

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF Project
“Participatory Sustainable Land Management in the Grassland
Plateaus of Western Madagascar” GEF ID Number: 5354
(2016-2022)



Evaluation Office of the United Nations Environment Programme

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Participatory Sustainable Land Management in the Grassland Plateaus of Western
Madagascar
GEF ID Number: 5354
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The evaluation consultant hopes that the findings, conclusions and recommendations will contribute to the successful finalisation of the current project, formulation of a next phase and to the continuous improvement of similar projects in other countries and regions.

Thank you to all the people met in Madagascar, and especially in Bongolava, that opened their places, showed their work, shared meals, and demonstrated that so much can be achieved against all odds (the famous social and environmental standards) when solidarity exists.

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His special interest is the focus on the gap between global commitment and field implementation on some dire environmental issues such as biodiversity loss, climate change, deforestation and social equity.

Denis holds two complementary academic backgrounds: sociologist (Master and PhD in sociology/public policies) and natural scientist (Master in agronomy).

Denis has worked more than 25 years on four continents (Africa, Europe, Latin America, Asia) from a wide range of perspectives: local communities, development NGOs, transnational corporations, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and academics. His research is published in journals pertaining to sociology and environmental economics. He is the author of "UNEP and civil society: Natural Allies" (UNEP, 2004).

About the Evaluation

Joint Evaluation: No

Report Language(s): English.

Evaluation Type: Terminal Evaluation

Brief Description: This report is a Terminal Evaluation of a UNEP/GEF project implemented between 2016 and 2022. The project's objective was *'to reverse land degradation and improve living conditions in the Bongolava Region of Western Madagascar through participatory sustainable management of the grasslands'*.

The evaluation sought to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, GEF and the main project partners. Therefore, the evaluation identifies lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation, especially where a second phase of the project is being considered. Recommendations relevant to the whole house have also been identified during the evaluation process.

Key words: Biodiversity, Agriculture, Community, Forest Management, Ecosystem, Governance, Sustainable Land Management.

Primary data collection period: 01 June – 15 December 2022

Field mission dates: 01 October – 15 October 2022

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANAE	Association nationale d'actions environnementales
DIRAE	Direction interrégionale de l'agriculture et de l'élevage
DIREDD	Direction interrégionale de l'environnement et du développement durable
GEF	Global Environment Facility
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MEDD	Ministère de l'environnement et du développement durable (Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development – MESD) ¹
MEEF	Ministère de l'écologie, de l'environnement et des forêts (Ministry of Ecology, Environment and Forests).
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PDSE	Direction de programmation et de suivi évaluation
PoW	Programme of Work
ProDoc	Project Document
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
ToC	Theory of Change
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

¹ At the signature of for the project in 2016 this ministry was called: Ministère de l'écologie, de l'environnement et des forêts (MEEF). However, for stake of consistency in whole the document we will use the term Ministère de l'environnement et du développement durable (MEDD) that is used today (as of January 2023 all along).

Project Identification Table

Table 1: Project Identification Table

GEF Project ID:	5354		
Implementing Agency:	UNEP	Executing Agency:	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Ministère de l'environnement et du développement durable - MEDD) and National Association for Environmental Actions (ANAE)
Relevant SDG(s) and indicator(s):	SDG Target 15.3: Indicator: 15.3.1 (as well as many others, including target 2.4, indicator 2.4.1)		
Sub-programme:	Healthy and Productive Ecosystems	Expected Accomplishment(s):	EA (a) Indicators (i,ii,iii)
UNEP approval date:	08 May 2016	Programme of Work Output(s):	PoW 2014-15 Ecosystem-based and support adaptation approach focus area: output 1 and 2
GEF approval date:	21 Sept 2016	Project type:	Medium Size Project
GEF Operational Programme #:	V	Focal Area(s):	Land Degradation
		GEF Strategic Priority:	LD-1: Agriculture and Rangeland Systems
Expected start date:	07 Dec 2016	Actual start date:	06 January 2017
Planned completion date:	Dec 2020	Actual operational completion date:	30 Sept 2022
Planned project budget at approval:	USD 6,930,731	Actual total expenditures reported as of 30 June 2022 (PIR2022):	USD 6,029,271
GEF grant allocation:	USD 1,584,931	GEF grant expenditures reported as of 30 June 2022 (PIR2022):	USD 1,471,581
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	USD 100,000	Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:	N/A
Expected Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	USD 5,345,800	Secured Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing as of 30 June 2022 (PIR 2022):	USD 4,557,690
First disbursement:	Jan 20217	Planned date of financial closure:	31 March 2023
No. of formal project revisions:	3	Date of last approved project revision:	25 th August 2022
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	2017, 2019, 2021	Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last: 26 th November 2021 Next: N/A
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (planned date):	Oct 2019	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	No evaluation made
Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	March 2022	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	June – December 2022
Coverage - Country(ies):	Madagascar	Coverage - Region(s):	Africa

GEF Project ID:	5354		
Dates of previous project phases:	N/A	Status of future project phases:	N/A

Executive Summary

Project background

1. The Bongolava region in Madagascar suffers from land degradation due to (i) abiotic factors, including erosion, and (ii) anthropogenic factors, such as inappropriate and unsustainable practices—particularly via poor agricultural practices, overgrazing, burning, and denuding of slopes, hills, and plateaux (a vast geographic type known as *tanety*). To address the threats to Sustainable Land Management (SLM), the project took a local management approach that intended to: (i) provide an appropriate basis for participatory land management, (ii) facilitate an accurate, comprehensive understanding of dynamic local issues, and (iii) help ensure local ownership of goals, leading to sustainable strategies and effective SLM application. Emphasizing on field work to change local practices and then regional level, the project was delivered through three complementary components with associated outcomes: 1) institutional development and capacity building, 2) sustainable land management practice implementation, and 3) knowledge management.

2. Approved in September 2016 by the GEF, the project started in January 2017. It benefited from two no cost extensions with actual operational completion date 30 September 2022 and an expected financial completion date 31 March 2023. It is a medium size project, with an overall budget of \$6,930,730 made up of \$1,584,931 (24%) from a GEF grant. There was neither a Mid-Term Review nor a Theory of Change (ToC) created during the project' design or implementation, which means the ToC had to be reconstructed during the evaluation process.

3. UNEP was the Implementing Agency, while the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (*Ministère de l'environnement et du développement durable - MEDD*) and the National Association for Environmental Actions (*Association nationale pour les Actions environnementales - ANAE*) were the Executing Agencies. UNEP and the MEDD co-chaired the Steering Committee (in French: COFIL – Comité de pilotage) providing overall orientation and approving the annual budgets. To boost field project delivery, the MEDD entrusted the national association ANAE with the role of executing agency. In practice, that meant that ANAE directly executed the financial and technical aspects of the project. It also prepared the documentation of the Steering Committee and reports to the implementing agency/donor (UNEP/GEF).

4. To execute the project, ANAE established a regional office in the Bongolava region and facilitated the establishment of local SLM committees in each of the seven communes. ANAE also closely coordinated its interventions with the Bongolava region, the MEDD at regional level and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock regional level. Supported by the local SLM committees and their local staff, ANAE ensured the monitoring of the project while the MEDD at regional level provided quality insurance of this work.

This evaluation

5. The evaluation assesses project performance and determines outcomes and impacts. It has two primary purposes: 1) to provide evidence of the results, and 2) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, GEF and the main project partners.

6. This evaluation is primarily targeted among UNEP and its partners on this project. The evaluation process may also identify recommendations on SLM relevant for the whole of UNEP as the evaluation will contribute to the development of a Portfolio Brief on SLM in early 2023.

Key findings

7. Overall, the project is rated as Satisfactory. This is the weighted rating of criteria detailed below. The project performance ratings table can be found within the report (See Recommendations section).

8. The project is assessed as being highly strategic for UNEP, fully aligned to UNEP/GEF priorities and highly relevant to global, regional, sub-regional and national priorities. Focusing on SLM by improving both local livelihoods and rehabilitating ecosystem services fulfils multiple strategic goals such as biodiversity preservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, poverty eradication and food security.

9. The project faced an adverse external context (drought, deteriorating local security, COVID, national political instability), but it remarkably adapted to this situation through the combination of adaptive local approaches and sustained commitments.

10. The effectiveness of the project is rated as Satisfactory. Working closely with the inter-regional directorate for agriculture and livestock (*Direction interrégionale de l'agriculture et de l'élevage - DIRAE*) and the inter-regional directorate for environment and sustainable development (*Direction interrégionale pour l'environnement et le développement durable – DIREDD*). Overall, 100% of the approved outputs were delivered fully. All the outputs were delivered at the time required to maximize their intended use. They were reported to be of excellent quality by users. There were high levels of user ownership with key users closely involved in their preparation. There were additional relevant outputs delivered on time for its intended use and of excellent quality.

11. The two first project outcomes (Enhanced capacity of communal institutions to implement SLM demonstrated; Increased farmers' capacity for SLM practices demonstrated) are fully achieved, while the third project outcome is mostly achieved (High level commitment to implementing a strategy for up scaling SLM at regional level demonstrated publicly). In addition, assumptions for progress from project outputs to project outcomes hold fully. Finally, drivers to support transition from output to project outcomes are in place.

12. More specifically, the project regulates the agro-ecosystem services: it provides freshwater supply, it improves local micro-climate, it stops soil degradation (7 *lavaka* stabilized), and it supports communal land rehabilitation (reforestation 221,783 trees) and individual soil rehabilitation on private land (for 2,435 households with a total of 52,415 plants including oranges, mangos, papaya, avocado). Secondly, it enhanced agro-ecosystem services' capacity to deliver goods: wood from planted trees; 306,484 fruits trees on the household for fruit consumption; rice from irrigation system (+50% productivity); small breeding (1,601 pigs for 497 households, 23,702 chicken for 1,356 households); 1,403 tons of compost for 1267 households; 786 households with improved stoves.

13. The project accomplished most of its targets, with SLM diagnosis and SLM operational in 7 communes with results integrated into decision-making for all 7 communes and adaptive SLM plants in each of the 7 participating counties.

14. Given that these activities (reforestation, improved water retention, control of land degradation, improved soil fertility) benefited the whole community, it is difficult to give the exact number of people benefiting. Each of the 14 *Fokontany* (or about 8,000 households in total) benefited from these measures by improved ecosystem services of the area. From a purely economic perspective (the pay for labour), 3,118 people benefited from this activity, including 2,236

women and 882 men. Overall, this is fully consistent with the target 2.1. *"2 urgent measures identified and implemented by local communities with equitable representation of women; 2,500 ha rehabilitated through urgent measures; 8,000 households benefitting from urgent measures"*.

15. The target *"100% of the total payments for interim support, including to women led measures disbursed and 100% of technical and organizational support for interim measures in each commune"* was fully delivered. In addition, the project supported 4,696 households, somewhat under the target of 5,670 households.

16. The target of *"56 local trainers trained, of which 1 woman per commune (which is 7 in total)"* was exceeded with 70 people from local committees trained, including 18 women. In addition, 422 local people were trained on specific subjects (SLM, small-scale livestock, compost, improved stove, plant production) acting as trainers for people in an eco-village approach, which is a wider range than SLM. In total, 5,227 people have been trained in the concept of SLM, of which 35% were women. This is less than the second target 2.3 of *"17,025 trained of which 30% women"*. In conclusion, more people have been trained with various skills they can replicate as a trainer, but fewer people have been trained as practitioners.

17. The project organized visits to the reforestation sites. In total, 1,583 people participated in these events, including 21% women and 13% people under 30 years of age. Most people from within the 7 participating communities (about 8,000 people) visited the sites. As such, the target *"11,349 adult population visiting the demonstration, including more than 30% women"* was partially achieved.

18. The impact is rated as Likely as the three pathways mutually reinforced each other to get higher results in the form of three intermediate states: i) Local and regional institutions strengthened by mainstreaming SLM; ii) Agricultural yields and associated incomes of local people improved and iii) Land degradation reduced across the Bongolova Region in Madagascar. Combined, these three intermediate states achieved a lasting impact in the form of improved living conditions of local people. The project improves the flow of different agro-ecosystem services in the overall Bongolova region as shown by the lower occurrence of fire. More specifically, the project improved the land condition for 20,334 ha now managed under SLM. The project also improved the follow up of agro-ecosystem services in various ways for approximately 10,000 households.

19. Financial management is rated Satisfactory. Initially, ANAE faced some difficulties in adhering to UNEP's financial policies and procedures. Patiently, UNEP assisted ANAE and provided training in Togo in 2018 helping ANAE to reach a satisfactory level. The completeness of financial information remained another issue all along the project, especially due to the difficulty to assess the exact co-financing, in particular due to poor reporting from the partners. Finally, the communication between finance and project management staff was constructive and effective.

20. Efficiency is rated as Satisfactory. The extension of the project for about 2 years could be seen as a negative impact on efficiency, as it implies financial burden on implementing and executing agencies. But in practice, this additional time helped to better deliver. Not only that, the project refocused its activities on the ground on what matters in the long-term, which is securing local long-term technical support to SLM committee and communes. But, also it strengthened its work with local institutional partners (DIREDD, DIRAE).

21. Monitoring and reporting is rated as Satisfactory. At design and during the project implementation the executing agency established a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit with a clear structure, dedicated staff and data collection method. The monitoring benefited from the support from the beneficiaries themselves (Local SLM committees) and from external monitoring (DIREDD) creating a positive learning loop. As a result, information generated by the implementation of the

monitoring plan during the life of the project has been used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and to ensure sustainability.

22. Overall, sustainability is rated as Satisfactory. Socio-political sustainability is highly satisfactory as it builds on already existing trust and stable socio-political relationships at the lowest level, the *fokontany*, and its aggregation into communes. Based on a strong ownership, it has a low degree of dependency on social/political factors at regional and national levels. The financial sustainability is moderately satisfactory. Project outcomes have a low dependency on financial flows to persist. But, yet that would still need some for maintenance. This need has been identified and an exit strategy with a financial component has been developed which is to add it in the budget of the community or the region. Institutional sustainability is moderately satisfactory. A robust mechanism is in place to sustain/support the institutionalisation of project outcomes at local level (the formalisation of the SLM committees at commune level; the incorporation of project outcomes in the DIREDD work programme). And discussions take place at national level to sustain these outcomes (MEDD to bolster its ecosystem-based approach and to legalize local SLM committees).

23. The factors affecting performances and cross-cutting issues are rated as Satisfactory. Out of the most conducive factors of success is clearly the quality of project management and supervision at all levels, from the most local to national and international levels involving the beneficiaries, the executing (ANAE) and implementing agencies (UNEP). Rated highly satisfactory, this project management allows both to adapt activities locally and also fulfill leadership towards achieving the planned outcomes. This high-quality project management was in tune with an excellent cooperation with stakeholders (communities, DIRAE, DIREDD). This inclusive approach considered the differentiated needs of the most marginalized people with a positive effect on equity. The project also made efforts to address structural gender inequity by developing activities more likely to directly interest women (like improved stoves, breeding and composting). The project also promoted the participation of more women by organizing the training in order to allow more women to participate.

24. The social and environmental safeguards is rated as Satisfactory. By focussing on both ecosystem regeneration (component 1) and improved local livelihoods (component 2), the project structurally strived to get both environmental and social positive outcomes. It also linked the two issues in a positive narrative. It changed the usual actions, vision and discourse by which socio-economic activities should lead to environmental degradation. Bushfire may be the most acute environmental problem. Most likely linked to the project, the Bongolava region was ranked 20th out of the 22 regions concerning fire points according to bush fires at the start of the project in 2017. And, in 2020 it was ranked 15th, an improvement of 7 points. The three extensions of the projects allowed them to continue field activities with low carbon emissions, while cancelling national and global workshops that had large footprints. However, this positive argument was not used for the extension. In summary, efforts were made to minimize the project's environmental footprint on a cost-efficient basis and not as a strategic operational management approach.

25. The rating for country ownership and driven-ness is highly satisfactory. The project was initially proposed and designed by ANAE and the MEDD with UNEP only supporting the project process so that it could fit the Global Environment Facility (GEF) requirements. In this sense, there was full country ownership and driven-ness from the start. During the implementation process, the project started by creating a bottom-up inclusive process that strengthened already existing local institutions and gave birth to self-determined SLM committees. It also successfully involved DIRAE and DIREDD that were key actors to move forward from outputs to outcomes. This broad ownership represents the needs and interests of all gendered and marginalised groups as demonstrated by the steady lasting involvement of the SLM local communities as well as a large variety of beneficiaries.

26. Communication and public awareness is rated as Moderately Satisfactory. From the start, the project established a specific component “knowledge sharing”. At local, community and regional level effective communication of learning and experience sharing between project partners and interested groups occurred. At regional level, the project also used regional radio and TVs as effective communication channels. At the national level, the project did some tailor-made communication to specialized audiences. The executing agency organised a global workshop to communicate the results associated with the project. However, the project didn’t use a clear strategy and implementation plan to proactively use communication channels and networks. For instance, the website was not updated, there was no newsletter or active electronic communication nationally or globally. As a main consequence, the method, outcomes and results of the projects are poorly known at national or international level.

Conclusions

27. Two main structural reasons underpin the project’s achievement: the approach of ANAE, with MEDD support, and the attitude of UNEP. On the one hand, the project benefited from the lasting involvement of ANAE in the region and nationally on SLM which includes establishing long-standing partnership, building trust, and developing adapting activities tailor-made to beneficiaries. On the other hand, UNEP facilitated an endogenous process within Madagascar. It acted as a go-between ANAE/MEDD and GEF to formulate, and then to execute the project. UNEP’s way of working raised the executing agency’s institutional capacity to comply with UN/GEF standards and provided positive-oriented solutions with administrative issues.

28. Benefiting from its good reputation and its long experience, ANAE undertook the project with a philosophy of caring in three dimensions. Firstly, the project cared about its own staff, with stability during the years in the employment before and during the project. This stability provided a context to nurture exchange, build institutional memory, and propose adaptive activities. This was fundamental when instability around the project prevailed. Secondly, the project cared about the people at local level focussing on improving their institutional capacity and their well-being. Thirdly, the project cared about the environment and more exactly the ecosystem with land degradation as the main threat. These three dimensions of care positively nurtured each other, allowed a conducive process and provided lasting impact.

29. If this work at the local level might look “simple”, it is not simplistic at all. It relied on close relationships with the communities, trust, reactive and adaptive activities based on the demand and the capacity of the beneficiaries.

30. The structural choice of the project also led to three weaknesses. Firstly, the need to find a national institutional recognition of local SLM committees. Then, the need to communicate and raise awareness at national and international levels widely in this overly interconnected world. Lastly, to secure funds sustainability in particular by mobilizing institutions dealing with climate change.

Lessons Learned

31. **Lesson 1:** Difficult external context can be overcome by adapting activities to this reality.

32. **Lesson 2:** Caring for the staff, the beneficiaries and the environment creates a positive feedback loop.

33. **Lesson 3:** UNEP’s facilitating role can create the conditions for success.

34. **Lesson 4:** Bottom-up socio-political efforts need institutional top-down institutional recognition.
35. **Lesson 5:** Sharing knowledge needs a proactive communication strategy.
36. **Lesson 6:** Financial sustainability is a challenge, especially when including marginalized peoples.

Recommendations

37. **Recommendation 1:** Partner (MEDD) to legally recognise SLM committees.
38. **Recommendation 2:** Partner (MEDD) to show the multiple benefits (socio-economic, health, education, environment) of SLM project to other relevant ministries.
39. **Recommendation 3:** Partners (MEED/ANAE) to put emphasis on local Financial sustainability, with an exit financial strategy.
40. **Recommendation 4:** Partners (MEED/ANAE) to establish a proactive communication strategy from the start both towards the local/regional level and the national/global level.
41. **Recommendation 5:** Project (UNEP) to involve Ministries of health, education and planning when designing SLM projects.
42. **Recommendation 6:** Project (UNEP) and partners (Government) to build projects on SLM from the need and the support from local level beneficiaries.
43. **Recommendation 7:** UNEP and partners to account SLM project contribution to climate change adaptation/mitigation.
44. **Recommendation 8:** UNEP to account for all gains from SLM (water, farming, soil restoration, reforestation, climate, health) mobilizing its Economic and Trade Policy Unit.
45. **Recommendation 9:** UNEP to create a documentary on SLM project for global outreach (as a source of inspiration and replication).
46. **Recommendation 10:** UNEP to partner with executing agencies that demonstrate resilience and adaptation to external context.
47. **Recommendation 11:** UNEP to conceive, operate and communicate on SLM projects as fundamental for climate, biodiversity and human well-being.
48. **Recommendation 12:** UNEP to develop adaptative financial mechanisms to liberate the 5% of the remaining budget – or part of it.

Résumé exécutif

Contexte du projet

49. La région de Bongolava à Madagascar souffre d'une dégradation des terres due à (i) des facteurs abiotiques, dont l'érosion, et (ii) des facteurs anthropiques, tels que des pratiques inappropriées et non durables - en particulier via de mauvaises pratiques agricoles, le surpâturage, le brûlage et le dénudement des pentes, collines et plateaux (un vaste type géographique appelé tanety). Pour faire face aux menaces qui pèsent sur la gestion durable des terres (GDT), le projet a adopté une approche de gestion locale visant à : (i) fournir une base appropriée pour la gestion participative des terres, (ii) faciliter une compréhension précise et complète des problèmes locaux dynamiques, et (iii) aider à assurer l'appropriation locale des objectifs, conduisant à des stratégies durables et à une application efficace de la GDT. En mettant l'accent sur le travail de terrain pour changer les pratiques locales et ensuite le niveau régional, le projet a été livré à travers trois composantes complémentaires avec des résultats associés : 1) le développement institutionnel et le renforcement des capacités, 2) la mise en œuvre de pratiques de gestion durable des terres, et 3) la gestion des connaissances.

50. Approuvé en septembre 2016 par le FEM, le projet a démarré en janvier 2017. Il a bénéficié de deux extensions sans frais avec une date d'achèvement opérationnel effective au 30 septembre 2022 et une date d'achèvement financier prévue au 31 mars 2023. Il s'agit d'un projet de taille moyenne, avec un budget global de 6 930 730 dollars, dont 1 584 931 dollars (24 %) provenant d'une subvention du FEM. Il n'y a pas eu de revue à mi-parcours ni de théorie du changement (TdC) créée pendant la conception ou la mise en œuvre du projet, ce qui signifie que la TdC a dû être reconstruite pendant le processus d'évaluation.

51. Le PNUE était l'agence d'exécution, tandis que le Ministère de l'environnement et du développement durable (MEDD) et l'Association nationale d'actions environnementales (ANAE) étaient les agences d'exécution. Le PNUE et le MEDD ont coprésidé le Comité de pilotage qui a fourni l'orientation générale et approuvé les budgets annuels. Pour stimuler l'exécution du projet sur le terrain, le MEDD a confié à ANAE le rôle d'agence d'exécution. En pratique, cela signifie que l'ANAE a directement exécuté les aspects financiers et techniques du projet. Elle a également préparé la documentation du Comité de pilotage et les rapports destinés à l'agence d'exécution/donateur (PNUE/FEM).

52. Pour exécuter le projet, l'ANAE a établi un bureau régional dans la région de Bongolava et a facilité la création de comités locaux de GDT dans chacune des sept communes. L'ANAE a également coordonné étroitement ses interventions avec la région de Bongolava, le MEDD au niveau régional et le ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Élevage au niveau régional. Appuyée par les comités locaux GDT et leur personnel local, l'ANAE a assuré le suivi du projet tandis que le MEDD au niveau régional a assuré la qualité de ce travail.

Cette évaluation

53. L'évaluation porte sur la performance du projet et détermine les résultats et les impacts. Elle a deux objectifs principaux : 1) fournir des preuves des résultats, et 2) promouvoir l'amélioration opérationnelle, l'apprentissage et le partage des connaissances grâce aux résultats et aux enseignements tirés entre le PNUE, le FEM et les principaux partenaires du projet.

54. Cette évaluation est principalement destinée au PNUE et à ses partenaires sur ce projet. Le processus d'évaluation peut également identifier des recommandations pertinentes sur la GDT pour

l'ensemble du PNUE, car l'évaluation contribuera à l'élaboration d'un Portfolio Brief sur la GDT au début de 2023.

Principales conclusions

55. Dans l'ensemble, le projet est jugé satisfaisant. Il s'agit de la note pondérée des critères détaillés ci-dessous. Le tableau de notation des performances du projet se trouve dans le rapport (voir la section Recommandations).

56. Le projet est évalué comme étant hautement stratégique pour le PNUE, complètement aligné sur les priorités du PNUE/FEM et hautement pertinent pour les priorités mondiales, régionales, sous-régionales et nationales en matière de politique environnementale. L'accent mis sur la GDT en améliorant les moyens de subsistance locaux et en réhabilitant les services écosystémiques répond à de multiples objectifs stratégiques tels que la préservation de la biodiversité, l'atténuation et l'adaptation au changement climatique, l'éradication de la pauvreté et la sécurité alimentaire.

57. Le projet a été confronté à un contexte externe défavorable (sécheresse, détérioration de la sécurité locale, COVID, instabilité politique nationale), mais il s'est remarquablement adapté à cette situation grâce à la combinaison d'approches locales adaptatives et d'engagements durables.

58. L'efficacité du projet est jugée satisfaisante grâce à la collaboration étroite avec la Direction interrégionale de l'agriculture et de l'élevage (DIRAE) et la Direction interrégionale pour l'environnement et le développement durable (DIREDD). Globalement, 100 % des réalisations approuvées ont été entièrement livrées. Tous les produits ont été livrés dans les délais requis pour maximiser leur utilisation prévue. Ils ont été jugés d'excellente qualité par les utilisateurs. Le niveau d'appropriation par les utilisateurs était élevé, les utilisateurs clés étant étroitement impliqués dans leur préparation. Des produits supplémentaires pertinents ont été livrés à temps pour leur utilisation prévue et sont d'excellente qualité.

59. Les deux premiers résultats du projet (démonstration de la capacité accrue des institutions communales à mettre en œuvre la GDT ; démonstration de la capacité accrue des agriculteurs à mettre en œuvre les pratiques de GDT) sont entièrement atteints, tandis que le troisième résultat du projet est en grande partie atteint (démonstration publique de l'engagement de haut niveau à mettre en œuvre une stratégie de mise à l'échelle de la GDT au niveau régional). En outre, les hypothèses relatives à la progression des réalisations du projet vers les résultats du projet se vérifient pleinement. Enfin, les moteurs pour soutenir la transition des produits aux résultats du projet sont en place.

60. Plus spécifiquement, en premier lieu, le projet a régulé des services agro-écosystémiques : il a fourni un approvisionnement en eau douce, il a amélioré le microclimat local, il a arrêté la dégradation des sols (7 lavaka stabilisés), et il a permis la réhabilitation des terrains communaux (reboisement par 221'783 arbres) et la réhabilitation individuelle des sols sur les terres privées (pour 2'435 ménages avec un total de 52'415 plantes comprenant des orangers, des manguiers, des papayers, des avocatiers). Deuxièmement, il a renforcé la capacité des services agro-écosystémiques à fournir des biens : bois des arbres plantés ; 306 484 arbres fruitiers dans les ménages pour la consommation de fruits ; riz du système d'irrigation (+50% de productivité) ; petit élevage (1 601 porcs pour 497 ménages, 23 702 poulets pour 1 356 ménages) ; 1 403 tonnes de compost pour 1 267 ménages ; 786 ménages avec des foyers améliorés.

61. Le projet a atteint la plupart de ses objectifs, avec des comités locaux de GDT opérationnels, un diagnostic GDT dans 7 communes avec des résultats intégrés dans la prise de décision pour les 7 communes et des installations GDT adaptatives dans chacune des 7 communes participantes.

62. Étant donné que ces activités (reboisement, amélioration de la rétention d'eau, contrôle de la dégradation des terres, amélioration de la fertilité des sols) ont bénéficié à l'ensemble de la communauté, il est difficile de donner le nombre exact de personnes bénéficiaires. Chacun des 14 Fokontany (soit environ 8000 ménages au total) a bénéficié de ces mesures par l'amélioration des services écosystémiques de la zone. D'un point de vue purement économique (la rémunération du travail), 3'118 personnes ont bénéficié de cette activité, dont 2'236 femmes et 882 hommes. Dans l'ensemble, cela est tout à fait conforme à l'objectif 2.1. "2 mesures urgentes identifiées et mises en œuvre par les communautés locales avec une représentation équitable des femmes ; 2'500 ha réhabilités par des mesures urgentes ; 8'000 ménages bénéficiant des mesures urgentes".

63. L'objectif "100% des paiements totaux pour l'appui intérimaire, y compris pour les mesures menées par les femmes, ont été décaissés et 100% de l'appui technique et organisationnel pour les mesures intérimaires dans chaque commune" a été entièrement atteint. En outre, le projet a soutenu 4.696 ménages, un peu moins que l'objectif de 5.670 ménages.

64. L'objectif de "56 formateurs locaux formés, dont 1 femme par commune (soit 7 au total) a été dépassé avec 70 personnes des comités locaux formés, dont 18 femmes. En outre, 422 personnes locales ont été formées sur des sujets spécifiques (GDT, petit élevage, compost, fourneau amélioré, production végétale) en jouant le rôle de formateurs pour les personnes dans une approche d'éco-village, ce qui représente un éventail plus large de nouvelles compétences que la GDT. Au total, 5'227 personnes ont été formées au concept de la GDT, dont 35% de femmes. Ce chiffre est légèrement inférieur au deuxième objectif 2.3 de "17 025 personnes formées, dont 30% de femmes". En conclusion, davantage de personnes ont été formées à diverses compétences qu'elles peuvent reproduire en tant que formateur, mais moins de personnes ont été formées en tant que praticiens.

65. Le projet a organisé des visites sur les sites de reboisement. Au total, 1'583 personnes ont participé à ces événements, dont 21% de femmes et 13% de personnes de moins de 30 ans. La plupart des personnes des 7 communautés participantes (environ 8'000 personnes) ont visité les sites. Ainsi, l'objectif "11'349 personnes adultes visitant la démonstration, dont plus de 30% de femmes" a été partiellement atteint.

66. L'impact est considéré comme Probable car les trois voies se sont mutuellement renforcées pour obtenir des résultats plus élevés sous la forme de trois états intermédiaires : i) Renforcement des institutions locales et régionales par l'intégration de la GDT ; ii) Amélioration des rendements agricoles et des revenus associés des populations locales et iii) Réduction de la dégradation des terres dans la région de Bongolova à Madagascar. Combinés, ces trois états intermédiaires ont eu un impact durable sous la forme d'une amélioration des conditions de vie des populations locales. Le projet améliore le flux des différents services agro-écosystémiques dans l'ensemble de la région de Bongolava, comme le montre la baisse de l'occurrence des incendies. Plus précisément, le projet a amélioré l'état des terres sur 20'334 ha, désormais gérées par la GDT. Le projet a également amélioré le suivi des services agro-écosystémiques de diverses manières pour environ 10 000 ménages.

67. La gestion financière est jugée satisfaisante. Au départ, l'ANAE a rencontré quelques difficultés pour adhérer aux politiques et procédures financières du PNUE. Patiemment, le PNUE a aidé l'ANAE et a fourni une formation au Togo en 2018, aidant l'ANAE à atteindre un niveau satisfaisant. L'exhaustivité des informations financières est restée un autre problème tout au long du projet, notamment en raison de la difficulté à évaluer le cofinancement exact, en particulier en raison de la faiblesse des rapports des partenaires. Enfin, la communication entre le personnel des finances et de la gestion du projet a été constructive et efficace.

68. L'efficacité est jugée satisfaisante. La prolongation du projet d'environ deux ans pourrait être considérée comme un impact négatif sur l'efficacité, car elle implique une charge financière pour les agences de mise en œuvre et d'exécution. Mais dans la pratique, ce délai supplémentaire a permis d'améliorer les résultats. En outre, le projet a recentré ses activités sur le terrain sur ce qui importe à long terme, à savoir l'obtention d'un soutien technique local à long terme pour les comités de GDT et les communes. Et il a également renforcé son travail avec les partenaires institutionnels locaux (DIREDD, DIRAE).

69. Le suivi et les rapports sont jugés satisfaisants. Lors de la conception et de la mise en œuvre du projet, l'agence d'exécution a créé une unité de suivi et d'évaluation dotée d'une structure claire, d'un personnel spécialisé et d'une méthode de collecte des données adéquate. Le suivi a bénéficié du soutien des bénéficiaires eux-mêmes (comités locaux de GDT) et du suivi externe (DIREDD), créant ainsi une boucle d'apprentissage rétroactive positive. En conséquence, les informations générées par la mise en œuvre du plan de suivi pendant la durée du projet ont été utilisées pour adapter et améliorer l'exécution du projet, obtenir des résultats et assurer la durabilité.

70. Dans l'ensemble, la durabilité est jugée satisfaisante. La durabilité sociopolitique est très satisfaisante car elle s'appuie sur la confiance déjà existante et les relations sociopolitiques stables au niveau le plus bas, le Fokontany, et son agrégation en communes. Basé sur une forte appropriation, il a un faible degré de dépendance aux facteurs socio-politiques aux niveaux régional et national. La viabilité financière est moyennement satisfaisante. Les résultats du projet sont peu dépendants des flux financiers pour perdurer. Mais, pourtant, il en faudrait encore pour l'entretien. Ce besoin a été identifié et une stratégie de sortie avec une composante financière a été développée qui consiste à l'ajouter dans le budget de la communauté ou de la région. La durabilité institutionnelle est moyennement satisfaisante. Un mécanisme solide est en place pour soutenir/appuyer l'institutionnalisation des résultats du projet au niveau local (la formalisation des comités de GDT au niveau de la commune ; l'incorporation des résultats du projet dans le programme de travail du DIREDD). Et des discussions ont lieu au niveau national pour soutenir ces résultats (le MEDD pour renforcer son approche écosystémique et pour légaliser les comités locaux de GDT).

