarded as not sufficiently systematic to accomplish some of the stated objectives, or to have an impact at policy level. For example, there is little evidence that the *Indigenous People's Network for Change* project, although relevant, was able to contribute, during its timeframe, to any formal decision and recommendation by either the Convention on Biodiversity Secretariat or the GEF.

170. Efficiency, in some cases, was affected by the over-ambitious nature of objectives that proved difficult to attain under existing conditions. One such example is the project *"Integrated Ecosystems Management (IEM) in shared watersheds between Nigeria and Niger",* whereby the evaluation found some of the expected outcomes/outputs were too far-reaching to be easily attainable within the project's time-frame and its available resources. Other factors affecting the achievement of planned outputs and activities included: i) suspension of funding; ii) longer-than-expected disbursement and/or tendering processes; iii) significant staff turnover; iv) sub-optimal choice of and reliance on external consultants to complete key tasks; and iv) inefficiencies in information dissemination (for instance, good quality publications not well targeted or sufficiently disseminated).

171. Overall, Knowledge Management (KM) products have contributed to the development of capacities of individuals and policy makers. Within the framework of the project *"Development and implementation of mechanisms to disseminate lessons learned and best practices in integrated trans-boundary water resource management in Latin America and the Caribbean"* for example, key publications and databases of national legislations were produced and made available on the web and these were accessed with as much as 20,000 hits annually; in a few cases the lessons learned were even used at national level to inform sub-national consultation processes. However, in some cases, projects relied too heavily on passive dissemination via the creation of web-sites, without parallel awareness-raising and more targeted dissemination initiatives. The

evaluations revealed that use of existing structures, networks and information can enhance the achievement of planned activities and outputs in a more timely and efficient manner; projects that involve capacity building and awareness raising can particularly be enhanced in this way without wasting available resources on 'reinventing the wheel'.

B.   Sustainability of Project Outcomes

172.   The evaluations assessed risks to the continuation and enhancement of long-term project-derived outcomes after the project funding had ceased. Four sustainability aspects were evaluated, namely: i) financial; ii) socio-political; iii) institutional framework and governance; and iv) environmental sustainability. Figure 9 below shows projects' likelihood to sustain intended outcomes.

Figure 9: Overall Assessment of Sustainability of Project Outcomes
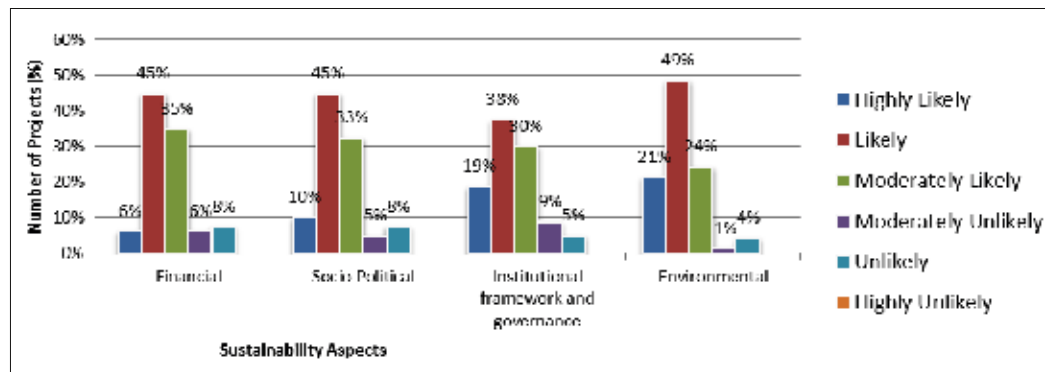
173.   Overall, about 86% of the evaluated projects were rated between "Highly Likely" and "Moderately Likely" to be financially and institutionally sustainable. Socio-political sustainability of projects received slightly higher ratings with about 88% of projects rated highly to moderately likely to be sustainable. Environmental sustainability of projects ranked highest in the assessment with only about 5% considered possibly unsustainable in this parameter. An example of a project deemed "Highly Likely" to be sustainable across all these aspects was "Supporting the Implementation of the African 10 YFP on SCP and the Work plan of the German Taskforce on Cooperation with Africa"; this project saw active participation of policy makers in several project activities and the adoption of project results contributed directly to the promotion of environmental and industrial policies in the region.

C.   Financial Sustainability

174.   This assesses the extent to which the continuation of project results is dependent on sustained financial support. Projects deemed most likely to be sustainable in this aspect had sufficient resources allocated (e.g. by governments, development partners, donors, programmes, etc.) to continue the dissemination of project outputs and for follow-up activities even after the project funding had ceased. The continuation of, and follow-up to, project activities of most projects is however often hampered by the lack of financial resources at country level, coupled with competing priorities for these resources. A continued reliance on financial support from donors and international organizations is symptomatic of this. The project "*Integrated Ecosystem Management (IEM) of Trans-boundary Areas between Nigeria and Niger*", for example, was rated likely to be sustainable because of the commitment demonstrated by the participating governments (Niger and Nigeria) in allocating resources for implementation of

the second phase of the project within the national budget, as well as the commitment from other development partners to review and consider project proposals prepared in context of the IEM implementation after project completion.

D. Socio-Political Sustainability

175. The evaluations assessed the extent to which project outcomes are dependent on socio-political factors, and the level of stakeholder ownership required to guarantee the outcomes are sustained. Generally socio-political sustainability is enhanced when projects are deemed to be relevant, stakeholders (including those at the community level) actively participate in project management and decision-making, and the project closely works with national and local governments to create a conducive policy environment. Among the factors that have been found to negatively affect socio-political sustainability include political unrest, shifting political and economic priorities, and lack of local political goodwill.

176. The evaluations reveal that strong linkages with national governments are considered very favourable for continuation of project-derived outcomes. An example of this is the project *"Evaluation of GEF-Funded UNEP and UNDP Projects that Phased Out Ozone-Depleting Substances in Countries with Economies in Transition"* whereby the government of Lithuania developed legislation to support the implementation of a multi-stakeholder approach involving different services, administrations and ministries in achieving sustainability of project outcomes. Conversely, in the case of the project *"China rural energy enterprise development"*, state-owned companies left very little room for the participation of small private players in the off-grid clean energy business; and while local government agencies have indeed appreciated the positive benefits of the project, they are unlikely to change the existing practices unless the central Government were to formulate a policy to create greater synergy among the various players.

E. Institutional Framework and Governance

177. This parameter gauges the probability that project outcomes will be sustained by the existing institutional and legal frameworks, policies, governing structures and processes. The evaluations found that institutional sustainability largely depends on the degree to which key stakeholders are involved in project execution as well as the extent to which the project contributes to defining clear governance and institutional frameworks that remain in place after the project's end. Project activities that have been found to enhance sustainability are closely related to socio-political sustainability issues and include: i) building local management/technical capacity to perpetuate project outcomes; iii) establishing effective outreach strategies; and iv) institutionalizing project outcomes by supporting the development of relevant policy.

E. Environmental Sustainability

178. Projects by UNEP/GEF in principle and by definition do not pose a threat to the environmental sustainability of the planned project outcomes; project activities as such do not imply environmental risks. The evaluations therefore assessed those external factors that could undermine the environmental sustainability of project outcomes. Over 90% of the projects evaluated were found to range between highly and moderately likely to be environmentally sustainable.

179. Long-term environmental project outcomes and benefits might however be at risk when the ecological trade-offs are not appreciated by the key stakeholders and decision-makers. In developing countries for example, issues such as land mismanagement, pollution, or short-term economic benefits are perceived to be more obvious risks; this may be attributed to limited awareness of the importance of environmental considerations and their linkages to socio-economic welfare.

180. An example of "Moderately unlikely environmental sustainability" is from the project "Support for Environmental Management of the Iraqi Marshlands" whereby external factors beyond the control of the project, namely droughts and upstream water use, present a risk to the long-term environmental sustainability of the planned outcomes. Given the pressing priority to address basic human needs in the post-conflict period, coupled with the long-standing regional disputes over water, the project concluded that it would have been unrealistic to include transboundary water issues into this project. Severe water scarcity caused by the drought in 2008–2009 (coupled with institutional factors inside and outside of Iraq, such as irrigation and construction of dams) impacted the quantity of water reaching the Marshlands, and resulted in the reversal of some of the project's results — such as sanitation demonstrations on sites which had dried up. However, the new UNEP-UNESCO follow up project "World Heritage as a tool for natural and cultural management of the Iraqi Marshlands" is addressing some of the sustainability questions through assisting the establishment of long-term preservation and management plans for the Marshlands and by raising the local, national and international recognition of the importance of the Iraqi Marshlands as a potential World Heritage site.

Lessons learnt

181. *Projects should develop* exit *strategies that incorporate policy dialogue and advocacy support, in order to promote the sustainability of results and impacts at a wider level. Pilot interventions with the highest potential for sustainability are likely to be those which do not merely implement a number of scattered activities, but combine demonstration activities with support to strategic planning and policy development.*

182. *Because outcomes relate to what people will be able to do better, faster, or more efficiently, the dissemination of project outputs (e.g. tools, models, guidelines, methods, case studies, knowledge, or recommendations) that can be easily taken up by the stakeholders/beneficiaries will be of great value for enhancing sustainability. Projects which aim at developing capacities should not only focus on training of individuals, but also on strengthening organizations (by improving procedures) and facilitating an enabling environment (through policy and legislation). Future projects should therefore be designed with careful attention to the actual chances that the capacities developed could be effectively used even after project end.*

183. *Involvement of local stakeholders in the decision-making and development of new knowledge and skills generates ownership which pays dividends for project sustainability. In order to enhance this uptake, the theory of change should be applied and some key pre-conditions fulfilled: financial resources need to be available, and community participation also needs to be encouraged in order to promote ownership even at the local community level.*

184. *Centralized budgets are increasingly under pressure, limiting the ability of countries to sustain relevant project results. Projects should have an explicit strategy to work with Governments to define prospective partners for financing the planned follow-up actions.*

G. Replicability and the Catalytic Role of Projects

185. Replicability is considered as the extent to which the approaches used and experiences gained from projects can be applied to the design and implementation of other similar projects. The project evaluations assessed project replicability in terms of expansion, extension or replication of similar activities in other countries / regions. The catalytic role refers to activities that support the creation of an enabling environment to help upscale new approaches at a national / regional level, in order to sustainably achieve project benefits.

186. Few projects could demonstrate catalytic effects while still being implemented or soon after their completion; the main element to evaluate the catalytic role of projects in such cases therefore related to foundational and enabling activities, focusing on: i) policy; ii) regulatory frameworks; iii) national priority setting; and iv) relevant capacity. Whenever the time elapsing between the end of a project and its terminal evaluation allowed for an assessment of the catalytic effect in terms of institutional, behavioural, and policy changes, the latter was however rather limited. Of the projects that were evaluated in relation to this criterion, 23% received a "Highly Satisfactory" rating and an additional 74% were rated either as "Satisfactory" or "Moderately Satisfactory" – a total of 97% within the "Satisfactory" performance range. (Refer to Figure below)

Figure 10: Assessment of replicability and catalytic role of projects
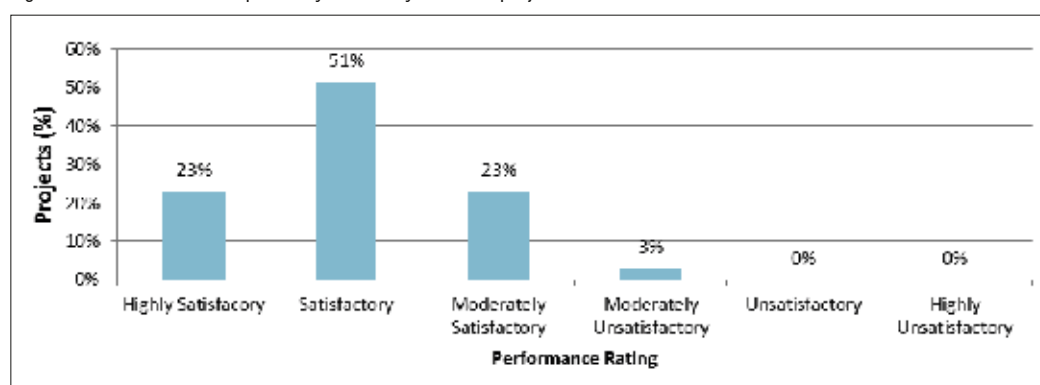
187. Project replicability to some degree was affected by differences in socio-economic and institutional situations from one country to another; replication therefore necessitated in many cases (notably in the least developed countries of Africa, Central Asia and Latin America) substantial and creative adaptations to suit local situations. An example of a project with successful catalytic effect and replicability is the *"Development and implementation of mechanisms to disseminate lessons learned and best practices in integrated trans-boundary water resource management in Latin America and the Caribbean",* whereby several countries in the region have developed new laws and policies relating to water resources management. While it is not possible to directly attribute these advances to the project itself, there is common agreement that access to relevant data on the web-nodes combined with regional meetings and dialogues had facilitated the process. Projects that did not perform quite as well against this criterion were hampered by: lack of appropriate policies to support institutional changes, weak participatory frameworks, lack of sustained financing after project completion, and lack of advocacy and communication of project results.

