



**Terminal Evaluation of the EU grant “Driving sustainable consumption in Latin America with better product information and design (ICSAL)” (which contributed to the UNEP project “Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production” - PIMS ID 2011)”  
(2018-2022)**



Evaluation Office of the United Nations Environment Programme

Distributed: February 2024



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EU grant “Driving sustainable consumption in Latin America with better product information and design (ICSAL)” (contributing to the UNEP project “Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production”)

(PIMS ID 2011)

(February 2024)

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## **Acknowledgements**

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This Terminal Evaluation was prepared for UNEP by Mr. Carsten Schwensen, as an independent consultant.

The evaluator would like to express gratitude to all persons met and who contributed to this evaluation, as listed in Annex II.

The evaluation consultant would like to thank the UNEP project team, and in particular the Programme Officer Mr. Tomas Declercq, for excellent contribution and collaboration to the evaluation process. Sincere appreciation is also expressed to those who took time to provide comments to the draft report. Last, but not least, the evaluator would like to thank project stakeholders in Costa Rica, Colombia and Mexico for their time and for being open-minded in the discussions.

The evaluation consultant hopes that the findings, conclusions and recommendations will contribute to continuous improvement of similar projects in the future.

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## **Brief consultant biography**

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Mr. Carsten Schwensen is a Danish Development Economist, with strong theoretical and practical experience from leading and implementing multi-disciplinary evaluations of development cooperation. He has more than 25 years of experience from development work and has been Team Leader/Core Team Member on 30+ large complex evaluation assignments of development assistance, using OECD DAC evaluation standards. The evaluations have covered a large number of countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Mr. Schwensen's practical experience from evaluation work includes strategic global evaluations; joint UN/multi-donor evaluations; impact evaluations; country programme evaluations; thematic multi-country and regional evaluations; evaluations of different aid modalities and financing instruments. Substantial experience from conducting evaluations in view of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## About the Evaluation

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**Joint Evaluation:** No

**Report Language:** English.

**Evaluation Type:** Terminal Evaluation

**Brief Description:** This report is a Terminal Evaluation of an EU grant implemented between 2018 and 2022. The grant's overall objective was to support governments, private sector and other stakeholders in the implementation of policies and practices that lead to improvement in product's design and product sustainability information and increase consumer awareness to support sustainable lifestyles in Latin America and the Caribbean. The evaluation sought to assess performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the EU grant, including the sustainability. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, and the relevant agencies of the participating countries.

**Source(s) of Funding by Institution Type:**

Foundation/NGO	No
Private Sector	No
UN Body	No
Multilateral Fund	Yes
Environment Fund	No

**Key words:** Sustainable Consumption; Production; Consumers; Ecolabelling; Ecolabel; Certification; Sustainable Lifestyle; Sustainable Consumption Week; Environmental Alliance; Latin America; Colombia; Costa Rica; Mexico; Caribbean;<sup>1</sup>

**Primary data collection period:** August – October 2023.

**Field mission dates:** 4-12 September 2023.

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<sup>1</sup> This data is used to aid the internet search of this report on the Evaluation Office of UNEP Website

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## **List of acronyms and abbreviations**

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Advance SCP	Advancing and Measuring Sustainable Consumption and Production for a Low-Carbon Economy in Middle-Income and Newly Industrialized Countries
EU	European Union
FUNDATEC	Fundación Tecnológico de Costa Rica
ICSAL	Driving sustainable consumption in Latin America with better product information and design
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTR	Mid Term Review
MTS	Medium Term Strategy
PoW	Programme of Work
PRC	Project Review Committee (internal UNEP committee that reviews and provides clearance to new projects)
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIS	Sustainability Information Systems
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
SPPEL	Sustainable Public Procurement and Ecolabelling
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
10YFP	10-Year Framework of Programmes

## Project identification table

**Table 1: Project Identification Table**

<b>UNEP PIMS ID:</b>	2011		
<b>Implementing Agency:</b>	Universidad de los Andes and Fundación Tecnológico (FUNDATEC) de Costa Rica		
<b>Relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and indicator(s):</b>	<p>Target 12.1: Implement the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries.</p> <p>Indicator 12.1.1: Number of countries developing, adopting or implementing policy instruments aimed at supporting the shift to sustainable consumption and production.</p> <p>Target 12.6: Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.</p> <p>Indicator 12.6.1: Number of companies publishing sustainability reports.</p> <p>Target 12.8: By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.</p> <p>Indicator 12.8.1: Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment.</p>		
<b>Sub-programme:</b>	Resource Efficiency in the UNEP Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) 2018-2021) now Finance and Economic Transformations Subprogramme in the MTS 2022-2025)	<b>Expected Accomplishment(s):</b>	<p>EA (a) Science-based approaches that support the transition to sustainable development through multiple pathways, including inclusive green economy and sustainable trade, and the adoption of sustainable consumption and production patterns at all levels.</p> <p>EA (c) Public and private sectors increasingly aware of and support the adoption of sustainable lifestyles and sustainable consumption patterns.</p>
<b>UNEP approval date:</b>	November 2018	<b>Programme of Work (PoW) Output(s):</b>	<p>PoW 2020 – 2021: 633.1</p> <p>Primary: SP6 Indicator (c) (ii) Increase in the number of countries that implement campaigns, awareness-raising, advocacy and educational initiatives that promote sustainable lifestyles, consumption and production, including gender equality.</p> <p>Secondary:</p>