71. Les facteurs affectant les performances et les questions transversales sont jugés satisfaisants. L'un des facteurs de réussite les plus favorables est sans conteste la qualité de la gestion et de la supervision du projet à tous les niveaux, du plus local au plan national et international, impliquant les bénéficiaires, les agences d'exécution (ANAE) et de mise en œuvre (PNUE). Jugée très satisfaisante, cette gestion de projet permet à la fois d'adapter les activités localement et d'assurer le leadership pour atteindre les résultats prévus. Cette gestion de projet de haute qualité a été en phase avec une excellente coopération avec les parties prenantes (communautés, DIRAE, DIREDD). Cette approche inclusive a pris en compte les besoins différenciés des personnes les plus marginalisées avec un effet positif sur l'équité. Le projet s'est également efforcé d'aborder l'inégalité structurelle entre les sexes en développant des activités plus susceptibles d'intéresser directement les femmes (comme les foyers améliorés, l'élevage et le compostage). Le projet a également encouragé la participation d'un plus grand nombre de femmes aux formations en les organisant (lieu, date, heure) de façon qu'elles tiennent compte de leurs contraintes.

72. Les sauvegardes sociales et environnementales sont jugées satisfaisantes. En se concentrant à la fois sur la régénération de l'écosystème (composante 1) et sur l'amélioration des moyens de subsistance locaux (composante 2), le projet s'est efforcé structurellement d'obtenir des résultats positifs tant sur le plan environnemental que social. Il a également lié les deux questions dans un récit positif. Il a changé les actions, la vision et le discours habituels selon lesquels les

activités socio-économiques devraient conduire à la dégradation de l'environnement. Les feux de brousse sont peut-être le problème environnemental le plus aigu. Très probablement en lien avec le projet, la région de Bongolava était classée 20e sur les 22 régions concernant les points d'incendie en fonction des feux de brousse au début du projet en 2017. Et, en 2020, elle était classée 15e, soit une amélioration de 5 points. Les trois prolongations des projets leur ont permis de poursuivre les activités de terrain avec de faibles émissions de carbone, tout en annulant les ateliers nationaux et mondiaux qui avaient des empreintes importantes. Toutefois, cet argument positif n'a pas été utilisé pour l'extension. En résumé, des efforts ont été faits pour minimiser l'empreinte environnementale du projet sur une base rentable et non comme une approche de gestion opérationnelle stratégique.

73. L'évaluation de l'appropriation et de l'impulsion du pays est très satisfaisante. Le projet a été initialement proposé et conçu par l'ANAE et le MEDD, le PNUÉ ne faisant que soutenir le processus du projet afin qu'il puisse répondre aux exigences du Fonds pour l'environnement mondial (FEM). En ce sens, le pays s'est pleinement approprié le projet et l'a piloté dès le départ. Pendant le processus de mise en œuvre, le projet a commencé par créer un processus inclusif ascendant qui a renforcé les institutions locales déjà existantes et a donné naissance à des comités de GDT autodéterminés. Il a également impliqué avec succès la DIRAE et le DIREDD qui ont été des acteurs clés pour passer des produits aux résultats. Cette large appropriation représente les besoins et les intérêts de tous les groupes sexués et marginalisés, comme le démontre l'implication constante et durable des communautés locales de GDT ainsi que d'une grande diversité de bénéficiaires.

74. La communication et la sensibilisation du public sont jugées moyennement satisfaisantes. Dès le début, le projet a établi une composante spécifique "partage des connaissances". Au niveau local, communautaire et régional, une communication efficace de l'apprentissage et du partage d'expérience entre les partenaires du projet et les groupes intéressés a eu lieu. Au niveau régional, le projet a également utilisé la radio et la télévision régionales comme canaux de communication efficaces. Au niveau national, le projet a fait de la communication sur mesure pour des audiences spécialisées. L'agence d'exécution a organisé un atelier mondial pour communiquer les résultats associés au projet. Cependant, le projet n'a pas utilisé une stratégie claire et un plan de mise en œuvre pour utiliser de manière proactive les canaux et réseaux de communication. Par exemple, le site web n'a pas été mis à jour, il n'y a pas eu de newsletter ou de communication électronique active au niveau national ou mondial. La conséquence principale est que la méthode, les résultats et les réussites du projet sont mal connus au niveau national ou international.

Conclusions

75. Deux raisons structurelles principales sous-tendent la réalisation du projet : l'approche de l'ANAE, avec le soutien du MEDD, et l'attitude du PNUÉ. D'une part, le projet a bénéficié de l'implication durable de l'ANAE dans la région et au niveau national sur la GDT, qui comprend l'établissement d'un partenariat de longue date, l'instauration de la confiance et le développement d'activités adaptées aux bénéficiaires. D'autre part, le PNUÉ a facilité un processus endogène à Madagascar. Il a joué le rôle d'intermédiaire entre l'ANAE/MEDD et le FEM pour formuler, puis exécuter le projet. La méthode de travail du PNUÉ a renforcé la capacité institutionnelle de l'agence d'exécution à se conformer aux normes de l'ONU/FEM et a fourni des solutions positives aux problèmes administratifs.

76. Bénéficiant de sa bonne réputation et de sa longue expérience, ANAE a entrepris le projet avec une philosophie de bienveillance à trois dimensions. Tout d'abord, le projet a pris soin de son propre personnel, avec une stabilité pendant les années d'emploi avant et pendant le projet. Cette stabilité a fourni un contexte permettant de nourrir l'échange, de construire la mémoire institutionnelle et de proposer des activités d'adaptation. Cela était fondamental lorsque l'instabilité régnait autour du projet. Deuxièmement, le projet s'est soucié des personnes au niveau local en se

concentrant sur l'amélioration de leur capacité institutionnelle et de leur bien-être. Troisièmement, le projet s'est soucié de l'environnement et plus précisément de l'écosystème, la dégradation des sols étant la principale menace. Ces trois dimensions de l'attention se sont nourries mutuellement, ont permis un processus propice et ont eu un impact durable.

77. Si ce travail au niveau local peut sembler "simple", il ne l'est pas du tout. Il repose sur des relations étroites avec les communautés, la confiance, des activités réactives et adaptatives basées sur la demande et la capacité des bénéficiaires.

78. Le choix structurel du projet a également conduit à trois faiblesses. Tout d'abord, la nécessité de trouver une reconnaissance institutionnelle nationale des comités locaux de GDT. Ensuite, la nécessité de communiquer et de sensibiliser largement aux niveaux national et international dans ce monde excessivement interconnecté. Enfin, la nécessité d'assurer la pérennité des fonds, notamment en mobilisant les institutions traitant du changement climatique.

Les leçons apprises

79. **Leçon 1** : Un contexte externe difficile peut être surmonté en adaptant les activités à cette réalité.

80. **Leçon 2** : Prendre soin du personnel, des bénéficiaires et de l'environnement crée une boucle de rétroaction positive.

81. **Leçon 3** : Le rôle de facilitateur du PNUE peut créer les conditions du succès.

82. **Leçon 4** : Les efforts socio-politiques ascendants ont besoin d'une reconnaissance institutionnelle descendante.

83. **Leçon 5** : Le partage des connaissances nécessite une stratégie de communication proactive.

84. **Leçon 6** : La viabilité financière est un défi, surtout lorsqu'il s'agit d'inclure des personnes marginalisées.

Recommandations

85. **Recommandation 1** : Partenaire (MEDD) doit reconnaître légalement les comités GDT.

86. **Recommandation 2** : Le partenaire (MEDD) doit montrer les bénéfices multiples (socio-économiques, santé, éducation, environnement) du projet GDT aux autres ministères concernés.

87. **Recommandation 3** : Les partenaires (MEED/ANAE) doivent mettre l'accent sur la durabilité financière locale, avec une stratégie financière de sortie.

88. **Recommandation 4** : Les partenaires (ANAE/MEED) doivent établir une stratégie de communication proactive dès le départ, tant au niveau local/régional qu'au niveau national/global.

89. **Recommandation 5** : Le projet (PNUE) doit impliquer les ministères de la santé, de l'éducation et de la planification lors de la conception des projets de GDT.

90. **Recommandation 6** : Le projet (PNUE) et les partenaires (gouvernement) doivent élaborer des projets de GDT à partir des besoins et du soutien des bénéficiaires au niveau local.

91. **Recommandation 7** : Le PNUE et les partenaires doivent tenir compte de la contribution des projets de GDT à l'adaptation/atténuation du changement climatique.
92. **Recommandation 8** : Le PNUE doit comptabiliser tous les gains de la GDT (eau, agriculture, restauration des sols, reforestation, climat, santé) en mobilisant son unité de politique économique et commerciale.
93. **Recommandation 9** : Le PNUE doit créer un documentaire sur le projet de GDT pour une diffusion mondiale (comme source d'inspiration et de reproduction).
94. **Recommandation 10** : le PNUE doit s'associer à des agences d'exécution qui font preuve de résilience et d'adaptation au contexte extérieur.
95. **Recommandation 11** : Le PNUE doit concevoir, opérer et communiquer sur les projets de GDT comme étant fondamentaux pour le climat, la biodiversité et le bien-être humain.
96. **Recommandation 12** : Le PNUE doit développer des mécanismes financiers adaptés pour libérer les 5% du budget restant - ou une partie de celui-ci.

1 INTRODUCTION

97. Institutional context. UNEP is the Implementing Agency, represented by the Land Degradation and Biodiversity Unit of the Biodiversity and Land Branch, within the Ecosystems Division. The Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Ministère de l'environnement et du développement durable - MEDD) and the National Association for Environmental Actions (Association nationale pour les Actions environnementales – ANAE) are the Executing Agencies. The project was implemented in the Bongolava region of Madagascar.

98. The project was approved 08 May 2016 by UNEP and 21 September 2016 by the GEF. It contributes to UNEP's Programme of Work 2014-15: Ecosystem-based and support adaptation approach focus area, output 1 and 2. It also contributes to GEF strategic priority on Land degradation (LD-1: Agriculture and Rangeland Systems). The project lasted 6 years, with an actual start date 06 January 2017 and operational completion date 30 September 2022 with financial closure expected on 31 March 2023. This included three no cost extension dates. It is a medium size project, with an overall budget of \$6,930,730 made up of \$1,584,931 (24%) from a GEF grant. There was neither a Mid-Term Review nor a Theory of Change (TOC) created during the project' design or implementation, which means the ToC had to be reconstructed during the evaluation process.

99. Purpose of the evaluation. The evaluation assesses project performance and determines outcomes and impacts. It has two primary purposes: 1) to provide evidence of the results, and 2) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, GEF and the main project partners.

100. Key intended audience for the findings. This evaluation is primarily targeted among UNEP and its partners on this project. The evaluation process may also identify recommendations on SLM relevant for the whole of UNEP as the evaluation will contribute to the development of Portfolio Brief on SLM.

2 EVALUATION METHODS

101. An external consultant (herein after referred to as the ‘evaluator’) conducted the Madagascar Project Terminal Evaluation between May and December 2022 under the management and oversight of the Evaluation Office of UNEP, based in Nairobi.

102. The evaluation employed a participatory approach with the key stakeholders. The evaluator kept the implementing agency (UNEP) and the executing agencies (ANAE, MEDD) informed of progress throughout. Other project stakeholders were interviewed to elaborate the report and provided with an opportunity to comment on the evaluation findings in the draft Terminal Evaluation Report. This process is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

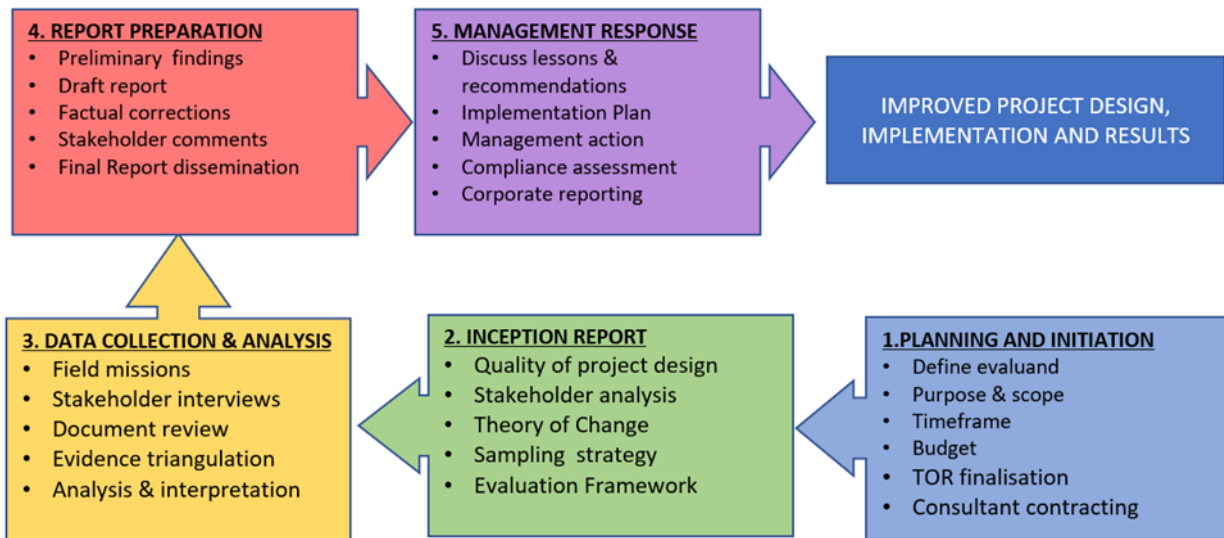


Figure 1. UNEP Evaluation Process

103. The evaluator assessed the quality at project design during the inception phase of the evaluation as the baseline for the study. A summary of it can be found in section 5.2. below and the detailed report in the Inception Evaluation Report, available from the UNEP Evaluation Office.

104. The evaluator reconstructed a ToC during the inception phase of the evaluation based on an extensive desktop review of all project documentation, and initial interviews with key project partners. This ToC was then presented and discussed with project partners involved in the evaluation, inputs and suggestions for improvement were sought, and the slightly revised version can be found in section 4 of this report.

105. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Guidelines, the project was assessed with respect to a minimum set of evaluation criteria grouped into the following 9 categories: Strategic Relevance, Quality of Project Design, Nature of External Context, Effectiveness (availability of outputs, achievement of project outcomes and likelihood of impact), Financial Management, Efficiency, Monitoring and Reporting, Sustainability and the Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-cutting Issues. As per UNEP guidance, the evaluation ratings are on a six-point scale.² The UNEP Evaluation

² Most criteria are rated against the following points on the scale: Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU); Nature of External Context is rated from Highly Favourable (HF) down to Highly Unfavourable (HU); Sustainability and Likelihood of Impact are rated from Highly Likely (HL) down to Highly Unlikely (HU).

Office has developed detailed descriptions of the main elements required to be demonstrated at each level (i.e. Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory) for each evaluation criterion. The evaluator has considered all the evidence gathered during the evaluation in relation to this matrix in order to generate evaluation criteria performance ratings.

106. For projects funded by the GEF, findings from the evaluation on five topics are to be uploaded in the GEF Portal. These topics are: i) performance against GEF's Core Indicator Targets; ii) engagement of stakeholders; iii) gender-responsive measures and gender result areas; iv) implementation of management measures taken against the Safeguards Plan and v) challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach. The evaluation findings related to the 5 topics of interest to the GEF are given in Annex VI.

107. The UNEP Evaluation office has also developed a set of strategic questions (**see below table 2**) for a SLM portfolio in order to contribute to synthesized learning on this topic. Countries targeted in the SLM Portfolio include Serbia, Albania, Madagascar, Kenya and Cuba.

108. During the inception stage, the evaluator developed an evaluation matrix questions (found in Annex IX) which consisted of set of questions based on the above evaluation criteria set out in the TOR, the above strategic conservations and the specific requests from the GEF.

109. A combination of methods and tools were applied during the evaluation to collect information necessary to answer all evaluation questions in an evidence-based manner. These are explained below in five stages:

110. **Table 2.** Set of strategic questions for SLM

1. Level of continuity, integrative learning and growth of SLM projects at design phase.
 - a. Why did UNEP choose this project?
 - b. Were learnings from Terminal Evaluations of previous projects absorbed into this project's
2. Level of sharing of project results and learnings among the UNEP project teams (within the LD Unit, but even across the Sub-programmes, if relevant) of technically relevant projects being implemented at the same time.
 - a. Were the task manager and the project team at UNEP (of the project you are evaluating) aware of the other SLM projects being implemented at the same time? If yes, were there any opportunities to share information?
3. The extent to which project teams (UNEP and Executing Agencies) are working within a common technical framework towards SLM.
 - a. What was the level/nature of practitioner-scientist interface?
 - b. Were (a) tools or methodologies previously developed by UNEP used/upscaled, or (b) were UNEP tools and methodologies developed that could be used in other SLM work (within or beyond UNEP)?
 - c. Are there any particular innovations and best practices coming from the project and how is UNEP sharing these (was the project connected to any networks (e.g. WOCAT) and knowledge management platforms for sharing)? (Were there any gaps or potentials in innovation not realized?)
 - d. To what extent did the success of the project depend on gender equity and/or considerations of gender roles? Were there any particular innovations the project was able to achieve in addressing gender equity?
 - e. Did the project address human rights and human wellbeing (e.g. access to land and resources, human health, rights to healthy environment)?

4. Project contributions to a common vision for SLM based on the global strategic priorities for land degradation neutrality.
 - a. Did the project focus on the most degraded areas or areas of high value (in terms of its global importance and human dependence)? How much of the degraded land has been improved (was it measured in ha)?
 - b. How were project partners who stood out as champions supported and empowered? Were the best partnerships leveraged (and also sustained, both in terms of the project, and in terms of UNEP's network toward SLM)?
 - c. In what ways did the project ensure that increased scientific evidence/knowledge or capacity led to changed behaviour/decision-making (if at all)? Were the most appropriate stakeholders targeted?
 - d. How much of the success of the project depended on production and consumption cycles and the economic system and how much influence did the project have on this? (decoupling economic growth from land and ecosystem degradation).
 - e. How did the project address its key assumptions/drivers (included at design or noted by the evaluator at TE)?
 - f. Are there any key factors that contributed to the sustainability of project results and impacts (any highlighted examples of transformative effects, innovation and social uptake, championship and changed behaviour, financial and institutional commitments)?
5. Are there any other considerations coming from the Terminal Evaluation of this project that you would like to highlight for the portfolio review?

111. During the inception stage, the evaluator developed an evaluation matrix questions (found in Annex IX) which consisted of set of questions based on the above evaluation criteria set out in the TOR, the above strategic conservations and the specific requests from the GEF.

112. A combination of methods and tools were applied during the evaluation to collect information necessary to answer all evaluation questions in an evidence-based manner. These are explained below in six stages:

- a. Inception Stage and Document Review: The Implementing agency (UNEP - Ecosystems Division) and the Executing agencies (MEED, ANAE) provided the majority of documentation during the Inception Stage. The evaluator also held a group discussion with the project partners together in June 2022, and individually (June/July with each of them). With that information and a desk-study from publicly available information on the Internet, the evaluator undertook a thorough review of the documents received, reviewed the quality of project design, analysed the stakeholder groups, reconstructed the ToC, planned the evaluation mission and developed the evaluation matrix question. In consultation with the Evaluation Office and the executing agencies, the organisation of the field mission and the visit of field site visits were agreed upon.
- b. Pre-country Mission Stakeholder Interviews and Data Gathering: The evaluator conducted a series of semi-structured interviews with two stakeholders from UNEP in September 2022 in advance of the country mission - these were the two previous Task Managers (TM) of the project. These interviews were conducted by video. Their selection was made by the evaluator, in agreement with the ANAE. Due to the difficulty to get Internet access in Madagascar, the exchanges with ANAE focussed on preparing the mission by exchanging emails so that it could be the most fruitful when meeting physically on site the most

diverse stakeholders. ANAE provided a list of stakeholders to be potentially contacted. After discussing with the Implementing and the Executing Agency, the evaluator established a small set of seven stakeholders to be interviewed during the field mission (e.g.: MEED, ANAE, communities, SLM committees, mayors, governmental agencies, international agencies).

- c. Country mission: The country mission took place between 1 and 15 October 2022. The country schedule, the sites to visit and people to meet was determined by the evaluator in concertation with ANAE. As for the date, the operational project completion was 30 September 2022: it was then agreed to undertake the field mission just after this completion. The sites were carefully chosen for three criteria: 1) their diversity of interventions (urgent measures reforestation/ lavakas control, ecovillage; 2) for their diversity of engagement (different communes, different technicians from ANAE); and 3) for their easy accessibility (possibility to meet different stakeholders). Overall this approach allowed the evaluator to visit 4 out of the 7 involved communes and 8 out of the 14 projects, with equal visits of sites with urgent measures (4) and ecovillage (4). On these sites, all main stakeholders could be interviewed (e.g. local authorities, SLM committees, beneficiaries including gendered and marginalized). Given the difficulties to communicate in Madagascar, there were also two physical meetings with the responsible of both Executing agencies (MEED, ANAE), one in the first week at the beginning of the mission, and one in the second week after the field mission to exchange on field findings. The evaluator was accompanied by a translator during the field mission.

Table 3. Country mission

03 October (Monday): Tana: Meeting with ANAE team and MEDD
04 October (Tuesday): Tsiroanomandidy: meeting with 3 technicians from ANAE.
05 October (Wednesday): Tsiroanomandidy: meeting chief forest at DIREDD, Director infrastructure at Bongolava region, and Mayor <u>Tsiroanomandidy Fihaonana</u>
06 October (Thursday): Commune <u>Mahasolo</u> (local authorities, SLM committee, beneficiaries), site Fieferana Ambony, urgent measures/reforestation (1); site Ambarate, ecovillage (2); site Ankadindra, urgente measure/reforestation (3).
07 October (Friday) Commune <u>Ambararatabe</u> (local authorities, SLM committee, beneficiaries); site Ambatofotsy – urgent measures (4), Ambatomitsangana; site laboketraka – ecovillage (5) site Ambatomitsangana – ecovillage (6); commune <u>Ambatolampy</u> (local authorities, SLM committee, beneficiaries); site Ambatolampy - ecovillage (7)
08 October (Saturday): Commune <u>Tsiroanomandidy Fihaonana</u> (local authorities, SLM committee, beneficiaries), site visit Andaingohazo, Amparihinomby – urgent measures/lavakas (8).
09 October (Sunday): Back to Tana
10 October (Monday): ANAE (General director, Technical director, Financial director)
11 October (Tuesday): Meeting/debriefing MEDD (Focal point project, ex-director MEED);
12 October (Wednesday): ANAE (responsible Monitoring & evaluation)
13 October (Thursday): preparation draft findings and PPT.
14 October (Friday): Debriefing with ANAE

d. The overall sampling frame for interviews can be found in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Respondents' sample for the Terminal Evaluation of the ILM Serbia Project

Respondent Category	Entity	# People Involved (M/F)	# People Contacted (M/F)	# Respondent (M/F)	% Respondent
Project team	Imp. agency UNEP	6 (4/3)	6 (4/3)	6 (4/3)	100%
	Ex. Agency ANAE MEED	7 (5/2) 2 (1/1)	7 (5/2) 2 (1/1)	7 (5/2) 2 (1/1)	100% 100%
Project (implementing/ executing) partners <i>Local communities</i>	7	6000 (3000/3000)	1000 (500/500)	400 (200/200)	40% 66%
<i>SLM committee</i>	7	105 (70/35)	60 (40/20)	40 (30/10)	
Local Government					
Mayor	7	7 (7/0)	2 (2/0)	2 (2/0)	100%
Fokontany chief	26	10 (10/0)	5 (10/0)	5 (10/0)	100%
Governmental agency (DIREN, Regional government)	2	2 (1/1)	2 (1/1)	2 (1/1)	100%
Multi-lateral partners	1	2 (0/2)	2 (0/2)	2 (0/2)	100%
	-	>6000	~1087	~500	~50%

- e. Validation of data: Once the data were gathered through the document review (a), online interviews and emails (b) and in-country interviews, document checks, and site visits (c), this was organized according to the criteria and evaluations questions as laid out in the matrix (Annex X). Where data from the three areas of collection demonstrated complementarity, these were used directly in the findings. In the cases where information did not coincide, additional interviews with relevant stakeholders (either (i) through direct follow up with the NPC and through documentation verification (e.g. request for email evidence), or (ii) through triangulation with other stakeholders and written sources.
- f. Preliminary Findings: The evaluator developed the preliminary findings which were circulated among the Evaluation Office, the Implementing Agency (IA) and the Executing Agency (EA) in advance of a feedback meeting with the EA and key stakeholder's post-country visit. The feedback meeting was held on 6 October 2022 where preliminary results were presented by the evaluator, and participants (NPC, SEPA, Ministry of Environmental Protection) provided feedback/clarifications, these were included in the final report.
- g. Development of Terminal Evaluation Report: The evaluator developed a draft report and submitted it (1st) to the evaluation manager at the Evaluation Office, who reviewed it and shared it with (2nd) the IA and EAs, after which the evaluator responded and/or revised the draft for the evaluation manager to finally (3rd) share it with project stakeholders for comment. Comments were shared with the evaluator for response and/or revision for finalisation of the Terminal Evaluation Report. An evaluation bulletin/brief was developed at the final stage of the evaluation reporting process.

113. The evaluation encountered some limitations during the evaluation due to the difficulty to communicate by visual conference in remote regions in Madagascar and the nature of the project that is about strengthening communal capacity at local level. This difficulty was counter balanced by proper time allocated during the field mission to extensively discuss with those local actors. In addition, while operational activities were due to be completed by 30 September 2022, in practice ANAE still organized terminal regional and national workshops (linked to component 3) in December 2012. As such, the evaluator, after consultation with the evaluation unit, incorporated these new activities as part of the evaluation in order to be accurate and inclusive.

114. This evaluation was bound to the Ethical Code of Conduct as per the UNEP Evaluation policy, which includes the following key factors: (a) all interviews and information were provided in confidence and anonymously and no information can be traced back to a direct source/individual, (b) those involved in the evaluation have had the opportunity to review the evaluation findings as well as the main evaluation report, (c) the evaluator was sure to have empathy and sensitivity to different contexts and cultures in which stakeholders work.

3 THE PROJECT

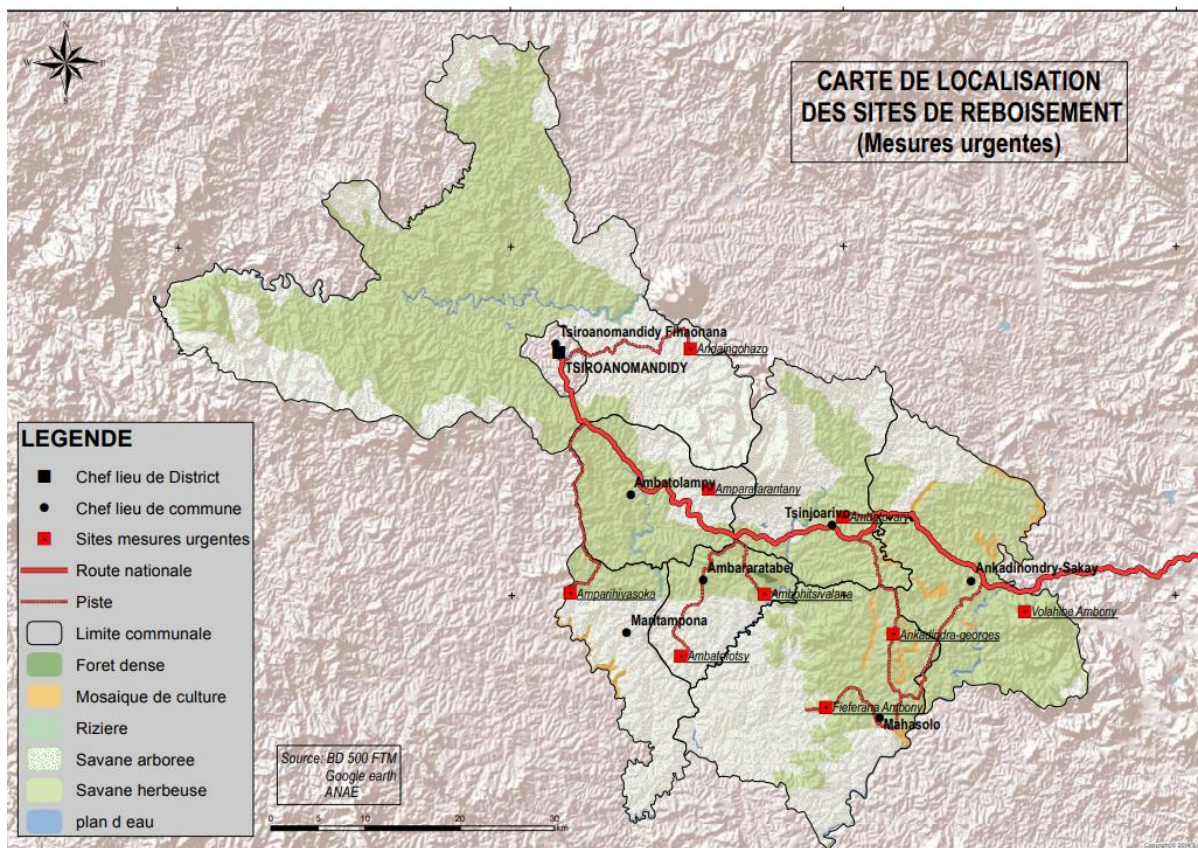
3.1 Context

115. Main issue that the project is trying to address: Madagascar suffers from land degradation due to (i) abiotic factors, including erosion, and (ii) anthropogenic factors, such as inappropriate and unsustainable practices-particularly via poor agricultural practices, overgrazing, burning, and denuding of slopes, hills, and plateaux (a vast geographic type known as *tanety*). The threats to Sustainable Land Management (SLM) are in most cases very complex, involving numerous, interwoven factors. On average poorer than the Malagasy, the population of Bongolava is particularly hit by land degradation as it depends almost entirely on natural resources for its socio-economic activities. Given the serious degradation and environmental problems in the region, a local management approach was planned in this project to: (i) provide an appropriate basis for participatory land management, (ii) facilitate an accurate, comprehensive understanding of dynamic local issues, and (iii) help ensure local ownership of goals, leading to sustainable strategies and effective SLM application. Local institutions were part of the participatory management approach through community rules such as the *dina*³ and the *valin-tànana*⁴; tools for effective and efficient management in rural areas. These norms frame the establishment of a participatory system of sustainable land management in the Bongolava region. According to the project design document (ProDoc), local stakeholders have found the application of the *dina* to be effective in other cases and it makes up the collective codes of conduct of rural societies or customary rules recognized by the Malagasy government. Seeking field work to change local practices and then regional level, the project was designed to be delivered through three complementary components with associated outcomes: 1) institutional development and capacity building, 2) sustainable land management practice implementation, and 3) knowledge management.

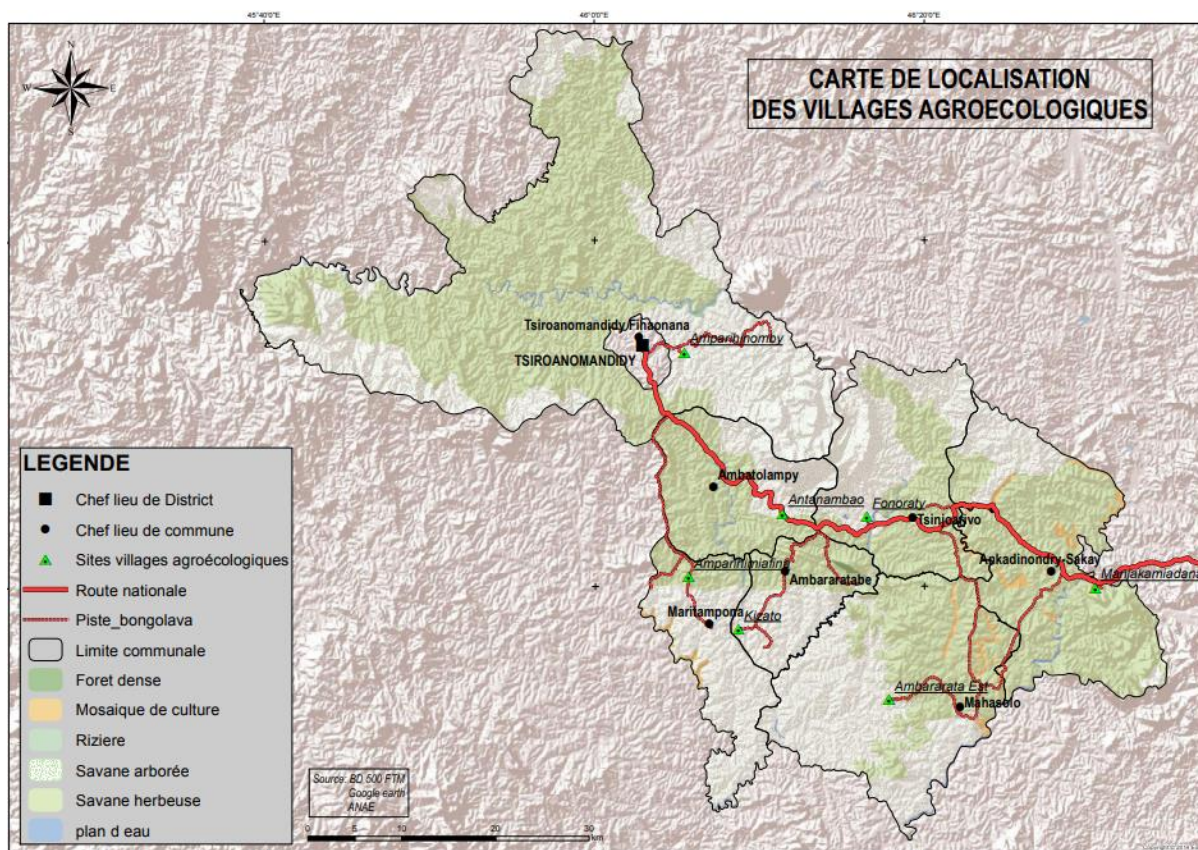
116. Maps of interventions location of reforestation/urgent measures.

³ A form of rules governing a community that regulates and is recognized in the community and by the state.

⁴ Form of community mutual support in rural communities.



117. Maps of interventions location of agroecological villages.



118. The project faced at least four specific external challenges. The climate becomes quite rapidly dryer, with rain starting in November-December, instead of October. The projects also faced national institutional instability. The Minister and Directors in charge of the Environment changes three times in the last four years, this Ministry itself changed names three times. The “office national pour l’environnement” in charge of monitoring project was burnt in 2019. At regional level, all the directors of the Bongolava region within the Ministry of interior were changed in 2021.