188. The findings from across project level evaluations also reinforce observations made in the formative evaluation from the assessment of a large number of project designs. There

appears to be an unrealised potential for UNEP to build a more robust science-based approach to maximize the likelihood of replication from 'demonstration' and 'pilot' activities. Demonstrations and pilots undertaken in multiple countries / settings could yield more information about the feasibility for replication in other contexts if their effectiveness were analysed in a structured way through comparative research frameworks. The idea here is that demonstration / pilot sites should be chosen in multiple locations to capture a wide range of contextual conditions in relation to the key variables that are thought to affect the performance of a given intervention. A research-based analysis of the performance of pilots and demonstrations would be more likely to yield generalizable findings that would foster effective replication in a wide range of situations. The impacts that stem from UNEP pilots and demonstrations would then reach far beyond the immediate locations of their execution.

Lessons Learnt

189. *Demonstration projects that are not coupled with considerable publicity on their successes have little catalytic effect and impact on the attitudes and behaviour of project beneficiaries and stakeholders who have not been directly involved in project implementation and execution.*

H.   Factors Affecting Project Performance

1.   Preparedness and Project Design

190. The evaluations assessed the quality of project design in terms of technical preparation, planned involvement of stakeholders and partners, and feasibility of the stated goals within the project duration. Projects that scored well in preparedness and design had objectives that were clear, realistic and feasible within the implementation timeframe; project counterparts were adequately selected; project design was technically sound and the concept well-constructed; lessons learnt from UNEP and other organisations/projects of a similar nature were used to improve project design; and partnership strategies were clearly defined — including well-defined implementation roles and responsibilities. A number of projects evaluated have clearly demonstrated the benefits of taking time at the outset to make a thorough assessment of the situation, learn lessons from other projects, collect the experience from as many sources as possible, and then start the implementation process. Partnerships and institutional arrangements with national stakeholders were also moderately well defined.

191. The project design *for "Improving water management and governance in African countries through support in development and implementation of IWRM plans"* was rated "Highly Satisfactory" because it had clearly defined its governance framework for execution, adequately identified the roles of stakeholders and beneficiaries, and planned for a number of regular Project Management Group meetings with all the partners. On the other hand, the design of the project *"Integrated management of peatlands for biodiversity and climate change"* project was rated 'unsatisfactory' because of a number of concomitant factors, including: poor financial planning/budgeting, unclear institutional arrangements, extremely ambitious components and activities compared to the size of the budget, poorly developed monitoring and evaluation approaches, and a slow / lengthy approval and design process which forced project managers to significantly change the design after the project started.

192. Regional and inter-regional projects often showed weak governance structures, with country teams left too much by themselves and existing capacities at national level poorly assessed or over-estimated when selecting the participating countries. Regional projects, though mostly valued for addressing common issues to the countries involved, require that the specificities

of each country (socio-economic, cultural, political, etc.) are well assessed and appropriately considered in the project design. Other issues that affected project readiness and design included: resource constraints; limited project time-frames; over-ambitious project objectives relative to the time and budget available; challenging approval processes; unrealistic expectations of GEF/UNEP; lack of sufficient risk assessment; management, institutional and/or regulatory hurdles; and lack of a project inception period with introductory activities e.g. baseline surveys or needs assessment by country/stakeholders.

193. The relevance of projects to the actual situation on the ground at the time of project implementation was also found to be critical to project design and preparedness. In post-conflict countries for example, mechanisms that are focused on the immediacy of results may not be the optimum vehicle for addressing large-scale environmental challenges (e.g. habitat restoration) that require longer-term interventions than post-conflict mechanisms may allow. Further, in post-conflict situations where in-country capacity is already likely to be low, a phased approach to implementing projects would enable in-country agencies to cope better with the cumulative workload. An example of a project implemented in "post-conflict" circumstances is *"Support for Environmental Management of the Iraqi Marshlands"*; the project design was simple and it recognised that the destruction of the marshlands was one of the major environmental and humanitarian disasters facing Iraq and consequently that their restoration was a priority. The perceived relevance of the project concept helped to enhance the effectiveness of implementation in particularly challenging circumstances.

Lessons Learnt

194. *Review of previous comparable projects*/project *activities is critical in the design of new projects because it allows for the incorporation of the lessons learnt and avoidance of similar pitfalls; too often, too little or no review at all is done and subsequently the wheel is "reinvented" and the same mistakes made. There would be great value addition if UNEP/GEF would give presentations of project successes and shortcomings to the project management units of other related projects; where lessons learned and successes are shared, the likelihood of the same errors being made is lessened. This is a better method than relying on passive dissemination of reports.*

195. *GEF projects* should *centre on regional projects involving countries that are closely related in the sense that they can much more easily form a relatively homogeneous group with less contrasting baseline conditions; for instance, countries that share more or less the same capacities, ecosystems, challenges, languages, etc. are likely to have fewer disparities. Widely varying country-level characteristics and demands complicate the achievement of project objectives; consequently some countries are able to go much further along the outcome-to-impact pathways while others struggle to take the initial steps. The project design must in some measure be adapted to account for country-specific conditions in order that the commitment and the level of interest are strengthened; to this end, a "sub-project document" for each country may be developed to incorporate such discrepancies between countries.*

196. *Post-conflict* projects *should focus on solving a set of immediate pertinent issues while still contributing to broader environmental goals. The achievement of objectives and results in projects concerned with post-conflict/ disaster rehabilitation also need to be given a 'fast-track' approach in order that there is no disparity or illogicality between the project intentions and the realities on the ground at the time of project implementation.*

197. *Where it enhances the achievement of objectives and results, GEF should consider more phased projects whereby regional/national tools and capacities are developed during a preliminary phase and the demonstrations of their use is undertaken in a successive phase(s).*

198.   *Greater consideration should be given to balancing funding and timing with expected outputs, especially when stakeholders are new to the intervention or the (inter)regional nature of the activities requires ample time to coordinate multiple partners.*

199.   *Those responsible for project design (and subsequent management and execution) should ensure that impact drivers are set in motion from the onset. These may include:*
- *A detailed analysis of background conditions, including a mapping of key stakeholders and institutional relationships in the areas covered by the project;*
- *Adequate time and resources to foster high level support and commitment from stakeholders who may include government 'champions', civil society organizations, private sector representatives, and local communities;*
- *A clear definition of roles and distribution of supervision, oversight, project management and execution responsibilities among the project partners; and*
- *An appropriate coordination and support mechanism which facilitates exchange between partners and participating countries, collation and dissemination of up-to-date information.*

2.   Implementation Approach and Adaptive Management

200.   The evaluations assessed the approach to project *implementation*, the preparedness and readiness of projects for implementation, the clarity of the roles and of the distribution of responsibilities, and the adaptive management measures. The projects with high performance ratings in this parameter often had effective management, timely reporting, good information dissemination, well-linked project components, well-suited methodologies that were appropriate for the current state of development in the country/region, high standards of professionalism and dedication by project staff, sufficient built-in opportunities for stakeholder coordination through consultative and review meetings, good coordination and a sense of trust and cooperation between the stakeholders.

201.   A number of projects did apply adaptive management to enable them respond to changing conditions and unforeseen circumstances. Project management was often praised for their flexibility in making necessary adjustments to cope with unexpected setbacks. In the project *"Building the partnership to track progress at the global level in achieving the 2010 biodiversity target"* for example, feedback UNEP Task Managers and others acted upon the results of the MTE to improve the implementation of the later stages of the project. Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports thereafter showed a significant improvement in PIR ratings, testifying to good adaptive management and learning from experience.

202.   The creation of strategic focal points to assist with project implementation and adaptive management also played a part in enhancing project performance. Much of the success of the project *"Addressing land-based Activities in the Western Indian Ocean"(WIO-LaB)"* for example, can be attributed to the appointment of National Focal Points (NFPs) whose roles spanned governance, coordination and oversight, policy development, and in some cases direct management of project activities such as the demonstration projects. The project relied strongly on the NFPs' ability to perform these tasks effectively in a context where institutional support was highly variable amongst different countries.

203.   Most of the negative assessments across different evaluations about the approach to project implementation actually derive from poor design: ambitious goals in short time-frames, and poor quality of feasibility studies. However, many of the issues are also linked to poor coordination structures that affected project implementation and management; using the example of the project "*Demonstrating Application of Environmentally Sound Technologies (ESTs)*

for Building Waste Reduction in Indonesia", project management and decision making was mostly done from Japan with very little control over the execution of project activities and the utilisation of project resources on the ground. The project titled *"International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management-Initiative"* experienced difficulties in decision-making and the linkages at the inter-division level of UNEP could have benefitted from being more clearly defined and operated.

204.   Other factors affecting the quality of project implementation in the evaluated projects included: high staff turn-over, slow recruitment of key project personnel, insufficient coordination between project stakeholders, complex management structures requiring additional decision levels, complex institutional arrangement for oversight and guidance.

Lessons Learnt

205.   *Whenever more than one UNEP division is involved in project execution, problems with coordination may arise; to remedy this, a formal process of joint planning should be developed which goes beyond a mere exchange of notes. Such a joint planning exercise could take the form of a workshop, in which agreement is sought on priorities, and mandates are clearly defined and recorded.*

206.   *UNEP needs to ensure that adequate staff and staff time is allocated from an early stage, especially in the case of complex regional projects involving multiple partner organizations. Sound coordination will usually require a full-time project manager based in the region to communicate regularly with project partners and support the execution of the activities in each country. Turnover of key project staff that results in delays and other inefficiencies in project execution is also a risk that needs management; mitigation strategies may include:*
*   *Ensuring a sufficient number of staff capable of backstopping one another's roles;*
*   *Formal hand-over processes in the event of staff turnover; and*
*   *Producing good, informative and up-to-date project documentation.*

207.   *It is important that UNEP relies on existing government structures and on national focal points (NFPs), especially as UNEP does not have a presence in most of the countries where projects are being implemented. It is important that these NFPs are committed to the project and actively participate in project implementation. The selection of suitable NFPs helps to ease the coordination of projects and facilitate cooperation between stakeholders in a more efficient and effective way than the executing agency would.*

I.   UNEP Supervision and Backstopping

208.   The evaluations assessed the role of UNEP in providing quality and timely technical and administrative support to projects, as well as project modifications when needed. UNEP was in most cases said to have provided incisive, timely, and well-received inputs to project management (72% of the cases). However, the different roles of supervision, oversight, project execution and management sometimes lacked adequate separation.

209.   The working relationships between the key partners proved to be difficult in a few cases, although divergent views were well managed by committed staff. UNEP could have, however, been more responsive to delays in reporting and their timely follow up and more proactive in correcting weaknesses in project design. The importance of frequent meetings to exchange experiences and lessons learnt, as well as to enhance the processes and ensure continuity in case key staff left the project/agency, was also often highlighted.

J.   Country Ownership and Driven-ness

210.   The evaluations assessed country ownership in terms of the recipient countries' commitment to projects, taking into consideration the relevance of project outcomes to national development and environmental agendas, as well as regional and international agreements. The assessment also looked at the extent to which relevant country representatives have been involved in the project, and government financial commitments, policies and regulatory frameworks are in line with the project's objectives. Of the projects evaluated for this parameter, 64% were rated "Satisfactory" or higher with the number increasing to 85% if projects rated "Moderately Satisfactory" are included. (Refer to Figure 11 below).

Figure 11: Project performance in ensuring country-ownership
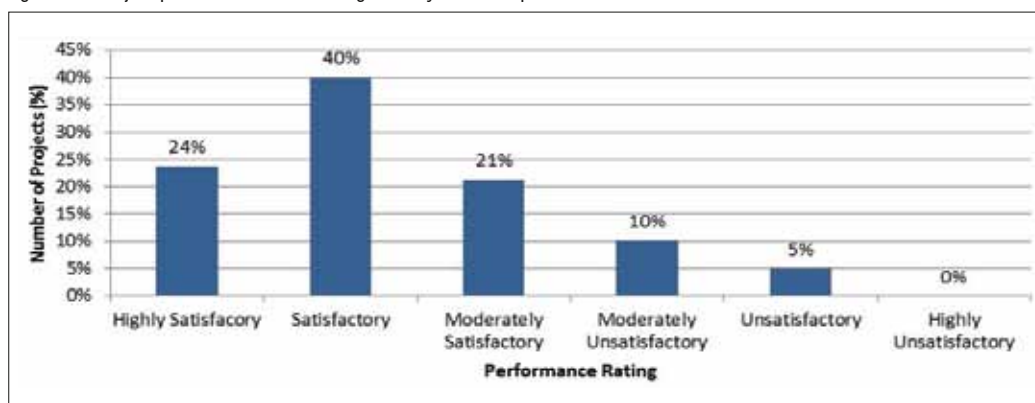
211.   Government ownership was strongest in countries where the project supported policy processes, and local government was effectively involved in demonstration projects. The project *"Building scientific and technical capacity to sustain trans-boundary waters"* for instance provided managers with technical training, better quality data and regional cooperation mechanisms for technical information exchange. The national officers felt they "owned" project results as they themselves executed the activities in their respective countries.

212.   A number of factors have proved essential to enhancing country ownership and commitment: i) relevance of project activities to national development and environmental agendas, ii) full involvement of key stakeholders in project planning and implementation; iii) organization of demonstration sessions, pilot projects, workshops and on-the-job training; iv) a high degree of political goodwill; and v) dissemination of lessons learnt.

213.   Country commitment and ownership has also been found to be driven by factors external to project management but tightly linked to the project's relevance. In the evaluation of *"Total sector methyl bromide phase out in countries with economies in transition and ozone portfolio"* for example, the commitment by Countries with Economies in Transition (CEITs) was largely driven by legal requirements to harmonize national legislations on Ozone Depleting substances (ODS) with the more stringent EU rules. By contrast, the government commitment in Non-EU-CEITs was much weaker as shown by the lack of ratification of key amendments to the Montreal Protocol.

Lessons learnt

214.   *Involvement of local (including community-level) stakeholders in the decision-making processes of a project generates ownership which pays dividends for sustainability.*

215. *Activities* aimed *at generating improved understanding/awareness do not automatically create a sense of ownership of project activities; the design of most demonstration projects assumes that they are in themselves sufficient to elicit interest, ownership and commitment. However, demonstration projects must also be relevant at the conceptual scale and also include a publicity component to "market" the demonstration.*

216. *Although it is* advisable *to identify countries for pilot activities well in advance, it should be a requirement that such countries are absolutely desirous of participating in these pilot projects, and that the proposed activities are relevant to their development priorities; this may be established through a closer-up feasibility study and firmer evidence of government commitment. Whenever a project is not fully demand-driven, the planned interventions may fail to respond to actual needs of the target groups and eliminate any sense of ownership.*

Figure 12: Assessment of Stakeholder Involvement
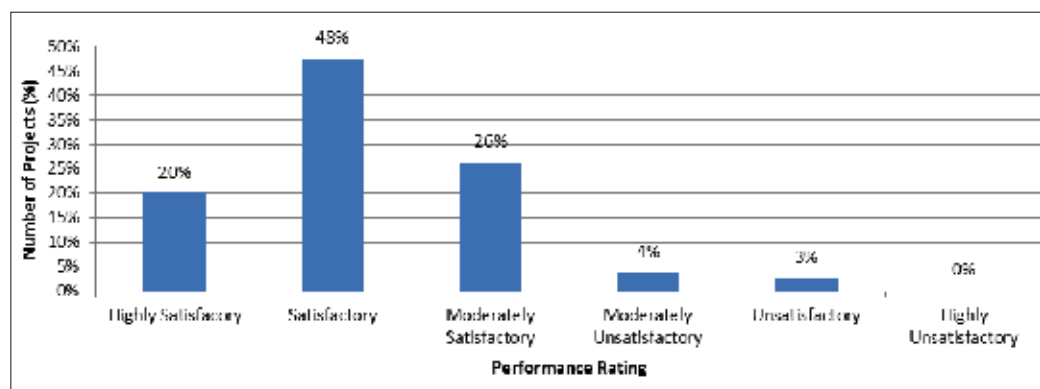
K.   Processes Affecting Stakeholder Involvement

217. The evaluations assessed stakeholder involvement by looking at information dissemination efforts, consultation processes and stakeholder participation in the actual execution of the project activities. As shown in Figure 12 below, about 94% of all the projects evaluated had a good performance in achieving stakeholder involvement (with one fifth of all projects evaluated being rated "highly satisfactory"), including ensuring that the most relevant stakeholders were identified and involved in the project.

218. The evaluations reveal that different mechanisms were put in place to ensure an adequate involvement of stakeholders through coordination meetings and workshops, face-to-face encounters, hands-on training sessions, and the set-up of ICT platforms. The most successful projects were those in which stakeholder involvement was a cross-cutting implementation approach running through all project activities — including giving stakeholders a role in the projects' conceptualisation and systematically involving them in decision-making throughout the project cycle.

219. The involvement of governments, private sector, and other key stakeholders in oversight structures was also found to be essential in encouraging policymaking and the necessary investments, as well as for the sustainability of interventions. Most of the projects evaluated were able to involve government departments, as well as development partners, NGOs, academic community, research institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector in multi-stakeholder dialogues. The project "*Development of National Implementation Plans for the Management of Persistent Organic Pollutants*" for example had a highly participatory process and was designed in part to demonstrate the efficacy of multi-stakeholder processes.

220. Some of the barriers to stakeholder involvement identified through the evaluations included: inadequate stakeholder input in the project design phase; short time-frames allocated for the participatory activities planned for in the project; lack of a culture of inclusiveness by some national governments; lack of mechanisms to identify and engage relevant stakeholders during project preparation; difficulties in dissemination and uptake of information; and failure to adopt different mechanisms for approaching diverse categories of stakeholders.

Lessons learnt

221. *A major lesson* learned *from involving stakeholders is that providing them with information and building their capacities makes them more effective in their roles as project participants, and ensures that the project meets their real needs — not the needs they are perceived to have. However, taking into account their uneven involvement along the project, they should be identified and informed of this participatory process prior to project start-up. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and documented commitment from the various actors are crucial for ensuring substantial participation by stakeholders, and for endorsing mutual understanding of their roles in the project cycle.*

222. *To catalyse actions among governments on issues for which there is no formal international agreement or convention process, UNEP should engage in strategic alliances where UNEP's reputation as a leader in international environmental change processes can engage high-level political support. Such alliances (e.g. with technical specialists, donors and private sector representatives) should be built around the following principles:*
    - *Clear objectives and commonly agreed goals*
    - *Timescale with milestones*
    - *Early attention to high-level political commitment*
    - *Clear governance rules and structures*
    - *Regular review of partnership performance*
    - *Monitoring system for compliance*
    - *Consideration of sanctions for non-compliance, which might work within a voluntary system.*

223. *Decision-making often requires high-ranking government officials, politicians and senior officers (directors and managers) to be aware of the key issues and challenges addressed by projects. As they are however unable attend training workshops that span over several days due time constraints, there is therefore a need to consider developing more strategic means of creating awareness and disseminating information aimed specifically at this group.*

224. *Use of virtual fora (internet and other electronic media) for stakeholder participation reduce the cost of organizing frequent stakeholder meetings and maintain dynamic knowledge networks; they however need to be well structured with well-defined goals in order to be of use, moreover there will always be situations where face-to-face discussions will be necessary for building trust. Although websites are useful in disseminating information, they are a passive tool and need to be backed by awareness campaigns to promote their use and enhance their effectiveness. It also does not necessarily follow that awareness alone will automatically lead to uptake of information and knowledge — this takes time and is underpinned by reinforcement and repetition, including development of face to face and experiential learning tools such as case studies and simulation exercises. A combined approach to capacity building, whereby learning-by-doing is coupled with hands-on training, appears to reinforce the overall delivery of results intended by the project.*

L. Financial Planning and Management

225. Evaluation of financial planning and management assessed the quality and effectiveness of the control of financial resources, and the timely flow of funds for payment of project deliverables throughout a project's lifetime. The evaluations also distinguished financial planning from management.

226. While a significant number of the projects evaluated did experience delays in disbursement of funds, financial management with respect to UNEP requirements was, with the exception of few projects, considered quite satisfactory, professional and transparent, with the controls and reporting systems in place. Projects that were rated "Highly Satisfactory" or "Satisfactory" generally applied appropriate standards of due diligence in the disbursement and spending of project funds. They also had budgets that were well designed and reporting was adequate and transparent. Other factors that favoured financial planning included: i) well-performed tendering process to ensure transparency; ii) selection of favourable quotations to avoid cost over runs; iii) in-kind contributions and co-financing from project partners; iv) professionalism in the management and control of financial systems and reporting; and v) creativity in dealing with variances in project expenditures and/or cash flow crises. 13 below shows that about three quarters of the projects evaluated were rated between highly to moderately satisfactory for this parameter.

Figure 13: Assessment of project performance in financial planning
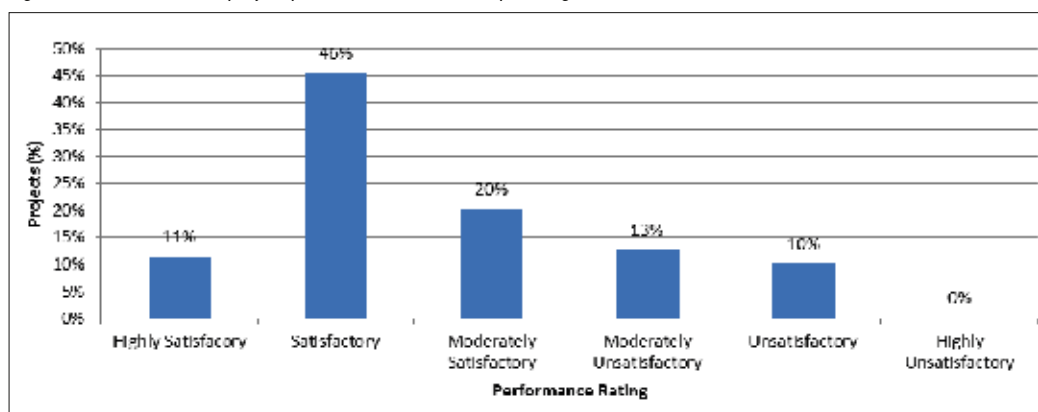
227. Weaknesses in financial planning and management were generally due to i) delays in release of project funds; ii) co-funding/leveraged funding not forth-coming in a timely manner; iii) lack of compensation for severe inflation or currency fluctuations; iv) overuse of international consultants to perform tasks; v) untimely financial reporting; vi) unrealistic expectations as to the degree to which activities can be achieved with limited budget allocations; and vi) complexities arising from having to deal with multiple funding agencies and partners.

228. UNEP has a system for accessing financial, budgetary and expenditure information for projects, and for keeping track of the co-financing and leveraged resources; this provides a useful tool for financial management however in the project *"International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management"* there were clearly difficulties experienced in obtaining accurate data used for financial planning and control, and difficulties in accessing the central system hosted by UNEP in Nairobi.

229. In the case of the project *"Enhancing Conservation of the Critical Network of Sites required by Migratory Waterbirds on the African/Eurasian Flyways"*, the governments contributed to the project

through "in-kind" finance whereby civil servants provided their services towards project implementation. "In-kind" contributions are supposed to be undertakings by governments and other agencies in order to commit them to project activities but they are rarely effective. All too frequently, civil servants are asked to undertake project activities as additions to their regular jobs for the same pay, leading to stress, resentment, poor work, and inadequate time being committed to the job at hand. This may result in the project suffering from poor delivery, or simply in other partners having to cover for this work and bearing the resultant (unaccounted for) costs. Co-financing can also create difficulties in financial management especially where the co-financers have differences in views, as was the case in *"China Rural Energy Enterprise Development"* project; disagreements between the co-financer and the project resulted in delays in the release of grant amounts and uncertainties during the early stage of project implementation.

Lessons learnt

230.   *"In-kind" co-finance by governments needs to be clearly defined at the project design stage whereby civil servants are committed to participate in project activities while their regular posts are temporarily filled by other personnel – the cost of this being borne as the contribution.*

231.   *In cases where co-financing partners do not contribute their share because of disagreements, it is important that a contractual agreement for co-financing be drafted carefully to prevent any conflict of interest or veto power of the co-financier over projects. In addition, financial appraisals should be part of the risk assessment, and possible mitigation strategies against non-compliance should be considered at an early stage.*

232.   *A project database system that provides a link to the associated financial budget and expenditure information from UNEP as a whole, is needed; such a system should be a pre-requisite for effective financial management and should be developed by QAS as a matter of priority.*

M.   Monitoring and Evaluation

233.   The evaluations assessed the quality of the design, application, effectiveness and financial feasibility of projects' Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems. M&E had the lowest average performance among all the criteria assessed in the project evaluations conducted (refer to Figure 14). Project M&E systems were rated "Satisfactory" and higher in only 33% of cases, with the number increasing to 63% if projects with "Moderately Satisfactory" rating are included. M&E design and funding were rated unsatisfactory in 38% and 35% of the projects respectively. The actual implementation of the M&E plan was slightly better (33%), given the constraints.