Remaining of the Office national pour l'Environnement that was burnt

119. The project was also hit by the COVID-19. The Madagascar government prevented all movement within its territory from March to June 2020, impeding the implementation of some training and movement from the capital to the region. Finally, COVID-19 has increased poverty and reinforced the insecurity. As such, Bongolava remained, during this evaluation, in the “red zone” of Madagascar where movement is avoided especially in late afternoon and in the evening.

3.2 Stakeholders

120. This is a bottom-up participatory approach project, with most of the activities at field level and wider impact at regional level, national and even international levels. As such the project is a matrix by nature when it comes to interest/influence of the stakeholders - with most of the main players being very local (at horizontal level) and some others on the vertical line (from local to international).

121. Key players (high interest/ high influence). UNEP is the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Implementing Agency. It ensured consistency with GEF policies and procedures and co-chaired the Steering Committee that provides yearly guidance. At UNEP, the Ecosystem Division was directly involved, as the GEF focal point of this project is attached to the Land Degradation and Biodiversity Unit of the Biodiversity and Land Branch within the Ecosystem Division. The Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Ministère de l’environnement et du développement durable - MEDD) was the other co-chair of the Steering Committee. It played a vital institutional role in aligning national laws and policies (including the National Development Plan and National Action Plan) to field level, as well as to work at the field level through its decentralized office of Bongolava. MEDD was also the co-Executing Agency along with ANAE.

122. ANAE was the co-Executing Agency entrusted by the Ministry. It was in charge of the project's daily implementation closely with the communities and along with MEDD, was responsible for fund management including, management of sub-contractors, controlling quality of outputs and ensuring proper Monitoring and Evaluation of the project. ANAE and MEDD were expected to establish a Project Management Unit (PMU) responsible for data collection and upstream reporting to the Steering Committee and the UNEP/GEF on a semi-annual basis. UNEP was expected to provide additional monitoring with support from the Task Manager for Biodiversity/Land degradation.

123. Decentralized local authorities and institutions (e.g. communes and *Fokontany*⁵) allowed a local participatory management as well as the application of community rules (*dina* and *valin-tànana*).

124. Peoples and their leaders from seven communes in Tsiroanomandidy District in their large diversity had to be mobilized to achieve the project. Their effective participation was a precondition for project achievement. As such, seven local SLM committees were established.

125. Special attention was given to the most marginalised people (the poorest in this case). It was done by undertaking work at the most local level (*Fokontany*), by building up their proper skills (agriculture, reforestation) and by using inclusive participation that reached out to all the potential beneficiaries within a *Fokontany*.

126. Due attention was given to gender by ensuring that both men and women were represented in the local steering committees by adapting the type of activities (reforestation, agriculture) so that both groups could participate, and by choosing the time of the activities so that both men and women could participate.

127. The technical department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and the Ministry of Livestock (MINELPA) supported sustainable agricultural practices and livestock care. Both Ministries merged during the project development to become the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock.

128. Low interest/ High influence. The Bongolava region was a key player to include results findings in the regional development plan and support the dissemination of research results.

129. High interest/ Low influence. National Centre of Agriculture (FOFIFA) provided technical and scientific support. The Groupement Semi Direct de Madagascar (GSDM) supported in the dissemination of best practices and channelled awareness. A number of development aid agencies (bilateral aid, United Nations) operating on SLM in Madagascar (especially linked to climate change, land degradation or biodiversity loss) showed great interest in the project, especially the Japanese Cooperation Agency that cooperated on the project and the European Union that adopted its approach in other parts of Bongolava.

130. Low interest/Low influence. Firms along the supply chain (e.g. rice mills, seed producers, veterinaries) didn't show much interest in this project, while benefiting from its outputs (e.g. Fruits, pigs, chicken, rice) connecting to the market and contributing to economic sustainability.

⁵ Villages within the communes

3.3 Project implementation structure and partners

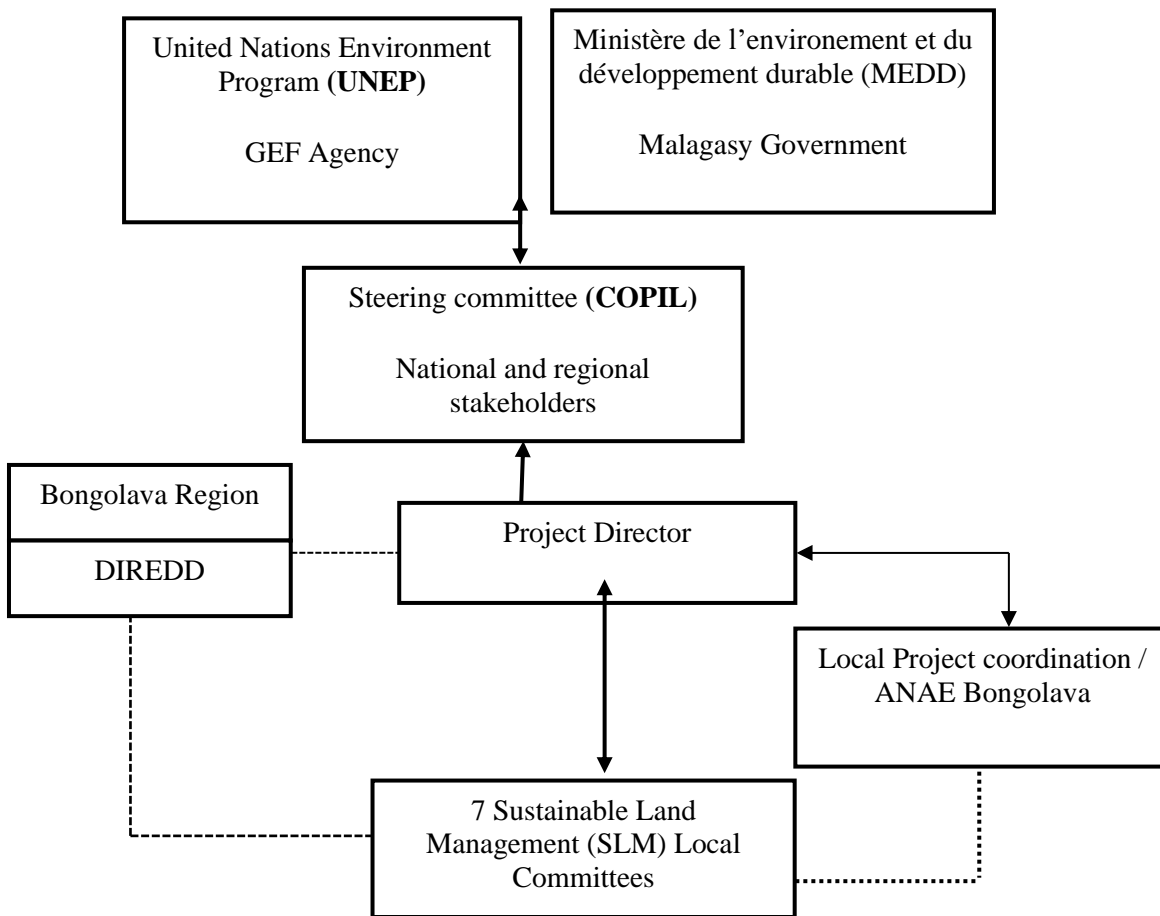
131. UNEP (GEF implementing agency) and the Ministry of environment and sustainable development (Ministère de l'environnement et du développement durable - MEED) of the Malagasy government (executing agency) joined forces to execute the project. They established and co-chaired a Steering Committee (in French a COFIL – Comité de pilotage) providing overall orientation and approving the annual budgets. This Committee was composed of about 20 organisations⁶ including, among others, focal points for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) (that is within the MEED), representatives from the Ministry of agriculture and livestock. ANAE was not part of the Steering Committee, it was in charge of the Secretariat. To boost field project delivery, the MEED entrusted the national association ANAE with the role of executing agency. In practice, this meant that ANAE directly executed the financial and technical aspects of the project. It also prepared the documentation of the Steering Committee and reports to donors (UNEP).

132. To execute the project, ANAE established a regional office in the Bongolava region and facilitated the establishment of local SLM committees in each of the seven communes. ANAE also closely coordinated its interventions with the Bongolava region, the MEDD at regional level and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock regional level. Supported by the local SLM committees and its local staff, ANAE ensured the monitoring of the project while the MEDD at regional level provided quality assurance for this work.

133. At national level, ANAE maintained a project director and key staff (monitoring, finance) to maintain relationships with national/international level stakeholders, including the MEDD, UNEP and development aid organisations.

⁶ 20 institutions include: Direction générale de l'écologie (DGEco), Direction de la planification, de la programmation et du suivi évaluation (DPPSE), Direction du développement régional de Bongolava, Direction régionale de l'environnement, de l'écologie et des forêts (DREEF), Direction régionale de l'agriculture et de l'élevage (DRAE), Direction régionale de l'eau, Circonscription du domaine ou de la topographie, ONG travaillant dans le cadre de la GDT Université, la Recherche scientifique, fédérations des paysans, Maires des 7 Communes ou ses représentants, Point focal FEM, Point focal UNCCD

Figure 2: Organigram of the Project with key project key stakeholders



3.4 Changes in design during implementation

134. During the implementation, there were three amendments to the contract. The first, 20 May 2021, is an extension of the technical duration of the agreement at no additional cost for 12 months from 1 January to 31 December 2021 with a revised budget and work plan. This one-year extension was requested for two combined reasons. On the one hand, the project started late (especially with the issue of establishing local SLM committees that were key for the project) and on the other hand the project was affected by the Madagascar's government containment measures on COVID-19 which meant that some activities could not be carried out, such as meetings. This budget revision included maintaining the presence of the team on the ground (especially the regional coordinator and the technicians in the communities) as well as the administrative support (secretary, accounting manager, drivers and guards). These funds were taken from a budget dedicated to meeting and conferences (including Steering committee) as these were not possible to organize during the year 2020.

135. The second amendment on 14 January 2022 is also an extension of the technical duration of the agreement at no additional cost for 6 months from 1 January to 30 2022 with a revised budget and work plan. The revised budget also maintained the presence of the technicians in the communities at the expense of workshops/meetings. Together, these two amendments impacted the GEF grant as follows: +20% for project personnel (+58.000 USD), +13% miscellaneous (+17.000) and -30% training/workshops (-82.000).

136. The third amendment on 25 August 2022 is also an extension of the technical duration of the agreement at no additional cost for 6 months from June to December 2022. The request includes an exceptional cash advance for 2.7% of the total GEF approved budget, UNEP retaining 2,3% (USD 35,667) of the total GEF approved budget until completion of the project instead of 5%. These funds were necessary to finalize the components 3 (knowledge management) and get lessons from monitoring & evaluation. These are: a project sustainability strategy, a SLM technical manual, regional national workshops.

3.5 Project financing

137. Completed table 5 and 6: (a) budget at design and expenditure by components; (b) planned and actual sources of funding/co-financing.

Table 5. Expenditure by component in USD (Information from ANAE at 21 November 2022)

Project costs	Design			Expense			Ratio		
	GEF	Co-finance	Total	GEF	Co-finance	Total	GEF	Co-finance	Total
Component 1	296,804	700,000	996,804	264,780	138,055	402,835	89%	20%	40%
Component 2	972,540	3,995,800	4,968,340	906,225	4,170,597	5,076,822	93%	104%	102%
Component 3	178,082	450,000	628,082	159,820	71,701	231,521	90%	16%	37%
Sub-total	1,447,426	5,145,800	6,593,226	1,330,826	4,380,353	5,711,179	92%	85%	87%
Management	137,505	200,000	337,505	140,756	177,337	318,093	102%	87%	94%
Total	1,584,931	5,345,500*	6,930,431*	1,471,581	4,557,690	6,029,271	93%	85%	87%

**As received from ANAE at 21 November 2022.

*As reported in the Annex-F1-Budget-03-03-2012-C, which is USD300 less than in the Project Identification Table.

Table 6: Type and origin of co-financing in USD (Information from ANAE at 21 November 2022)

Co-financing (Type/Source)	UNEP own Financing (USD1,000)		Government* (USD1,000)		Other** (USD1,000)		Total (USD1,000)		Total Disbursed (USD1,000)
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	
- Grants	0	0	1706.0	0	300.0	384.1	2006,0	384.1	384.1
- In-kind	0	0	2360.8	3706.7	970.0	466.8	3339.8	4173.5	4173.5
Total	0	0	4066.8	3706.7	1279.0	850.1	5345,8	4556.7	4557.6

*MEDD-secretariat general, MEDD-general environmental directory, MEDD-PIP, Ministry agriculture and livestock, Region Bongolava, Commune Mahasolo, Commune Fihaonana, Commune Ankadinondry, Commune Ambatolampy, Commune Ambararatabe, Commune Tsinjoarivo

** FOFIFA, ANAE.

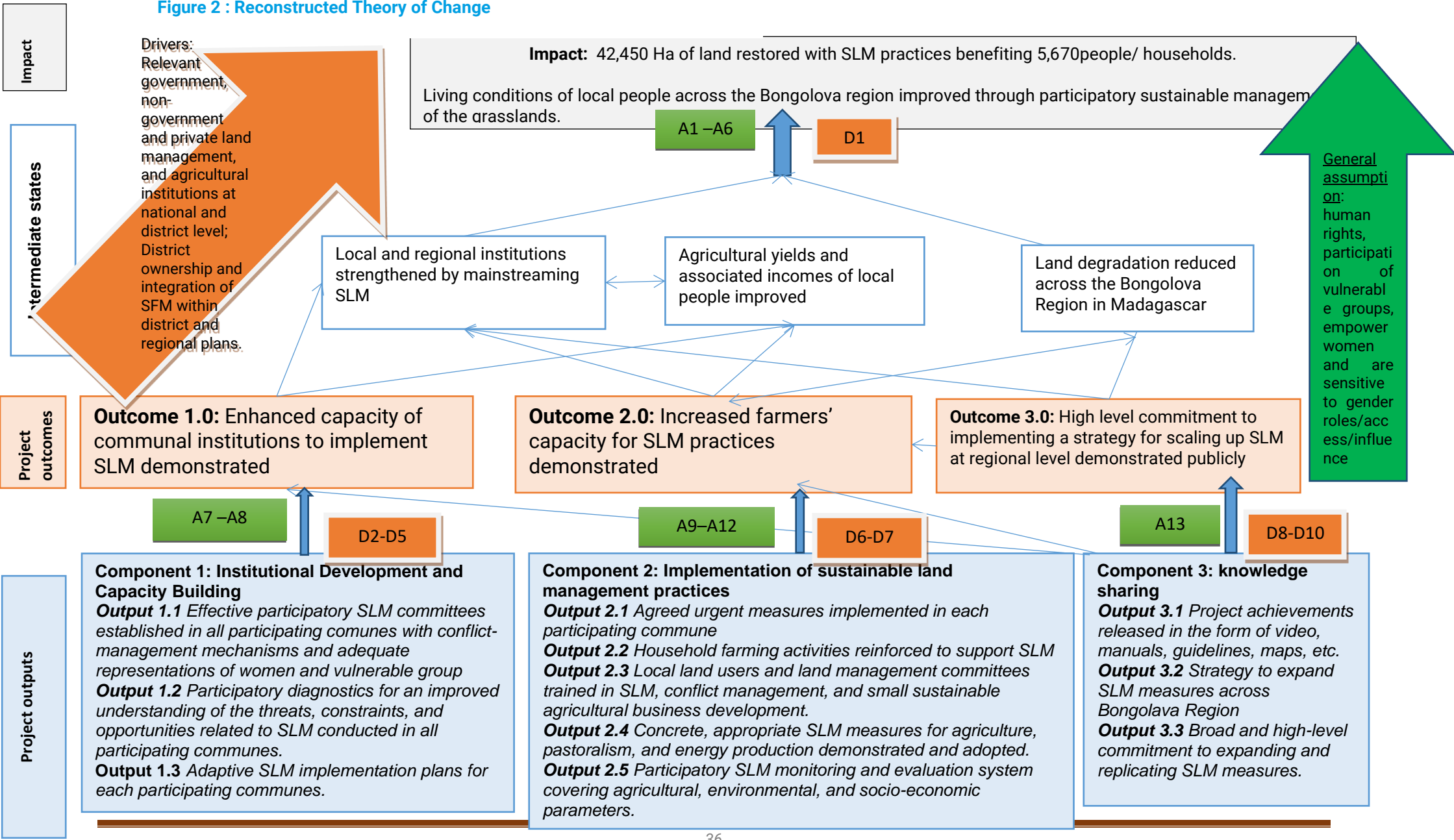
4 THEORY OF CHANGE AT EVALUATION

138. The fundamental assumption underlying the entire project was that a significant number of outputs in the form of strengthening institutional capacity and raising farmers capacity in SLM at community levels (Ambararatabe, Ambatolampy, Ankadinondry, Mahasolo, Maritampona, Tsinjoarivo Imanga, Tsiroanomandidy Fihaonana) would lead, regionally, to three interlinked project outcomes (Enhanced capacity of communal institutions, Increased farmers' capacity for SLM practices, High level commitment to implement a strategy for scaling up SLM). These outcomes gave the foundation for sustainable SLM in the entire Bongolava region.

139. The reconstructed ToC is presented in figure 2 with a narrative explanation below. It contains the logical flow from outputs to outcomes, intermediate states and impact presented by arrows. It also shows that several outputs should contribute towards achieving each of the three outcomes and these outcomes should contribute to higher level results (intermediate states and impact). Finally, figure 2 contains the assumptions (AI-A13) and drivers (D1-D10) underpinning this flow.

140. The project developed three main causal pathways detailed in the ToC. In the first pathway to get the outcome 1, "**Enhanced capacity of communal institutions to implement SLM demonstrated**", there outputs were expected with an emphasis on local institutional capacity building on SLM in the seven participating communes (Effective participatory SLM committees established; participatory diagnostics on SLM; adaptative SLM implementation plans). Combined, those outputs helped change the behaviour (outcome) in each participating district in the form of an enhanced capacity of communal institutions to implement SLM. Key assumptions to achieve this outcome at district level were security and sufficient benefits (social, economic) to sustain local commitments. Key drivers were land tenure and land use security clarified by communities and government, local and regional political stability, local policies and laws enforced, and the ownership from local stakeholders and from the local institutions on the processes.

Figure 2 : Reconstructed Theory of Change



Assumptions (A) and Drivers (D)

(in italic, the one added for the purpose of the ToC, others are from the ProDoc)

To translate Outcome to Impact

A1: SLM generates higher income for the same effort

(Community see a sustained direct benefit from it)

A2: Favourable market

A3: Regional socio-political stability

A5: Rather favourable climate conditions

A6: Free of major crop pests or diseases

D1: Legal/Institutional framework to support SLM initiative

Assumptions to achieve Outcome 1

A7: Peaceful situation at local level (security).

A8: Sufficient benefits to sustain local commitments

D2: Land tenure and land use security clarified by communities and government

D3: Local and regional political stability

D4: Local policies and laws enforced

D5: ownership from local stakeholders and from the local institutions

Assumptions to achieve Outcome 2

A9: Rather favourable climate conditions

A10: No corruption in the local distribution system

A11: Good yields

A12: Market prices favourable to farmers

D6: Farmers use SLM benefits to improve their living conditions

D7: Technique/seedlings adapted to local conditions

Assumptions to achieve Outcome 3

A13: Interest from neighbouring communities

D8: Receptivity from Region for inclusion in Regional Development Plans.

D9: Sufficient funding for post-project dissemination of success.

D10: Sustained political will and honouring of commitments.

141. The second pathway towards getting outcome 2 **“Increased farmers’ capacity for SLM practices demonstrated”** was based on five outputs with an emphasis on concrete participatory agricultural practices for farmers in the field as well as urgent measures to stop land degradation (Agreed urgent measures implemented in each participating commune, household; farming activities reinforced to support SLM; Local land users and land management committees trained in SLM, conflict management and small sustainable agricultural business development; concrete, appropriate SLM measures for agriculture, pastoralism, and energy production demonstrated and adopted; and participatory SLM monitoring and evaluation system covering agricultural, environmental, and socio-economic parameters). Combined, those outputs were expected to support a change of behaviour (outcome) in each participating district in the form of increased farmers capacity for SLM practices demonstrated through concrete implementation. Four key assumptions were necessary to achieve this outcome (rather favourable climate, no corruption in the local distribution system, good yields and market prices favourable to farmers). The project also relied on several drivers to achieve this outcome especially that non-governmental agencies and the Ministry of agriculture and livestock provided techniques/seedlings adapted to local conditions, as well as that involved farmers use SLM benefits to improve their living conditions.

142. The third pathway towards getting outcome 3 **“High level commitment to implementing a strategy for up scaling SLM at regional level (Bongolava region) demonstrated publicly”** was based on three outputs (Project achievements released in the form of video, manuals, guidelines, maps, etc.; strategy to expand SLM measures across Bongolava Region; and broad and high-level commitment to expanding and replicating SLM measures). It sought to share knowledge to the other communes from the Bongolava region and at regional level based on the achievement in strengthening communal institutional and individual farmers capacity on SLM. This pathway depended on the key assumption that neighbouring communities in the region were interested, as well as several drivers linked to institutions at district levels and Bongolava Region: receptivity from the Bongolava region for inclusion in the Regional Development Plan, sufficient funding for post-project dissemination of success, and sustained political will and honouring of commitments.

143. The outcomes from each of the three pathways mutually reinforced each other to get higher results in the form of three intermediate states: Local and regional institutions strengthened by mainstreaming SLM; agricultural yields and associated incomes of local people improved; and land degradation reduced across the Bongolava Region in Madagascar. Combined, these three intermediate states indicate a lasting impact in the form of improved living conditions of local people across the Bongolava region through participatory sustainable management of the grasslands.

144. More specifically, a tangible impact consisted in 22,344 ha of land restored with SLM. This number comes as a summary of rehabilitation from reforestation, control of *lavakas*, and increased plantations for agroforestry systems by individual farmers. This is significantly less than the 42,450 ha initially planned. But, in addition to this direct impact, there also was a direct positive impact of the project on SLM on the whole region (61 *fokontany* (villages) from the 7 communities) which is a total area of 421,900 ha. There is for instance a significant reduction of wild fire and additional tree planting on wide areas across the region due to the initiatives of inhabitants. Also, the project benefited much more than the 5,670 households initially planned, changing the behaviour of more than 10,000 people on SLM. See detail in impact section.

145. The pathway from project outcome to intermediate states and long-term impact depended on five assumptions: SLM generates higher income for the same effort (Community see a sustained direct benefit from it); regional socio-political stability; favourable market; rather favourable climate conditions; freedom from major crop pests or diseases and one key driver: Legal/institutional framework to support SLM initiative. This driver resulted from combined actions of different stakeholders: government at national level, and communities/beneficiaries at local /communal/village) level.

5 EVALUATION FINDINGS

5.1 Strategic Relevance

5.1.1 Alignment to UNEP MTS, POW and Strategic Priorities

146. The project was aligned with UNEP's mandate, functions and Medium-Term Strategy (2014 – 2015) and its related biennial Programme of Work. It fitted under the Ecosystem Management and Governance sub-programme, with expected accomplishment of the Ecosystem Management Sub-programme thematic priority, with two of its outputs: 1) Technical support provided to countries to develop and pilot methods and tools and dissemination of these through knowledge networks along with research results, lessons learned and good practices; 2) Technical support provided to countries to implement ecosystem-based adaptation demonstrations and supporting adaptation approaches, and to scale these up through partnerships at the regional/ national levels.

147. The project was aligned with the UNEP policy on strengthening local capacity and South-South cooperation by supporting the MSDD, local associations and local institutions.

5.1.2 Alignment to UNEP/GEF/Donor Strategic Priorities

148. The project was consistent with the GEF-5 Focal Area strategies on Land Degradation. In particular, the project contributes to the achievement of Land Degradation Focal Area Objective 1 (LD-1) Agriculture and Rangeland systems: Maintain or improve flow of agroecosystem services sustaining the livelihoods of local communities. It fulfilled the Land Degradation Strategy, especially its outcome 1.2 "Improved agricultural management" with its key expected indicator 1.2. "Increased land area with sustained productivity and reduced vulnerability of communities to climate variability". The project should also lead to increased investments in SLM (LD outcome 1.4).

5.1.3 Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Priorities

149. The project was also aligned to many Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets as follows: SDG 1: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3; SDG 2: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4; SDG 5: 5.1; SDG 10: 10.1, 10.2; 11: 11.4; SDG 15: 15.1, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5; SDG 16: 16.6, 16.7; SDG 17: 17.6 and 17.7.

150. The project is relevant to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2015-2019.

151. At Madagascar level, the project is relevant for a wide range of national environmental priorities: Action Plan to the Ten-Year Strategy of the United Nations' Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD): Development Plan, Environmental Policy, Agricultural Sector Policy, Forest Policy and Strategy for Sustainable Management of Biodiversity, Policy for Disaster Risk Management, Policy on Land, Strategy on Research, Energy policy, Educational Policy on Environment for Sustainable Development policy, Policy on Integrated Management of Water Resources and Strategy for the fight against climate change.

152. At sub-national (regional) level, the project is relevant for the Regional Plan of Rural Development for Bongolava (2007).

5.1.4 Complementarity with Existing Interventions/ Coherence

153. The project is coherent with other UNEP/ GEF financed initiatives in Madagascar and is nurturing them in an iterative feed-back loop, especially the following two projects “Evaluation of Natural Capital to Support Land Use Planning, Improved management effectiveness of Terrestrial Protected Areas, deployment of SLM practices and Creation of Eco-Villages in Central Madagascar (10309 – GEF7)” and “Conservation and improvement of ecosystem services for the Atsinanana region through agroecology and the promotion of sustainable energy production (Project 9793 – GEF6)”.

154. Additionally, another five UNEP/GEF projects in Madagascar are coherent with this GEF project as they also focus from various angles on biodiversity conservation and improving livelihoods: 1) Inclusive conservation of sea turtles and seagrass habitats in the north and northwest of Madagascar (10696 – GEF7); 2) Effective implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing from the Use of Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge in Madagascar (10316 – GEF7); 3) Sustainable Management of Conservation Areas and Improved Livelihoods to Combat Wildlife Trafficking in Madagascar (5354 – GEF5); 4) Strengthening the Network of New Protected Areas in Madagascar (5351-GEF5); 5) Conservation of Key, Threatened Endemic and economically valuable Species (project 5352 – GEF5).

155. The project complements existing interventions from the Ministry of environment and sustainable development and from the Ministry of agriculture and livestock.

156. The project complements other development aid projects, especially the programme LIFE from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and programme from the European Union in Bongolava.

Rating for Strategic Relevance: 6 (Highly Satisfactory) (all sub-categories are rated HS)

5.2 Quality of Project Design

157. Overall, the Quality of the Project Design (QPD) was rated as “Moderately Satisfactory” (See Figure 3).

Figure 3: Quality of Project Design (QPD) scores

CALCULATING THE OVERALL PROJECT DESIGN QUALITY SCORE				
	SECTION	RATING (1-6)	WEIGHTING	TOTAL (Rating x Weighting)
A	Operating Context	5,66	0.4	2,3
B	Project Preparation	4	1.2	4,8
C	Strategic Relevance	5	0.8	4,0
D	Intended Results and Causality	2,5	1.6	4,0
E	Logical Framework and Monitoring	4,5	0.8	3,6
F	Governance and Supervision Arrangements	5	0.4	2,0
G	Partnerships	4,5	0.8	3,6
H	Learning, Communication and Outreach	4,33	0.4	1,7
I	Financial Planning / Budgeting	4,5	0.4	1,8
J	Efficiency	4	0.8	3,2
K	Risk identification and Social Safeguards	4	0.8	3,2
L	Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic Effects	4	1.2	4,8
M	Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps	5	0.4	2,0
			TOTAL SCORE:	4,1 <i>(Sum Totals divided by 10)</i>

1 (Highly Unsatisfactory)	< 1.83	4 (Moderately Satisfactory)	>=3.5 <=4.33
2 (Unsatisfactory)	>= 1.83 < 2.66	5 (Satisfactory)	>4.33 <= 5.16
3 (Moderately Unsatisfactory)	>=2.66 <3.5	6 (Highly Satisfactory)	> 5.16

158. The main strengths of this project at design are that the ProDoc and revisions took into consideration various key aspects of the projects: operating context, a good preparation (with adequate studies), good logical framework with clear SMART indicators, a good monitoring system, efforts for a good governance with designed steering committees at local level and an overall steering committee, elaborate partnerships both at local and national levels and research for efficiency. There is also a clear bottom up approach for sustainability to strengthen social cohesion and institutional structures with catalytic effects at regional level. There is also a good identification of risks.

159. The main weaknesses included that the reconstructed ToC (that needed to be done as there was no ToC) highlighted that some outputs and outcomes had to be reformulated. Intermediate states, drivers and assumptions had to be added. The project seemed overambitious within the short time frame as reforestation and institutional building takes time and as it depended on a large number of assumptions and several drivers. The component 3 “knowledge” seemed seriously underfunded (US\$178,082 or 3% of the overall project) and was planned late in the implementation plan, suggesting difficulty to implement fully. Finally, the ProDoc neither addressed the rights and inclusion of marginalized peoples, nor it showed concerns for gender issues, including equality between men and women.

Rating for the Quality of Project Design: 4 (Moderately Satisfactory)

5.3 Nature of the External Context

160. Climate change is affecting the region, which is prone to drought. However, activities improved water catchment which allowed for adaptation to this changing climate.



The Bongolova region is increasingly affected by climate change

161. National political instability is endemic. The Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development (MESD), general secretaries and thematic directors changed three times, including the name of this Ministry that was changed during the time of the project. *Office national de l'environnement* in charge of monitoring the environment was burnt. Also, removal of the head of the Bongolova region depending from the Ministry of interior and all his directors in 2020. The project was only a little bit affected by change as it was directly working with stable leadership from locally politically communities and their villages (*Fokontany*). Also, the project worked at community/regional level with stable structures from the decentralised administration: Direction interrégionale de l'agriculture et de l'élevage (DIRAE) and Direction interrégionale de l'environnement et développement durable (DIREDD). The project also made specific additional efforts to involve the Bongolova region. As executing agency, ANAE could also directly implement the project, both technically/financially, largely avoiding this national political instability.

162. COVID affected Madagascar with a national decision to prevent movement between regions from March to June 2020 and to restrict public gathering. The project was only a little bit affected as it was highly decentralized with only little need to go from the region to the capital, and as the intervention was targeted to small groups of Sustainable Land Management (SLM) committees and small groups of beneficiaries. In addition, field activities (e.g.. Digging, planting, maintaining seedlings) were still allowed.

163. Security conditions affect the Bongolava region, it is a "red zone" and became an even more dangerous place after the COVID. The project took actions to mitigate this situation. The movements between communities were essentially restricted to the afternoon to avoid attack. Strong trusting relationships were established with the members of the SLM committees: they were all selected by their own village (*Fokontany*), one by village. Finally, each commune promulgated a decree to establish its SLM committee.

164. The economic situation is deteriorating in Madagascar, and in the Bongolova region. However, the project had a positive impact on the economic conditions of the beneficiaries and the local community (e.g. with improved farming techniques, better access to water, more efficient stove, improved livestock health).

165. Overall the project faced very adverse external context, but it remarkably adapted to this situation.

Rating for Nature of the external context: 5 (Moderately Unfavourable)

5.4 Effectiveness

5.4.1 Availability of Outputs

166. The evaluation of each output is based on the information from monitoring and evaluation, crossed-check the field visits and bilateral discussions both with beneficiaries and staff.

167. Regarding **Component 1** "Institutional Development and Capacity Building" Output 1.1 "Effective participatory SLM committees established in all participating communes with conflict- management mechanisms and adequate representations of women and vulnerable group" was fully achieved. 7 SLM committees, one in each commune, were established and were fully operational. The members were democratically elected by their *Fokontany*, with a total of 18 women and 52 men. This is fully consistent with the target for output 1.1. "7 SLM committees operational".



168. "Output 1.2 Participatory diagnostics for an improved understanding of the threats, constraints, and opportunities related to SLM conducted in all participating communes" was fully completed. It consisted of 7 participatory diagnostics to understand the threats, constraints and opportunities around 7 themes: socio-economic, biophysics, ecosystem services, gender, participatory monitoring, soil and fauna & flora. These diagnostics were further integrated into decision-making and activities for all 7 communes, associated districts and Bongolova region.

169. This is fully consistent with the target for output 1.2 "SLM Diagnosis and reporting integrated into decision-making for all 7 communes and associated districts and regions".



170. “Output 1.3 Adaptive SLM implementation plans for each of the 7 participating communes” was fully delivered. Each of the 7 communes established a written agreement of cooperation with each of the local SLM. The agreement defines the implementation plan with the main activities to be undertaken. The adaptive implementations emphasis on inclusion, including gender consideration. They were signed by the mayor of each commune.



171. This is fully consistent with the target of output 1.3 “7 adaptive, communal SLM plans, including foreseeable contingencies and gender related issues”.

172. For **Component 2:** Implementation of sustainable land management practices, the Output 2.1 “Agreed urgent measures implemented in each participating commune” was delivered fully. There was at least one site of urgent measures in each of the participating communes with equitable representation of women: these were measures to stabilise lavakas, to reforest and to improve water retention that is necessary both for downstream agriculture and for plants. The reforestation activities included: land preparation, soil amendment, planting, relining, installation of anti-erosion device, fixing hedge planting and live hedges including *crotalaria refusa* and *cajanus Cajun*. This also included the establishment of fire walls and mowing (land clearance) to prevent fire. In total, 245 Ha of forest was replanted through GEF co-financing, 2’304 Ha rehabilitated. 45,5 KM of ditches against erosions were

established, and 81,5 km of paths to stop fire expansion. The project also stabilised 7 lavakas and planted 221'783 trees (in particular neem, acacias and gmelina). Given that these activities (reforestation, improved water retention, control of land degradation) benefited the whole community, it is difficult to give the exact number of people benefiting from. Each of the 14 *Fokontany* (or about 8,000 households in total) benefited from these measures by improved ecosystem services of the area. From a purely economic perspective (the pay for labour), 3,118 people benefited from this activity, including 2,236 women and 882 men.