Figure 14: Assessment of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems
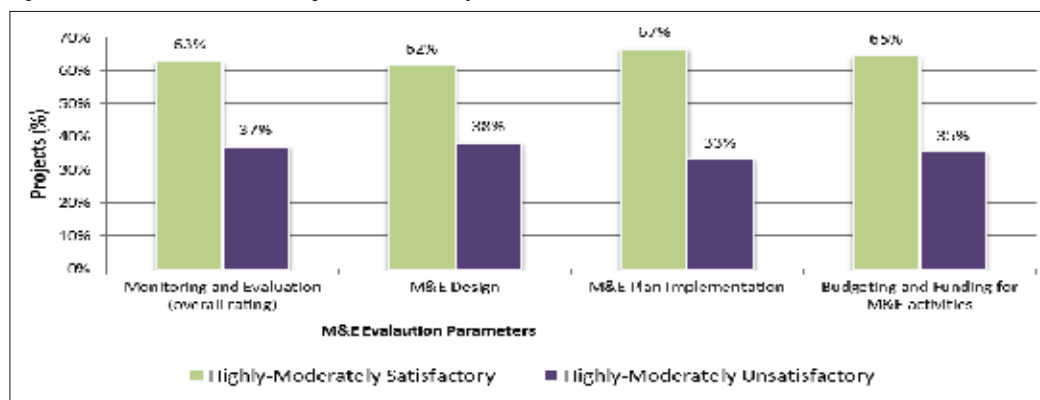
234. The low average performance of M&E systems in majority of projects evaluated was due to a number of weaknesses, including: (i) inconsistencies in the definition of project objectives and outcomes in the project document and in the logical framework; (ii) absence of sufficient baseline data; (iii) shortcomings in the design of key performance indicators that hampered the measurement of the level of achievement; and (iv) monitoring too output-oriented and not properly assessing progress in achieving project outcomes and objectives against key performance indicators. Reporting was often under-budgeted, with a limited number of field visits, and, especially in the case of regional projects, often experienced significant delays.

235. Good M&E systems featured a log frame with SMART[7] indicators for results, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and regular reporting at country level. In some cases, results from reporting and Mid-Term Evaluations were used to inform and contribute to sound decision-making as with the projects "*Addressing land-based activities in the Western Indian Ocean*" project, and "*Eastern African coastal and marine environment resource database and atlas (Phase 3)*" whereby the project management at country level appear to have responded to the recommendations stemming from the regular six monthly reporting to improve project implementation.

Lessons Learnt

236. *The design of a project's M&E system in project documents should receive special attention, while also ensuring that sufficient funds are apportioned to M&E implementation and reporting.*

237. *Project documents should include a clear log frame, appropriate baselines, and SMART process and performance indicators. Indicators should not be restricted to the output level but should also measure the extent to which the different project components contribute to achieving the desired outcomes (i.e. impact-oriented). A baseline study should be included in all projects as part of the project preparatory phase to enable a more impact-oriented M&E process. To the extent possible project monitoring should also include gender-disaggregated data.*

238. *Project documents should adequately address the issue of how to deal with failure to comply with reporting obligations. As a pre-condition, deadlines for reporting must be established and adequate resources allocated to the preparation and analysis of the reports.*

239. *Mid-term reviews and evaluations are most practical when held closer to the project's actual mid-term when they can effectively identify operational constraints and allow managers sufficient time to react and implement recommendations.*

240. *M&E and tracking tools/procedures that are too complex and time-consuming tend to discourage project staff and should therefore be shortened and simplified. Standardized templates and systems for monitoring are useful particularly in a project with wide geographic coverage – this also makes comparisons between different entities easier to do.*

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7   Specific (Simple) Measurable Accurate (Attributable) Relevant Time-bound (and Target-specific)

IV. Compliance with evaluation recommendations

A. Summary of the recommendation compliance procedure

241. Following the completion of an evaluation, the Evaluation Office requests the responsible officer of the evaluated project/programme a feedback on the evaluation's recommendations in terms of acceptance and related actions for implementation. .

242. The implementation plan specifies whether a recommendation has been accepted; how the recommendation will be implemented; who is responsible for its implementation; the date by which the implementation of the recommendation is expected to be completed and what actions have already been taken (if any). Wherever a recommendation is rejected by the project / programme management, an explanation must be provided as to why the recommendation cannot be implemented and, where appropriate, an alternative course of action is to be specified.

243. The Evaluation Office sends the programme officer the implementation plan upon finalization of the evaluation. The implementation plan needs to be returned duly filled in within a month. If this does not occur, all the recommendations specified in the evaluation report are recorded as non-compliant (see below). After the implementation plan has been completed, the Evaluation Office will follow-up with the substantive office on the status of implementation of recommendations at six month intervals and report on the levels of compliance to the Executive Director. This is done in September and in March every year.

244. At each assessment point, the progress in implementing agreed recommendations, as recorded by the responsible staff in updates to the implementation plan, is assessed. On the basis of the evidence provided in the implementation plan progress updates received, recommendations are recorded as:
   • Fully implemented (compliant),
   • Partially implemented (partially compliant),
   • Not implemented (not compliant).
   • No further action required (if events overtake what is planned)

245. Fully implemented recommendations, which required no follow-up, are recorded as such and 'closed'. All the other recommendations will remain 'open'. However, when a recommendation has reached its third assessment point (i.e. 18 months after the first assessment point) it will automatically be recorded as 'closed'. The status of implementation of the recommendation will also be recorded at this time and no further changes to this status will be made. If the Evaluation Office does not receive an updated implementation plan prior to the compliance assessment process, any remaining recommendations from that evaluation are 'closed' with the level of compliance unchanged from the previous assessment point. Any recommendations from mid-term evaluations that were not fully implemented after three assessment points will be considered in the terminal evaluation of the project / programme and incorporated into the terms of reference accordingly.

B. Overview of compliance with subprogramme and project evaluation recommendations 2006 – 2011

246. In the period 2006 – 2011, the Evaluation Office completed a total of 119 project and subprogramme evaluations, which resulted in 748 recommendations. As of September 2011, one hundred and fifty-seven (21 per cent) of recommendations were fully implemented while 40 (5 per cent) were partially implemented. Seventy four (10 per cent) were not implemented (not compliant). 23% were still open. The figure below shows total number of recommendations issued in a year and their status of implementation.

Figure 15: Status of evaluation recommendations by year of Issuance (2006–2011)
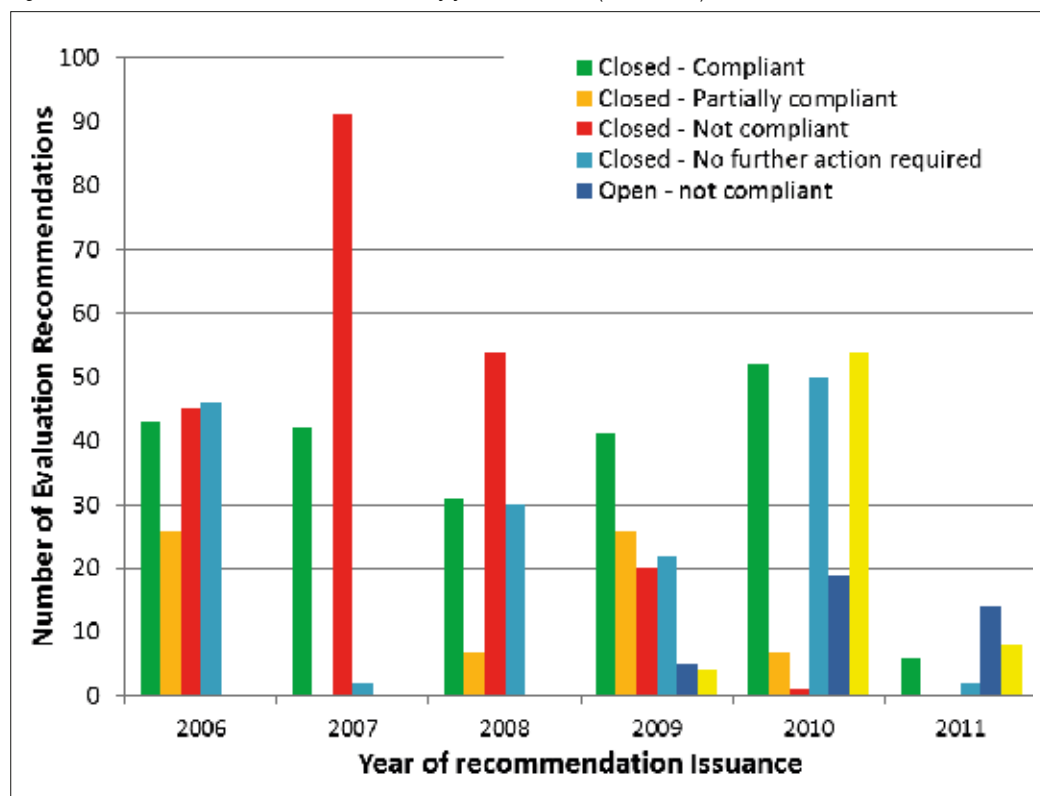
247. During the biennium 2010–2011 (up to September 2011), 39 evaluations were completed. Nine evaluations had no recommendations while 30 implementation plans were issued. Responses to two implementation plans, which were recently issued, have yet to be received. The compliance rate represents 93 per cent which is a remarkable improvement compared to the 67 per cent compliance of the previous biennium. Two hundred and eighteen (218) recommendations were issued from the 30 evaluations containing recommendations. One hundred and sixty-one (74 %) recommendations were accepted, while 22 (10 %) were partially accepted. Twenty seven (13 %) were not accepted. Five recommendations (2%) received no response and for three recommendations (1%), acceptance was not indicated in the response.

248. Fifty-eight (27 %) of the recommendations issued in 2010–2011 were fully implemented (compliant), while 7 (3 %) were partially implemented. Ninety-five (45 per cent) remain open and are either yet to commence implementation or formally report progress made (not compliant). Of the remaining recommendations, fifty two (24%) were closed with 'no further action required' and one recommendation was closed as 'not compliant'.

249.   Overall, recommendations compliance (i.e. in terms of programme/project managers completing the required implementation plans and providing updates on implementation of evaluation recommendations) has greatly improved. The overall implementation of recommendations has increased from 24 per cent in 2008–2009 biennium to 27 % in 2010–2011.

250.   The following graphs show the number of evaluation recommendations issued between 2006 and 2011 for each division. The compliance over time for these recommendations is shown in annual cohorts, according to the year in which they were issued.

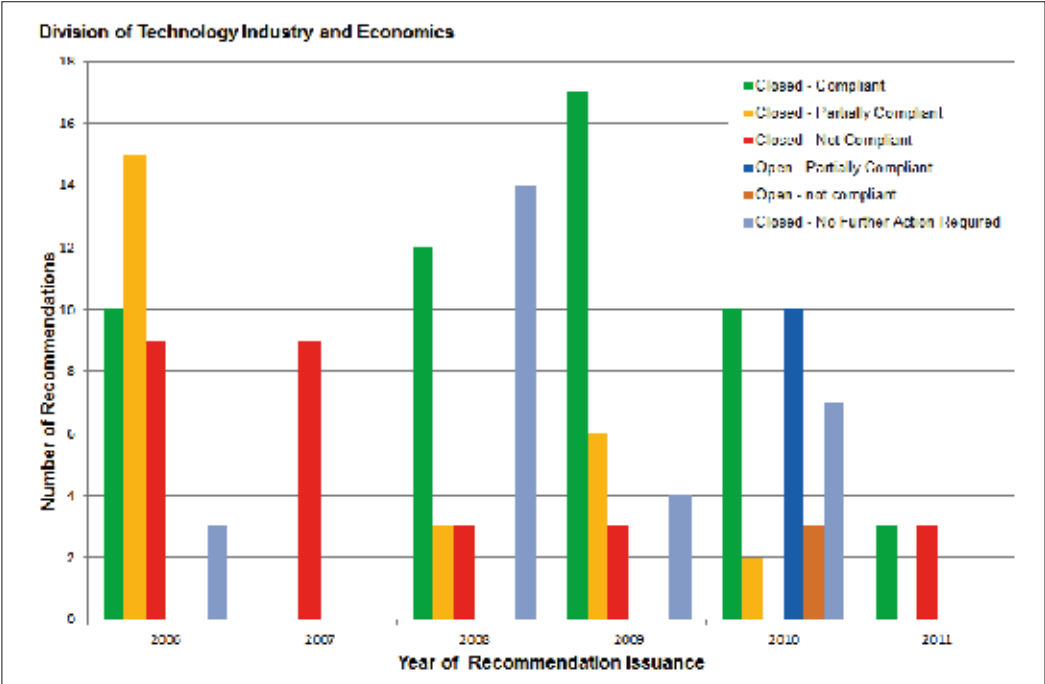Figure 16: DTIE — Compliance with evaluation recommendations 2006–2011

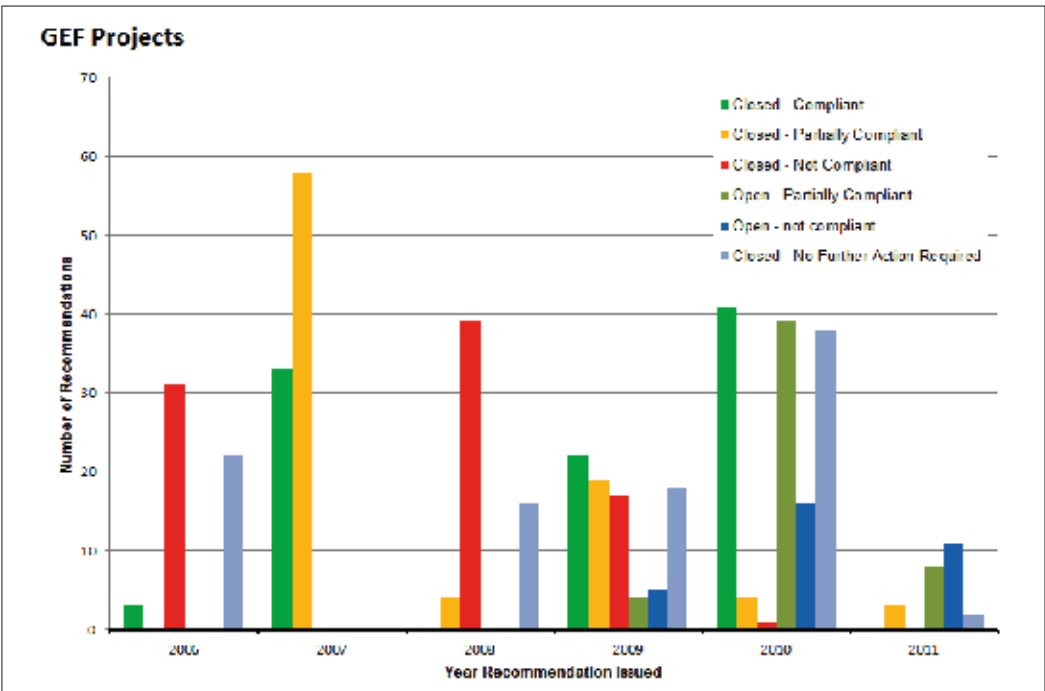Figure 17: DGEF / GEF project – Compliance with evaluation recommendations 2006 – 2011

Figure 18: DEPI — Compliance with evaluation recommendations 2006–2011
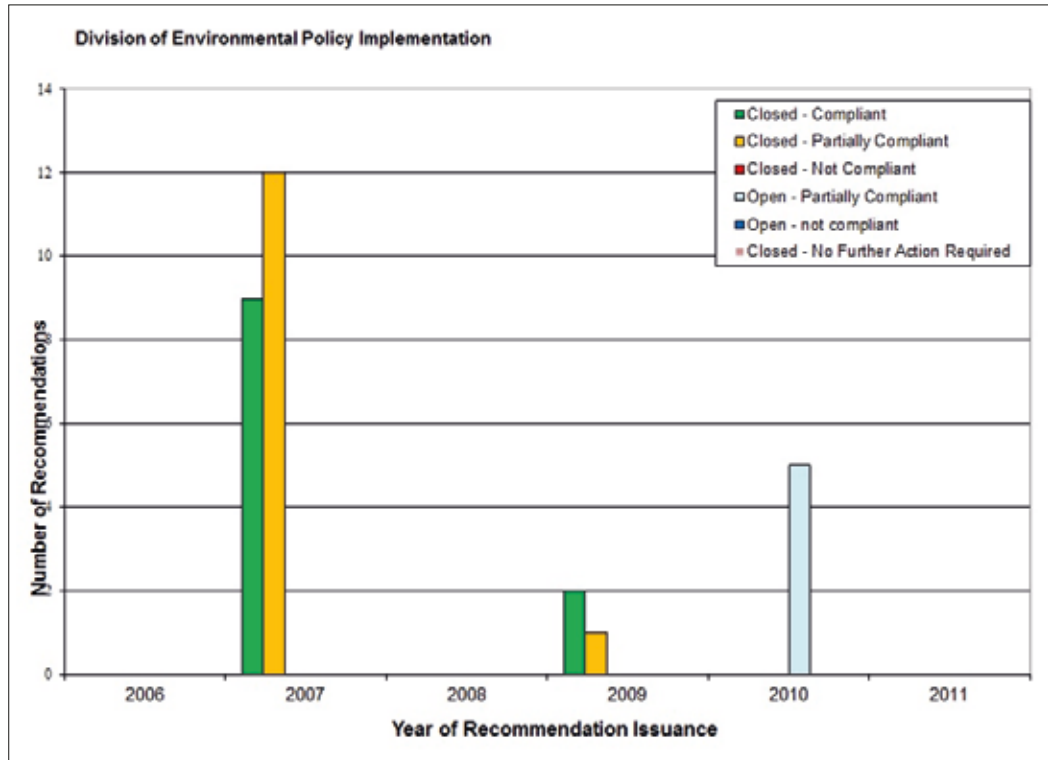

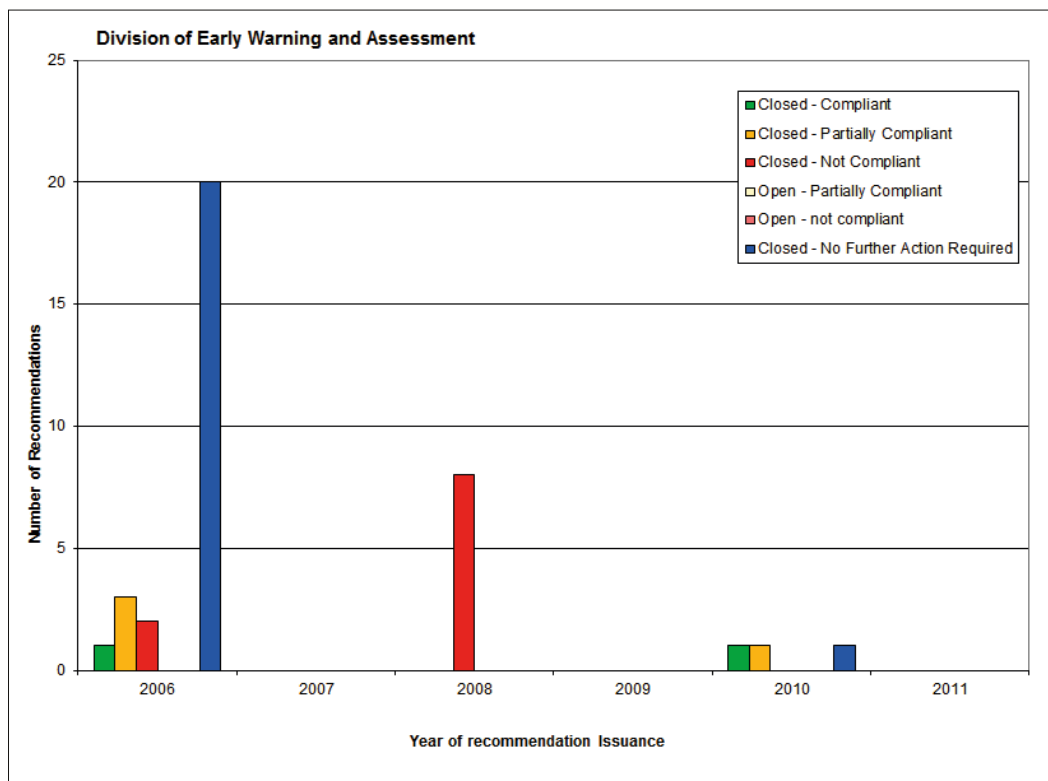Figure 19: DEWA – Compliance with evaluation recommendations 2006 – 2011
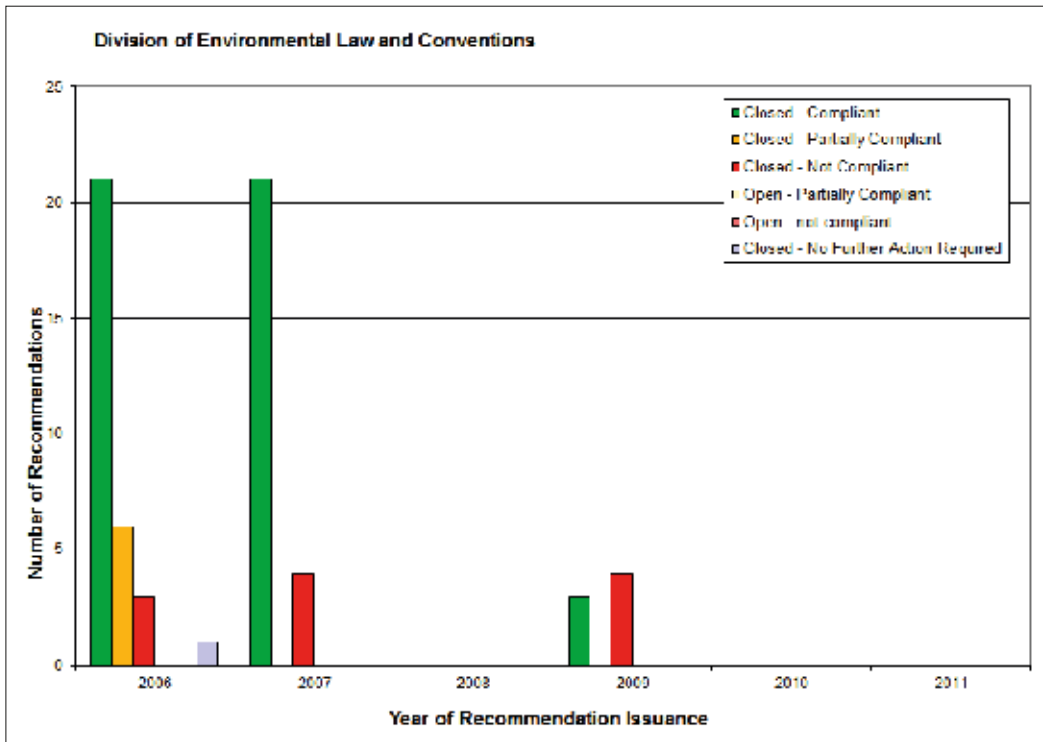
Figure 20: DELC — Compliance with evaluation recommendations 2006–2011

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V. The approach to UNEP Sub-programme Evaluations

A.   Purpose and scope of Sub-programme Evaluations

251.   A Sub-programme Evaluation (SPE) aims at assessing the relevance and delivery performance of UNEP's work expected to contribute to the set of Expected Accomplishments classified under a given Sub-programme. An SPE should help UNEP identify key lessons on strategic positioning, management arrangements and day-to-day programme implementation that will provide a useful basis for improved sub-programme design and delivery. It will try to answer the following key questions:
- Does UNEP have a clear vision and strategy for the Sub-programme and are these in line with priorities defined at global/regional/country level, and coherent UNEP's overall mandate, comparative advantage and capacity?
- Is UNEP on the right track in achieving its expected outcomes under the Sub-programme?
- Have projects and costed workplan activities been efficiently implemented and produced tangible results as expected?
- Have human and financial resources been optimally deployed to achieve sub-programme objectives?
- How effective have partnerships been used to leverage UNEP's efforts?

252.   SPEs are essential building blocks for the biennial evaluations of the UNEP Medium-term Strategy (MTS), at mid-term and at its end. Resources permitting, the UNEP Evaluation Office has therefore planned to conduct an evaluation of all six UNEP Sub-programmes over each four-year MTS period[8].

253.   SPEs typically cover UNEP's work over the last three biennia. Lessons learned from a more distant past will still be considered to assess to what extent these have been taken into account in planning and implementation of Sub-programme related activities over the subsequent biennia.

254.   The current Sub-programmes, with their Expected Accomplishments (EAs) and Programme of Work (PoW) Outputs were defined for the MTS 2010–2013 and PoW 2010–2011. Therefore, from 2010 onwards, it is possible to see which projects, UNEP units and external partners are involved in each Sub-programme, and fall within the scope of each SPE. Nonetheless, the boundaries among SPs are not always very clear-cut, and, in many cases, there are UNEP projects classified under Sub-programmes other than that under evaluation that could easily be part of the SPE. An SPE will look at linkages between the Sub-programme under review and those other interventions from a strategic perspective, but the full assessment of the latter will be done as part of the evaluation of the Sub-programme under which they were classified. In biennia prior to 2010–2011, it is often less obvious what interventions and actors should be considered by an SPE, as there were no cross-divisional Sub-programmes

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8   See the Approach to the Evaluation of the Medium Term Strategy presented in the 2008–2009 Evaluation Synthesis Report, pp. 59–69, December 2009.

and interventions were classified under Sub-programmes that corresponded to the Divisions. The scope of an SPE for these previous biennia will be defined by the projects and "costed" divisional activities, together with the UNEP units and the external partners involved, that fall under Expected Accomplishments and Programme of Work Outputs with an explicit relationship to one or more of the current EAs of the Sub-programme under review.

255. In terms of assessment of results achieved, SPEs are pitched primarily at the outcome level and above, that is at the level of the Sub-programme's higher objectives. The approach for the outcome assessment is elaborated in more detail below. Activities and outputs will be reviewed as factors contributing to the achievement of outcomes and progress towards impact, rather than as expected results per se. Thus, SPEs will not comprehensively assess the conduct of activities or the delivery of outputs against work plans, but review these lower-level results only to the extent that their delivery (or absence) has affected the outcomes and higher-level results.