Overall, this is fully consistent with the target 2.1. *“2 urgent measures identified and implemented by local communities with equitable representation of women; 2,500 ha rehabilitated through urgent measures; 8,000 households benefitting from urgent measures”*.



173. The Output 2.2 “Household farming activities reinforced to support SLM” was fully delivered. Choice of the activities were determined at the request of the beneficiaries in each *Fokontany* to ensure ownership over these outputs according to the “LIFE” approach developed by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). This consisted of: a) Sensitise communities about an identified activity; b) Identify local trainers (people living in the *Fokontany*) willing to learn and share their knowledge to others; c) Train the local trainers; Train the people in the community expressing their interest in carrying out the activity in question; d) Carry out continuous capacity building and monitoring of the beneficiaries in question. The training also targeted women and was carried in conjunction of small economic support (ex. Vaccine) to implement measures.

174. As a result, different household benefited from different economic activities. 408 households produced rice with improved seedlings allowing +50% gain in productivity (an increase of about 10% of the total house hold income). 1,356 households benefited from training and direct care for raising chicken (23,702 heads), 497 households for pigs (1,601 pigs). This care included different vaccinations against disease and supply in vitamins. 2'435 households with arboriculture (52,415 oranges, mangos, papayas, avocados).

175. At the end of the project, the target 2.2. was fully achieved with “100% of the total payments for interim support, including to women led measures disbursed and 100% of technical and organizational support for interim measures in each commune”, In addition the the project supported 4,696 households, a bit short from the target of 5,670 households.



176. The Output 2.3 “Local land users and land management committees trained in SLM, conflict management, and small sustainable agricultural business development” was delivered.

177. 70 people from local committees were trained, including 18 women. This is more than the target of “56 local trainers trained, of which 1 woman per commune (which is 7 in total)”. In addition, 422 local peoples were trained on specific subjects (SLM, small-scale livestock, compost, improved stove, plant production) acting as trainers for people in an eco-village approach, which is a wider range than SLM.

178. In total, 5,227 people have been trained in the concept of SLM, of which 35% women. This is ,less than the target 2.3 of 17,025 trained of which 30% women. In conclusion, more

people have been trained with various skills they can replicate as a trainer, but less people have been trained as practitioners.



179. Output 2.4 “Concrete, appropriate SLM measures for agriculture, pastoralism, and energy production demonstrated and adopted” was partially delivered. Joining efforts with JICA, the project called it “LIFE”, with different activities concrete activities: Households planted 306’484 trees including mainly food trees for local consumption of sale (e.g. mango, avocado); 1267 households produced 1’403 tons of compost; 768 households build improved stoves saving 50% of wood for cooking. In each participation communes, the project established learning sites opened to all. As such, the first target associated with output 2.4 “*demonstration/learning site established*” was fully delivered.

180. The project organized visits to the reforestation sites for key stakeholders (Mayor, administration, local traditional leaders, main stakeholders such as DIREDD) from 19 non-participating communes in December 2020. It also organised knowledge sharing workshops in each of the 19 communes. As such, second target associated with output 2.4 “ ≥ 4 exchange visits to other communes’ demonstration/ learning sites” was fully achieved.

181. In total, 1,583 people participated in these events, including 21% women and 13% people under 30 years of age. The project created specific materials to raise awareness of these people and their communes such as flyers for each participant and a video documentary (March 2020). In addition, most people from within the 7 participating communities (about 8’000 people) visited the sites, As such, the third target “*11,349 adult population visiting the demonstration, including more than 30% women*” was partially achieved.

182. The third target of “*8,508 ha land under SLM*” was achieved. Two methods could be used to assess this: 1) The area covered by trees: with 100 trees per hectare, this is a land cover of about 3,000 hectares. In addition some land under SLM is not under forestry, but agriculture; 2) the area under sustainable local management: With a household owning an average of 2 ha (from 1,0 to 4,0 ha) and 5,227 trained, the target is met if most of the people trained are actually implementing their skills.

183. The fourth target “*17,025 population using SLM to increase income, gender disaggregated by head of household*” is partially met.



184. The Output 2.5 “Participatory SLM monitoring and evaluation system covering agricultural, environmental, and socio-economic parameters” was fully delivered. Established as a bottom-up system with the full involvement of the local SLM committees, this participatory monitoring system serves as an early warning system on gaps and activities remaining to be done. It also boosted local SLM committee ownership on the process and decision-making. More on the Monitoring and evaluation in below in section 5.7.

185. At the end of the project, the target 2.5 was fully achieved with “5 SLM indicators tracked and 100% of adopted SLM indicators actively monitored, tracked, and incorporated into local decision-making”. In practice, there were way more than 5 indicators tracked (see section 5.7.2.).

186.

FICHE DE SUIVI REBOISEMENT - Campagne: 2017-2018							
Date de suivi: 02.12.2020		Nom participants: Anank/Anak/AL/TL			Fonction: Gardiens/KMT/AL/TL		
Nom du site: Andringahao		Commune: Tsiroanomandidy Fihavianza			Heure début: 7h30		
Heure fin: 10h							
N° placette (10m*10m)	Type de parcelle	Nb plants obs (arr:2020)	Nb plants obs	Nb plants vivants/obs	Nb plants morts/obs	Hauteur plants/placette (cm)	Diamètre plants/placette (cm)
1a 46.17943 -18.76477 ref	Savane	21	31	31	0	510 - 550 - 450 - 500 - 300	8 - 9 - 8 - 9,5 - 6,5
						400 - 450 - 450 - 430 - 230	8 - 6,5 - 7 - 5 - 6
						500 - 550 - 350 - 300 - 700	8,5 - 7 - 6,5 - 10,5 - 6
						450 - 600 - 500 - 300 - 450	8 - 6,5 - 6 - 4,5 - 6,5
						480 - 510 - 500 - 520 - 480	4,5 - 7,5 - 8,5 - 8,5 - 3
						520 - 500 - 300 - 600 - 380	1,5 - 4,5 - 3,5 - 4,5 - 7
600						9	
2a 46.17959 -18.96530 ref	Pente	7	7	7	0	600 - 450 - 510 - 7 - 600	8 - 6,5 - 10 - 8 - 7
						240 - 55	3 - 1,2

For the **Component 3** “knowledge sharing”, the output 3.1 “Project achievements released in the form of video, manuals, guidelines, maps, etc.” were delivered fully. The project branded its work well: 500 Tee shirts for SLM committees and key stakeholders, fliers, 250 brochures, 50 block notes, 9 banners (in French and Malgache: two regionals and one for each of the seven communes), stickers for cars/bikes, sign posts for each of the 11 reforestation sites, in each of the 7 communes and at regional level, 125 block notes for the training participants, 14 posters (two in each communes: one in French, one in Malagasy), 1500 calendars. The project communicated through the media: TV+ Madagascar in 06/2017, Two national television slots (TVM and TVM Bongolava) for a documentary on the SLM committees in 2019 and for a documentary on the project in 2020. The project was discussed on the radio in February 2019 (Bongolava, Fafi and Tsiroanomandidy) and January 2020 (Bongolova, Fafi). These were opportunities to discuss the project and also to raise awareness of the people in

the region on some key SLM topics: technique to stop erosion and build capacity to produce compost. The project wrote three-double pages in the magazine “Mada-Vert” from the MEDD in 2018, 2019 and 2021. The project also wrote an article with the achievement of the project in the Agroecology journal 13 from Groupement Semis Direct de Madagascar (GSDM). In 2021, the project sets of materials over their achievements: 3 posters, 700 flyers for people participating to the workshops. Finally, in 2020, the project created ad disseminated a two-page document on overall project successes and best practices in 300 copies.

187. At the end of the project, the first component of target 3.1 “At least 300 Multi-media materials—including materials on overall project successes and best practices—available and disseminated” was largely exceeded. At the same time, the second component of target 3.1 “Local community participants creating and disseminating content in ways that will continue post-project (e.g., radio shows; routine meetings with other communes to exchange ideas)” was achieved.



188. The Output 3.2 “Strategy to expand SLM measures across Bongolava Region” is rated as satisfactory.

189. The target “Adoption of strategy at regional level to expand SLM throughout Bongolava Region” was partially met. The Bongolava region is updating its regional development plan with inputs of the different ministries at regional level. In this context the DIREDD proposed to include SLM and methodologies of the project within the Bongolava regional plan. This information remains, however, rather informal, as the draft regional plan doesn’t exist yet.



190. The Output 3.3 “Broad and high-level commitment to expanding and replicating SLM measures” yielded satisfactory results. The first target 3.3. “7 communes and the region agreed on how to implement and finance SLM replication strategies” was partially achieved. The 7 communes and the Region are putting emphasis on SLM. But, there was not yet a common strategy to replicate and finance SLM. The second target 3.3. “7 Partners actively promote and support efforts to expand and replicate SLM” is fully achieved. Locally, the 7 communities are fully supportive. In addition, nationally and internationally there are steady support to replicate and expand.

191. Major development aid largely supported the expansion and replication of the SLM measures as well as the overall project methodological approach. As such, the European Union used similar methods in its project “SANBONAI” on three regions: Bongolava, Analamanga and Itasy. ANAE is also in advanced discussions with Conservation International (Alaotra Mangoro et Ata inananana regions).

192. The project is in close discussions with major multilateral agencies (FAO, UNEP), bilateral agencies (GTZ-German cooperation, JICA-Japanese cooperation, and the European Union) and international NGOs (Conservation International) to adopt and replicate the project methodology and expand it in the Region and in several regions of Madagascar. As such, the projects fed two UNEP/GEF projects: “Evaluation of Natural Capital to Support Land Use Planning, Improved management effectiveness of Terrestrial Protected Areas, deployment of SLM practices and Creation of Eco-Villages in Central Madagascar (10309 – GEF7)” and “Conservation and improvement of ecosystem services for the Atsinanana region through agroecology and the promotion of sustainable energy production (Project 9793 – GEF6)”.

193. Executed by the AFDI/ANAE and SOA consortium, The European Union project SANBONAI will scale up the project approach on SLM in 12 communes (for 5000 people) of 3 regions of Madagascar (Bongolava, Itasy and Analamanga) in 4 years. This project started in December 2021. In the same vein, Conservation International is discussing replicating and extending this SLM project around protected areas in Aloatra Mangoro and Atsinanana regions with ANAE.

194. In addition to it, and beyond the project expectation, the partner has also organized workshops on project's achievements at regional and national level in December 2022. These 2 workshops were not initial outputs and were organised in addition as a way to yield results and share to all. These two outcomes come late due to two factors: the component 3 both started late in the project implementation process and was initially underfunded. Before implementing these workshops, ANAE had to get an exceptional cash advance for 2.7% of the total GEF approved budget. UNEP allowed this, retaining only 2.3% (USD 35,667) of the total GEF approved budget until completion of the project instead of 5%.

Overall, more than 80% of approved outputs were delivered fully. The most important outputs were delivered at the time required to maximize their intended use. All outputs were deemed to be of excellent quality by users. There are high levels of user ownership with key users closely involved in their preparation. There were additional relevant outputs delivered on time for its intended use and of excellent quality.

195. In conclusion, the rating for output delivery is Satisfactory.

5.4.2 Achievement of Project Outcomes

196. The project was successful in achieving the outcomes 1.0 *"Enhanced capacity of communal institutions to implement SLM demonstrated"*. Key assumptions held with sufficient security and benefits (social, economics) at local level to sustain commitments. Key drivers were also in place: local communities' land tenure was clarified, they also actively participated with local institutions in enforcing local/regional policies and laws. Local stakeholders (local beneficiaries, *Fokontany*, communes, DIREDD, DIRAE) show ownership of the process.

197. The project was highly successful in achieving outcome 2.0 *"Increased farmers' capacity for SLM practices demonstrated"*. The assumptions held: the climate was rather favourable, there was no corruption in the local distribution system, the yields were good and the market prices favourable to farmers. Drivers were also fully fulfilled: the ministries and non-governmental agencies provided techniques and seedlings well adapted to local conditions both for agriculture and livestock. The involved farmers were also empowered to use and replicate SLM benefits (e.g. creating seedlings, replant, livestock care,) to improve their living conditions.

198. The project was partially successful in achieving outcome 3.0 *"High level commitment to implementing a strategy for up-scaling SLM at regional level (Bongolava region) demonstrated publicly"*. The assumption that neighbouring communities in the region were interested was correct. Several drivers were in place such as the interest in other development aid and from technical arms from the Ministry of environment and sustainable development that is proposing SLM within the next regional development plan. The Bongolava region is also receptive to this inclusion for its next Regional Development Plan. However, the new Regional Development plan is taking time to be processed and the 2023 national elections even slow this process down. The project made a successful effort in dissemination of the project achievements at Regional level, but may have needed additional support (both political

and financial) for upscaling it at national and international levels. Both executing and implementing agencies (UNEP/ANAE) took appropriate adaptive actions by facilitating the release of some of the GEF remaining funds, extending the project and organising regional and national workshops at the end of 2022 that were not foreseen at the beginning of the project.

199. Overall, the two first project outcomes are fully achieved, while the third project outcome is mostly achieved. In addition, assumptions for progress from project outputs to project outcomes hold fully. Finally, drivers to support transition from output to project outcomes are in place.

200. In conclusion, the rating for achievement of project outcomes is Satisfactory.

5.4.3 Achievement of Likelihood of Impact

201. The outcomes from each of the three pathways mutually reinforced each other to get higher results in the form of three intermediate states: Local and regional institutions strengthened by mainstreaming SLM, Agricultural yields and associated incomes of local people improved and Land degradation reduced across the Bongolova Region in Madagascar. Combined, these three intermediate states achieved a lasting impact in the form of improved living conditions of local people across the Bongolova region through participatory sustainable management of the grasslands.

202. More specifically, a tangible impact consisted in 22,344 ha of land restored with SLM practices. This number comes as an estimation of ha rehabilitated from reforestation, stabilized from further land degradation from *lavakas*, and increasing planted for agroforest by individual farmers. It is consistent with the number of trees planted (about 100 by ha) and with the land controlled/managed by trainees (about 1 to 5 ha). This is significantly less than the 42,450 ha initially planned.

203. But, in addition to this direct impact, there also was a direct positive impact of the project on SLM on the whole region (61 *fokontany* (villages) from the 7 communities) which is a total area of 421,900 ha with, for instance, a significant reduction of wildfire and tree plantation due to the initiatives of inhabitants. In total, the project made a lasting impact on about 10,000 households (with each household comprised of about 5 people). A more exact number is difficult to provide as many households are involved in several activities. In any case, the lasting impact for the households is substantially beyond the target of 5,670 people.

204. The pathway from project outcome to intermediate states and long-term impact depended on five assumptions that held: Communities saw a sustained direct benefit, socio-political regional stability existed, the market was favourable, the climate conditions were rather favourable, agricultural productions were free of major crop pests or diseases. The main driver "Legal/institutional framework to support SLM initiative" was fully operational thanks to very active commitments from regional stakeholders (local institutions, regional representations of Ministries, communities and beneficiaries) and the passive – but rather positive - behaviour of the government at national level.

205. The general assumption that the project would empower all stakeholders at the local level, in particular the most marginalized groups was correct. Discussions and observations at the field level confirmed that the project included the poorest people within the communities as beneficiaries and as decision-makers on project activities. For instance, a widow that had hardly any land and yet needed to care for young children was in the local SLM

committee. This example is not unique and set the tone on how inclusive the project was. The project also achieved to empower women, not only as beneficiaries, but also as holding key positions in SLM committees and as trainers. This partially addressed structural gender inequity in this region.

206. The project outcomes that are the most important to attain intermediate states were fully achieved, assumptions for progress from project outputs to project outcome held fully, drivers to support transition from outputs to project outcomes were largely in place (driver of component 3 yet to be fully accomplished). In addition, all intermediate states were partially achieved (two first fully, the third partially), assumptions for the change process from intermediate states to impact do hold and drivers to support transition from intermediate state to impact are partially in place.

In conclusion, the impact of the project is Likely.

Rating for Effectiveness:	5 (Satisfactory)
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5.5 Financial Management

5.5.1 Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures

207. Initially not acquainted with UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures, the executing agency had difficulties to comply with UNEP's requirements at the beginning. As a consequence, cash advances for field activities were delayed the first year (2017) liberated 29 November 2017. It was then too late for the project as reforestation is a seasonal activity depending on rainfall (from October to March in Bongolava region).

208. UNEP assisted ANAE so that it could comply with UNEP financial policies and procedures on a demand basis. In addition, to improve the capacity of the project team on technical, operational and financial management, UNEP trained ANAE on UNEP procedures in Lomé, Togo, from 24 to 28 June 2018. The delays in approval and disbursement of cash advances to ANAE improved, even though sometimes UNEP still had specific questions and requests of clarifications that ANAE took some time to fulfil.

209. Overall, with UNEP staff support, that adherence to UNEP's financial policies and procedures became satisfactory. All of the following are in evidence most, but not all, off the time: Timely approval and disbursements of cash advances to ANAE; a regular analysis of actual expenditure against budget and workplan; a timely submission of regular expenditure reports (six-monthly and annual); expenditure within the approved annual budget (or a timely revision submitted/approved); and budget revisions made when relevant and for expenditure variations of 10% and above.

210. In conclusion, the adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures is rated as Satisfactory.

5.5.2 Completeness of Financial Information

211. The "Co-financing and Project Cost's tables" at design by budget lines were not accessible.

212. The three revisions to the budgets include comprehensive financial details by budget line, on the initial budget, on the revised budget and on the difference between the two (in cash and percentages).

213. The disbursement document (Funds transfer) from GEF to UNEP exists.

214. All the quarterly financial reports and cash request are completed, with project expenditures sheet to date. The project is detailed by budget line for GEF funding. There is no detailed project budget by output or outcome for GEF funding.

215. The aggregated co-financing sum is within the PIR each year, but there are no details by type of co-financing (cash, in-kind), by outputs or even by component. There is a word sheet with project costs for 2020 (Sources of co-financing, Name of co-financier, Type of co-financing investment, mobilized amount) but other years are lacking. The proof of delivery from cash or in-kind contributions are not countersigned by partners.

216. All relevant project legal agreements are in place between parties (with UNEP, GEF, ANAE, MEDD), including initial contact and three revised contracts due to non-cost extensions.

Table 7: Financial Management Table

Financial management components:		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
1. Adherence to UNEP's/GEF's policies and procedures:		S	See 5.5.1.
Any evidence that indicates shortcomings in the project's adherence ⁷ to UNEP or donor policies, procedures or rules		No	
2. Completeness of project financial information⁸:			
Provision of key documents to the evaluator (based on the responses to A-H below)		MS	Co-financing and agreed financial data by outputs, outcomes and components would be financially key to get a picture on how they whole project was financially managed, and not only the co-financing
A.	Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines)	No	Not there
B.	Revisions to the budget	Yes	Three
C.	All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA)	Yes	
D.	Proof of fund transfers	No	
E.	Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind)	No	Globally, the co-financing is in the PIRs. But, there is not a record of the co-financing from partners to the executing agency.

⁷ If the evaluation raises concerns over adherence with policies or standard procedures, a recommendation maybe given to cover the topic in an upcoming audit, or similar financial oversight exercise.

⁸ See also document 'Criterion Rating Description' for reference.

F.	A summary report on the project's expenditures during the life of the project (by budget lines, project components and/or annual level)	Yes	Yes, quarterly and, yearly summary by budget line but not components
G.	Copies of any completed audits and management responses (<i>where applicable</i>)	HS	Yes, yearly from 2017 until 2022.
H.	Any other financial information that was required for this project	N/A	
3. Communication between finance and project management staff		S	In general, it was highly satisfactory, with proactive communication but at the end there was a gap because of change of PM
Project Manager's level of awareness of the project's financial status.		MS	Satisfactory until end of project, with gaps between PM
Fund Management Officer's knowledge of project progress/status when disbursements are done.		HS	
Level of addressing and resolving financial management issues among Fund Management Officer and Project Manager/Task Manager.		HS	Proactive
Communication between by Fund Management Officer, Project Manager/Task Manager during the preparation of financial and progress reports.		HS	Close contact to help ANAE to respond to UNEP requirements
Project Manager, Task Manager and Fund Management Officer responsiveness to financial requests during the evaluation process		HS	
Overall rating		S (5)	

217. In conclusion, the Completeness of Financial Information is rated as Satisfactory.

5.5.3 Communication Between Finance and Project Management Staff

218. ANAE was the executing agency with a direct reporting to UNEP on behalf of the MEED. As such, there was one clear financial reporting line about this project: ANAE, then Steering committee, then UNEP in a UNEP requested format. ANAE respected all financial procedures.

219. Evidence suggests that the project managers (the different project managers as there were successively three) have strong awareness of the financial status of project. The FMO has strong awareness of overall project progress when financial disbursements are made. (i.e. Disbursements made against good quality financial and technical progress reports). There is regular / frequent contact between PM and FMO.

220. In addition, there is evidence that PM and FMO are proactive in resolving financial issues. They discussed with the executing agency to resolve any specific issues, and also invited ANAE for a financial training in Africa to build their capacity. All narrative and financial reports were confirmed as having been reviewed by both finance and project staff members

prior to submission. There is evidence that good communication between financial and project staff members has positively affected project implementation (i.e. within budget, more activities than planned etc). The two no-cost extensions of the project didn't affect the overall project performance, as ANAE could still focus on the last outputs with sufficient funding by releasing part of the remaining funding. Listening to the PM, the FMO agreed with this request, releasing an exceptional cash advance for 2.7% of the total GEF approved budget, UNEP retaining 2.3% (USD35,667) of the total GEF approved budget instead of 5%. This was critical for ANAE to finish the project.

221. If communication between PM and FMO were proactive in solving financial issues, yet the change of PM during the project toward its ends had some consequences in financial flow and budget extension. As such, it is only in June 2022 (the same month that the project was supposed to finalize with the second extension) that ANAE could properly formulate its request for a no-cost extension that included some budget revision to finalize the project. The PM and FMO were then quick at solving this issue.

222. In conclusion, Communication Between Finance and Project Management Staff is rated as Satisfactory.

Rating for Financial Management:	5 (Satisfactory)
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5.6 Efficiency

223. Starting in January 2017, the project was supposed to finish in December 2020. With 3 no-cost extensions until September 2022, the project activities took an additional 1 year and 9 months from the originally planned period. The main initial reason for this delay was the difficulty for the executing agency (ANAE) to meet UNEP's requirements and access to cash advance. As such, funds arrived too late for reforestation projects that depend on rainfall. With a rainfall season being very short (from November to February) it was impossible for the local SLM committees to self-organise, prepare seedlings and start. Therefore, the implementation of project activities was delayed for a year waiting for the new rainfall cycle. Later, in spring 2020, some activities (workshops, field visits) were also delayed due to the COVID.

224. On the one hand, this 1 year and 9 months addition could be seen as a negative impact on efficiency, as it implies a financial burden on implementing and executing agencies. However, in practice this additional 1 and 9 months could in fact be one of the key reasons for project achievement without any increased funds.

225. On the one hand, the project had to refocus its activities on the ground on what essentially matter in the long-term by securing local long-term technical support to SLM committee and "ecovillages" in the *fokontany* while removing national level activities such as the global Steering Committee meetings in person that was replaced by virtual online meetings. On the other hand, such an SLM project structurally needs more than 4 years as they combined the difficulty of both strengthening local institutional capacity (a social aspect that includes building trust, awareness, interest, technical skills) and improving ecological conditions with also takes great time (from seedlings, to planting, to growing trees).

226. By narrowing down the project to field activities and enlarging its time frame, the project increased its efficiency as cost related field activities are much cheaper than national activities especially in the Madagascar context (cheap labour, low living costs).

227. In addition, the project closely worked with the DIREDD and DIRAE, building on these two existing institutions, and obviously with, and through, the local SLM committees it had established. As a result of this long-term partnership with the DIREDD and DIRAE for close to five six years instead of four, the project could yield additional benefits both in regards to reforestation (with DIREDD) and livestock (with DIRAE). These two governmental institutions provided additional in-kind resources to the project.

228. This low-key long-term work also allowed some fine tune adaptation within the project. As such, the project adopted an “eco-village” or LIFE approach to implement its component 2 in partnership with JICA, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency.

229. In conclusion, the project was implemented within no cost extensions. The evidence suggests that this was a cost-effective approach that strongly supported the achievement of the project. Project activities were sequenced efficiently and the project built on a partnership which strengthened each partner and created synergies between them.

Rating for Efficiency: 5 (Satisfactory)

5.7 Monitoring and Reporting

5.7.1 Monitoring Design and Budgeting

230. At design, the project covered all indicators appropriately in the logical framework, had a theoretical data collection method, and had data collection frequency appropriate for the indicator. Also, the project had a dedicated budget for monitoring activities and the person responsible for monitoring progress against each indicator was identified.

2. In summary, at design, the monitoring plan was really theoretical in several aspects (e.g. Frequency, type of data, method,). What really mattered and was key: the existence of SMART indicators, a dedicated budget and a manager responsible. In conclusion, the Monitoring Design and Budgeting is rated as Satisfactory.

A MI FINIR		A LA FIN DU PROJET	VERIFICATION
COMPONENTES 1. DEVELOPPEMENT INSTITUTIONNEL ET RENFORCEMENT DES CAPACITES			
1.1	Adoption et validation des plans GDT au niveau des 7 communes	Plans GDT opérationnels	Rapport d'établissement et d'approbation des plans GDT
1.2	7 GDT (comités gestion durable des terres) créés	7 GDT	Liste des membres du comité GDT en gestion
1.3	7 diagnostics participatifs	7 PCD (PND adaptés à la prise en compte de la GDT)	Rapport de diagnostic initial
1.4	Création et renforcement de autres participatifs de terrain		Rapport d'engagement des communes et de la région
1.5	7 plans GDT adoptés	7 plans GDT opérationnels	Plans opérationnels approuvés Valeur de terrain ANAE et autres locaux
COMPONENTES 2. MISE EN OEUVRE DES PRATIQUES GDT			
2.1	De 80% à 100% des terres gérées selon GDT	De 80% à 100% des terres gérées selon GDT	Rapport sur l'état des progrès réalisés sur terrain (évaluation au stade d'impact)
2.2	5000 arbres plantés dans la zone en action communale (70% de terrain)	5000 arbres plantés dans la zone en action communale (70% de terrain)	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.3	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.4	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.5	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.6	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.7	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.8	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.9	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.10	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.11	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.12	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.13	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.14	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.15	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.16	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.17	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.18	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.19	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
2.20	30000 kg de semences distribués	30000 kg de semences distribués	Journal de terrain communautaire
COMPONENTES 3. ATTEINTE DES CONNAISSANCES			
3.1	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.2	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.3	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.4	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.5	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.6	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.7	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.8	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.9	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.10	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.11	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.12	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.13	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.14	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.15	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.16	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.17	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.18	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.19	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire
3.20	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Phyto, animal et microorganismes en action	Journal de terrain communautaire

5.7.2 Monitoring of Project Implementation

231. During the implementation of the project, the executing agency established a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit with clear structure, dedicated staff and data collection method.

232. The structure of the monitoring is detailed and helped to collect all the data from the field in an accurate manner. It is composed of: local trainer that collect data at fokontany levels; SLM committees that gather these data at communal levels; SLM committees that gives these data to the technicians of the project (employed by ANAE); technicians upload the

data at Bongolova on their computer; coordinator at Bongolova region compile the data of the seven communes, check accuracy, and send to ANAE headquarters. Finally, the head of the Monitoring and Evaluation in ANAE headquarters uploads the database, controls the data, and provides feed-back loop on the missing data/gaps to the team in the Bongolova region. The database is then used to contribute to the project's monitoring (e.g. New actions to undertake), knowledge management and final reporting (e.g. Annual PIRs).

233. To collect detailed relevant data, the project created specific data collection sheets for each topic (e.g. reforestation, compost, stove, fruit plants, rice cultivation, breeding, nursery, fire, workshops) disaggregated by sex (women/mand) and age (more or less than 35 years). Each sheet comes with very detailed indicators. For example, there are 9 indicators for the fire sheet (date, rate, areas...). All these detailed data by indicator form the bases of a huge database that was made available to the evaluation. See for instance, the detailed indicators below for the compost.

FISY FANARAHANA MASO - LIFE KOMPOSTA - 2020-2021

Kaominina:					Fokontany:		Anaran'ny FL :							
Anaran'ny mpandray aritra :					L. any:	Taona nahaterahana :	Foreonana :							
Efitrano ara-citra:					Firy no isan'ny komposta vita niantohan'ny tetikasa manontolo:		Firy no isan'ny komposta vita niantohan'ny tetikasa tamin'ny ankehony:		Efa nisy olona ve liana tamin'ny komposta anahoarinao?		Nanahana ny fanatanteraha any?			
Habetsahany:					fourche	Gaine	Arrosoir	Dokomie	Fiofanosa	Eay:	Tsia:	Firy:	- Sarotra	- Mora
Daty fanohiana	Haben'ny (cm)			Akora fototra 1	Fatrany	Akora fototra 2	Fatrany	Fatan'ny komposta aza	Toerana nampiasaina any	Points GPS (X, Y, Z)	Velarany (a)	Voh. natao	Vokatry aza (kg)	
	Sakany	LAVANY	HAIVORNY											

234. Complete and relevant baseline data were collected at the beginning of the project. In addition, complete, relevant and detailed monitoring data were collected throughout all the projects on a regular basis that allowed continuous improvement of the project. These data were analysed and shared among the project team, with the partners and with the steering committee partners.

235. Tools and methodologies that were responsive to the needs of different stakeholder groups were utilised during monitoring. In that sense, bottom-up monitoring involving beneficiaries and their representatives (SLM committees) allowed them to gather data from all the stakeholders including the most vulnerable and to be gendered sensitive.

236. Initially, an adequate, planned monitoring budget was reasonably spent. In addition, the three amendments to extend the project by a total of 1 year and 9 months included

reallocation of funds towards monitoring. It allowed monitoring and evaluation for an additional 1 year and 9 months beyond the initial four year of project time.

237. In addition, information on forest related issues (e.g. planting, fire hotspots) were also shared with the DIREDD that provided a useful external audit for the project. DIREDD could also use the data for its own work in the Bongolava region.

238. To conclude, information generated by the implementation of the monitoring plan during the life of the project has been used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and to ensure sustainability. The Monitoring of Project Implementation is rated as Satisfactory.

5.7.3 Project Reporting

239. There is a substantial documentation of project progress available. All the key annual Project Implementation Review reports (PIRs, 01 July – 30 June) are well completed, but some intermediated progress reports are missing such as some calendar annual reports.

240. The evaluator had extensive discussions with Direction interrégionale de l'environnement et du développement durable (DIREDD) and received proof that they were regularly reporting to the PDSE so that PSDE consolidated the information and monitored the project from a PSDE/MEED perspective.

241. Semi-annual and annual reports were reviewed to check for any specific concerns and discussions on the fulfilment of roles, including reporting, were also held with the GEF focal point and co-director of the project, both working for MEED.

242. Reports (annual audit reports, PIRs, requests for financial extensions, steering committees, progress reports on specific outputs) and bilateral interviews (UNEP, ANAE) found substantial collaboration and communication of the project with the UNEP Task Manager to improve progress reports towards UNEP's standards, especially the PIRs. UNEP/donor reporting has occasional gaps (especially on co-financing). Data reported is disaggregated by gender and age (youth less than 30 years). Data is not disaggregated on a marginalization based as the whole project includes marginalized people and built on their participation on a bottom-up level. Monitoring reports are both gender neutral (i.e. reflecting gendered experiences equally) and gender sensitive (i.e. reporting experiences differentiated by gender groups).

243. In conclusion, the project reporting is rated as Satisfactory.

Rating for Monitoring and Reporting: 5 (Satisfactory)

5.8 Sustainability

5.8.1 Socio-political Sustainability

244. The sustainability of project outcomes has a low degree of dependency on social/political factors at regional and national levels. It builds on trust and stable socio-political relationships at the lowest level, the *fokontany*, and its aggregation into communes.

245. In addition, there is strong ownership, interest and commitment among government and among other stakeholders which to some extent extends to the critical levels of

government which have the power to sustain project outcomes. In this context, support from DIREDD will be important to sustain community ownership/interest over the outcomes of the project. Ownership over the project is rather resilient to government changes, yet full deployment of its potential is also linked to DIREDD and Bongolava region support over SLM.

246. An adaptive mechanism is in place to respond to changes in the social/political context, should it become necessary. As such, political priorities to legalize SLM committees with governmental support has already been discussed with the MEDD and local institutionalization of the SLM has already been largely endorsed at commune level such that the project outcomes and these new social norms (improve the quality of both forest ecosystem and human wellbeing) became local and regional political priorities).

247. In conclusion, the socio-political sustainability of the project is rated as Highly Likely.

5.8.2 Financial Sustainability

248. The project outcomes have a low dependency on financial flows to persist. However, project outcomes would still need maintenance of ditches to facilitate water retention, clearance of grassland to prevent fire or additional work to stabilize *lavakas*. The needed sums are very little (some USD thousands for each commune) and targeted at beneficiaries, trainers and members of local CLM committees. The requirement of funds has been identified and an exit strategy with a financial component has been developed (to add it in the budget of the community or the region). It includes the financial needs for SLM into the commune budget. It also includes the political/legal recognition of the SLM committee by the national government.

249. In conclusion, the financial sustainability of the project is rated as Moderately Likely.

5.8.3 Institutional Sustainability

250. The sustainability of project outcomes has a low degree of dependency on sensitivity to institutional support as it relies more on the direct involvement of the local beneficiaries within a conducive trustful socio-political contact.

251. In addition, a robust mechanism is in place to sustain/support the institutionalisation of project outcomes. This includes: 1) the formalisation of the SLM committees at commune level; 2) the incorporation of project outcomes in the Dired work programme (at Regional level and nationally) about reforestation and agroecology; and the integration of the project outcomes in the draft Bongolava regional plan yet to be discussed and approved in 2024 by national election time.

252. The capacity of relevant individuals has been enhanced, and they are likely to stay in their position to support the project outcomes. This includes the trainers, the members of the SLM committees, the mayors of the communes and the staff of the administration both from DIRAE and DIREED.