B.   Evaluation audience and participatory approach

256.   The immediate and priority users of SPEs include:
- The UNEP Senior Management Team, comprised of the Executive Director, the Deputy Executive Director, the Divisional Directors, the Director of the GEF Coordination Office, the Chief of the Executive Office and the Chief of the Office for Operations;
- The Directors of the Regional Offices (ROs) and RO staff involved in the Sub-programme;
- Relevant staff from the Executive Office, and in particular the Chief Scientist, the Principal Advisor to the Executive Director, and the Quality Assurance Section;
- The Sub-programme Coordinator and other Sub-programme Coordinators;
- UNEP managers and other staff involved in the Sub-programme;
- The UNEP Committee of Permanent Representatives and the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environmental Forum.

257.   Interest in SPEs is likely to be shown by other stakeholders and partners, including: the UN Secretariat, UN or other international bodies working on themes covered by the Sub-programme, secretariats and offices of relevant cooperation agreements, commissions and committees, NGOs and civil society groups, research centres and academia, et cetera.

258.   To increase learning and ownership by the evaluation audience, **a participatory and collaborative approach** is used. This approach values the contribution of everyone involved and gives every stakeholder an opportunity to present his/her views. The joint assessment of relevance, performance, sustainability and joint determination of the reasons for success or failure (the "why?" question) provides the basis for drawing lessons from the evaluation. The evaluation process will also present many opportunities for stakeholder consultation on deliverables of the evaluation: TORs, Inception Report, Working Papers and Final Report.
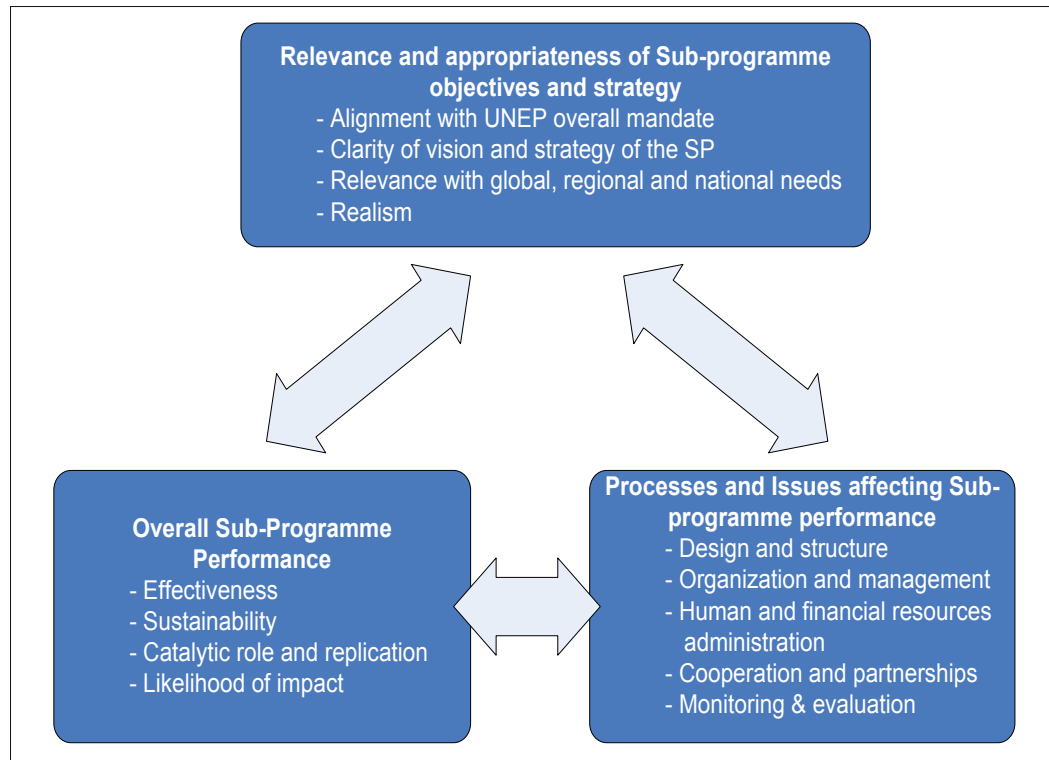
C.   Analytical framework of Sub-programme Evaluations

1.   Inter-related areas of focus

259.   An SPE assesses a Sub-programme through three areas of focus, corresponding to three distinct but strongly related levels of analysis (see Figure 21).

Figure 21. Areas of focus of an SPE

260. At the "macro" level, an SPE assesses the relevance and appropriateness of Sub-programme objectives and strategy. It analyses the clarity and coherence of the Sub-programme's vision, objectives and intervention strategy, within the changing global, regional and national context, and the evolving overall mandate and comparative advantages of UNEP.

261. An SPE further assesses the overall performance of the Sub-programme in terms of effectiveness (i.e. achievement of outcomes), sustainability, up-scaling and catalytic effects. It also reviews the potential or likelihood that outcomes are leading towards impact. Which outcomes will be assessed, will be determined by a reconstruction of the Sub-programme's Theory of Change (see below).

262. Finally, an SPE will examine in more detail; intervention design issues, organisational aspects, partnerships and specific business processes that affect the overall performance of the Sub-programme. As mentioned above, outputs and activities delivered by the Sub-programme's interventions will also be considered as factors affecting the achievement of outcomes and potential of impact. The Theory of Change of the Sub-programme should help identify which factors should receive particular attention of the evaluation.

2. Three units of analysis

263. An SPE is conducted at the level of three different "units of account and learning". The first, and most obvious unit of analysis, is **the Sub-programme** itself, which has recently evolved from a divisional to a thematic arrangement of UNEP's strategy and programme of work. However, considering the vast number and high variety of interventions, and highly diverse institutional arrangements and other factors affecting performance under a Sub-programme as a whole, the Sub-programme is probably not the most practical and straightforward level at which to conduct analysis. It is also not the best level at which to attribute performance and uncover lessons learned.

264.	Therefore, two lower units of analysis are used, which, combined in a sensible manner, should also provide sufficient information and analysis for the assessment of the sub-programme as a whole. The second, and main unit of analysis is the **Expected Accomplishment** Performance may be easily attributed to the line managers and partners delivering against an EA. EAs are also good units of analysis for learning, as they are usually better defined and delimited, and less complex than the sub-programme as a whole, but still provide the opportunity to see linkages between interventions either within or between main areas of intervention.

265.	The third unit of analysis needs to be determined in accordance to the nature of the Sub-programme. It should provide much needed insights in the linkages (complementarities and synergies) between the different EAs of the Sub-programme, and possibly also between the latter and other Sub-programmes. In the case of the Environmental Governance SPE, for instance, this unit of analysis is the **geographic focus of governance interventions** (national, regional, international). A set of programmes and projects are studied that contribute to and rely upon the achievement of several EAs within (and outside) the Sub-programme. For the Disasters and Conflicts (D&C) SPE, this third unit of analysis is the **D&C country programme**. Indeed, in a selected number of post-disaster and post-conflict countries, the D&C Sub-programme has conducted a sequence of complementary interventions contributing to different EAs of the Sub-programme and other Sub-programmes, and a country assessment can provide useful insights in how those interventions are related to each other.

## 3.	Theory of Change

266.	A "Theory of Change" (TOC) depicts the logical sequence of desired changes (also called "causal pathways" or "results chains") to which an intervention, programme, strategy etc. is expected to contribute. It shows the causal linkages between changes at different results levels (outputs, outcomes, intermediate states and impact), and the actors and factors influencing those changes. The reconstruction of a TOC can help to identify the expected outcomes of UNEP's work and the intermediary states between outcomes and desired impact. It also helps determine the key factors affecting the achievement of outcomes, intermediary states and impact, including outputs (goods and services produced by the interventions) and other drivers, assumptions made and the expected role and contributions by UNEP and other key actors.

267.	In most cases, UNEP will not have complete control of the processes towards achieving outcomes and impact. For example, there might be factors, such as political will, which will partly determine if the delivered outputs lead to outcomes and further to impacts. However, UNEP may be able to produce additional outputs, build on partnerships and enhance institutional development to increase the likelihood that desired changes will happen (e.g. outreach and advocacy work designed to increase 'political will').

268.	Since impact is a result of a lasting change, and often requires specialised tools to be measured, SPEs can only assess the potential for impact, by identifying and analysing the change processes that are taking place towards impact, as well as the factors that contribute to or inhibit those change processes.

269.	An SPE attempts to map out Theories of Change for different "units of analysis" (see previous section). First, this will be done at the level of the **overall sub-programme**, taking the PoWs of the last three biennia as a starting point. Second, more detailed TOCs will be

prepared for the **Expected Accomplishments** under the sub-programme. Finally, TOCs will be reconstructed as part of the third unit of analysis, for example the cross-cutting programme for the EG SPE or the country programme for the D&C SPE.

4.   Outcomes Assessment

270.   The outcome focus of SPEs is justified because the evaluation object is not a single, well-demarcated project, but a large group of project and non-project activities operating over different geographic and temporal scales, delivering numerous and diverse outputs, that are expected to contribute together to a more manageable number of outcomes at the global, regional and country level. On the other hand, a focus on outcomes, as opposed to even higher level changes, promises a relatively shorter timeframe and more credible linkages between UNEP actions and the measured changes. As mentioned earlier, SPEs do not measure the achievement of impact, but rather determine the potential for impact, based on a review of the actors and factors expected to drive the changes along the causal pathways towards impact. Outcome assessment will focus on major Subprogramme initiatives as detailed analysis of the full scope of interventions is unlikely to be feasible.

271.   Through the Outcomes Assessment, an SPE aims to examine the status (the extent to which the expected outcomes have been achieved) and relevance (to global/country/region needs and UNEP mandate) of the outcomes. The evaluation will also examine key underlying factors which affect the achievement of the planned outcomes. These may be, for instance, the financing processes in place, or the choice and roles of partners. The evaluation will not assess delivery of individual outputs as such but rather verify whether the delivered outputs have been relevant and meaningful to achieve the outcomes.

272.   The Outcomes Assessment includes an examination of factors affecting the sustainability of the desired outcomes, in terms of, for example, the extent to which sustainability issues have been reflected in project design, or whether a strategy has been put in action to sensitise partners and other stakeholders in order for them to promote sustainability. The assessment also pays special attention to UNEP's potential role in catalysing action by other players, to implement recommendations provided in UNEP environmental assessments and promote scaling-up of UNEP pilot projects.

273.   Outcomes Assessment may also be conducted at the level of the three different units of analysis: the Expected Accomplishments, the cross-cutting programme (at national, regional, global level) or country programme (or any third unit of analysis that is appropriate), and the overall sub-programme – which is a synthesis of findings at the EA and geographic area levels. The TOCs reconstructed at different levels, should help determine the expected outcomes and higher-level changes, and the factors affecting their achievement.

5.   Design Assessment

274.   SPEs aim to provide insights and recommendations for improved design and planning subprogrammes by critically assessing the internal coherence of SPs and estimating whether any relevant connection among different subprogrammes has been established.

275.   For UNEP to adequately monitor the achievement of results, SPs need to be designed in a way where the contribution of all the activities (not necessarily from one SP only) to an objective is acknowledged. This applies, to a more significant extent, to cross-cutting services in the whole Organization – such as communication or the regional representation function – which are currently framed within the EG subprogramme.

276.   The appropriateness of different design options will be carefully assessed, and recommendations to Management made. The review of the subprogramme structures (at least for the first two subprogramme evaluations conducted) will aim to inform the design of subprogrammes under the next MTS (2014–2017).

D.   Evaluation data sources and collection techniques

277.   SPEs use a combination of techniques: desk review, interviews, and direct observations. For each evaluation, an Evaluation Framework is prepared, serving as a guide to what information should be extracted from which specific source.

278.   The desk review enables the evaluation team to gain essential knowledge of the global, regional and country context related to the themes covered by the Sub-programme, and a broad overview of UNEP's work within the Sub-programme at those different levels.

279.   Interviews with the Sub-programme management and staff in UNEP should provide insights on the history and background to the Sub-programme; views on the appropriateness of its objectives and strategy, organisation and management, and financial and human resource administration. UNEP Senior Managers are interviewed to obtain their views on whether the Sub-programme objectives and strategy are consistent with UNEP's overall mandate and strategic objectives; and on key internal and external partnerships. They are also asked to present their vision for the future of the SP within UNEP. Interviews with other relevant Units and Sub-programmes of UNEP aim to address the primary questions of how UNEP responds to its mandate in the thematic areas covered by the Sub-programme under review from its wider technical capacities and experiences; opportunities and challenges for cooperation within UNEP and better impact. Key questions to be addressed to the Regional Offices and the SP focal points located within the Regional Offices will cover where the activities of the SP fit in with the 'big-picture' of UNEP's role in their regions and the synergies between the different programmes and activities.