253. Finally, an exit strategy with an institutional component has been initiated. This includes strengthening MEDD both to bolster its ecosystem-based approach (combination of reforestation and improved local livelihood such as agro-ecology) and to legalize local SLM committees.

254. In conclusion, the institutional sustainability of the project is rated as Moderately Likely.

5.9 Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

5.9.1 Preparation and Readiness

255. Evidence suggests that at the time of first disbursement (cash advance 6 January 2017), the annual costed work plan was developed with appropriate details, the environmental and social safeguards assessment was carried out, with stakeholder participation, and all partners capacity was confirmed/addressed. As such, a comprehensive and relevant stakeholder analysis was undertaken before the project started. Only the gender aspect was not well detailed at the beginning of the other project. As such, a gender analysis was completed during the project implementation in May 2019.

256. At the time of the first disbursement, the staffing mobilisation was also undertaken in a timely manner, with the project team established and ready to work. The period between GEF project approval (September 2016) and first disbursement is 6 months or less.

257. The project was officially launched to all partners in May 2017 with a comprehensive inception meeting. This meeting included a detailed updated work plan, a management plan with appropriate and adequate governance including a global steering committee. Following this meeting, the MEDD formally established the global steering committee by ministerial decision of 9 August 2017. This Steering Committee includes full and appropriate representation of all stakeholders.

258. During 2017, the executing agency established a detailed and compliant procurement plan that fulfils UNEP's requirement with UNEP's support. This challenge that was overcome during 2017 had some impacts, by delaying quarterly reporting and cash advances (see section 5.6).

259. In conclusion, preparation and readiness is rated as Satisfactory.

5.9.2 Quality of Project Management and Supervision

260. UNEP provided technical guidance and long-term supervision to the executing agency so that it could adapt and comply with UNEP rules and procedures. The executing agency was really receptive to UNEP's advice or requests, thereby increasing the project's execution and complying with UNEP's standards. In this regard, UNEP was of invaluable support to increase the executing agency's capacity to comply with UNEP financial rules and procedures. UNEP was also in full support to adapt the project to local reality including no cost extensions of close to two years with a refocus to support local long-standing activities and monitoring. This refocus happened at the expense of national level activities (workshops and global steering committees). This adaptive management strategy to increase the lifespan of the project in the field was key both for social sustainability of the local SLM committees and for yielding long-term results in reforestation (component 1) and agroecology (component 2). However, with the no-cost extension of the project from January 2021, UNEP showed some difficulties to mobilize internally additional resources for supervision. Indeed, this "no-cost" extension implies in fact additional supervision costs that were not initially covered, adding workload on UNEP's staff.

261. The executing agency has had a high level of project management performance. It has cared about the project in three key dimensions: project's staff, the ecosystem and the

people/beneficiaries. First of all, the executing agency managed to maintain all its staff (e.g. directors, drivers, monitoring, technicians) during the whole time of the project. Not only does this allow necessary project stability and institutional memory of execution, but more importantly, it also allows to establish trusting relationships with all the stakeholder facilitating project delivery. These trusting relationships with local people, local beneficiaries, and their elected leaders was also increased by the method of the project where the technicians are in the field on a daily basis with local stakeholders. Through the established monitoring and evaluation system, the headquarter staff in Antananarivo also could know exactly the situation of the project. With high levels of trust, a strong field presence and accurate knowledge of the situation, the executive agency could take an adaptive management approach that lowered risk, solved problems, took advantage of emerging opportunities, and overall increased project performance.

262. There are different examples of this adaptive management throughout the project. A first example is the decision to delay Component 1 for one year to avoid climate risk, a decision that could be seen potentially problematic, but that in practice increased the role and capacity of local SLM as well as the involvement of DIREDD. Another was the reshaping of the outputs under *“Component 2: Implementation of sustainable land management practices”*, especially Output 2.2 *“Household farming activities reinforced to support SLM”* where the project took advantage of the LIFE project developed by JICA and rebranded this component as *“eco-villages”* (see 5.4.1). Adaptation was also demonstrated at the time of the COVID where planned national and global meetings were impossible and local movement restricted. The project took this opportunity to get a virtual global steering committee at no cost and used the savings to reallocate funds for extended activities in the field. Even though the global steering committee was meeting only three times (including one virtually), this adaptive strategy maintained partner relationships at national/global levels (MSDD, UNEP), increased productive partner relationships at local level, and overall maintained project relevance within a changing external context.

263. In conclusion the Steering Committee at national level and the seven local SLM committees worked very well. The teams involved in implementation structures have been managed excellently. The working relationship between the Task Manager and project partners has been constructive to an excellent extent. The staff turn-over was very low allowing increasing capacity, knowledge sharing and building trust; they were located appropriately for efficient project implementation and an adequate amount of regular and constructive information exchange between project team, PM and UNEP colleagues took place. Implementation Agency and Executing Agency provided excellent leadership towards achieving the planned outcomes.

264. There was also examples of excellent adaptive management, assessed based on speed of responses to execution challenges or contextual changes and adequacy of management response to any financial shortfalls – the responses showed clear prioritization.

265. In conclusion, the rating for project management and supervision is Satisfactory for UNEP (implementing agency) and Highly Satisfactory for the ANAE (executing agency). The overall rating for this sub-category is Highly Satisfactory.

5.9.3 Stakeholders Participation and Cooperation

266. Initially, the executing agency could build on their extensive knowledge of the area, as it had already worked with good results on SLM for a World Bank project at the turn of the millennium. People, especially older leaders still remember this work, trusting ANAE from the

start. In addition, ANAE key assessments (especially on socio-economic conditions) had been done prior project implementation. Evidence suggests that Implementation was undertaken with an excellent understanding and analysis of stakeholder groups, all those who are affected by or could affect this project. Initially a bit weak on gender issues, the project also made an assessment (in 2019) to better understand this dimension and take it into account better.

267. The project team has made strong and fully effective efforts to promote stakeholder ownership of process or outcome as illustrated by the existence of functioning local committees, enthusiastic trainers and fully concerned administrative staff at the DIREDD (for the forestry component) and at the DIRAE (for the breeding component). The consultation and communication with stakeholder groups during the life of the project was excellent: always effective, at least weekly and well-timed. The local SLM committees and project staff achieved to federate the beneficiaries at local level (commune) and sub-local level (*Fokontany*) and also to nurture exchanges with other communes (sharing plans, exchanging learning and expertise).

268. The project has fruitfully addressed the linkages to poverty alleviation and ecosystem recovery. As such it has provided both income for reforestation activities (through cash for reforestation activities) and for improved livelihoods (through husbandry care) linking both issues. The project thoroughly assessed and mitigated negative effects on sustainability of livelihoods, equity of opportunities and the protection of human rights for populations directly or indirectly affected. To conclude, the project demonstrates positive effects on equity, with the most marginalized people able to participate. This was obvious for the poultry programme where beneficiaries with only some 5 or 10 chickens were fully benefiting from the programme (that included vaccination, vitamins, care training); all the same when beneficiaries with only one hectare or less for land could fully participate in agroecological projects.

269. In conclusion, the rating for stakeholder participation and cooperation is Highly Satisfactory.

5.9.4 Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

270. Evidence suggests that the project took into consideration human rights/ gender issues during its implementation, interpretation of results, but not for project expenditures.

271. The project structurally cared about local stakeholders including the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, and built the activities of the project from their needs, their capacity and their vision. As such, project implementation showed strong human rights and gender considerations. As an example, these were the local stakeholders that identified themselves which activities they would undertake (e.g. Poultry) or which place they would rehabilitate (e.g. *lavakas*, reforestation) with the timeframe and the magnitude of the activity.

272. The gender efforts during project implementation was consistent with the project approval as partly mainstreamed: it is reflected in the context, implementation, log frame and indicators, but not with a specific budget.

273. Most implementation strategies including marginalized people and addressing gender inequality were incorporated in the project's design. In addition, as a result of good project monitoring and a formal gender assessment in 2019, adaptive actions focusing on gender equality have been introduced. As a result, the project developed activities more susceptible to directly interest women (like improved stoves, breeding and composting). The project also

promoted the participation of more women by organizing the training in order to allow more women to participate.

274. Women's participation and equity were part of the project approach to achieve its objective. The women's participation rate in project activities was about 37% for awareness-raising, 48% for training and 25% for implementation. About the subject, women were more interested in training for compost (52% of the participants) due to the fact that compost is used for market gardening, improved stoves (36%) and small livestock breeding (around 40%). These activities are gender-sensitive (accessible to all), allowing women to have additional knowledge and income.

275. Also the project has strengthened the women as the end user (seeds, tools, etc.) and therefore as true beneficiaries of the project. This happened despite the fact that at household level the benefits are often assigned to the head of the households, which are men in most of the cases. To rule out ambiguity in the assessment of the role attributed to women, the project distinguished the recipient from the end user of the support. These data demonstrate that the women are more involved in activities that improve their living conditions, such as the collection of firewood, cooking and small breeding.

276. Household structure and functions for women empowerment often showed the sharing of responsibility between men and women in the household. In this context, project activities have enabled these women to gain more knowledge in the short term. In the long term, they facilitated access to local wood energy and allowed regular sources of income, especially market gardening or breeding.

277. In conclusion, the responsiveness to human rights and gender equality is rated as Satisfactory.

5.9.5 Environmental and Social Safeguards

278. By focussing on both ecosystem regeneration (component 1) and improved local livelihoods (component 2), the project structurally strives to get both positive environmental and positive social outcomes. It also links the two issues in a positive narrative. It changes the usual actions, vision and discourse by which socio-economic activities should lead to environmental degradation. It acts in a way that environmental recovery and improving social conditions from the most socio-economically marginalized in the Malagasy society go constructively together. Ground evidence suggests that this happened. The management plan addressed potential social issues (economic conditions) and reviewed risks (land tenure), as well as the project monitoring including safeguarding uses (fire risks). The adaptive management plan addressed these issues and reported on them, even though the reporting on these social issues could have been better reported in the PIRs for instance.

279. The social conflicts' prevention and management was made easier with the establishment of local SLM committee's and the local authority's involvement. In addition, the LIFE model used in the implementation process optimized ownership, by promoting an equal opportunity for participation in project activities and voluntary adherence.

280. Land tenure is a specific potential acute issue for all agrarian societies. This issue was clarified during the project's implementation. To minimize conflicts around land tenure, before the implementation of each activity, meetings were organized with all stakeholders. The project only occurred on land where the owner had made a commitment to make their plots available for project activities.

281. Bushfire may be the most acute environmental problem due to the fact that not only it leads to soil erosion, but also it prevents reforestation efforts (component 1). The harmful effects of recurrent bushfires and unsuitable farming practices are the main causes of land degradation. At the start of the project, the Bongolava region was ranked 20th out of the 22 regions concerning fire points according to bush fires, in 2020 it was ranked 15th, an improvement of 7 points⁹.

282. Efforts to minimize the project's environmental footprint is another specific environmental topic to be addressed. By focussing on local implementation, the project put the bulk of its activities at local level and minimized its environmental footprint. Reforestation, agroforestry and improved stoves are activities that had even a positive footprint. However, this aspect was not highlighted in the project. All the same, the three extensions of the projects allowed them to continue field activities which had very little footprint. This happened at the expense of the national and global workshops that had large footprints. In this context, the three revisions helped to minimize the project's environmental footprint. However, this positive argument was not used for the extension. In summary, efforts were made to minimize the project's environmental footprint on a cost-efficient basis and not as a strategic operational management. The project would have gained to have an explicit strategy to reduce its negative foot-print. An explicit strategy would have allowed to take into account reducing environmental footprint in the procurement process or in organising events.

283. In conclusion, the rating for environmental and social safeguards is Satisfactory.

5.9.6 Country Ownership and Driven-ness

284. The project was initially proposed and designed by ANAE and the MEDD with UNEP only supporting the project process so that it could fit in the GEF requirements. In this sense, there was full country ownership and driven-ness from the start. As such, ANAE and MEDD at regional level showed direct and full ownership of the project. This was directly seen in the project implementation process where ANAE and DIREDD showed a close project management partnership. The ANAE and DIREDD leadership were key to moving forwards from outputs linked to component 1 to project outcome 1 *"Enhanced capacity of communal institutions to implement SLM demonstrated"*.

285. The project also successfully involved the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock and the project was part of their own work programme. ANAE, DIRAE and DIREDD ownership on the process were key to move forwards from outputs linked to component 2 to project outcome 2 *"Increased farmers' capacity for SLM practices demonstrated"*.

286. Finally, the project also involved the Ministry of Interior, especially the Bongolava region, ANAE and DIREDD to move forwards on the outputs linked to component 3 towards the project outcome 3 *"High level commitment to implementing a strategy for scaling up SLM at regional level demonstrated publicly"*. DIREDD and ANAE showed full commitment in this regard, while Bongolava region initially fully committed became more passive due to the local political changes (changes of their directors at regional level) and broader national politics (with national elections in 2023).

287. DIREDD, DIRAE, SLM committees and *Fokontany* showed ownership for moving forwards from project outcomes towards three intermediate states, as it is shown by their

⁹ Source: DIREDD Bongolava, Interregional Directorate of Environment and Sustainable Development.

additional project's support beyond initial project timeframe: Local and regional institutions strengthened by mainstreaming SLM; Agricultural yields and associated incomes of local people improved; and Land degradation reduced across the Bongolova Region in Madagascar.

288. The MEDD and DIREDD provides continuous support, external evaluation and strategic guidance to the project. The MEDD/DIREDD advocates for changes at regional level results by including projects found in the Bongolova regional plan. It also endorsed the project results. DIREDD and DIRAE continued their support beyond the initial project time frame, initiating no-cost complementary activities (from January 2017 until December 2022), and providing in kind co-financing contributions.

289. This ownership adequately represents the needs and interests of all gendered and marginalised groups as demonstrated by the steady and lasting involvement of the SLM local communities as well as a large variety of beneficiaries.

290. In conclusion, the rating for country ownership and driven-ness is Highly Satisfactory.

5.9.7 Communication and Public Awareness

291. The project was built around three core components with associated outputs (section 5.4.1). The third component "knowledge sharing" was essentially about communication and public awareness. As a cross-cutting issue over the life-span of the project, communication and public awareness could be analysed at three complementary levels: community level, regional level and nationally/globally.

292. At local, community and regional level effective communication of learning and experience sharing between project partners and interested groups occurred. The public awareness activities undertaken during the implementation of the project to shape behaviour among wider communities were effective. These various activities included learning exchanges on sites and awareness meetings and within non-benefiting communes. This communication activity was well targeted towards key audiences (local leaders, beneficiaries, population at large, including most marginalized).

293. At regional level, the project also used regional radio and TVs as effective communication channels. These communication activities and channels were well tailor-made to local farmers driving the desired change and who have moderate awareness of the project's main messages. However, they are quite infrequent over the life of the project, didn't include audience feed-back, were poorly monitored, and were inadequately budgeted. As a result, this regional awareness activity was more undertaken on an ad hoc basis, based on opportunities (e.g. Start of the project, venue of some external partners), than a thoughtful strategy with steady implementation plan, clear activities and adequate budget. These public awareness efforts have been moderately effective in driving change towards results beyond outputs.

294. At national level, the project did some tailor-made communication to a specialized environmental audience with the Mad-Vert (magazine from the MEDD). In addition, at the very end of the project, in December 2022, the project organized a regional and global workshop to communicate over the results associated with the project. This was a unique moment to share substantial experience between project partners and other interested groups. The project also relied on bilateral interpersonal relationships and ANAE network (with other development aid agencies, other associations) to communicate about the project rather informally. However, the project didn't use a clear strategy and implementation plan to

proactively use communication channels and networks. For instance, the website was not updated, there were no newsletters or other active electronic communication nationally or globally. All the same, established communication channels (TV, radio, national events) and networks (pool of UN agencies, development aid, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), national governmental agencies) were only a little bit used to spread the messages and communicate at national and international level. As a main consequence, the method, outcomes and results of the projects are poorly known outside the environmental sector at national or international level.

295. To summarize, the component 3 (knowledge sharing) demonstrated a good but limited communication strategy prepared and implemented. But, implementation activities were inadequately financed. They were not established to get feed-back channels or tailor-made to meet differentiated needs of gendered or marginalised groups. In addition, no knowledge sharing platforms were established, and there were no plans for the sustainability of this communication channel under either socio-politically, institutionally or financially.

296. In conclusion, the communication and public awareness rates are Moderately Satisfactory.

297. Summing up the ratings affecting performance and cross-cutting issues, the overall rating is Satisfactory.

Rating for Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues: 5 (Satisfactory)

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

298. Overall, the project is rated as Satisfactory. This is a noteworthy achievement if one considers that the project had to face some very serious adverse challenges during its life time (2016-22): The heads at the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Ministère de l'environnement et du développement durable – MEED) changed four times, the COVID hit in 2020, the climate is getting dryer, and the local conditions became even more unsafe (see V.I. d).

299. Two main structural reasons underpin counterintuitively this achievement: the approach of ANAE, with MEDD support, and the attitude of UNEP.

300. On the one hand, the project benefited from the longstanding involvement of ANAE and its partners nationally and in the Bongolava region. Established in 1991 with close partners dedicated to environment and agriculture (ex. MEDD, FOFIFA, aid agencies of churches, various NGOs), ANAE has a long experience in Madagascar linking environmental protection and agricultural development. This includes a previously successful project in the Bongolava region at the turn of the millennium. On the other hand, UNEP facilitated an endogenous process within Madagascar. It acted as a go-between between ANAE (and MEDD) and GEF to formulate, and then to execute the project. UNEP's way of working raised the executing agency's institutional capacity to comply with UN/GEF standards and provided positive-oriented solutions with administrative issues (such as the 3 non-cost extensions with some budget reallocation).

301. Benefiting from its good reputation and its long experience, ANAE undertook the project with a philosophy of caring in three dimensions. Firstly, the project cared about its own staff, with stability during the years in the employment before and during the project. This stability allowed the nurturing of exchanges, building institutional memory, and proposing adaptive activities. This was fundamental when instability around the project prevailed. Secondly, the project cared about the people at local level focussing on improving their institutional capacity and their well-being. Thirdly, the project cared about the environment and more exactly the ecosystem with land degradation as the main threat. These three dimensions of care in the project positively nurtured each other helping to develop practical, tailor-made and adaptive activities. It also allowed the establishment of a conducive process that provided lasting impact. Overall, this process allowed the strengthening of local SLM committees, reforestation, and provided a number of agro-ecological activities.

302. Overall this process was also participatory and inclusive, allowing the most marginalized ones to participate and was gender sensitive. In light of the gender assessment carried out in 2019, the project took some gender-responsive measures, in particular to boost women ownership to the process (see annex VI.c).

303. This positive inclusive feed-back loop benefited from a well-established monitoring and evaluation system (see annex VI.a) which involved both the beneficiaries and the executing agency. The project managed to establish a positive relationship between rehabilitating agro-ecosystem services and improving local livelihood. The bottom-up monitoring of these two components also allowed adaptive actions and the ownership of local communities in the process. This allowed them to understand local dynamics, take corrective actions, and propose a more inclusive approach with the LIFE and the eco-villages. If this work

at the local level might look “simple”, it is not simplistic at all. It relied on close relationships with the communities, trust, as well as reactive and adaptive activities based on the demand and the capacity of the beneficiaries.

304. From the achievement at beneficiary level, the project nurtured socio-political building process (SLM committees recognized within the community), created a coherent cooperation (e.g. With DIREDD, DIRAE), and moved towards institutional recognition of SLM committees (see annex VI.b). This institutional recognition is yet to completely materialize. Indeed, institutional national recognition remained challenging. Reporting to the Ministry of interior, the Bongolava region is slow in revising its development plan. At the same time, the MEDD hasn't yet recognized the local SLM committees at national level. These recognitions would also facilitate SLM committees' access for funding.

305. The extension of the project for an additional two years at no cost was not a burden that lowered the efficiency. On the contrary, allowing the project to develop over a total of six years, it was much more suitable for such a process-oriented project.

306. Beyond the need to find top-down recognition that would benefit from the project's bottom-up efforts, the project faced also two other challenges. The first is the difficulty to communicate and raise awareness at national and international levels, this is to say beyond project partners. Lack of funds and late timing of these activities partially explain this. But, more structurally, the project focussed on technical capacity building and improving social cohesion, being therefore adaptative and process oriented. As such, it naturally tended to favour bilateral relationships at national level (e.g. with development aid agencies, with GEF agencies) at the expense of communicating widely its results, good practices, and outcomes. In an overly interconnected world, with communication today often taking over real work and content, the project would have benefited from adapting to this new reality. The project could have invested much more in a deep communication strategy with dedicated staff, boosted web-site, newsletters and wide use of other communication channels at national, and even international levels (see VI.d).

307. Financial sustainability is the second challenge (see VI d). Short-term impact of the project would need to secure funds to get long lasting impacts. It is highly unlikely that people with extremely low income could invest in maintaining ecological infrastructure (e.g. Manage fire, reclaim lavakas, maintain ditches) to benefit ecological services. As project activities help to reduce greenhouse gases' emissions and adapt to a changing climate, secure funds from institutions involved in climate should be a priority.

308. The table below provides a summary of the ratings and findings discussed in Chapter 5. It demonstrates why the project is rating 'Satisfactory'.

Table 8. Summary of project findings and ratings

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
Strategic Relevance		6 (HS)
1. Alignment to UNEP MTS, POW and Strategic Priorities	Fully aligned to UNEP MTS, POW and strategic priorities	6 (HS)

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
2. Alignment to UNEP Donor/GEF/Partner strategic priorities	Consistent to GEF-5 Focal Area strategies on Land Degradation.	6 (HS)
3. Relevance to global, regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities	Aligned to at least 7 SDGs and associated targets; relevant with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2015-19; consistent with several environmental priorities at Madagascar national/ regional level (biodiversity, climate, desertification, water).	6 (HS)
4. Complementarity with existing interventions/ Coherence	Coherent with other UNEP/GEF interventions and with other bilateral agencies (European Union, Japan)	6 (HS)
Quality of Project Design	Excellent understanding of the local situation, partners, and activities in a difficult context. But, the project lacked a TOC, seems overambitious in the short GEF 4-years' timeframe, and the component 3 "knowledge sharing" underfunded and a bit overlooked.	4 (MS)
Nature of External Context	National political instability is endemic, Climate change is affecting the region, local security conditions are still deteriorating, and COVID affected the Madagascar. Project could be resilient by focussing on the local level.	3 (MU)
Effectiveness		5 (S)
1. Availability of outputs	More than 80% approved outputs were delivered fully, with excellent quality and high levels of user ownership.	5 (S)
2. Achievement of project outcomes	The project was successful in achieving the two first outcomes, while the third outcome is mostly achieved. In addition, assumptions for progress from project outputs to project outcomes hold fully. Finally, drivers to support transition from output to project outcomes are in place.	5 (S)
3. Likelihood of impact	The most important project outcomes to attain intermediate states are fully achieved. All intermediate states are partially achieved and assumptions for the change process towards impact do hold and drivers are partially in place.	5 (L)
Financial Management		5 (S)
1. Adherence to UNEP's financial policies and procedures	With UNEP support, ANAE raised its capacity to adhere to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures.	5 (S)
2. Completeness of project financial information	Legal alignments are in place, quarterly and yearly financial reports are detailed. The executing agency provides co-financing yearly, but there is no proof from the partners about these co-financing.	4 (MS)
3. Communication between finance and project management staff	There is good communication between the PM and FMO that were proactive in solving financial issues. Yet, the change of PM towards the end of the project had some consequences in communication delaying budget extension.	5 (S)
Efficiency	The project was implemented with no cost extension. The additional close to two years of project extension happens to be a quite cost-effective approach to the project. It allowed them to focus on local capacity and agro-ecology in the long term. Project activities were sequenced efficiently and projects built on a partnership that created synergies.	5 (S)
Monitoring and Reporting		5 (S)

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
1. Monitoring design and budgeting	At design the monitoring plan was well thought with a bottom up approach to monitoring, a clear structure, dedicated and budget.	5 (S)
2. Monitoring of project implementation	Information generated by implementing the monitoring plan has been used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes, to ensure sustainability.	All key annual
3. Project reporting	All annual PIRs are completed, but some intermediate reports are missing such as some calendar annual reports. The collaboration and communication with the UNEP PM were substantial. Data is disaggregated by age and gender.	5 (S)
Sustainability		4 (ML)
1. Socio-political sustainability	Outcomes have a low degree of dependency on socio-political factors at national level. It builds on trust and stable social relationships at the lowest level, the Fokontany, and its aggregation in communes.	6 (HL)
2. Financial sustainability	Outcomes have a low dependency on financial flow to persist. Yet, they would need some maintenance. An exist strategy has been thought through but its implementation remains a challenge.	4 (ML)
3. Institutional sustainability	Outcomes have a low degree of dependency on sensitivity to institutional support, as they are more based on local socio-political governance. In addition, capacity of local institutions has been strengthened (SLM committees) with governmental institutional support (DIRAE, DIREED). Finally, an exit strategy has been initiated with the MEED to legalize SLM.	5 (L)
Factors Affecting Performance		5 (S)
1. Preparation and readiness	At the time of the first disbursement, the annual costed plan was developed with appropriate details, the safeguards assessment was carried out, with stakeholder participation and partners capacity confirmed. The staffing mobilization was also undertaking in a timely manner and the launching of the project with establishing the steering committee went smoothly.	5 (S)
2. Quality of project management and supervision	UNEP provided technical guidance and long-term supervision to the executing agency to adapt to UNEP rules and procedures. The executing agency (ANAE) had a high level of project management performance by caring about the project in three dimensions: its staff, the ecosystem to rehabilitate and the beneficiaries. In conclusion, UNEP/ANAE both provided excellent leadership towards achieving the outcomes UNEP/Implementing Agency: S ANAE/Executing Agency: HS	6 (HS)
3. Stakeholders' participation and cooperation	The project made strong and effective efforts to promote stakeholder ownership of the processes, as well as fruitful cooperation between stakeholders (in particular governmental institutions and local communities). In addition, it had a positive impact on equity.	6 (HS)

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality	The project took fully into consideration human rights/gender issues during its implementation and interpretation of results, but not for budget allocation. As such it supported the most marginalized people and contributed to gender equality.	5 (S)
5. Environmental and social safeguards	The project strives to get positive both environmental and social outcomes. It also links the two issues in a positive narrative, changing the overall vision by which socio-economic activities should lead to environmental degradation. Project made efforts to minimize its environmental footprint in practice to gain efficiency, but did not conceptualize it as an explicit strategy.	5 (S)
6. Country ownership and driven-ness	Designed by ANAE and the MEED, UNEP only supported the process to reach GEF standards. In its implementation, the project was driven by ANAE with close support of local communities and governmental institutions (DIREDD and DIRAE). This high level of ownership adequately represented the needs and interests of all genders and marginalized groups.	6 (HS)
7. Communication and public awareness	The project built on three components, with “knowledge sharing” being one of them. It made great efforts to communicate at local, community and regional level through visit exchanges, radio and even TV. At national level there were key activities such as the workshop in December 2022. But overall, there were no established feed-back channels to meet differentiated needs. The national communication remained ad hoc, with no strategic use of emerging technologies and plans for the sustainability of these communication channels.	4 (MS)
Overall Project Performance Rating		5 (S)

6.2 Lessons learned

Lesson Learned #1:	Difficult external context can be overcome by local adapting activities to this reality.
Context/comment:	Activities towards local peoples can avoid national political instabilities and unsafe local conditions. Activities to restore the ecosystem can have a positive impact on local climate adaptation.

Lesson Learned #2:	Caring for the staff, the beneficiaries and the environment creates a positive feed-back loop.
Context/comment:	This caring approach nurtures each other helping to develop practical, tailor-made and adaptive activities. It allowed to establish a conducive process that provided lasting impact. It also allowed the establishment of a useful monitoring plan.

Lesson Learned #3:	UNEP’s facilitating role is key to enable conditions of success.
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Context/comment:	UNEP could act as a go-between ANAE (and MEDD) and GEF to formulate, and then to execute the project. It raised the executing agency's institutional capacity to comply with UN/GEF standards and provided positive-oriented solutions with administrative issues.
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Lesson Learned #4:	Bottom-up socio-political efforts need in the long-term some sort of institutional top-down institutional recognition.
Context/comment:	National institutional recognition is difficult to materialize from local efforts. Not only does institutional national recognition take time, but also local efforts are poorly appreciated nationally. However, local efforts need some sort of long-term national policy recognition for institutional sustainability and financial sustainability.

Lesson Learned #5:	Sharing knowledge needs a strong communication strategy.
Context/comment:	At a time of hyper global communication, the projects should invest in a communication strategy, with dedicated staff and use of all channels (e.g. Internet, video, radio, TV), especially at national and international level.

Lesson Learned #6:	Financial sustainability is a challenge, especially for projects focussing on marginalized peoples
Context/comment:	Secure funds from institutions involved in climate should be a priority as SLM projects such as this one directly helps to reduce greenhouse gases' emissions and adapt to a changing climate.

6.3 Recommendations

Recommendation #1:	Partners (Ministry of environment and sustainable development (Ministère de l'environnement et du développement durable - MEDD) to legally recognise SLM committees.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Strengthening the socio-political-legal framework at local level, also needs to get a top-down endorsement (from national government to regional level) both to get institutional recognition and secure access of finance from national governmental level to local level.
Priority Level:	1
Type of Recommendation	National policies and laws
Responsibility:	Partner: Ministère de l'environnement et du développement durable - MEDD
Proposed implementation time-frame:	2023-26

309. Cross-reference to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section 5.8.2; 5.8.3

Recommendation #2:	Partner (MEDD) to show the multiple benefits (socio-economic, health, education, environment) of SLM project to other ministries (e.g. education, health, interior, finance, planning).
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Integration of this project with other development activities, different ministries work on the same objectives by silos. Needs to enhance the importance of SLM for the goals in other ministries beyond MEED.
Priority Level:	1
Type of Recommendation	Awareness raising
Responsibility:	Partner: Ministère de l'environnement et du développement durable - MEDD
Proposed implementation time-frame:	2023-24

310. Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section 5.1.4; 5.3; 5.9.6

Recommendation #3:	Partners (MEED/ANAE) to put emphasis on local Financial sustainability, with an exit strategy to secure long-term maintenance with targeted funds
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	SLM needs some low-level maintenance. However, in an extremely economically poor context, it is doubtful the local stakeholders will invest in this low maintenance without any direct economic benefit, as the benefits from SLM are always different from the actual action. There should be possibility of access small funds either through accounting for the climate benefit of SLM or by targeted bilateral funds.
Priority Level:	1
Type of Recommendation	Operational
Responsibility:	Partner: ANAE and other stakeholders in Bongolova
Proposed implementation time-frame:	From 2022

311. Cross-reference to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section 5.8.2, 5.9.5, annex VI GEF portal

Recommendation #4:	Partners (ANAE/MEED) to develop a proactive communication strategy from the start. The strategy should both raise public awareness at regional level (through radio) and at national/global (through digital communication: internet site, e-newsletters, seek journalists).
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	The communication strategy comes too late in the project, usually only when first outcomes are achieved, which is about mid-term projects. As a result, it is a challenge to get broad support at regional, national and even global level for SLM at the end of the project.
Priority Level:	2
Type of Recommendation	Public awareness
Responsibility:	Partners: MEED/ANAE
Proposed implementation time-frame:	From 2023

312. Cross-reference to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section 5.9.7; annex VI GEF portal inputs d, e

Recommendation #5:	Project (UNEP) to involve ministries of health, education and planning when designing SLM projects.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Think of the long-term impact. Short-term gains are lost in the overall demography of people depending on land for farming activities. SLM projects should be designed in synergies with ministries dealing with access to education, to health, including reproductive health, and to land-use planning.
Priority Level:	2
Type of Recommendation	Policy coordination
Responsibility:	Project and partners: UNEP with national Government
Proposed implementation time-frame:	From 2023 onwards

313. Cross-reference to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section 5.1.3; 5.3; annex VII SLM portfolio 2(e)

Recommendation #6:	Project (UNEP) and partners (Government) to build projects on SLM from the need and the support from local level beneficiaries. Project/partners to prioritize decentralized regional cooperation with technical services of government (ex. DIREDD), local actors (towns, associations) to gain on efficiency (adaptation to local land use, violence, resilient to political changes).
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Bottom-up approach is a key to success on SLM. But, it is difficult to ensure it happens in practice as political asymmetries and institutional-legal framework tend to concentrate power, decision-making and execution at national level.
Priority Level:	1
Type of Recommendation	Policy
Responsibility:	Project and Partner: National government, UN agencies, GEF
Proposed implementation time-frame:	From 2023

314. Cross-reference to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section 3.2; 3.3; 5.1.1; 5.6; 5.9.2; annex VIII SLM portfolio 4(b)

Recommendation #7:	UNEP and partners to account for project contribution to climate change adaptation/mitigation (account to greenhouses emissions - avoided or as a sink).
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	There is a need to get sustainable funding from SLM. All avoided emissions (improve stove, prevent fires) and as a sink (store in trees and soil) should be accounted for to get carbon credit offsets. Get funding and secure financial sustainability by trading these offsets. Liaise with (Reduction Emissions Deforestation and (land) Degradation) from The World Bank, UNEP or private stakeholders.
Priority Level:	2
Type of Recommendation	Policy
Responsibility:	Project and partners: UNEP and government
Proposed implementation time-frame:	From 2023-2025

315. Cross-reference to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section 5.1.2; 5.1.3; 5.3; 5.4.2; 5.4.3; annex VI GEF portal input (a), (d) ; Annex VIII SLM portfolio 1a, 4f, 5

Recommendation #8:	UNEP to account for all benefits from SLM (water, farming, soil restoration, reforestation, climate, health) mobilizing internal resources from its Economic and Trade Policy Unit.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	There is a great need to get an impact on the other development sectors. SLM is endangered to remain isolated as an environmental issue, while it is a fundamental condition for any future development.
Priority Level:	1
Type of Recommendation	Policy & economics
Responsibility:	Project: UNEP
Proposed implementation time-frame:	2023-24

316. Cross-reference(s) to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section 5.8.2; 5.9.5; annex VI GEF portal

Recommendation 9:	UNEP to create a documentary on the outcomes and impact of the project at national/global outreach (BBC, AFD?) as a source of inspiration and replication.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Need to raise worldwide interest in SLM with positive stories from the ground that show a good impact of intervention. SLM largely miss-understood and under radar compared to climate or even biodiversity issue.
Priority Level:	1
Type of Recommendation	Public awareness
Responsibility:	Project: UNEP
Proposed implementation time-frame:	2023

317. Cross-reference to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section 5.4.1; 5.9.7; annex VI GEF portal inputs d, e

Recommendation #10:	UNEP to partners with executing agencies that demonstrate resilience and adaptation to external context.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Challenging external context can greatly affect the project especially in regard to institutional changes, political instability and changing of staff or resources resulting of it.
Priority Level:	1
Type of Recommendation	Policy
Responsibility:	Project: UNEP
Proposed implementation time-frame:	From 2023

318. Cross-reference to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section 5.3; 5.8

Recommendation #11:	UNEP to conceive, operate and communicate on SLM projects as fundamental for climate, biodiversity and human well-being when implementing (and not only in the initial project document).
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	There is a great need widely to communicate with stakeholders beyond the partners in project implementation: development aid organisations, other ministries, UN agencies, public at large. This communication needs to be tailor made to their needs and interests.
Priority Level:	1
Type of Recommendation	Policy
Responsibility:	Project: UNEP, GEF
Proposed implementation time-frame:	2024

319. Cross-reference to rationale and supporting discussions:

- Section 5.4.1; 5.9.7; 6.1; annex VI GEF portal inputs e; Annex VIII SLM portfolio 3.c

Recommendation #12:	UNEP to develop adaptative financial mechanisms to liberate the 5% of the remaining budget – or part of it – when project ends if projects are well-functioning, for instance by adding an audit or field mission at the beginning for the last operating year.
Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:	Difficulty for Executing agencies to finish the project especially when it is financially important in their portfolio.
Priority Level:	3
Type of Recommendation	Policy
Responsibility:	Project: UNEP, GEF
Proposed implementation time-frame:	2024 onwards

ANNEX I. RESPONSE TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Place in text	Stakeholder comment	Evaluator's Response
Paragraphs 4, 21, 84, 136,	Perhaps it would be better to write "local SLM committee" but not "SLM local committee".	Thank you. 7 changes were made throughout the document.
Paragraphs 14, 75, 77, 115, 124, 125, 148, 216, 236, table 4	Write fokontany instead of fonkontany (it's not correct)	Thank you. 15 changes were made through out the document.
Paragraph 83	L'ANAE was not a member of steering committee, ANAE staff was in charge of the secretariat	Thank you. This reference was delated in the new paragraph 131. And to clarify, the new following sentence was added "ANAE was not part of the Steering Committee, it was in charge of the Secretariat."
Table 3	Country mission 10 october : general director, technical director and financial director but not president	Thank you. This was corrected as such "General director, Technical director, Financial director"
Paragraphs 96 and 155	421,900 ha but not 4,421,900 ha	Thank you. This was corrected as such "421,900 ha"
Annex 2	Person consulted: ANAE : add ANDRIAMAHAY for Serge Rija MEDD : write Edmée Christine RALALAHARISOA instead of Medmé ANAE : write Holy RABENIRINA instead of Holy ANAE : write Jhiny Aubertin ANDRIAMAHEFA instead of Shiny	Thank you, the four modifications were made in Annex 2.

ANNEX II. PEOPLE CONSULTED DURING THE EVALUATION

People consulted during the Evaluation

Type of group	Name of organisation	Name of person	Position	Method	Gender
Implementing agency	UNEP	Adamou Bouhari	Task Manager 2015-19	Video conference and emails	M
Implementing agency	UNEP	Victoria Luque	Task manager 2020-21 UNEP/GEF Executive coordinator	Video conference and email	W
Implementing Agency	UNEP	Aska Ochiel	Task Manager	Emails	W
Implementing agency	UNEP	George Saddimbah	Fund management officer	Video conference and emails	M
Implementing agency	UNEP	Johan Robinson	Chief GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation unit	Video and emails	M
Executing agency	ANAE	Mihaja Randrianantenaina	Technical director	In person, video, emails	W
Executing agency	ANAE	Tahina Rakotondralambo	Executive director	In person, video, emails	M
Executing agency	ANAE	Serge Rija Andriamahay	Director finance and administration	In person, emails	M
Executing agency	MEDD	Paul Ralison	Project focal point	In person, emails	M
Executing agency	MEDD	Edmée Christine Ralalaharisoa	Ex-director MEED	In person	M
Executing agency	ANAE	Holy Rabenirina	Manager Monitoring & evaluation	In person	M
Executing agency	ANAE	Jhiny Aubertin Andriamahefa	Administrator at Bongolava region	In person	M
Executing agency	ANAE	Jean-Baptiste	Technician	In person	M
Executing agency	ANAE	Aristide	Technician	In person	M
Partners	Region Bongolava/Ministry interior	Raharivony Fanomezantsoa	Chef service de l'intercollectivité, du partenariat et des projets	In person	M
Partners	Region Bongolava/Ministry interior	Margot Ramarokoto	Directeur des infrastructures et du développement	In person	W
Partners	Direction interrégionale des forêts Itaz-Bongolova	Maxime Tojo Randriamampita	Chef de service	In person	M
Local authorities	Tsironanomandidy commune	Herinarivo Maminiaira Madson	Mayor	In person	M

Local authorities	Tsironanomandidy commune	Felix André Rakotondrandra	Ajoint Mayor	In person	M
<p>Four communes (local authorities, SLM committee, beneficiaries) and 8 sites visited with discussions in person (6-8 October 2022).</p> <p>A) Commune <u>Mahasolo</u>, site Fieferana Ambony, urgent measures/reforestation (1); site Ambarate, ecovillage (2); site Ankadindra, urgente measure/reforestation (3).</p> <p>B) Commune <u>Ambararatabe</u>; site Ambatofotsy – urgent measures (4), Ambatomitsangana; site laboketraka – ecovillage (5) site Ambatomitsangana – ecovillage (6).</p> <p>C) Commune <u>Ambatolampy</u>; site Ambatolampy - ecovillage (7)</p> <p>D) Commune <u>Tsiroanomandidy Fihaonana</u>, site visit Andaingohazo, Amparihinomby – urgent measures/ lavakas (8).</p>					

ANNEX III. KEY DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Project Management	
Project design documents agreed with all donors (UNEP ProDoc, Full GEF Approved CEO Endorsement Request package, Individual Donor Agreements, and all appendices)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GEF focal point Madagascar-Endorsement of project development proposal – 30 April 2013 2. Approved CEO GEF letter endorsement – 21 September 2016 3. UNEP/GEF MSP Project Document with technical annexes- 2016 (not dated and not with annex M – Environment and Social Safeguards, and not with annex J GEF tracking tool and not annex F, and not with project supervision plan) 4. Annex J “GEF Tracking tool revised” as an excel sheet. 5. Word document ANAE response matrix to GEF questions (June 2016) 6. Annex M “Environment and social safeguards” as a word document 7. Project supervision plan (detail responsibilities of each partner over time 2015-2019) which is lacking in the ProDoc 8. Annex as a word document - with acronyms and Appendix G: Forward planning and plan of action 9. Annex_F1-Budget 03-03-2016 (as an Excel sheet not dated within the document) 10. Project Cooperation Agreement (PAC) UNEP-MMEF 7 December 2016 signed by both parties. 11. Co-financing signed documents from each party supporting the narrative within the ProDoc (Ambraratabe, Ambatolampy, Ankadinondry, Tsinjo Imanga MEE-DGE, FOFIFA, MADR, MINEL, Region Bongolava, ANAE, Mahasolo) 12. UNEP biennial work programme 2014-15 13. GEF-5 Focal area strategies
Documents approving formal revisions	14. Approved three revisions: legal agreement and budget allocations
Project progress reports, including regular reports to donors (both narrative and financial components)	15. May 2017 – Audio of the inception workshop.
For projects funded by the GEF, Project Identification Form (PIF), annual Project Implementation Review reports (PIRs) and the GEF Tracking Tool for relevant Focal Areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. PIF document-2016-03-26 17. PIRs 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022
Evaluation reports, including Mid-Term Reviews	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Email text 13 04 2022 from Aska Ochiel explaining that MTR is not existing (as MSP, it was not compulsory) 19.
Recommendation Implementation Plans from any mid-point assessments	20. 2018-04-05 Rapport de la réunion de supervision/recadrage PNUE (entre le PNUE/ANAE) : This document contains recommendation implementation plans.
Financial Management	

FMO Confirmation of Expenditure to date	21. FMO confirmed Expenditures in June 2022. 22. Quarterly financial reports
Any revisions to budgets, including for no-cost extensions	23. Three budget revisions (including no-cost extensions and budget reallocation)
Project Management	
Full list of partners and other stakeholders, with up-to-date contact details	24. Recruitment of the project staff-2017-02-15 25. MEEF DG mise à disposition de matériel-2017-02-15
Documents from inception meetings (including agendas, participants lists, PowerPoint presentations, minutes, etc.)	26. 2017-05-Présentation des indicateurs objectivement vérifiables et des moyens de vérification du projet de gestion participative durable des terres des plateaux de l'ouest de Madagascar (Région Bongolava). PPT 27. 2017-05-Projet de gestion participative durable des terres des plateaux de l'Ouest de Madagascar. PPT 28. 2017-05-Delivery of output overtime Excel 29. 2017-05-Résumé project jet PPT 30. 2017-05-ToR atelier de lancement pour les partenaires 31. Press release inception workshop 22 June 2017 32. Participant list at the inception workshop 33. Objective and agenda of the inception workshop 22 June 2022 34. UNEP presentation at the inception workshop 35. Yearly working plan 22 June 2022 36. List of partners 22 June 2022
Steering Committee meeting documents, including agendas, meeting minutes and any summary reports.	37. TorR of the steering committee. 38. Decree establishing the steering committee by the Ministry. 39. PPT presenting the project 2017-18 40. Steering Committee 2017, 2019, 2021, written reports and minutes
All project/country workplans, including revised versions	41. Annual workplans, including revisions (as defined in the no-cost extensions). 42. 2018-04-05-Résumé des activités réalisées et des démarches méthodologiques. 43. 2018-04-05-Rapport de la réunion de supervision/recadrage PNUE (entre le PNUE/ANAE) 44. 2018-04-05-Terme de référence de la réunion de supervision/recadrage PNUE/ANAE 45. 2019-02-12-Présentation des activités de 2018-Réunion du COPIL
Supervision/monitoring mission reports	46. MEED supervision report 2021 47. Internal UN audit. Mr Kasunde. 2019
Project deliverables, such as: technical project reports; country assessment/sector studies; training agendas and participant lists; project communications materials; links to relevant	48. All component-related outputs, publications and extras. This includes the assessments (component 1, outcome .1.1) and Outreach and Communications materials (component 3): for instance map of urgent measures/reforestation (carte des mesures urgentes/reforestation); map of agro ecovillages (carte des villages agroécologiques); Posters – Projet de gestion

knowledge sharing platforms	participative durable dans le paysage du plateau de moyen ouest de Madagascar region Bongolava 2017-2020)
Project Completion / Terminal Report (draft version if not yet finalized)	49. Draft 2022 PIR. No project completion or terminal report available.
Financial Management	
All financial reports (i.e. UNEP financial reports submitted internally or to donors and/or financial reports received from partners)	50. Initial Budget Plans, Budget Revision 51. Financial Reporting, including co-financing and all expenditure reports.
Verification of delivery of GEF co-finance (cash and in-kind) contributions	52. GEF co-financing by year by ANAE, not by partners.
Audit reports, for externally executed project in excess of \$200,000 in GEF funding and Management Responses to audits, where applicable	53. Annual financial audit report 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021

ANNEX IV. BRIEF CV OF THE EVALUATOR

Name	Ruyschaert Denis
Profession	Dr. Sociology and Agronomist Engineer
Nationality	
Country experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe: Belgium, Finland, France, Switzerland • Africa: Kenya, Cameroon, Congo republic - Brazzaville • Americas: Guatemala • Asia: Malaysia, Indonesia • Oceania: Australia, New Zealand
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phd sociology – public policies • Ing agronomist (environment)

Short biography

Mr Denis Ruyschaert is an independent evaluator on wide range of environmental issues. His special interest is the focus on the gap between global commitment and field implementation on some dire environmental issues such as biodiversity loss, climate change, deforestation and social equity.

Denis has worked more than 25 years on four continents (Africa, Europe, Latin America, Asia) from a wide range of perspectives: local communities, development NGOs, transnational corporations, the United Nations environment programme (UNEP) and academics. His researches are published in journals pertaining to sociology and environmental economics. He is the author of "UNEP and civil society: Natural Allies" (UNEP, 2004).

Denis Ruyschaert is working as the faculty lead on environment and sustainability at the Graduate Institute Geneva; as an international consultant on environmental governance; and as elected member of the Geneva Municipality council where is the President of the commission dealing with environment and planning.

Key specialties and capabilities cover:

- Agriculture, biodiversity, climate change, environment, governance, inequality, resource extraction, lobby, international negotiations, public policy, waste.

Selected assignments and experiences

- From 01/2022: Faculty lead environment and sustainability, Graduate Institute Geneva: Lead 10 projects, including UNEP/Nature-Based Solution in Europe, FAO/Climate-agriculture-peacebuilding, WMO/climate service and energy.
- From 01/2008: independent consultant: Forest governance in Congo Basin (Terminal Evaluation GEF/UNEP, 2018); Gold supply chain (SWISSAID, 2014); Impact of WTO on farmers (ProNatura, 2021) Food sovereignty (City of Geneva, 2020); Stakes of food systems in international cooperation (Geneva cantonal federation, 2021).
- Director of associations working on biodiversity preservation and improved livelihoods in Indonesia (2006-11) and Guatemala (1998-2001).
- UN diplomat dealing with civil society engagement in intergovernmental negotiations (UNEP 2001-05).
- Associate researcher on waste recycling (Suez, 1995-97).

ANNEX V. EVALUATION TORS (WITHOUT ANNEXES)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF project

Participatory Sustainable Land Management in the Grassland Plateaus of Western Madagascar (GEF ID 5354)

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1. Project General Information

Table 2: Project Summary

GEF Project ID:	5354		
Implementing Agency:	UNEP	Executing Agencies:	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD) and National Association for Environmental Actions (ANAE)
Relevant SDG(s) and indicator(s):	SDG Target 15.3: Indicator: 15.3.1		
GEF Core Indicator Targets (identify these for projects approved prior to GEF-7¹⁰)	Objective 1 (Agriculture and Rangeland Systems: Maintain or improve flow of agro-ecosystem services sustaining the livelihoods of local communities) of the Land Degradation focal area		
Sub-programme:	Healthy and Productive Ecosystems	Expected Accomplishment(s):	EA (a) Indicators (i,ii,iii)
UNEP approval date:		Programme of Work Output(s):	Biennium 2020-2021 Healthy and productive ecosystems
GEF approval date:	21 Sept 2016	Project type:	MSP
GEF Operational Programme #:	V	Focal Area(s):	Land Degradation

¹⁰ This does not apply for Enabling Activities

		GEF Strategic Priority:	LD-3: Integrated Landscapes: Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape	
Expected start date:	07 Dec 2016	Actual start date:	07 Dec 2016	
Planned operational completion date:	Dec 2020	Actual operational completion date:	July 2022	
Planned project budget at approval:	USD 6,930,731	Actual total expenditures reported as of 31 Dec 2021:	USD 5,251,428.69	
GEF grant allocation:	USD 1,584,931	GEF grant expenditures reported as of 31 Dec 2021:	USD 1,453,316.69	
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	\$ 100,000	Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:	N/A	
Expected Medium-Size Project co-financing:	USD 5,345,800	Secured Medium-Size Project co-financing:	USD 3,798,112	
Date of first disbursement:	Jan 2017	Planned date of financial closure:	Dec 2022	
No. of formal project revisions:	3	Date of last approved project revision:	TBC (Currently in process)	
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	26 th November 2021 and the next plan for March 2022	Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last: 26 th November 2021	Next: N/A
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (planned date):	Oct 2019	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	N/A	
Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	March 2022	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	April – Oct 2022	
Coverage - Country(ies):	Madagascar	Coverage - Region(s):	Africa	
Dates of previous project phases:	N/A	Status of future project phases:	N/A	

2. Project Rationale

1. Madagascar suffers from land degradation due to (i) abiotic factors, including erosion, and (ii) anthropogenic factors, such as inappropriate and unsustainable practices—particularly via development, burning, and denuding of slopes, hills, and plateaux (a vast geographic type known as tanety). The threats to Sustainable Land Management (SLM) are in most cases very complex, involving numerous, interwoven factors. The Bongolava region in the mid-west of Madagascar and its surroundings are threatened by widespread land degradation, recurrent bush fires, and soil erosion.

2. Given the serious degradation and environmental problems in the region, a local management approach was planned to (i) provide an appropriate basis for participatory land

management, (ii) facilitate an accurate, comprehensive understanding of dynamic local issues, and (iii) help ensure local ownership of goals, leading to sustainable strategies and effective SLM application. Local institutions were part of the participatory management approach through community rules such as the dina and the valin-tànana; tools for effective and efficient management in rural areas. These norms frame the establishment of a participatory system of sustainable land management in the Bongolava region. According to local stakeholders, the application of the dina is effective and makes up the collective codes of conduct of rural societies or customary rules recognized by the Malagasy government.

3. Project Results Framework

3. The project's objective was *'to reverse land degradation and improve living conditions in the Bongolava Region of Western Madagascar through participatory sustainable management of the grasslands'*. The project design incorporates deep community engagement and participation, being embedded in strengthened local institutions.

4. Despite being approved in 2016, the project documents do not contain a Theory of Change (TOC). This means that the TOC will need to be reconstructed during the evaluation process.

5. It is noted that the formulation of outcomes in results framework does not always meet evaluability requirements: they do not reflect the uptake or application of outputs ('are capacitated and have decided to implement' and 'are committed to').

6. The project was delivered through three components with associated outcomes as follows:

Table 3: Results statements (PIR, 2021)

Component 1: Institutional development and capacity building.	
Outcome 1:	1.1. All the communal structures and stakeholders are capacitated and have decided to implement sustainable land management (SLM) measures
Outputs	<p>1.1.1. Effective participatory SLM committees established in participating communes with conflict-management mechanisms and adequate representation of women and vulnerable groups</p> <p>1.1.2. Participatory diagnostics for an improved understanding of the threats, constraints, and opportunities related to SLM in all 7 participating communes</p> <p>1.1.3. Adaptive SLM implementation plans for each 7 participating commune.</p>
Component 2: Sustainable land management practice implementation	
Outcome 2:	2.1. Land degradation reduced and living conditions improved across the project's intervention areas
Outputs	<p>2.1.1. Agreed urgent measures implemented in each of the participating commune</p> <p>2.1.2. Household farming activities reinforced to support SLM</p> <p>2.1.3. Local land users and land management committees trained in SLM, conflict management, and small sustainable agricultural business development</p> <p>2.1.4. Concrete, appropriate ecofriendly SLM measures for agriculture, pastoralism, and energy production demonstrated and adopted</p> <p>2.1.5. Participatory SLM monitoring and evaluation system covering agricultural, environmental, and socio-economic parameters.</p>
Component 3: Knowledge management.	
Outcome 3:	3.1. Stakeholders are committed to SLM at all levels
Outputs	3.1.1. Project achievements released in the form of video, manuals, guidelines, maps, etc.

	<p>3.1.2. Strategy to expand SLM measures across Bongolava Region.</p> <p>3.1.3. Broad and high-level commitment to expanding and replicating SLM measures.</p>
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4. Executing Arrangements

9. UNEP is the Implementing Agency for this project. The work was managed within the GEF Biodiversity Unit, which is part of the Biodiversity and Land Branch of the Ecosystems Division. The Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD) and National Association for Environmental Actions (ANAE) are named as the Executing Agencies.

5. Project Cost and Financing

Table 4: Project Financing at Design (CEO Endorsement, June 2016)

Item	GEF Financing	Co-Financing	TOTAL
Component 1: Institutional development and capacity building	USD 296,804	USD 700,000	USD 996,804
Component 2: Implementation of sustainable land management practices	USD 972,540	USD 3,995,800	USD 4,968,340
Component 3: Knowledge management	USD 178,082	USD 450,000	USD 628,082
Total Project Costs	USD 1,447,426	USD 5,145,800	USD 6,593,226

6. Implementation Issues

10. The project did not carry out a Mid Term Review.

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

7. Objective of the Evaluation

In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy¹¹ and the UNEP Programme Manual¹², the Terminal Evaluation is undertaken at operational completion of the project to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The Evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, GEF and the main project partners. Therefore, the Evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation, especially where a second phase of the project is being considered. Recommendations relevant to the whole house may also be identified during the evaluation process.

8. Key Evaluation Principles

Evaluation findings and judgements will be based on **sound evidence and analysis**, clearly documented in the Evaluation Report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) as far as possible, and when verification is not possible, the single source will be mentioned (whilst anonymity is still protected). Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out.

The “Why?” Question. As this is a Terminal Evaluation and a follow-up project is likely [or similar interventions are envisaged for the future], particular attention will be given to learning from the experience. Therefore, the “why?” question should be at the front of the consultants’ minds all through the evaluation exercise and is supported by the use of a theory of change approach. This means that the consultant(s) needs to go beyond the assessment of “what” the project performance was and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of “why” the performance was as it was (i.e. what contributed to the achievement of the project’s results). This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project.

Attribution, Contribution and Credible Association: In order to *attribute* any outcomes and impacts to a project intervention, one needs to consider the difference between what has happened with, and what would have happened without, the project (i.e. take account of changes over time and between contexts in order to isolate the effects of an intervention). This requires appropriate baseline data and the identification of a relevant counterfactual, both of which are frequently not available for evaluations. Establishing the *contribution* made by a project in a complex change process relies heavily on prior intentionality (e.g. approved project design documentation, logical framework) and the articulation of causality (e.g. narrative and/or illustration of the Theory of Change). Robust evidence that a project was delivered as designed and that the expected causal pathways developed supports claims of contribution and this is strengthened where an alternative theory of change can be excluded. A *credible association* between the implementation of a project and observed positive effects can be made where a strong causal narrative, although not explicitly articulated, can be inferred by the chronological sequence of events, active involvement of key actors and engagement in critical processes.

Communicating evaluation results. A key aim of the Evaluation is to encourage reflection and learning by UNEP staff and key project stakeholders. The consultant(s) should consider how reflection and learning can be promoted, both through the evaluation process and in the communication of evaluation findings and key lessons. Clear and concise writing is required on all evaluation deliverables. Draft and final versions of the Main Evaluation Report will be shared with key stakeholders by the Evaluation Manager. There may, however, be several intended audiences, each with different interests and needs regarding the report. The consultant(s) will plan with the Evaluation Manager which audiences to target and the easiest and clearest way to communicate the key evaluation findings and lessons to them. This may include some, or all, of the following; a webinar, conference calls with relevant stakeholders, the preparation of an Evaluation Brief or interactive presentation.

9. Key Strategic Questions

¹¹ <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/policies-and-strategies>

¹² <https://wecollaborate.unep.org>

In addition to the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 10 below, the Evaluation will address the **strategic questions** listed below. These are questions of interest to UNEP and to which the project is believed to be able to make a substantive contribution. Also included are five questions that are required when reporting in the GEF Portal and these must be addressed in the TE.

This project evaluation is part of a review of UNEP's portfolio of Sustainable Land Management projects and the strategic questions will be designed at the portfolio level for each of the projects being evaluated under that theme.

- a. To what extent, and in what ways, has this project worked in a complementary/coherent manner with other identified SLM projects reaching operational completion in the same year?**
- i. Do the project teams know about each other and do they share information/learning?
 - ii. Do the participants have any opportunities to share learning?
- b. To what extent, and in what ways, are project teams (UNEP and Executing Agencies) aware of working within a common technical framework?**
- i. What was the level/nature of practitioner-scientist interface?
 - ii. Were UNEP tools and methodologies used or developed that could be used in other SLM work (within or beyond UNEP)?
 - iii. Was support given to champions/agents of change to support sustainability?
 - iv. Were longer-term impacts of SLM for UNEP strategy tracked and/or measured?
 - v. How much of the success of the project depended on production and consumption cycles and the economic system and how much influence did the project have on this?
 - vi. Is UNEP taking advantage of the project's outputs and learning and communicating it within, and outside, of its walls?
- c. In what ways does the design of this project contribute to a common TOC on SLM?** (a proposed portfolio TOC will be provided during the inception phase of this project evaluation) Further details on the possible elements/nature of the contribution will be provided (e.g. innovation, transformation effect, scale, potential for substantive global and/or institutional contribution on key issues such as land degradation neutrality etc).
- d. Has this project contributed to any efficiencies/economies of scale stemming from UNEP managing several projects on a similar topic?** (E.g. have project designs been more efficient or of higher quality due to expertise within the UNEP GEF Focal Unit on Biodiversity and Land Degradation? Have partnerships been able to develop at a more mature level? Have common measures of results been developed? Etc)

Address the questions required for the GEF Portal in the appropriate parts of the report and provide a summary of the findings in the Conclusions section of the report:

- (a) Under **Monitoring and Reporting/Monitoring of Project Implementation:**

What was the performance at the project's completion against Core Indicator Targets? (For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided¹³).

(b) Under **Factors Affecting Performance/Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation**:

What were the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR? *(This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval)*

(c) Under **Factors Affecting Performance/Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality**:

What were the completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas? *(This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent)*

(d) Under **Factors Affecting Performance/Environmental and Social Safeguards**:

What was the progress made in the implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval? The risk classifications reported in the latest PIR report should be verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned taken to address identified risks assessed. *(Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant during this review should be shared with the Task Manager for uploading in the GEF Portal)*

(e) Under **Factors Affecting Performance/Communication and Public Awareness**:

What were the challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions? *(This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval)*

10. Evaluation Criteria

All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Sections A-I below, outline the scope of the criteria. A weightings table in excel format will be provided by the Evaluation Manager to support the determination of an overall project rating. The set of evaluation criteria are grouped in nine categories: (A) Strategic Relevance; (B) Quality of Project Design; (C) Nature of External Context; (D) Effectiveness, which comprises assessments of the availability of outputs, achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact; (E) Financial Management; (F) Efficiency; (G) Monitoring and Reporting; (H) Sustainability; and (I) Factors Affecting Project Performance. The Evaluation Consultant(s) can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate.

A. Strategic Relevance

The Evaluation will assess the extent to which the activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the donors, implementing regions/countries and the target beneficiaries. The Evaluation will include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UNEP's mandate and its alignment with UNEP's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. Under strategic relevance an assessment of the complementarity of the project with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups will be made. This criterion comprises four elements:

¹³ This is not applicable for Enabling Activities

i. Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy¹⁴ (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities

The Evaluation should assess the project's alignment with the MTS and POW under which the project was approved and include, in its narrative, reflections on the scale and scope of any contributions made to the planned results reflected in the relevant MTS and POW. UNEP strategic priorities include the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building¹⁵ (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The BSP relates to the capacity of governments to: comply with international agreements and obligations at the national level; promote, facilitate and finance environmentally sound technologies and to strengthen frameworks for developing coherent international environmental policies. S-SC is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries.

ii. Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partner Strategic Priorities

Donor, including GEF, strategic priorities will vary across interventions. GEF priorities are specified in published programming priorities and focal area strategies. The Evaluation will assess the extent to which the project is suited to, or responding to, donor priorities. In some cases, alignment with donor priorities may be a fundamental part of project design and grant approval processes while in others, for example, instances of 'softly-earmarked' funding, such alignment may be more of an assumption that should be assessed.

iii. Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities

The Evaluation will assess the alignment of the project with global priorities such as the SDGs and Agenda 2030. The extent to which the intervention is suited, or responding to, the stated environmental concerns and needs of the countries, sub-regions or regions where it is being implemented will be considered. Examples may include: UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF), national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies or Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) plans or regional agreements etc. Within this section consideration will be given to whether the needs of all beneficiary groups are being met and reflects the current policy priority to leave no one behind.

iv. Complementarity with Relevant Existing Interventions/Coherence¹⁶

An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization¹⁷, took account of ongoing and planned initiatives (under the same sub-programme, other UNEP sub-programmes, or being implemented by other agencies within the same country, sector or institution) that address similar needs of the same target groups. The Evaluation will consider if the project team, in collaboration with Regional Offices and Sub-Programme Coordinators, made efforts to ensure their own intervention was complementary to other interventions, optimized any synergies and avoided duplication of effort. Examples may include UNDAFs or One UN programming. Linkages with other interventions should be described and instances where UNEP's comparative advantage has been particularly well applied should be highlighted.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality
- Country ownership and driven-ness

B. Quality of Project Design

¹⁴ UNEP's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UNEP's programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UNEP's thematic priorities, known as Sub-programmes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes, known as Expected Accomplishments (EAs), of the Sub-programmes. <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/our-evaluation-approach/un-environment-documents>

¹⁵ <http://www.unep.fr/ozonaction/about/bsp.htm>

¹⁶ This sub-category is consistent with the new criterion of 'Coherence' introduced by the OECD-DAC in 2019.

¹⁷ A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

The quality of project design is assessed using an agreed template during the evaluation inception phase, ratings are attributed to identified criteria and an overall Project Design Quality rating is established. The complete Project Design Quality template should be annexed in the Evaluation Inception Report. Later, the overall Project Design Quality rating¹⁸ should be entered in the final evaluation ratings table (as item B) in the Main Evaluation Report and a summary of the project's strengths and weaknesses at design stage should be included within the body of the report.

Factors affecting this criterion may include (at the design stage):

- Stakeholders participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality

C. Nature of External Context

At evaluation inception stage a rating is established for the project's external operating context (considering the prevalence of conflict, natural disasters and political upheaval¹⁹). This rating is entered in the final evaluation ratings table as item C. Where a project has been rated as facing either an Unfavourable or Highly Unfavourable external operating context, and/or a negative external event has occurred during project implementation, the ratings for Effectiveness, Efficiency and/or Sustainability may be increased at the discretion of the Evaluation Consultant and Evaluation Manager together. A justification for such an increase must be given.

D. Effectiveness

i. Availability of Outputs²⁰

The Evaluation will assess the project's success in producing the programmed outputs and making them available to the intended beneficiaries as well as its success in achieving milestones as per the project design document (ProDoc). Any *formal* modifications/revisions made during project implementation will be considered part of the project design. Where the project outputs are inappropriately or inaccurately stated in the ProDoc, reformulations may be necessary in the reconstruction of the Theory of Change (TOC). In such cases a table should be provided showing the original and the reformulation of the outputs for transparency. The availability of outputs will be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality, and the assessment will consider their ownership by, and usefulness to, intended beneficiaries and the timeliness of their provision. It is noted that emphasis is placed on the performance of those outputs that are most important to achieve outcomes. The Evaluation will briefly explain the reasons behind the success or shortcomings of the project in delivering its programmed outputs and meeting expected quality standards.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness
- Quality of project management and supervision²¹

¹⁸ In some instances, based on data collected during the evaluation process, the assessment of the project's design quality may change from Inception Report to Main Evaluation Report.

¹⁹ Note that 'political upheaval' does not include regular national election cycles, but unanticipated unrest or prolonged disruption. The potential delays or changes in political support that are often associated with the regular national election cycle should be part of the project's design and addressed through adaptive management by the project team. From March 2020 this should include the effects of COVID-19.

²⁰ Outputs are the availability (for intended beneficiaries/users) of new products and services and/or gains in knowledge, abilities and awareness of individuals or within institutions (UNEP, 2019)

²¹ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP.

ii. Achievement of Project Outcomes²²

The achievement of project outcomes is assessed as performance against the project outcomes as defined in the reconstructed²³ Theory of Change. These are outcomes that are intended to be achieved by the end of the project timeframe and within the project's resource envelope. Emphasis is placed on the achievement of project outcomes that are most important for attaining intermediate states. As with outputs, a table can be used where substantive amendments to the formulation of project outcomes is necessary to allow for an assessment of performance. The Evaluation should report evidence of attribution between UNEP's intervention and the project outcomes. In cases of normative work or where several actors are collaborating to achieve common outcomes, evidence of the nature and magnitude of UNEP's 'substantive contribution' should be included and/or 'credible association' established between project efforts and the project outcomes realised.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of project management and supervision
- Stakeholders' participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality
- Communication and public awareness

iii. Likelihood of Impact

Based on the articulation of long-lasting effects in the reconstructed TOC (*i.e. from project outcomes, via intermediate states, to impact*), the Evaluation will assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts becoming a reality. Project objectives or goals should be incorporated in the TOC, possibly as intermediate states or long-lasting impacts. The Evaluation Office's approach to the use of TOC in project evaluations is outlined in a guidance note available and is supported by an excel-based flow chart, 'Likelihood of Impact Assessment Decision Tree'. Essentially the approach follows a 'likelihood tree' from project outcomes to impacts, taking account of whether the assumptions and drivers identified in the reconstructed TOC held. Any unintended positive effects should also be identified and their causal linkages to the intended impact described.

The Evaluation will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute to, unintended negative effects (e.g. will vulnerable groups such as those living with disabilities and/or women and children, be disproportionately affected by the project?). Some of these potential negative effects may have been identified in the project design as risks or as part of the analysis of Environmental and Social Safeguards.

1. The Evaluation will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role²⁴ or has promoted scaling up and/or replication as part of its Theory of Change (either explicitly as in a project with a

²² Outcomes are the use (*i.e. uptake, adoption, application*) of an output by intended beneficiaries, observed as changes in institutions or behavior, attitude or condition (UNEP, 2019)

²³ All submitted UNEP project documents are required to present a Theory of Change with all submitted project designs. The level of 'reconstruction' needed during an evaluation will depend on the quality of this initial TOC, the time that has lapsed between project design and implementation (which may be related to securing and disbursing funds) and the level of any formal changes made to the project design.