280.   Project and programme staff "in the field" is vital to acquiring an understanding of the work conducted in the (sub-) regions and at a country level. Interviews with these staff are centred on the TOC of the Sub-programme for specific EAs or for the cross-cutting programme or geographic area they are working in; the relevance and achievement of outcomes, progress towards impact and sustainability of results, internal and external factors affecting the latter and the particular contributions of UNEP to outcomes and potential impact. To obtain a better understanding of the (sub-) regional (or country) context and collect external views on the role and performance of UNEP in the geographic area, the SPE Team will meet with key partners and stakeholders, including selected senior representatives of the UN and other agencies operating on environment and themes under the Sub-programme; regional bodies; partner Ministries and National Agencies of Environment; Bilateral and multi-lateral donors that are involved in the subject and have funded Sub-programme projects as well as those key funders in these countries that have not funded the SP projects; INGOs, civil society and NGOs, etc. To the extent possible, the evaluators also interview project stakeholders in the field to discuss how, in their view, services and goods delivered by the projects have contributed to achieving the expected outcomes and higher level objectives of the Sub-programme in the region (or country).

281.   Direct observation of tangible outputs (e.g. plantations, infrastructure, but also written products such as policy guidelines, environmental impact assessment reports) or people's

behaviour (for instance how people interact in a partner meeting) are expected to generate additional evidence and insights about factors affecting the achievement of outcomes and potential for impact. Where relevant, site visits are conducted in selected countries. The purpose of the site visits is not only to see visible evidence of results 'on the ground', but first and foremost to meet project stakeholders in 'the field' and discuss how, in their view, project outputs (services and goods delivered by the project) have contributed to achieving the expected outcomes and higher level objectives of the Sub-programme in their community.

E.   Scenario building for developing evaluation recommendations

282.   The recommendations of an SPE are typically prepared around **scenarios for the future** of the Sub-programme. Several realistic scenarios will be proposed and their pros and cons will be weighed against each other. Recommendations are made in terms of changes that would be required for the Sub-programme to evolve in the direction of the different scenarios.

283.   The scenarios will include a "no change" scenario assuming that UNEP will make no fundamental changes in the way it delivers the Expected Accomplishments within the sub-programme and in the way it engages in the different geographical areas. Recommendations for this scenario are strongly rooted in the findings of the SPE (after all, the SPE assesses the current situation which equals the "no change" scenario), and concentrate on solving institutional and process issues that may currently affect the performance of the sub-programme. These recommendations could be useful also in case UNEP would engage in one of the alternative scenarios.

284.   It is impossible to say in a generic way what the other scenarios would look like, but potentially a combination of changes could be made in terms of specialisation or further diversification of Expected Accomplishments, a more limited or a broader geographical or thematic coverage of UNEP interventions within a SP, different institutional mechanism for coordination amongst Divisions, a higher degree of direct execution or a stronger reliance on partnerships within and outside UNEP etc. Weighing the pros and cons, and formulating recommendations for those alternative scenarios will obviously be more hypothetical but nonetheless useful to aid the decision process concerning a Sub-programme's future. Recommendations for these alternative scenarios will relate more to "macro" elements such as strategic positioning of UNEP at the global, (sub-) regional and country level and strategic partnerships.

VI. Internal and External Assessments of the Performance of the UNEP Evaluation Function

285.   The performance of UNEP's Evaluation Office is assessed through the following mechanisms:
   a)   Self-assessments and external peer review or the evaluation function;
   b)   benchmarking of evaluation function performance from an independent third party against the performance of the evaluation functions of other international organizations;
   c)   analysis of the 'value-added' from evaluation review and quality control processes.

286.   The above approaches to assessing the performance of UNEP's evaluation function are described in the sections below.

A.   Self-assessments and Peer Review of the evaluation function

287.   The Evaluation Office is currently undergoing an independent external Peer Review conducted under the auspices of United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in partnership with the OECD-DAC Evaluation Network and supported by contributions from the Belgian Government. The Peer Review will provide an assessment of the Evaluation Office of UNEP (and, in a separate report, the evaluation function of UN-Habitat) against United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards. The purpose of the peer review is summarized as follows:

288.   Enhancing knowledge about, confidence in and use of evaluations by governing bodies and senior management of each of the two agencies, and in the case of UN-Habitat possibly leading to informed decisions about increasing the independence of the evaluation office;

289.   Improving evaluation policy and practice, including stronger planning and resourcing of evaluation (also based on greater appreciation and support of evaluation by governing bodies and senior management), by sharing good practice and building internal capacity and confidence of the Evaluation Office; and

290.   Supporting the Evaluation Office's efforts to ensure greater acceptance and integration of evaluation findings in each agency's performance management system.

Preliminary Findings

291.   General
   •   UNEP follows UNEG norms and standards in evaluation and has a well-established evaluation function.
   •   Good separation between the planning, monitoring and evaluation functions
   •   The evaluation policy was an important step into clarifying roles and responsibilities for the conduct of evaluation in the organization
   •   Absence of annual evaluation budget under the control of the evaluation office impedes

its ability to choose evaluation subjects at strategic and thematic level.

- Systems are in place for the conduct of project evaluations following international standards.
- Linkage between project evaluations and normative work can be strengthened.
- Evaluation Office contributes to enhancing the practice of evaluation in the UN system.

292. Independence
- Evaluations are conducted transparently without interference of management and are seen as independent.
- Direct reporting line to the Executive Director
- Provision 30 in the Evaluation Policy, regarding a segment within the governing council/CPR agenda for the head of Evaluation Office has not been fully put into place.
- Evaluation reports are available on the external web sites

293. Credibility
- Evaluations are considered technically sound and objective.
- Evaluation report quality received high ratings by the GEF which coincides with the peer review panel's assessment.
- The professionalism of the staff is good and recognized.
- There are areas of UNEP's work that have not been sufficiently evaluated (beyond GEF and environment fund)
- Evaluations are conducted in a credible and transparent manner following international standards.
- Limited resources for conducting evaluation present risks to their credibility.
- The increasing demand for evaluations brings out concerns as to the future capacity to deliver quality evaluations.

294. Utility
- The utility of project evaluations in the organization is considered high.
- The results of evaluations are presented to direct stakeholders and senior management but in a limited manner of staff at large.
- The link between demonstrative projects and the normative work of the organizations has not been clearly established by evaluations.
- The evaluation programme of work does not sufficiently cover the strategic learning needs of the organization.
- Growing demand and interest for impact evaluations not been fulfilled due to limited resources.
- Timeliness of the evaluations will be an issue with increased demand for project evaluations
- Management responses are used in performance assessments of Directors.

295. Conclusions
- Evaluation function in UNEP has been well established according to UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the United Nations
- The evaluations are conducted in a credible and independent way and have contributed to accountability and learning at project level.
- The contribution of evaluation to the strategic orientation of the organization is limited.

296. Recommendations
- An appropriate balance between strategic/thematic evaluations and project evaluations should be sought.

- Rules should be revised for project evaluations under responsibility of Evaluation Office (thresholds, relevance, etc).
- Secure predictability and adequacy of resources allocated for evaluation
- Establish mechanisms to systematically harvest lessons learned from evaluations with the aim to contribute to Knowledge Management
- Streamline the management response system highlighting the responsibility of management in implementing the recommendations.

B.   Benchmarking Performance of the Evaluation Function

297.   Each year the independent GEF Evaluation Office assesses the performance of GEF Implementing Agencies against a number of performance measures. This is often reported in the GEF Annual performance Report. Several of the performance measures cover important aspects of the performance of UNEP's Evaluation Office, benchmarked against the performance of the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group and UNDP's Evaluation Office. At the end of each GEF replenishment period, an in-depth Overall Performance Study (OPS) is also conducted. In April 2011, the GEF Evaluation Office published its usual Annual Performance Report 2010 (APR) and, in June 2011, the in-depth OPS4 evaluation was released.

298.   The performance of UNEP's Evaluation Office within the GEF compares very favourably against the World Bank and UNDP. For example, 100% of the UNEP Terminal Evaluations submitted in for FY 2010 were rated by the GEF Evaluation Office as 'moderately satisfactory' or better for quality, the equivalent performance for the World Bank and UNDP was 82% and 88% respectively.

299.   Tables 1 and 2 present the percentage of reports submitted by the Implementing Agencies that were rated moderately satisfactory or above in terms of quality.

Table 1: Terminal Evaluation Reports Rated Moderately Satisfactory or above, by Project Size and Agency

FY 2010	Full Size Projects		Medium Size Projects		All Projects	
Agency	Number Rated	Percent Rated MS or above	Number Rated	Percent Rated MS or above	Number Rated	Percent Rated MS or above
UNDP	8	75%	9	100%	17	88%
UNEP	4	100%	1	100%	5	100%
World Bank	9	89%	13	77%	22	82%
All Agencies	21	86%	23	87%	44	86%

Table 2: Percentage of Terminal Evaluation Reports Moderately Satisfactory or Above, by Year of Submission and Agency

Agency	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010
UNDP	54%	91%	87%	94%	93%	95%	88%
UNEP	67%	50%	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%
World Bank (WB)	80%	100%	86%	94%	88%	94%	82%
All Agencies	69%	88%	83%	95%	92%	96%	86%

C.   Quality of Evaluation reports

300.   Each evaluation report submitted to the UNEP Evaluation Office is rated for quality at both draft and final stages ,to assess the value of the review and quality control processes by the Evaluation Office over its. The aspects assessed are:
- Did the report present an assessment of relevant outcomes an d achievement of project objectives?
- Was the report consistent, the evidence complete and convincing and were the ratings substantiated?
- Did the report present a sound assessment of sustainability of outcomes?
- Were the lessons and recommendations supported by the evidence presented?
- Did the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used?
- Did the report include an assessment of the quality of the project M&E system and its use for project management?
- Quality of the lessons: Were lessons readily applicable in other contexts? Did they suggest prescriptive action?
- Quality of the recommendations: Did recommendations specify the actions necessary to correct existing conditions or improve operations ('who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?)'. Can they be implemented?
- Was the report well written? (clear English language and grammar)
- Did the report structure follow Evaluation Office guidelines, were all requested Annexes included?
- Were all evaluation aspects specified in the TORs adequately addressed?
- Was the report delivered in a timely manner?

301.   The independent review by the GEF, summarized above, provides the bigger picture with regard to the overall quality of completed evaluation reports and states that, for the period 2007 – present, 100% of evaluation reports are rated 'Moderately Satisfactory' or better for quality. Table 3 presents the percentage of reports in each quality category from the Evaluation Office's assessments.

302.   However, the quality of evaluation reports produced could be entirely due to the selection decisions made by the Evaluation Office when hiring consultant evaluators, and, consequently, the time spent by professional staff on review of reports to enhance their quality might be unjustified. To establish whether this is the case, we can compare the quality of reports as assessed when initially submitted to the Evaluation Office by the consultant evaluators, to the quality of the reports as assessed at final approval, always noting that the UNEP final assessments of evaluation report quality have been independently verified by the quality assessments done by the GEF Evaluation Office.

303.   The assessment of quality of evaluation reports covers 34 project evaluations conducted in 2010–2011. The table below presents a summary of the quality ratings given to the draft and final evaluation reports reviewed in this period. The quality rating system is based on a number rating between 1–6 where: — Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1, and unable to assess = 0.

Table 3: Comparison of Evaluation Report Quality at Draft and Final Stage

Quality Rating	Draft Reports		Final Reports	
	No. (out of 34)	%	No. (out of 34)	%
Highly Satisfactory	7	21	7	21
Satisfactory	11	32	21	62
Moderately Satisfactory	13	38	6	17
Moderately Unsatisfactory	3	9	—	—
Unsatisfactory	—	—	—	—
Highly Unsatisfactory	—	—	—	—

304. For the period 2010–2011, 100% of the final evaluation reports were rated 'moderately satisfactory' or better based on UNEP and GEF criteria for quality. Sixty-two [62%] (21 out of 34) of the final evaluation reports attained a quality rating of satisfactory; 21% (7 out of 34) rated as 'highly satisfactory'; and 17% (6 out of 34) rated as 'moderately satisfactory'. There were no final evaluation reports rated as 'moderately unsatisfactory', 'unsatisfactory' or 'highly unsatisfactory' for quality.

305. The overall quality of all the draft evaluation reports was 4.63 (satisfactory) while that of the final evaluation reports was 4.92 (satisfactory) — an improvement of 0.29 in the overall quality score.

306. Similar to the previous biennium, the quality of evaluation reports submitted to the EO has improved, as evidenced by the increase in the score and rating both in the individual criteria and the overall score attained in the draft reports as compared to that of the final evaluation reports, following EO quality assurance processes.

307. As the table below shows, the quality assurance function performed by the Evaluation Office contributed improving the share of satisfactory reports from 32% to 62%.. Approximately twenty-four per cent (23.5%) [8 out of 34] reports improved in quality from 'moderately satisfactory' to 'satisfactory' following the intervention of the EO. A further 8.8% (3 out 34) reports had a quality improvement changing their category from 'moderately unsatisfactory' to 'satisfactory'. The review and quality assessment processes undertaken by the EO can, therefore, be said to have a value-adding effect to the quality of information presented in the final evaluation reports, and this may well translate in to improved utility to the respective projects/programmes.

308. The criterion with the greatest overall improvement following EO intervention is the 'Quality of Recommendations' (from an average score of 4.25 'Moderately Satisfactory' at draft stage to an average score of 4.88 'Satisfactory' — an increase of 0.64 in the overall score). Other criteria with relatively high improvements in the overall score in the final report include: 'Quality of the lessons' and 'Assessment of relevant outcomes and achievement of project objectives'.

309. **Table 4: Quality improvement in Evaluation Reports as a result of the EO quality control processes**

Draft Report Quality	Final Report Quality	Number and % of Total	Rating, Number and % where quality was assessed in the SAME category at both draft and final stages
Moderately Satisfactory	Satisfactory	8 (23.5%)	Highly Satisfactory = 7 (20.6%)
Moderately Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	3 (8.8%)	Satisfactory = 10 (29.4%)
Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	1 (2.9%)	Moderately Satisfactory = 5 (14.7%)
			Moderately Unsatisfactory – N/A
			Unsatisfactory — N/A
			Highly Unsatisfactory — N/A

310. The table also shows the number of projects where the quality was assessed as being within the same category at both draft and final stages. Approximately 65% (22 out of 34) of the reports received the same quality rating at both draft and final stages, with the improvement only being apparent in an increase in the overall score. Of these, 20.6% (7 out of 34) of the evaluation reports retained a quality rating of 'highly satisfactory', 29.4% (10 out of 34) as 'satisfactory' and 14.7% (5 out of 34) as 'moderately satisfactory'. Of all the reports with the same rating at draft and final stage, 63.6% (14 out of 22) showed an increase in the overall score, whereas 36.4% (8 out of 22) had no change in the overall score. The increase in the number of evaluation reports that have maintained the same quality category at both draft and final stages may be attributed to improvement in the selection of consultants and in the Terms of Reference issued, which eventually reflects in the quality of the draft reports submitted to the EO for review.

311. The table below compares the quality of final evaluation reports during the period 2008–2009 against 2010–2011.

Table 5: Comparison of Evaluation Report Quality between 2008–09 and 2010–11.

Quality Rating	% Draft Reports		% Final Reports	
	2008–2009	2010–2011	2008–2009	2010–2011
Highly Satisfactory	17	21	33	20
Satisfactory	47	32	60	62
Moderately Satisfactory	30	38	7	18
Moderately Unsatisfactory	3	9	—	—
Unsatisfactory	3	—	—	—
Highly Unsatisfactory	—	—	—	—

312. In comparison to the quality assessments conducted in the period 2008/09, there has been an increase in final evaluation reports rated 'satisfactory' and 'moderately satisfactory' by 2% and 11% respectively. Final evaluation reports rated 'highly satisfactory' decreased by 7%. At the same time, no report was classified as "unsatisfactory", compared to the 3% of the draft evaluation reports in the period 2010–2011.

Annex I. List of projects evaluated in 2010–2011

1. Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNEP/UNDP/DGEF project GF/6030-04-12 on "Combating Living Resources Depletion And Coastal Area Degradation in the Guinea Current LME Through Ecosystem-Based Regional Actions" (GCLME) GFL/2731-04-4809, By Mr. Lucien Chabason (Consultant), January 2010

2. Terminal Evaluation of UNEP/GEF project GF/4040-03-24 (4704) Energy Management and Performance Related Savings Scheme (EMPRESS), By Mr. Abdelmourhit Lahbabi (Consultant), February 2010

3. Mid-Term Evaluation of the project on Improving Water Management and Governance in African Countries Through Support in Development and Implementation of IWRM Plans, By Ms. Gunilla Bjorklund (Consultant), March 2010

4. Terminal Evaluation of project EA/0401-95-03 and EA/1100-96-20 – Eastern African Coastal and Marine Environment Resource Database and Atlas, Phase 3: Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Tanzania, By Mr. Tim Huntington (Consultant), April 2010

5. Terminal Evaluation of project GF/4040-05-05 (4822) GEF Funded UNEP and UNDP Projects that Phased Out Ozone Depleting Substances in Countries with Economies in Transition, By Mr. Tom Batchelor and Mr. Valery Smirnov (Consultants), March 2010. Report included:

5b. Terminal Evaluation of the Regional Project "Total Sector Methyl Bromide Phase Out in Countries with Economies in Transition" for projects implemented by UNEP and UNDP in Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, By Mr. Tom Batchelor and Mr. Valery Smirnov (Consultants), March 2010.

6. Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF project GF/1030-04-03 (4788)/GFL-2328-2711-4788 – Building Scientific and Technical Capacity for Effective Management and Sustainable Use of Dry-land Biodiversity in West African Biosphere Reserves, By Mr. Mark Nicholson (Consultant), July 2010

7. Terminal Evaluation of the Joint UNDP/UNEP/GEF Project GF/1020-04-03 (4813): Strengthening Global Capacity to Sustain Transboundary Waters: The International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:Learn) Operational Phase, By Mr. Richard Paisley (Consultant), July 2010

8. Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF project GF/1030-03-01 (4650) "Integrated Management of Peatlands for Biodiversity and Climate Change: The Potential of Managing Peatlands for Carbon Accumulation While Protecting Biodiversity", By Mr. Joshua Brann (Consultant), July 2010

9. Mid-Term Evaluation of UNEP/DGEF project GF/1010-07-01 (4977) Building the Partnership to Track Progress at the Global Level in Achieving the Global 2010 Biodiversity Target Indicators GEF Id No. 2796. By Mr. Joshua Brann (Consultant), June 2010

10. Terminal Evaluation of UNEP/GEF project GF/1040-06-01 (4905) Knowledge base for Lessons Learned and Best Practices in the Management of Coral Reefs, By Mr. James Berdach (Consultant), August 2010

11. Terminal Evaluation of project MT/4040-04-23 (5079) Using Carbon Finance to Promote Sustainable Energy Services in Africa (CF-SEA), By Mr. Bernt Frydenberg (Consultant), October 2010

12. Terminal Evaluation of UNEP/GEF Project GF/CP/2010-05-04 (4879) Indigenous People Network for Change (IPNC), By Mr. Peter Bridgewater (Consultant), June 2010

13. Terminal Evaluation project GF/1020-03-01 (GF/2732-03-4264) of Development and Implementation of Mechanisms to Disseminate Lessons Learned and Best Practices in Integrated Transboundary Water Resource Management in LAC (DELTA), By Mr. Glenn Hearns (Consultant), September 2010

14. Terminal Evaluation of project CP/4020-07-01 (3626) Supporting the Implementation of the African 10YFP on SCP and Workplan of the German Taskforce on Cooperation with Africa, By Mr. Ferd Schelleman (Consultant), June 2010

15. Terminal Evaluation of Project GFL/2328-2732-4452: Development of National Implementation Plans for the Management of Persistent Organic Pollutants (NIPs/POPs), By Mr. Joan Albaiges, Mr. Katin Touray, Ms. Maria del Pillar Alfaro Monge, (Consultants), September 2010

16. Terminal Evaluation of project DA/9999-06-02 (1567) — Implementation of a Regional Programme on Sustainable Production and Consumption in Latin America and the Caribbean (implemented by ROLAC), Mr. Roberto Urquizo (Consultant), November 2010.

17. Outcome and Influence Evaluation of the UNEP Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV), by David and Hazel Todd (Consultants), July 2010

18. Terminal Evaluation of project CP/4010-06-05 (3624) Demonstrating ESTS for Building Waste Reduction in Indonesia (DEBRI), By Mr. Adrian Coad (Consultant), October 2010

19. Mid-Term Evaluation of UNEP/DGEF project GF/4010-07-01 (4960) on Bus Rapid Transit and Pedestrian Improvements in Jakarta GEF ID 2954, By Mr. David Antell and Mr. Owen Podger (Consultants), August 2010

20. Mid-Term Evaluation of UNEP/DGEF project GF4010-05-02 (4870) Greening the Tea Industry in East Africa (GTIEA), Mr. Ulrich Meier and Mr. Zadoc Ogutu (Consultants), October 2010

21. Mid-Term Evaluation of project GF/4040-05-10 (4837) Generation and Delivery of Renewable Energy Based Modern Energy Services in Cuba; the case of Isla de la Juventud GEF ID 1361, By Mr. Hermanus Knoef and Mr. Manuel Blasco (Consultants), June 2010

22. Terminal Evaluation of project CP/4020-06-06 (3985) International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management — Resource Panel. Addressing the Global Dimensions of the EU's Thematic Strategy on the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources 2006–2010, Mr. Bernard Mazijn (Consultant), January 2011

23. Terminal Evaluation of project MT/4040-03-01 (5062) China Rural Energy Enterprise Development (CREED), By Mr. Brahmanand Mohanty (Consultant), September 2010

24. Mid-Term Evaluation of project CP/4040-03-16 (3430) of the Global Network on Energy for Sustainable Development (GNESD), Mr. Philip Alan Grant Mann (Consultant), November 2010

25. Terminal Evaluation of project GF/6010-06-03 (4907) — Enhancing Conservation of the Critical Network of Sites of Wetlands (WOW) Required by Migratory Waterbirds on the African/Eurasian Flyways (GEF Id No. 4907), by Mr. Phillip John Edwards (Consultant), November 2010

26. Terminal Evaluation of UNEP/DGEF project GF/6030-04-11 (4792) Addressing Land Based Activities in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO- LaB) (GEF Id No. 1247), by Ms. Sarah Humphrey (Consultant), November 2010

27. Terminal Evaluation of project DA/9999-06-01 (1566) South-South Network of Global Environment Outlook (GEO) Collaborating Centre's for Integrated Environment Assessment and Reporting to Support Policy Formulation and Informed Decision Making Processes at National, Regional and Global Levels (implemented by DEWA in cooperation with ROLAC, ROAP, ROA and ROWA, by Anthony Barbour (Consultant), December 2010

28. Terminal Evaluation of project DA/9999-07-01 (1568) – Capacity Building in Environmental Impact Assessment and Promotion of Public Participation in West Asia (implemented by ROWA), by Mr. Tarek Genena (Consultant), March 2011

29. Mid-Term Evaluation of project GF/3010-05-17 (4889) Integrated Ecosystems Management (IEM) in Shared Watersheds between Nigeria and Niger (end of Phase 1), By Messrs. Winston Mathu, Kano Namata, and Ayobami Salami (Consultants), January 2011

30. Terminal Evaluation of UNEP/DGEF project GF/1010-07-01(4977) Building the Partnership to Track Progress at the Global Level in Achieving the Global 2010 Biodiversity Target phase- I ,GEF Id no.2796 , by Mr. David Pritchard (Consultant), January 2011

31. Terminal Evaluation of UNEP/GEF project "Technology Transfer Networks (TTN)" — Phase II: Prototype verification and expansion at the country/regional level GF/4040-01-12 (4343) and GF/4040-01-70 GFL/ 2328-2740-4343, by Mr. Nebiyeleul Gessese (Consultant), December 2010

32. Terminal Evaluation of project CP/4010-06-02 (3925) Support for Environmental Management of the Iraqi Marshlands (Project Extension Phase II-A): CPL 3925 and (Project Extension Phase II-B): CPL3956 + AE/4010-04-03 (AE2791) and AE/4010-04-71 (AE2794) for Phase I and CP/4010-07-05 (CP3A24) for Phase III By Dr. Phillip John Edwards, Dr. Abbas Balasem (Consultants), April 2011

33. Terminal Evaluation of project GF/1010-06-02 (4909) Land Degradation Assessment in Dry lands (LADA) GEF ID No. 1329, By Messrs. Klaus Kellner, Camillo Risoli and Markus Metz (Consultants), May 2011

34. Terminal Evaluation of UNEP/GEF project GF/3010-08-20 (4A21) International Commission on Land Use Change and Ecosystems GEF Id No. 3811, By Ms. Camille Bann and Ms. Patricia Kameri-Mbote (Consultants), March 2011

35. Terminal Evaluation of UNEP/GEF project GF/1030-09-01 (4A43) Development of the Methodologies for the GEF Transboundary Waters Assessment Programme (TWAP) GEF Id no. 3342, by Ms. Sarah Humphrey and Mr. Arun Elhance (Consultants), April 2011

36. Mid-Term Evaluation of Project GF/4040-06-06 (2619) Financing Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Investments for Climate Change Mitigation (FEEI), GEF Id no.2619, By Wolfgang Mostert (Consultant), September 2011.

37. Terminal Evaluation of project GF/4040-01-10 GFL/2721-01-4334 — Solar and Wind Energy Resource Assessment (SWERA), GEF Id 1281, By Mr. A. Brew-Hammond (Consultant), September 2011

38. Formative Evaluation of the UNEP's Programme of Work for 2010–2011, by Evaluation Office, June 2011.

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