²⁴ The terms catalytic effect, scaling up and replication are inter-related and generally refer to extending the coverage or magnitude of the effects of a project. Catalytic effect is associated with triggering additional actions that are not directly funded by the project – these effects can be both concrete or less tangible, can be intentionally caused by the project or implied in the design and reflected in the TOC drivers, or can be unintentional and can rely on funding from another source or have no financial requirements. Scaling up and Replication require more intentionality for projects, or individual components and approaches, to be reproduced in other similar contexts. Scaling up suggests a substantive increase in the number of new beneficiaries reached/involved and may require adapted delivery mechanisms while Replication suggests the repetition of an approach or component at a similar scale but among different beneficiaries. Even with highly technical work, where scaling up or replication involves working with a new community, some consideration of the new context should take place and adjustments made as necessary.

demonstration component or implicitly as expressed in the drivers required to move to outcome levels) and as factors that are likely to contribute to greater or long-lasting impact.

Ultimately UNEP and all its partners aim to bring about benefits to the environment and human well-being. Few projects are likely to have impact statements that reflect such long-lasting or broad-based changes. However, the Evaluation will assess the likelihood of the project to make a substantive contribution to the long-lasting changes represented by the Sustainable Development Goals and/or the intermediate-level results reflected in UNEP's Expected Accomplishments and the strategic priorities of funding partner(s).

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of Project Management and Supervision (including adaptive management)
- Stakeholders participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality
- Country ownership and driven-ness
- Communication and public awareness

E. Financial Management

Financial management will be assessed under three themes: *adherence* to UNEP's financial policies and procedures, *completeness* of financial information and *communication* between financial and project management staff. The Evaluation will establish the actual spend across the life of the project of funds secured from all donors. This expenditure will be reported, where possible, at output/component level and will be compared with the approved budget. The Evaluation will verify the application of proper financial management standards and adherence to UNEP's financial management policies. Any financial management issues that have affected the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance will be highlighted. The Evaluation will record where standard financial documentation is missing, inaccurate, incomplete or unavailable in a timely manner. The Evaluation will assess the level of communication between the Project/Task Manager and the Fund Management Officer as it relates to the effective delivery of the planned project and the needs of a responsive, adaptive management approach.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness
- Quality of project management and supervision

F. Efficiency

Under the efficiency criterion the Evaluation will assess the extent to which the project delivered maximum results from the given resources. This will include an assessment of the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution.

Focusing on the translation of inputs into outputs, cost-effectiveness is the extent to which an intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its results at the lowest possible cost. Timeliness refers to whether planned activities were delivered according to expected timeframes as well as whether events were sequenced efficiently. The Evaluation will also assess to what extent any project extension could have been avoided through stronger project management and identify any negative impacts caused by project delays or extensions. The Evaluation will describe any cost or time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe and consider whether the project was implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternative interventions or approaches.

The Evaluation will give special attention to efforts made by the project teams during project implementation to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data

sources, synergies and complementarities²⁵ with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency.

The factors underpinning the need for any project extensions will also be explored and discussed. As management or project support costs cannot be increased in cases of 'no cost extensions', such extensions represent an increase in unstated costs to implementing parties.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness (e.g. timeliness)
- Quality of project management and supervision
- Stakeholders participation and cooperation

G. Monitoring and Reporting

The Evaluation will assess monitoring and reporting across three sub-categories: monitoring design and budgeting, monitoring implementation and project reporting.

i. Monitoring Design and Budgeting

Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART²⁶ results towards the provision of the project's outputs and achievement of project outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender, marginalisation or vulnerability, including those living with disabilities.. In particular, the Evaluation will assess the relevance and appropriateness of the project indicators as well as the methods used for tracking progress against them as part of conscious results-based management. The Evaluation will assess the quality of the design of the monitoring plan as well as the funds allocated for its implementation. The adequacy of resources for Mid-Term and Terminal Evaluation/Review should be discussed if applicable.

ii. Monitoring of Project Implementation

The Evaluation will assess whether the monitoring system was operational and facilitated the timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period. This assessment will include consideration of whether the project gathered relevant and good quality baseline data that is accurately and appropriately documented. This should include monitoring the representation and participation of disaggregated groups (including gendered, marginalised or vulnerable groups, such as those living with disabilities) in project activities. It will also consider the quality of the information generated by the monitoring system during project implementation and how it was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensure sustainability. The Evaluation should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring were used to support this activity.

The performance at project completion against Core Indicator Targets should be reviewed. For projects approved under GEF-6, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided.

iii. Project Reporting

UNEP has a centralised project information management system (Anubis) in which project managers upload six-monthly progress reports against agreed project milestones. This information will be provided to the Evaluation Consultant(s) by the Evaluation Manager. Some projects have additional requirements to report regularly to funding partners, which will be supplied by the project team (e.g. the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool for GEF-funded projects). The Evaluation will assess the extent to which both UNEP and donor reporting commitments have been fulfilled. Consideration will be given as to whether reporting has been carried out with respect to the effects of the initiative on disaggregated groups.

²⁵ Complementarity with other interventions during project design, inception or mobilization is considered under Strategic Relevance above.

²⁶ SMART refers to results that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented. Indicators help to make results measurable.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Quality of project management and supervision
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality (e.g. disaggregated indicators and data)

H. Sustainability

Sustainability²⁷ is understood as the probability of the benefits derived from the achievement of project outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the intervention. The Evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the endurance of achieved project outcomes (i.e. 'assumptions' and 'drivers'). Some factors of sustainability may be embedded in the project design and implementation approaches while others may be contextual circumstances or conditions that evolve over the life of the intervention. Where applicable an assessment of bio-physical factors that may affect the sustainability of project outcomes may also be included.

i. Socio-political Sustainability

The Evaluation will assess the extent to which social or political factors support the continuation and further development of the benefits derived from project outcomes. It will consider the level of ownership, interest and commitment among government and other stakeholders to take the project achievements forwards. In particular the Evaluation will consider whether individual capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

ii. Financial Sustainability

Some project outcomes, once achieved, do not require further financial inputs, e.g. the adoption of a revised policy. However, in order to derive a benefit from this outcome further management action may still be needed e.g. to undertake actions to enforce the policy. Other project outcomes may be dependent on a continuous flow of action that needs to be resourced for them to be maintained, e.g. continuation of a new natural resource management approach. The Evaluation will assess the extent to which project outcomes are dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained. Secured future funding is only relevant to financial sustainability where a project's outcomes have been extended into a future project phase. Even where future funding has been secured, the question still remains as to whether the project outcomes are financially sustainable.

iii. Institutional Sustainability

The Evaluation will assess the extent to which the sustainability of project outcomes (especially those relating to policies and laws) is dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance. It will consider whether institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. are robust enough to continue delivering the benefits associated with the project outcomes after project closure. In particular, the Evaluation will consider whether institutional capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Stakeholders participation and cooperation
- Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality (e.g. where interventions are not inclusive, their sustainability may be undermined)
- Communication and public awareness
- Country ownership and driven-ness

I. Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

²⁷ As used here, 'sustainability' means the long-lasting maintenance of outcomes and consequent impacts, whether environmental or not. This is distinct from the concept of sustainability in the terms 'environmental sustainability' or 'sustainable development', which imply 'not living beyond our means' or 'not diminishing global environmental benefits' (GEF STAP Paper, 2019, Achieving More Enduring Outcomes from GEF Investment)

(These factors are rated in the ratings table but are discussed within the Main Evaluation Report as cross-cutting themes as appropriate under the other evaluation criteria, above. If these issues have not been addressed under the evaluation criteria above, then independent summaries of their status within the evaluated project should be given.)

i. Preparation and Readiness

This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project (i.e. the time between project approval and first disbursement). The Evaluation will assess whether appropriate measures were taken to either address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. In particular the Evaluation will consider the nature and quality of engagement with stakeholder groups by the project team, the confirmation of partner capacity and development of partnership agreements as well as initial staffing and financing arrangements. (Project preparation is included in the template for the assessment of Project Design Quality).

ii. Quality of Project Management and Supervision

In some cases 'project management and supervision' may refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects²⁸, it may refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping and supervision provided by UNEP. The performance of parties playing different roles should be discussed and a rating provided for both types of supervision (UNEP/Partner/Executing Agency) and the overall rating for this sub-category established as a simple average of the two.

The Evaluation will assess the effectiveness of project management with regard to: providing leadership towards achieving the planned outcomes; managing team structures; maintaining productive partner relationships (including Steering Groups etc.); maintaining project relevance within changing external and strategic contexts; communication and collaboration with UNEP colleagues; risk management; use of problem-solving; project adaptation and overall project execution. Evidence of adaptive management should be highlighted.

iii. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

Here the term 'stakeholder' should be considered in a broad sense, encompassing all project partners, duty bearers with a role in delivering project outputs and target users of project outputs and any other collaborating agents external to UNEP and the Executing Agency. The assessment will consider the quality and effectiveness of all forms of communication and consultation with stakeholders throughout the project life and the support given to maximise collaboration and coherence between various stakeholders, including sharing plans, pooling resources and exchanging learning and expertise. The inclusion and participation of all differentiated groups, including gender groups should be considered.

The progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program occurring since the MTR should be reviewed. (This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval).

iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

The Evaluation will ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on the human rights-based approach (HRBA) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Within this human rights context the Evaluation will assess to what extent the intervention adheres to UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment²⁹.

²⁸ For GEF funded projects, a rating will be provided for the Project Management and Supervision of each of the Implementing and Executing Agencies. The two ratings will be aggregated to provide an overall rating for Quality of Project Management and Supervision

²⁹ The Evaluation Office notes that Gender Equality was first introduced in the UNEP Project Review Committee Checklist in 2010 and, therefore, provides a criterion rating on gender for projects approved from 2010 onwards. Equally, it is noted that policy

In particular the Evaluation will consider to what extent project-implementation and monitoring have taken into consideration: (i) possible inequalities (especially those related to gender) in access to, and the control over, natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of disadvantaged groups (especially women, youth and children and those living with disabilities) to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of disadvantaged groups (especially those related to gender) in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation.

The completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas should be reviewed. (This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent).

v. Environmental and Social Safeguards

UNEP projects address environmental and social safeguards primarily through the process of environmental and social screening at the project approval stage, risk assessment and management (avoidance, minimization, mitigation or, in exceptional cases, offsetting) of potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with project and programme activities. The Evaluation will confirm whether UNEP requirements³⁰ were met to: *review* risk ratings on a regular basis; *monitor* project implementation for possible safeguard issues; *respond* (where relevant) to safeguard issues through risk avoidance, minimization, mitigation or offsetting and *report* on the implementation of safeguard management measures taken. UNEP requirements for proposed projects to be screened for any safeguarding issues; for sound environmental and social risk assessments to be conducted and initial risk ratings to be assigned are evaluated above under Quality of Project Design).

The Evaluation will also consider the extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint.

Implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval should be reviewed, the risk classifications verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned taken to address identified risks assessed. Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant should be shared with the Task Manager.

vi. Country Ownership and Driven-ness

The Evaluation will assess the quality and degree of engagement of government / public sector agencies in the project. While there is some overlap between Country Ownership and Institutional Sustainability, this criterion focuses primarily on the forward momentum of the intended projects results, i.e. either a) moving forwards from outputs to project outcomes or b) moving forward from project outcomes towards intermediate states. The Evaluation will consider the engagement not only of those directly involved in project execution and those participating in technical or leadership groups, but also those official representatives whose cooperation is needed for change to be embedded in their respective institutions and offices (e.g. representatives from multiple sectors or relevant ministries beyond Ministry of Environment). This factor is concerned with the level of ownership generated by the project over outputs and outcomes and that is necessary for long-lasting impact to be realised. Ownership should extend to all gendered and marginalised groups.

vii. Communication and Public Awareness

The Evaluation will assess the effectiveness of: a) communication of learning and experience sharing between project partners and interested groups arising from the project during its life and b) public awareness activities that were undertaken during the implementation of the project to influence attitudes or shape behaviour among wider communities and civil society at large. The Evaluation should

documents, operational guidelines and other capacity building efforts have only been developed since then and have evolved over time. <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7655/->

Gender_equality_and_the_environment_Policy_and_strategy-

2015Gender_equality_and_the_environment_policy_and_strategy.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

³⁰ For the review of project concepts and proposals, the Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) was introduced in 2019 and replaced the Environmental, Social and Economic Review note (ESERN), which had been in place since 2016. In GEF projects safeguards have been considered in project designs since 2011.

consider whether existing communication channels and networks were used effectively, including meeting the differentiated needs of gendered or marginalised groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project the Evaluation will comment on the sustainability of the communication channel under either socio-political, institutional or financial sustainability, as appropriate.

The project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions should be reviewed. This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval.

Section 3. EVALUATION APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

The Terminal Evaluation will be an in-depth evaluation using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used as appropriate to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is highly recommended that the consultant(s) maintains close communication with the project team and promotes information exchange throughout the Evaluation implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the evaluation findings. Where applicable, the consultant(s) will provide a geo-referenced map that demarcates the area covered by the project and, where possible, provide geo-reference photographs of key intervention sites (e.g. sites of habitat rehabilitation and protection, pollution treatment infrastructure, etc.)

The findings of the Evaluation will be based on the following:

- (a) **A desk review** of:
 - Relevant background documentation;
 - Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework and its budget;
 - Project reports such as six-monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence and including the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool etc.;
 - Project deliverables: [TM to list notable items];
 - Mid-Term Review or Mid-Term Evaluation of the project (*where appropriate*);
 - Evaluations/reviews of similar projects (*where appropriate*).
- (b) **Interviews** (individual or in group) with: (TM to complete)
 - UNEP Task Manager (TM); (CHECK FOR PREVIOUS TMS)
 - Project management team, including the Project Manager within the Executing Agency, where appropriate;
 - UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO);
 - Portfolio Manager and Sub-Programme Coordinator, where appropriate;
 - Project partners, including [list];
 - Relevant resource persons;
 - Representatives from civil society and specialist groups (such as women's, farmers and trade associations etc).
- (c) **Surveys** [provide details, where appropriate]
- (d) **Field visits** [provide details, where appropriate]
- (e) Other data collection tools [provide details, where appropriate]

11. Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

The Evaluation Team will prepare:

- **Inception Report:** (see Annex 1 for a list of all templates, tables and guidance notes) containing an assessment of project design quality, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, project stakeholder analysis, evaluation framework and a tentative evaluation schedule.
- **Preliminary Findings Note:** typically in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, the sharing of preliminary findings is intended to support the participation of the project team, act as a means to ensure all information sources have been accessed and provide an opportunity to verify emerging findings. In the case of highly strategic project/portfolio evaluations or evaluations with an Evaluation Reference Group, the preliminary findings may be presented as a word document for review and comment.
- **Draft and Final Evaluation Report:** containing an executive summary that can act as a stand-alone document; detailed analysis of the evaluation findings organised by evaluation criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations and an annotated ratings table.

An **SLM Portfolio Brief** will be prepared to bring together key findings across a number of UNEP projects addressing SLM and reaching operational completion over a period of 3-4 years (2019 – 2022). This will be prepared for wider dissemination throughout UNEP. The final details of this Brief, and the contribution to be made by this project evaluation process, will be agreed with the Evaluation Manager no later than during the finalization of the Inception Report.

Review of the Draft Evaluation Report. The Evaluation Consultant(s) will submit a draft report to the Evaluation Manager and revise the draft in response to their comments and suggestions. Once a draft of adequate quality has been peer-reviewed and accepted, the Evaluation Manager will share the cleared draft report with the Task Manager and Project Manager, who will alert the Evaluation Manager in case the report contains any blatant factual errors. The Evaluation Manager will then forward the revised draft report (corrected by the Evaluation Consultant(s) where necessary) to other project stakeholders, for their review and comments. Stakeholders may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions as well as providing feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons. Any comments or responses to draft reports will be sent to the Evaluation Manager for consolidation. The Evaluation Manager will provide all comments to the Evaluation Consultant(s) for consideration in preparing the final report, along with guidance on areas of contradiction or issues requiring an institutional response.

Based on a careful review of the evidence collated by the Evaluation Consultants and the internal consistency of the report, the Evaluation Manager will provide an assessment of the ratings in the final evaluation report. Where there are differences of opinion between the evaluator and the Evaluation Manager on project ratings, both viewpoints will be clearly presented in the final report. The Evaluation Office ratings will be considered the final ratings for the project.

The Evaluation Manager will prepare a **quality assessment** of the first draft of the Main Evaluation Report, which acts as a tool for providing structured feedback to the Evaluation Consultant(s). The quality of the final report will be assessed and rated against the criteria specified in template listed in Annex 1 and this assessment will be appended to the Final Evaluation Report.

At the end of the evaluation process, the Evaluation Office will prepare a **Recommendations Implementation Plan** in the format of a table, to be completed and updated at regular intervals by the Task Manager. The Evaluation Office will track compliance against this plan on a six-monthly basis for a maximum of 12 months.

12. The Evaluation Consultant

For this Evaluation, the Evaluation Team will consist of an Evaluation Consultant who will work under the overall responsibility of the Evaluation Office represented by an Evaluation Manager, **Janet Wildish**, in consultation with the UNEP Task Manager, **Johan Robinson**, Fund Management Officer, **George Saddimbah**, and the Sub-programme Coordinator of the Health and Productive Ecosystems Sub-

programmes, **Marieta Sakalian**. The consultant will liaise with the Evaluation Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the Evaluation, including travel. It is, however, each consultant's individual responsibility (where applicable) to arrange for their visas and immunizations as well as to plan meetings with stakeholders, organize online surveys, obtain documentary evidence and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The UNEP Task Manager and project team will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the Evaluation as efficiently and independently as possible.

The Evaluation Consultant will be hired over a period of 6 months (01 April 2022 to 31 Oct 2022) and should have the following: a university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other relevant political or social sciences area is required and an advanced degree in the same areas is desirable; a minimum of 8 years of technical / evaluation experience is required, preferably including evaluating large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; and a good/broad understanding of Sustainable Land Management is desired. English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For this consultancy, fluency in oral and written English and **French** is a requirement. Working knowledge of the UN system and specifically the work of UNEP is an added advantage. The work will be home-based with possible field visits.

The Evaluation Consultant will be responsible, in close consultation with the Evaluation Office of UNEP for overall management of the Evaluation and timely provision of its outputs, described above in Section 11 Evaluation Deliverables, above. The consultant will ensure together that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered.

FOR SINGLE CONSULTANTS

In close consultation with the Evaluation Manager, the Evaluation Consultant will be responsible for the overall management of the Evaluation and timely provision of its outputs, data collection and analysis and report-writing. More specifically:

Inception phase of the Evaluation, including:

- preliminary desk review and introductory interviews with project staff;
- draft the reconstructed Theory of Change of the project;
- prepare the evaluation framework;
- develop the desk review and interview protocols;
- draft the survey protocols (if relevant);
- develop and present criteria for country and/or site selection for the evaluation mission;
- plan the evaluation schedule;
- prepare the Inception Report, incorporating comments until approved by the Evaluation Manager

Data collection and analysis phase of the Evaluation, including:

- conduct further desk review and in-depth interviews with project implementing and executing agencies, project partners and project stakeholders;
- (where appropriate and agreed) conduct an evaluation mission(s) to selected countries, visit the project locations, interview project partners and stakeholders, including a good representation of local communities. Ensure independence of the Evaluation and confidentiality of evaluation interviews.
- regularly report back to the Evaluation Manager on progress and inform of any possible problems or issues encountered and;
- keep the Project/Task Manager informed of the evaluation progress.

Reporting phase, including:

- draft the Main Evaluation Report, ensuring that the evaluation report is complete, coherent and consistent with the Evaluation Manager guidelines both in substance and style;

- liaise with the Evaluation Manager on comments received and finalize the Main Evaluation Report, ensuring that comments are taken into account until approved by the Evaluation Manager
- prepare a Response to Comments annex for the main report, listing those comments not accepted by the Evaluation Consultant and indicating the reason for the rejection; and
- (where agreed with the Evaluation Manager) prepare an Evaluation Brief (2-page summary of the evaluand and the key evaluation findings and lessons)

Managing relations, including:

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

13. Schedule of the Evaluation

The table below presents the tentative schedule for the Evaluation.

Table 3. Tentative schedule for the Evaluation

Milestone	Tentative Dates
Evaluation Initiation Meeting	
Inception Report	
Evaluation Mission (where appropriate and feasible)	
E-based interviews, surveys etc.	
PowerPoint/presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations	
Draft report to Evaluation Manager (and Peer Reviewer)	
Draft Report shared with UNEP Project Manager and team	
Draft Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	
Final Report	
Final Report shared with all respondents	

14. Contractual Arrangements

Evaluation Consultants will be selected and recruited by the Evaluation Office of UNEP under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) on a “fees only” basis (see below). By signing the service contract with UNEP /UNON, the consultant(s) certify that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of the contract) with the project’s executing or implementing units. All consultants are required to sign the Code of Conduct Agreement Form.

Fees will be paid on an instalment basis, paid on acceptance by the Evaluation Manager of expected key deliverables. The schedule of payment is as follows:

Schedule of Payment for the Evaluation Consultant:

Deliverable	Percentage Payment
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Approved Inception Report (as per annex document #9)	30%
Approved Draft Main Evaluation Report (as per annex document #10)	30%
Approved Final Main Evaluation Report	40%

Fees only contracts: Where applicable, air tickets will be purchased by UNEP and 75% of the Daily Subsistence Allowance for each authorised travel mission will be paid up front. Local in-country travel will only be reimbursed where agreed in advance with the Evaluation Manager and on the production of acceptable receipts. Terminal expenses and residual DSA entitlements (25%) will be paid after mission completion.

The consultants may be provided with access to UNEP's information management systems (e.g PIMS, Anubis, Sharepoint etc) and if such access is granted, the consultants agree not to disclose information from that system to third parties beyond information required for, and included in, the evaluation report.

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

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

ANNEX VI. GEF PORTAL INPUTS

Address the questions required for the GEF Portal in the appropriate parts of the report and provide a summary of the findings in the Conclusions section of the report:

(a) Under Monitoring and Reporting/Monitoring of Project Implementation:

The performance at the project's completion against the Objective 1 *"Agriculture and Rangeland Systems: Maintain or improve flow of agro-ecosystem services sustaining the livelihoods of local communities"* of the Land Degradation focal area is satisfactory. The project improves the flow of different agroecosystem services in the overall Bongolava region as shown by the lower occurrence of fire. More specifically, the project improved the land condition for 20,334 ha now managed under SLM. Project also improved the follow up of agro-ecosystem services in various ways for approximately 10,000 households. Firstly, it regulates the agro-ecosystem services: it provides freshwater supply, it improves local micro-climate, it stops soil degradation (7 *lavakas* stabilized), and it supports communal soil rehabilitation (reforestation 221,783 trees) and individual soil rehabilitation on private land (for 2,435 households with a total of 52,415 plants including oranges, mangos, papaya, avocado). Secondly, it enhanced agro-ecosystem services capacity to deliver goods: wood from planted trees; 306,484 fruits trees on the household for fruit consumption; rice from irrigation system (+50% productivity); small breeding (1,601 pigs for 497 households, 23,702 chicken for 1,356 households); 1,403 tons of compost for 1,267 households; 786 households with improved stoves. The project achieved to re-link the relationship between rehabilitating agro-ecosystem services and improving local livelihood. The bottom-up monitoring of these two components also allowed adaptive actions and the ownership of local communities in the process.

(b) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation:

There was no MTR. The section below describes the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders from the beginning. As this was a SLM project rooted in local reality to improve flow of agro-ecosystem services, a key issue was to nurture a strong cooperation among the various local stakeholders so that they work in a conducive way: to improve the ecosystem services, to protect the ecosystem services, and to sustainably benefit from these ecosystem services.

The project achieved to both strengthen the local governance (local institutional and political capacity) over the management of the agroecosystem locally and improve these agroecological systems. This was based on a close and adaptive partnership with the local communities, ANAE and the government at district/regional level (DIREDD, DIRAE). This was also achieved by allowing a lengthy process creating trust among partners over six years, which is beyond the initial 4-year time frame. This situation illustrated that one key challenge in this project was to both raise institutionally capacity and (social capital) and agro-ecosystem services (natural capital) in the extremely short time frame of a GEF project.

The other structural challenge that the projects faced was that by strongly focusing on local adaptive delivery with local cooperation, the project had less emphasis on national cooperation. It replaced it with bilateral ad hoc cooperation. This had not a direct impact on project SLM performance in the short term. But, in the longer term it could have, for up-scaling the results at national (or even) international level.

(c) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality:

Focusing on the marginalized region of one of the poorest countries in the world with its adaptive bottom up-approach, the project design supports all peoples including the most marginalized one. As such, establishment of local SLM committees, choice of the activities, and decision to participate were always based on participative, transparent and inclusive principles.

However, this approach is not totally gender sensitive as it didn't address some structural power issues within the households and communities. In light of the gender assessment carried out in 2019, the project took some gender-responsive measures, in particular to boost women ownership to the process. The project modified the workshops hours to the afternoon to allow more women to participate. It also proposed activities more specifically to women (ex. small breeding, composting, improved stove). Finally, it embraced a more inclusive approach: the "LIVE approach" center around household well-being. As such, evidence suggests often a complementarity on the role of women and men at household level, rather than competition for the same.

As a consequence, a key gender challenge remained the support of the single parents, especially mothers in charge of below 18-old children.

(d) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Environmental and Social Safeguards:

At CEO approval, there was no safeguards plan. Combined the ProDoc, the logical framework, the PIF and the table 8 "*Additional risks clarified during the project's preparation*" provided together appropriately the risk: land tenure, local poverty, climate change, security, and technology, political change, internal problems in local committees, governance, large shocks (economic, social, environmental), corruption, low interest from communities, and procurement issue.

In practice, this bottom-up project approaches that both strengthened local institutional framework and enhanced ecological services mitigated these risks. Adaptive activities tailor made to beneficiaries allowed them to adapt and include the marginalized people.

The main lessons of the project are that the beneficiaries know very well their conditions, seek stability, and act to mitigate social or environmental risk. Empowering communities to decide on activities and strengthening local institutions (local SLM committees) are fundamental to improve socio-environmental performance and mitigate risks.

(e) Under Factors Affecting Performance/Communication and Public Awareness:

The "knowledge management" is the third component, and as such one of the three pillars of the project. From the start, this knowledge management has been a tricky issue in the project: these activities start late in the implementation plan and seem underfunded (USD 178,028 from GEF).

In addition, during the implementation, the project emphasized on the social and environmental adaptive activities with communities. This is a socially tailor-made approach

to the SLM issue. As such, the project tailor made awareness raising activities at communal and regional level.

However, with this late start, lack of funds, and local/regional emphasis, the project has overlooked the communication as an organized planned strategy, with dedicated staff and specific budget at a broader scale, especially nationally. As such, there was a limited amount of communication to share broadly the benefit from projects results on web, TV, radio and magazine. Projects made valuable efforts to communicate towards the end with regional and national workshops for sharing knowledge in December 2022. In conclusion, the project missed some opportunities to be known in the public domain nationally, even internationally. It didn't really affect the project itself to deliver. But, it more impacts UNEP and GEF to communicate and build partnerships over SLM in the long term.

ANNEX VII - SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO REVIEW BRIEF - CONTRIBUTING QUESTIONS

The following questions form part of a “portfolio review” of five separate GEF/UNEP SLM projects³¹ that are undergoing Terminal Evaluations in the same year (2022). The review builds on a previous desktop SLM portfolio review conducted in 2021,³² and aims to highlight commonalities, priorities and comparative advantages for UNEP under the SLM/LD thematic area, particularly in developing and implementing better proposals into the GEF-8 programme funding stream.

The questions will inform the portfolio review and will be used in addition to reviewing the Terminal Evaluation reports of the five projects. Individual evaluators are requested to answer the questions below in a questionnaire format, and additionally participate in an interview/discussion with the reviewer³³ (Justine Braby, justine.braby@gmail.com).

1. Level of continuity, integrative learning and growth of SLM projects at design phase.

a. Why did UNEP choose this project?

UNEP didn't “choose” this project. The project was designed by ANAE with support from MEDD. MEDD proposed this project as a GEF priority for Madagascar to UNEP as an implementing agency. MEDD proposed this project to UNEP and no other GEF implementing agency because of constructive bilateral discussions between the two institutions. There was the understanding that UNEP came as facilitating an endogenous process so that ANAE/MEDD could reach UNEP/GEF standards and access GEF funding. UNEP accepted this role of facilitating and capacity building from the start as it is also at the core of its mandate. In addition, the project itself deals with several critical topics for UNEP: land degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change, with three related environmental international conventions.

b. Were learnings from Terminal Evaluations of previous projects absorbed into this project's design?

This was the first GEF project that UNEP implemented in Madagascar on SLM. Therefore, there was no learning from other terminal evaluations absorbed in this project regarding the technical part of SLM. However, regarding organizational set up, roles and responsibilities, the project benefited from previous experience from GEF projects. In addition, this project

³¹ GEF 5272 (Scaling up sustainable land management and agro-biodiversity conservation to reduce environmental degradation in small-scale agriculture in Western **Kenya**); GEF 5354 (Participatory sustainable land management in the grassland plateaus of Western **Madagascar**); GEF 8003 (Capacity building for information coordination and SLM monitoring systems in areas with water resource management problems in **Cuba** - project # 2 of CPP on SLM); GEF 5822 (Enhanced cross-sectoral land management through land use pressure reduction and planning in **Serbia**); GEF 9477 (Promoting sustainable land management in **Albania** through integrated restoration of ecosystems)

³² A rapid review of 16 SLM-related Terminal Evaluations conducted between 2015-2021, with a focus on the 8 most relevant.

³³ Envisaged to take place after the country mission and drafting of the Terminal Evaluation report.

absorbed into its design that “monitoring and evaluation” and “knowledge sharing” needs to be emphasized with dedicated funding.

2. Level of sharing of project results and learnings among the UNEP project teams (within the LD Unit, but even across the Sub-programmes, if relevant) of technically relevant projects³⁴ being implemented at the same time.

a. Were the task manager and the project team at UNEP (of the project you are evaluating) aware of the other SLM projects being implemented at the same time? If yes, were there any opportunities to share information?

This SLM project is located in the Land Degradation and Biodiversity Unit of the Biodiversity and Land Branch within the Ecosystems Division. The Task manager and the project team at UNEP were aware of the other SLM projects being implemented at the same time. This first SLM project accepted in 2016 (GEF-5) was the starting point an overall new approach on SLM in Madagascar which lead to the development of a coherent portfolio on the topic in this country (see 5.1.4) with a project to support of ecosystem services (Project 9793 – GEF6) and another to evaluate natural capital and deploy eco-village (Project 1039 – GEF7).

3. The extent to which project teams (UNEP and Executing Agencies) are working within a common technical framework towards SLM.

a. What was the level/nature of practitioner-scientist interface?

The project is based on the needs of the beneficiaries “the practitioners” either to recover the ecosystems (in particular to reforest and to stop the extension of lavakas) or to deliver goods and services from the ecosystem. Facilitated by ANAE and based on scientific assessments, the project is a fine-tuned relationship between the beneficiaries and scientists to tailor-made the activities. As such, types of trees for reforestation were selected in partnership with DIREDD; Seeds for improved rice with the research centre (FOFIFA LRI); techniques for small breeding with DIRAE.

b. Were (a) tools or methodologies previously developed by UNEP used/upscaled, or (b) were UNEP tools and methodologies developed that could be used in other SLM work (within or beyond UNEP)?

This is a typical bottom-up project that firstly seeks local legitimacy, then extends partnership, and finally impacts national level. At the local level, the project was started by establishing SLM committees and proposing reforesting/agro-ecological activities. This approach was later combined and structured into a larger “eco-village” concept model. This eco-village model is now applied for the new UNEP/GEF-7 it is also used by other international agencies.

³⁴ For instance, between the five projects that were all coming to completion in 2021 and are part of this review, or any UNEP projects relevant to the specific project under evaluation.

c. Are there any particular innovations and best practices coming from the project and how is UNEP sharing these (was the project connected to any networks (e.g. WOCAT³⁵) and knowledge management platforms for sharing)? (Were there any gaps or potentials in innovation not realized?)

The main innovation from this project is the bottom-up approach with empowerment of sub-level communities (Fokontany) and communities themselves in establishing local SLM committees.

The main best practice is that the project positively links improving local wellbeing and restoring local ecosystems. It changes the practices and discourse so that human wellbeing depends on increasing the flow of ecosystem services. It gets away from the usual discourse socially marginalized people are unable to reclaim a healthy environment.

UNEP shared the results of the project among partners and with GEF. But, as mentioned in 5.9.7. proactive communication and public awareness using digital technologies and networks could have benefited the project.

d. To what extent did the success of the project depend on gender equity and/or considerations of gender roles³⁶? Were there any particular innovations the project was able to achieve in addressing gender equity?

The success of the project did structurally depend on the involvement of beneficiaries at most local level, including the most marginalized one, and gender equity, so that discourse and practices locally change regarding the sustained management of the local ecosystem services. This is detailed in 5.4.9

To include both women and man equality, the project made two innovations. Firstly, it chooses the hours of the workshops to allow women to participate, which is in the afternoon. This was a hard choice, as from the project management point of view this was not practical. Indeed, due to security at local level, the technicians had then to stay in the village for the night. Secondly, the project proposed activities that could directly improve women's living conditions, such as making compost, improved stove and small breeding.

We also do not need to oppose men and women in this project, but see their complementary work. Household structure and functions for women empowerment often showed the sharing of responsibility between men and women in the household. In this context, project activities have enabled these women to gain more knowledge in the short term. In the long term, they facilitated access to local wood energy and allowed regular sources of income, especially market gardening or breeding.

e. Did the project address human rights and human wellbeing (e.g. access to land and resources, human health, rights to healthy environment)?

³⁵ WOCAT is a global network on Sustainable Land Management (SLM) that promotes the documentation, sharing and use of knowledge to support adaptation, innovation and decision-making in SLM. <https://www.wocat.net/en/>

³⁶ Considering the significance of gender issues in SLM, especially at the land-use level.

Based on the need and knowledge of local beneficiaries, the project always clarified contentious issues from the start such as land rights and distribution of power/responsibilities within the communities (role of the SLM committees, the trainers and the communities). It also decided on activities from the most local level (sub-community: Fokontany) in a participative, inclusive and open process. This allowed all participants to participate on an equal basis. Finally, the project sought to restore the local environmental ecosystem and improve human well-being which is the practical side of the rights to a healthy environment

4. Project contributions to a common vision for SLM based on the global strategic priorities for land degradation neutrality.

- a. Did the project focus on the most degraded areas or areas of high value (in terms of its global importance and human dependence)? How much of the degraded land has been improved (was it measured in ha)?³⁷**

The situation in the Bongolava region in Madagascar is dramatic regarding land management due to deforestation and widespread burning. However, these areas are of high value, as ecosystem restoration and sustainable land use management is possible, with services of high value for humans: water supply for rice fields, wood from reforestation, fruits from agroforestry, seeds for small breeding. A total tangible impact consisted in 22,344 Ha of land restored with SLM

- b. How were project partners who stood out as champions supported and empowered? Were the best partnerships leveraged (and also sustained, both in terms of the project, and in terms of UNEP's network toward SLM)?**

Establishing SLM committees with full partnerships and support from the communities, DIREDD and DIRAE were fundamental in each community, not only to bring trust and ownership, but also to nurture individual commitments towards SLM. This was also a cost-effective way to support SLM activity in a decentralized manner.

- c. In what ways did the project ensure that increased scientific evidence/knowledge or capacity led to changed behaviour/decision-making (if at all)? Were the most appropriate stakeholders targeted?**

The project ensured that increased knowledge led to change behaviours by directly involving the beneficiaries from the start. They could see the improvement by themselves over a period of six year. Also, the project linked closely with DIREDD as an external auditor. It enlisted this governmental institution that could closely check changes over time, be convinced, and then be the first advocator at Bongolava level.

- d. How much of the success of the project depended on production and consumption cycles and the economic system and how much influence did the project have on this? (decoupling economic growth from land and ecosystem degradation).**

³⁷ Please provide your comment also on the quality of improvement (e.g. actual rehabilitation or restoration, or at land use plan level?)

The achievement of the project depended on both improving ecosystem services and providing well-being (ex. Fruits, plants, water supply) from these services. In this sense, the project reconnected the life production cycle as a whole, even if it didn't explicitly mention it. As such, the project proposed small-scale breeding and fruit production, used agro-ecological practices, produced compost to nurture soil, improved soil for better agricultural production, increased water supply for better agricultural production, more water and seeds for small-scale breeding. The project has had a great impact on decoupling economic growth from land degradation as the core of the project is to recover from degradation to deliver sustainable economic benefits.

e. How did the project address its key assumptions/drivers (included at design or noted by the evaluator at TE)?

The project addressed the key assumptions and drivers by its approach: caring for the staff, caring for the beneficiaries, and caring for the environment. Based on this, it could develop longstanding trust, partnerships, and adaptive activities at local level, with regional and national impact.

f. Are there any key factors that contributed to the sustainability of project results and impacts (any highlighted examples of transformative effects, innovation and social uptake, championship and changed behaviour, financial and institutional commitments)?

The key factor that contributed to the sustainability of project results and impacts was the focus on socio-political local level, with long-standing trustfully close relationships beyond the 4-year plan of the project. When a project like this is facing so many potential adverse external factors (national political change, climate change, COVID), the key is to nurture stability and adaptive activities at the local level. At the same time, the global steering committee (UNEP and MEDD) needs to be positive and reactive to these changes to adapt project framework, technical and financial plan.

5. Are there any other considerations coming from the Terminal Evaluation of this project that you would like to highlight for the portfolio review?

SLM is at the core of sustainability and goes well beyond land degradation issues. It also includes biodiversity loss and climate change, including climate mitigation (carbon in the soil or in the tree) and adaptation (providing micro-climate). It could be interesting to check how SLM contributes to biodiversity and climate.

SLM is also about carbon stock recovery (in plant, in soil) and therefore it needs to link with climate financing to secure some sort of long-term financial sustainability.

ANNEX VIII – EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation criteria/questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verifications
Criterion A. Strategic relevance		
A.1. Does the project's implement strategies and delivered contribution aligned to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ UNEP's mandate and thematic priorities, as represented in the Medium-Term Strategy and Programme of Work under which the project was approved (2014-15) ☒ UNEP's Capacity building (BSP), and South - South Cooperation (S-SC) policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ProDoc, annual reports, Interviews with UNEP staff, UNEP MTS and POW
A2. Was the project aligned to GEF Focal areas and Strategic priorities	☒ Level of alignment with GEF	Comparison of ProDoc and annual report. Interview with Task Manager.
A3. Did the project contribute (results) to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities	☒ Level of alignment with global, regional, sub-regional and / or national environmental priorities (e.g. NAMAs / UNDAFs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ProDoc, interview with UNEP staff and Government officials
A4. Were cross cutting issues including human rights and gender equality adequately considered in project design and implementation?	☒ Level of alignment with identified target group and beneficiary needs and priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
A5. To what extent did the project consider ongoing or planned interventions by UNEP, GEF or other partners working in the area or on the same issue?	☒ Evidence of collaboration, cooperation and complementarity actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ProDoc, annual progress reports, other projects from UNEP, other GEF projects. • Interviews with Task manager and executing agencies
Criterion B. Quality of Project Design	See Annex A	
Criterion C. Nature of external context		
<p>Did the climate, security, economic, political context affect the project and how did the project adapt to this?</p> <p>How did the project respond and adapt to COVID situation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Reported extreme external events. ☒ Reported level of adaptation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguards in ProDoc. • Annual progress reports, project revisions. • Interviews with UNEP staff and implementing partners.
Did the COVID affect the project and how did the project adapt to this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Reported COVID. ☒ Reported adaptive management to COVID. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual progress reports, project revisions. • Interviews with UNEP staff and implementing partners.

Evaluation criteria/questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verifications
How did the project respond and adapt to COVID situation?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governmental measures on COVID.
D. Effectiveness		
D1. Availability of outputs		
<p>Did the climate, security, economic, political context affect the project and how did the project adapt to this?</p> <p>How did the project respond and adapt to COVID situation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of outputs delivered, % achievement of each output • Timeline of delivery of the outputs, Log frame indicator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PMIs, annual project progress reports. • Field observations • Interviews with Task Manager, members of local steering committees and beneficiaries.
<p>Did the COVID affect the project and how did the project adapt to this?</p> <p>How did the project respond and adapt to COVID situation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of stakeholder participation and cooperation in making and using the outputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct field observation. • Citation of stakeholders' roles in tangible products (publications, studies, etc.) • Interviews with partners in implementation and project beneficiaries
D. Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder participation and cooperation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct observation. • Interviews with partners in implementation and project beneficiaries
D1. Availability of outputs		
<p>Were all the outputs delivered fully?</p> <p>And were all the outputs delivered per the ProDoc and Workplan?</p> <p>Were the outputs delivered on time for their intended use?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level achievement for each project outcomes. • Number or assumptions and drivers that holds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIR/Annual progress reports • Interviews with Task Manager and members from executing agencies. • Field visits to intervention areas: interview members from the local steering committees. • Direct field observations
Were the outputs of excellent quality/utility by users?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of assumptions that hold, number of assumptions that didn't hold and reasons for. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with members from the Steering committees, local steering committees, government. • Desk study on "assumptions" reported in the progress documents.
Were stakeholders appropriately involved in producing programmed outputs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of drivers that were in place, number of drivers that didn't hold and reasons for. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with members from the Steering committees, local steering committees, government. • Desk study on "drivers" reported in the progress documents.
D.2. Achievements of outcomes		
How successful was the project in achieving the outcomes as included in the ToC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of strengthening the institutional framework • Improved agricultural yields and incomes locally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with members from local steering committees. • Local observations • Interviews with local inhabitants

Evaluation criteria/questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verifications
<p>outcome 1.0: Enhanced capacity of communal institutions to implement SLM demonstrated.</p> <p>Outcome 2.0: Increased farmers' capacity for SLM practices demonstrated</p> <p>Outcome 3.0 High level commitment to implementing a strategy for scaling up SLM at regional level (Bongolava region) demonstrated publicly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced land degradation 	<p>(direct beneficiaries and not direct beneficiaries)</p>
<p>To what extent the assumption holds that the project facilitated participation of vulnerable groups and empower women, including being sensitive to gender roles/access/influence?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of compliance of assumptions on human rights, inclusion of marginalized peoples and gender issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports. • Field discussion
<p>Did the assumptions hold in the transition from outcomes to impact? (as included in the ToC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of compliance of assumptions: SLM generates higher income for the same effort; favourable market; regional/national political stability; institutional framework to support SLM; favourable climate condition; free of major crop pests or diseases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project progress reports/PIR • Interviews with project staff, key stakeholders
<p>Were drivers positively influenced in the transition from outcomes to impact? (as included in the ToC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of engagement of actors driving the process: ministries, NGOs, private landowners, agricultural institutions, districts, region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project progress reports/PIR • Interviews with project staff, key stakeholders
<p>To what degree the project is likely to create long-term impact on land restoration (with aim at 42,450Ha with SLM benefiting 5,670 people/households.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likelihood of positive impact and sustainability of replication across the Bongolova region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance indicators of upscaling and replication efforts • Interviews with UN Environment, project team, research partners, national level decision makers, and third-party stakeholders (other initiatives/agencies at national, regional level)
<p>E. Financial Management</p>		
<p>E1. Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures</p>		

Evaluation criteria/questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verifications
<p>Was a timely approval and disbursement of cash advances to partners, Regular analysis of actual expenditure against budget and workplan, timely submission of regular expenditure reports (six-monthly and annual)? Were the expenditure being within the approved annual budget (or approved revision)</p> <p>Were the budget revisions made when relevant?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completeness of financial information and communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with Task Manager, FMO, members of executing agencies ((MEDD, ANAE) • Financial reports and audit reports, project revisions.
<p>E2. Completeness of Financial Information</p>		
<p>Is the financial information complete, given at a detailed level (annual/quarterly), signed by the FMO and presented at outputs/</p>	<p>High level project budget (costs) for secured and unsecured funds.</p> <p>High level project budget by funding source(s) for secured and unsecured funds.</p> <p>Disbursement (Funds Transfer) document from funding source(s) to UNEP.</p> <p>Project expenditure sheet (to-date).</p> <p>Detailed project budget (by output/outcome) for secured funds.</p> <p>Report of delivery of in-kind contributions.</p> <p>Partner legal agreements and documentation for all amendments exist.</p> <p>Re-approved project budget by budget line for project extensions (both cost and no-cost extension).</p> <p>Management response to audit reports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with Task Manager, FMO, members of executing agencies ((MEDD, ANAE) • Financial reports and audit reports. • Review of contacts/agreement, ProDoc.

Evaluation criteria/questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verifications
E3. Communication Between Finance and Project Management Staff		
Was financial information and communication between financial and project management staff complete and transparent?	<p>Level of awareness of the project manager of the current financial status of the project.</p> <p>Level of awareness of the FMO of overall project progress when financial disbursements are made. (i.e. Disbursements made against <i>good quality</i> financial and technical progress reports).</p> <p><i>Regularity of the contacts between PM and FMO.</i></p> <p>Level of impact on the project of communication between financial and project staff members (ex. <i>no extensions, more outputs than planned etc</i>).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with Task Manager, FMO, members of executing agencies ((MEDD, ANAE) • Financial reports and audit reports.
How well are standards (clarity, transparency, audit etc.) of financial and operational (staff recruitment, evaluation, secondary conditions) planning, management and reporting applied, to ensure that sufficient and timely financial resources were available to the project and its partners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of standards for financial and operative management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with administrative staff and service providers • Financial reports and audit reports
To what extent co-financing has materialized as expected at project approval?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of co-financing, related to original planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial reports of project • Interviews with project administrative staff and UN Environment task manager
F. Efficiency		
Did the project operate within existing roles, mechanisms or institutions or expanded them in an efficient and effective manner?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of inclusion of pre-existing initiatives and institutions, proof cooperation with other projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual progress reports • Interviews with key stakeholders (pre-existing initiatives and other institutions) • Evaluation of project design
Was the project implemented within the timeframe and against a revised results framework specified by a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of compliance with project planning / annual plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project progress reports, PIR, Approved project revisions. • Interviews with staff from Implementing and executing

Evaluation criteria/questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verifications
formal revision with additional resources?		agencies (MEED, ANAE).
Did the project take cost-effective approaches (adaptive measure, partnerships)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of compliance with project financial planning / annual plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project financial reports • Interviews with project staff • Interviews with financial staff
G. Monitoring and Reporting		
G.1. Monitoring Design and Budgeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex A inception report 	
G.2. Monitoring of Project Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex A inception report 	
Was the M&E system operational and facilitated timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period? Did this include monitoring the representation and participation of disaggregated groups? Were the results used to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of implementation of M&E system (execution of activities) • Changes in project implementation as result of MTE or other supervision visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with key stakeholders • Project implementation reports • Management response to MTE
G.3. Monitoring Implementation		
How has monitoring been conducted, and how have results been used to adapt implementation approach?	<p>Review of monitoring practice</p> <p>Review of oversight arrangements</p>	Availability of monitoring results, project team interviews, Technical Steering Committee
H. Sustainability		
H.1. Socio-political sustainability		
Are there any social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impact?	Qualitative	Interviews with Steering Committee, government representatives, donors, site visit interviews with beneficiaries, Task Manager
Is the level of ownership by the main stakeholders and policy-makers sufficient to allow for the project results to be sustained?	Qualitative	Interviews with Steering Committee, government representatives, donors, site visit interviews with beneficiaries, Task Manager
Is there any adaptive mechanism in place to respond to changes in the	Qualitative	Interviews with Steering Committee, government representatives, donors,

Evaluation criteria/questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verifications
social/political context (e.g. social norms, political priorities)?		site visit interviews with beneficiaries, Task Manager
H2. Financial sustainability		
To what extent are the continuation of project results (direct outcomes) and the eventual impact of the project dependent on future financial resources to persist?	Qualitative	Interviews with Country Coordinators, Technical Steering Committee, country visit interviews, Task Manager
What is the likelihood that adequate financial resources will be secured to use capacities built by the project and that an exit strategy with a financial component has been initiated?	Qualitative, possible data on onward funding	Interviews with Country Coordinators, Technical Steering Committee, country visit interviews, Task Manager
H3. Sustainability of the institutional framework		
Has the capacity of relevant individuals been enhanced and they are seen to exercise increased influence in support of the project outcome?	Qualitative	Interviews with Country Coordinators, Technical Steering Committee, country visit interviews, Task Manager
Is there a <i>strong</i> mechanism in place to sustain/support the institutionalisation of project outcomes (e.g. all planned new policies and laws have been completed and approved, although no action to implement them has yet been taken)?	Qualitative	Test whether this question is relevant to this context; Interviews with Country Coordinators, Technical Steering Committee, country visit interviews, Task Manager
I. Factors Affecting Project Performance (x-cutting in narrative of above)		
I1. Preparation and readiness	Also see Annex A	
Why did UNEP choose this project?		
Were learnings from Terminal Evaluations of previous projects absorbed into this project's design?		
I2. Quality of Project Management and Supervision		
Were measures taken place to address project weaknesses or adapt to changes to achieving	An inception meeting	Annual progress reports, Interviews with country coordinators, country visits, Task Manager, questionnaire,

Evaluation criteria/questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verifications
outcomes sufficient in the project? This includes timing and quality of engagement with stakeholders, the Steering Committee.	<p>An annual, costed workplan appropriate detail</p> <p>A detailed procurement</p> <p>A Steering Committee established with full, appropriate representation</p> <p>A good ESE safeguards assessment with stakeholder participation.</p> <p>Comprehensive and relevant stakeholder analysis undertaken.</p> <p>Partners capacity confirmed</p> <p>Legal agreements signed in a timely manner.</p> <p>Staffing mobilisation in a timely manner.</p> <p>Adequate governance arrangements. Implement PRC recommendations.</p> <p>6 months or less to approve project and first disbursement</p> <p>Measures from inception strengthened the project.</p>	Technical Steering Committee, review of project implementation documentation
<i>1.3 Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation</i>		
Was there an excellent analysis of stakeholders' groups (all those who are affected by or could be affect this Project)	See annex A	
Has it been an effective effort by the project team to promote stakeholder ownership of process or outcomes?	Participation and involvement, ownership, qualitative	Interviews with country coordinators, country visits, Task Manager, Project Director, questionnaire, Technical Steering Committee
What has been the degree of communication, collaboration and collective actions with stakeholders?	Participation and involvement, ownership, qualitative	Interviews with country coordinators, country visits, Task Manager, Project Director, questionnaire, Technical Steering Committee

Evaluation criteria/questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verifications
	Stakeholders aware of outcomes and impact.	
<i>1.4. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity</i>		
Are human rights and gender considerations found in: project implementation, interpretation of results and project expenditure?	Project outcomes and impact Funds	Project documents Monitoring & Evaluation documents, expenditures.
<i>15. Environmental and social safeguards</i>		
Are there any safeguarding considerations at all levels (from management plan to monitoring and response) so that the most vulnerable groups are considered and get positive equity gains?	Type of stakeholders benefited by the project	Project documents Monitoring & Evaluation documents, expenditures.
Did the project implement measures to decrease the environmental footprint of project management?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of environmental footprint calculation and examples measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with project team and administrative staff • PIR/PPR
<i>1.6. Country Ownership and Driveness</i>		
Linked to sustainability, although specifically connected to TOC. Have those who have influence in the country been involved in moving outputs to outcomes, and outcomes to intermediate states?	Country level ownership	Interviews at country-level, interviews with country coordinators, interview with Project Director
To what extent has the project created opportunities for particular individuals or institutions (champions) to catalyse change (without which the project would not have achieved its results)? What level of support was given to these actors?		
<i>1.7. Communication and Public Awareness</i>		
What was the level of learning and sharing among project partners and interested groups arising from the project life?	Qualitative	Interviews at country-level, interviews with country coordinators, interview with Project Director

Evaluation criteria/questions	Evaluation indicators	Means of verifications
What public awareness activities took place, and how effective were they in shaping the behaviour among wider communities and civil society at large?	Level of events, event impact	Interviews at country-level, interviews with country coordinators, interview with Project Director, review of event and conference reporting
Were communication channels and networks used effectively or any feedback channels were established?	Level of comms	Interviews at country-level, interviews with country coordinators, interview with Project Director
How have gender differentiated roles and levels of influence as well as marginalized groups been integrated into communication channels so that all voices are heard?	Demographics of comms	Interviews at country-level, interviews with country coordinators, interview with Project Director

ANNEX IX – QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

Quality Assessment of the Evaluation Report

Evaluand Title:

Participatory Sustainable Land Management in the Grassland Plateaus of Western Madagascar

All UNEP evaluations are subject to a quality assessment by the Evaluation Office. This is an assessment of the quality of the evaluation product (i.e. evaluation report) and is dependent on more than just the consultant's efforts and skills.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
Substantive Report Quality Criteria		
<p>Quality of the Executive Summary:</p> <p>The Summary should be able to stand alone as an accurate summary of the main evaluation product. It should include a concise overview of the evaluation object; clear summary of the evaluation objectives and scope; overall evaluation rating of the project and key features of performance (strengths and weaknesses) against exceptional criteria (plus reference to where the evaluation ratings table can be found within the report); summary of the main findings of the exercise, including a synthesis of main conclusions (which include a summary response to key strategic evaluation questions), lessons learned and recommendations.</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>A strong Executive Summary that provides the reader with all the main findings from the evaluation. The translation into French is much appreciated. The recommendations benefited from the consultant's interactions with the project team but may not be as readily interpreted as actionable points by those outside the project.</p>	5.5
<p>I. Introduction</p> <p>A brief introduction should be given identifying, where possible and relevant, the following: institutional context of the project (sub-programme, Division, regions/countries where implemented) and coverage of the evaluation; date of PRC approval and project document signature); results frameworks to which it contributes (e.g. Expected Accomplishment in POW); project duration and start/end dates; number of project phases (where appropriate); implementing partners; total secured budget and whether the project has been evaluated in the past (e.g. mid-term, part of a synthesis evaluation, evaluated by another agency etc.)</p> <p>Consider the extent to which the introduction includes a concise statement of the purpose of the evaluation and the key intended audience for the findings?</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>The introduction is short and covers all the necessary details.</p>	5.5
<p>II. Evaluation Methods</p> <p>A data collection section should include: a description of evaluation methods and information sources used, including the number and type of respondents; justification for methods used (e.g. qualitative/ quantitative; electronic/face-to-face); any selection criteria used to identify respondents, case studies or sites/countries visited; strategies used to increase stakeholder engagement and consultation; details of how data were verified (e.g. triangulation, review by stakeholders etc.).</p> <p>Methods to ensure that potentially excluded groups (excluded by gender, vulnerability or marginalisation) are reached and their</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Clear and detailed methods section.</p> <p>More could have been written about how potentially excluded groups were reached during the evaluation.</p>	5.0

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
<p>experiences captured effectively, should be made explicit in this section.</p> <p>The methods used to analyse data (e.g. scoring; coding; thematic analysis etc.) should be described.</p> <p>It should also address evaluation limitations such as: low or imbalanced response rates across different groups; gaps in documentation; extent to which findings can be either generalised to wider evaluation questions or constraints on aggregation/disaggregation; any potential or apparent biases; language barriers and ways they were overcome.</p> <p>Ethics and human rights issues should be highlighted including: how anonymity and confidentiality were protected and strategies used to include the views of marginalised or potentially disadvantaged groups and/or divergent views. Is there an ethics statement?</p>		
<p>III. The Project</p> <p>This section should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Context</i>: Overview of the main issue that the project is trying to address, its root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being (i.e. synopsis of the problem and situational analyses). • <i>Results framework</i>: Summary of the project's results hierarchy as stated in the ProDoc (or as officially revised) • <i>Stakeholders</i>: Description of groups of targeted stakeholders organised according to relevant common characteristics • <i>Project implementation structure and partners</i>: A description of the implementation structure with diagram and a list of key project partners • <i>Changes in design during implementation</i>: Any key events that affected the project's scope or parameters should be described in brief in chronological order • <i>Project financing</i>: Completed tables of: (a) budget at design and expenditure by components (b) planned and actual sources of funding/co-financing 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All elements are well covered.</p>	<p>5.5</p>
<p>IV. Theory of Change</p> <p>The <i>TOC at Evaluation</i> should be presented clearly in both diagrammatic and narrative forms. Clear articulation of each major causal pathway is expected, (starting from outputs to long term impact), including explanations of all drivers and assumptions as well as the expected roles of key actors.</p> <p>This section should include a description of how the <i>TOC at Evaluation</i>³⁸ was designed (who was involved etc.) and applied to the context of the project? Where the project results as stated in the project design documents (or formal revisions of the project design) are not an accurate reflection of the project's intentions or do not follow UNEP's definitions of</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Good discussion of causal pathways, accompanied by a TOC diagram and identification of a range of Drivers and Assumptions.</p>	<p>5.5</p>

³⁸ During the Inception Phase of the evaluation process a *TOC at Evaluation Inception* is created based on the information contained in the approved project documents (these may include either logical framework or a TOC or narrative descriptions), formal revisions and annual reports etc. During the evaluation process this TOC is revised based on changes made during project intervention and becomes the *TOC at Evaluation*.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
<p>different results levels, project results may need to be re-phrased or reformulated. In such cases, a summary of the project's results hierarchy should be presented for: a) the results as stated in the approved/revised Prodoc logframe/TOC and b) as formulated in the <i>TOC at Evaluation</i>. <i>The two results hierarchies should be presented as a two-column table to show clearly that, although wording and placement may have changed, the results 'goal posts' have not been 'moved'</i>.</p> <p>Check that the project's effect on equality (i.e. promoting human rights, gender equality and inclusion of those living with disabilities and/or belonging to marginalised/vulnerable groups) has been included within the TOC as a general driver or assumption where there was no dedicated result within the results framework. If an explicit commitment on this topic was made within the project document then the driver/assumption should also be specific to the described intentions.</p>		
<p>V. Key Findings</p> <p>A. Strategic relevance:</p> <p>This section should include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UNEP's mandate and its alignment with UNEP's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. An assessment of the complementarity of the project at design (or during inception/mobilisation³⁹), with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups should be included. Consider the extent to which all four elements have been addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW) ii. Alignment to Donor/GEF Strategic Priorities iii. Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities iv. Complementarity with Existing Interventions 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Good discussion of all elements of Strategic Relevance</p>	5.5
<p>B. Quality of Project Design</p> <p>To what extent are the strength and weaknesses of the project design effectively <u>summarized</u>?</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>The strengths and weaknesses of the project design are appropriately summarised.</p>	5.5
<p>C. Nature of the External Context</p> <p>For projects where this is appropriate, key <u>external</u> features of the project's implementing context that limited the project's performance (e.g. conflict, natural disaster, political upheaval⁴⁰), and how they affected performance, should be described.</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Interesting discussion of the context, which goes beyond the identification of any unexpected, external factors.</p>	5.5

³⁹ A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

⁴⁰ Note that 'political upheaval' does not include regular national election cycles, but unanticipated unrest or prolonged disruption. The potential delays or changes in political support that are often associated with the regular national election cycle should be part of the project's design and addressed through adaptive management of the project team.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
<p>D. Effectiveness</p> <p>(i) Outputs and Project Outcomes: How well does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the a) availability of outputs, and b) achievement of project outcomes? How convincing is the discussion of attribution and contribution, as well as the constraints to attributing effects to the intervention.</p> <p>The effects of the intervention on differentiated groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation, should be discussed explicitly.</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Good discussion of the provision of outputs, supported by photos/visual material, which are much appreciated.</p> <p>The discussion of the achievement of outcomes builds on the discussion of outputs and was confirmed through the evaluator's field mission.</p>	5.5
<p>(ii) Likelihood of Impact: How well does the report present an integrated analysis, guided by the causal pathways represented by the TOC, of all evidence relating to likelihood of impact? How well are change processes explained and the roles of key actors, as well as drivers and assumptions, explicitly discussed? Any unintended negative effects of the project should be discussed under Effectiveness, especially negative effects on disadvantaged groups.</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Good discussion of the pathways from outcomes to longer lasting impact.</p> <p>The evaluator explains how the project team addressed the needs of the disadvantaged.</p>	5.5
<p>E. Financial Management</p> <p>This section should contain an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under financial management and include a completed 'financial management' table.</p> <p>Consider how well the report addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adherence</i> to UNEP's financial policies and procedures • <i>completeness</i> of financial information, including the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used • <i>communication</i> between financial and project management staff 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All sub-categories of financial management are addressed appropriately.</p>	5.5
<p>F. Efficiency</p> <p>To what extent, and how well, does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of efficiency under the primary categories of cost-effectiveness and timeliness including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implications of delays and no cost extensions • Time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe • Discussion of making use during project implementation of/building on pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. • The extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint. 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Appropriate discussion of efficiency.</p>	5.5

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
<p>G. Monitoring and Reporting</p> <p>How well does the report assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring design and budgeting (<i>including SMART results with measurable indicators, resources for MTE/R etc.</i>) Monitoring of project implementation (<i>including use of monitoring data for adaptive management</i>) Project reporting (<i>e.g. PIMS and donor reports</i>) 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Good discussion of monitoring and reporting, supported by visual material, which is much appreciated.</p>	5.5
<p>H. Sustainability</p> <p>How well does the evaluation identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of achieved project outcomes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio-political Sustainability Financial Sustainability Institutional Sustainability 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Appropriate discussion of sustainability</p>	5.5
<p>I. Factors Affecting Performance</p> <p>These factors are <u>not</u> discussed in stand-alone sections but are integrated in criteria A-H as appropriate. Note that these are described in the Evaluation Criteria Ratings Matrix. To what extent, and how well, does the evaluation report cover the following cross-cutting themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation and readiness Quality of project management and supervision⁴¹ Stakeholder participation and co-operation Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity Environmental and social safeguards Country ownership and driven-ness Communication and public awareness 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All factors are discussed in some detail, which adds to the evaluation.</p>	5.5
<p>VI. Conclusions and Recommendations</p> <p>i. Quality of the conclusions: The key strategic questions should be clearly and succinctly addressed within the conclusions section. It is expected that the conclusions will highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the project and connect them in a compelling story line. Human rights and gender dimensions of the intervention (e.g. how these dimensions were considered, addressed or impacted on) should be discussed explicitly. Conclusions, as well as lessons and recommendations, should be consistent with the evidence presented in the main body of the report.</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Good conclusion, which focuses in on an interesting narrative describing how the project reached a successful level.</p>	6
<p>ii) Quality and utility of the lessons: Both positive and negative lessons are expected and duplication with recommendations</p>	<p>Final report:</p>	

⁴¹ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Report Rating
should be avoided. Based on explicit evaluation findings, lessons should be rooted in real project experiences or derived from problems encountered and mistakes made that should be avoided in the future. Lessons are intended to be adopted any time they are deemed to be relevant in the future and must have the potential for wider application (replication and generalization) and use and should briefly describe the context from which they are derived and those contexts in which they may be useful.	Useful lessons that were shared with the project team in country and within UNEP in time for an upcoming mission.	5
<p>iii) Quality and utility of the recommendations:</p> <p>To what extent are the recommendations proposals for specific action to be taken by identified people/position-holders to resolve concrete problems affecting the project or the sustainability of its results? They should be feasible to implement within the timeframe and resources available (including local capacities) and specific in terms of who would do what and when.</p> <p>At least one recommendation relating to strengthening the human rights and gender dimensions of UNEP interventions, should be given.</p> <p>Recommendations should represent a measurable performance target in order that the Evaluation Office can monitor and assess compliance with the recommendations.</p> <p>In cases where the recommendation is addressed to a third party, compliance can only be monitored and assessed where a contractual/legal agreement remains in place. Without such an agreement, the recommendation should be formulated to say that UNEP project staff should pass on the recommendation to the relevant third party in an effective or substantive manner. The effective transmission by UNEP of the recommendation will then be monitored for compliance.</p> <p>Where a new project phase is already under discussion or in preparation with the same third party, a recommendation can be made to address the issue in the next phase.</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>The recommendations are specific to the project team, benefiting from discussions in country and with UNEP. The actions arising from the evaluation will also benefit from UNEP's ongoing work in Madagascar.</p>	5
VII. Report Structure and Presentation Quality		
<p>i) Structure and completeness of the report: To what extent does the report follow the Evaluation Office guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included and complete?</p>	Final report:	6
<p>ii) Quality of writing and formatting: Consider whether the report is well written (clear English language and grammar) with language that is adequate in quality and tone for an official document? Do visual aids, such as maps and graphs convey key information? Does the report follow Evaluation Office formatting guidelines?</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Excellent writing, especially given that the evaluator conducted the majority of the interviews and mission in French.</p>	6
OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING		5.5

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1. The overall quality of the evaluation report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.

At the end of the evaluation, compliance of the evaluation process against the agreed standard procedures is assessed, based on the table below. *All questions with negative compliance must be explained further in the table below.*

Evaluation Process Quality Criteria	Compliance	
	Yes	No
Independence:		
1. Were the Terms of Reference drafted and finalised by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
2. Were possible conflicts of interest of proposed Evaluation Consultant(s) appraised and addressed in the final selection?	Y	
3. Was the final selection of the Evaluation Consultant(s) made by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
4. Was the evaluator contracted directly by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
5. Was the Evaluation Consultant given direct access to identified external stakeholders in order to adequately present and discuss the findings, as appropriate?	Y	
6. Did the Evaluation Consultant raise any concerns about being unable to work freely and without interference or undue pressure from project staff or the Evaluation Office?		N
7. If Yes to Q6: Were these concerns resolved to the mutual satisfaction of both the Evaluation Consultant and the Evaluation Manager?	N/A	
Financial Management:		
8. Was the evaluation budget approved at project design available for the evaluation?	Y	
9. Was the final evaluation budget agreed and approved by the Evaluation Office?	Y	
10. Were the agreed evaluation funds readily available to support the payment of the evaluation contract throughout the payment process?	Y	
Timeliness:		
11. If a Terminal Evaluation: Was the evaluation initiated within the period of six months before or after project operational completion? Or, if a Mid Term Evaluation: Was the evaluation initiated within a six-month period prior to the project's mid-point?	Y	
12. Were all deadlines set in the Terms of Reference respected, as far as unforeseen circumstances allowed?	Y	
13. Was the inception report delivered and reviewed/approved prior to commencing any travel?	Y	
Project's engagement and support:		
14. Did the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and identified project stakeholders provide comments on the evaluation Terms of Reference?	Y	
15. Did the project make available all required/requested documents?	Y	
16. Did the project make all financial information (and audit reports if applicable) available in a timely manner and to an acceptable level of completeness?	Y	
17. Was adequate support provided by the project to the evaluator(s) in planning and conducting evaluation missions?	Y	
18. Was close communication between the Evaluation Consultant, Evaluation Office and project team maintained throughout the evaluation?	Y	
19. Were evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations adequately discussed with the project team for ownership to be established?	Y	
20. Did the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and any identified project stakeholders provide comments on the draft evaluation report?	Y	

Quality assurance:			
21. Were the evaluation Terms of Reference, including the key evaluation questions, peer-reviewed?		Y	
22. Was the TOC in the inception report peer-reviewed?		Y	
23. Was the quality of the draft/cleared report checked by the Evaluation Manager and Peer Reviewer prior to dissemination to stakeholders for comments?		Y	
24. Did the Evaluation Office complete an assessment of the quality of both the draft and final reports?		Y	
Transparency:			
25. Was the draft evaluation report sent directly by the Evaluation Consultant to the Evaluation Office?		Y	
26. Did the Evaluation Manager disseminate (or authorize dissemination) of the cleared draft report to the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and other key internal personnel (including the Reference Group where appropriate) to solicit formal comments?		Y	
27. Did the Evaluation Manager disseminate (or authorize dissemination) appropriate drafts of the report to identified external stakeholders, including key partners and funders, to solicit formal comments?		Y	
28. Were all stakeholder comments to the draft evaluation report sent directly to the Evaluation Office		Y	
29. Did the Evaluation Consultant(s) respond adequately to all factual corrections and comments?		Y	
30. Did the Evaluation Office share substantive comments and Evaluation Consultant responses with those who commented, as appropriate?		Y	

Provide comments / explanations / mitigating circumstances below for any non-compliant process issues.

<u>Process Criterion Number</u>	<u>Evaluation Office Comments</u>