			SP6 Indicator (a) (i) Increase in the number of countries transitioning to sustainable development through multiple pathways, including through implementing inclusive green economy, sustainable consumption and production, and sustainable trade policies.	
<b>Expected start date:</b>	November 2018	<b>Actual start date:</b>	December 2018	
<b>Planned completion date:</b>	November 2020	<b>Actual operational completion date:</b>	October 2022	
<b>Planned project budget at approval:</b>	USD 1,464,968.16	<b>Actual total expenditures reported (as of January 2023):</b>	USD 1,511,053.23	
<b>Planned Extra-Budgetary Financing</b>	USD 1,464,968.16	<b>Secured Extra-Budgetary Financing:</b>	USD 1,555,235.50	
<b>First disbursement:</b>	USD 526,604	<b>Planned date of financial closure:</b>	January 2021	
<b>No. of formal project revisions:</b>	2	<b>Date of last approved project revision:</b>	14/10/2020	
<b>No. of Steering Committee meetings:</b>	10 (at national level)	<b>Date of last Steering Committee meeting:</b>	Last: April 2021	Next: N/A
<b>Midterm Review/ Evaluation (planned date):</b>	N/A	<b>Midterm Review/ Evaluation (actual date):</b>	N/A	
<b>Coverage - Country(ies):</b>	Colombia, Costa Rica and Mexico	<b>Coverage - Region(s):</b>	Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)	
<b>Dates of previous project phases:</b>	N/A	<b>Status of future project phases:</b>	IKI Eco-advance project in January 2023 to continue with regional approach to ecolabelling (Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico)	

## Executive Summary

### Project background

1. The EU grant "Driving sustainable consumption in Latin America with better product information and design" (ICSAL) was implemented by the Resource Efficiency Unit at the UNEP Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Office (Programme Management Officer under supervision of the Unit Head at the UNEP LAC Office) with the technical support of the Sustainable Consumption and Production Unit of the UNEP Industry and Economy Division. The grant was implemented under the UNEP Project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011) which was implemented by the Sustainable Consumption and Production Unit of the UNEP Industry and Economy Division.
2. ICSAL was implemented with the support of national consultants and implementing partners (Universidad de los Andes and Fundación Tecnológico (FUNDATEC) de Costa Rica) within three focus countries in the LAC region: Colombia, Costa Rica and Mexico. The EU grant was implemented in the period from December 2018 to October 2022 with a total secured extra-budgetary financing of USD 1,555,235.50.
3. The overall objective of ICSAL was to support governments, private sector and other stakeholders within the three selected focus countries in the implementation of policies and practices leading to improvement in product's design and product sustainability information and increased consumer awareness to support sustainable lifestyles. Specifically, ICSAL aimed to address the following key obstacles: i) Lack of policy, financing and other incentives to foster investments in the development of more sustainable products; ii) Lack of or deficient technology and processes that could improve organizations' sustainability performance; and iii) Lack of information that supports consumer behaviour by working with intermediaries – business and government - thus indirectly reaching the individual consumer. Through this approach, ICSAL aimed to impact on the drivers of consumer behaviour related to marketing influence, the availability of more sustainable products, and fostering sustainable consumption and production.

### This evaluation

4. This Evaluation had two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, Universidad de los Andes and FUNDATEC de Costa Rica as well as other key stakeholders. Therefore, the Evaluation aimed to identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation.
5. The evaluation was conducted in the period from June 2023 to January 2024 and included field missions to Costa Rica and Colombia (in September 2023), as well as a number of online consultations with other key stakeholders, in particular from Mexico.

### Key findings

6. The *Strategic Relevance* of ICSAL was assessed as *Highly Satisfactory*. ICSAL was well aligned to UNEP strategic priorities and work planning, as well as to the Green Deal roadmap of the EU. ICSAL was well-aligned to the SDGs as well as to the regional agenda. In addition, there were several concrete complementary actions between ICSAL and the IKI grant 'Advance SCP' also implemented under the PIMS ID 2011, as well as with other

UNEP projects. Most importantly, ICSAL was fundamental in preparing the way for a new and larger IKI project which provides additional support to the Environmental Alliance of America, the first regional initiative for developing a common ecolabeling and environmental declarations system in Latin America and the Caribbean.

7. The *Quality of Project Design* was rated as *Moderately Satisfactory*. Overall, the project design process was characterized by a strong anchoring within the LAC region, and using of experience from previous and ongoing projects, including as a basis for selecting focus countries, key partner institutions and relevant expertise. ICSAL's design was strong in terms of its strategic relevance and in terms of its planned governance and supervision arrangements, communication and knowledge, financing/budgeting, and efficiency measures. On the other hand, design weaknesses were identified in relation to the limited importance given to analysis of the operating context (the socio-political situation), results and causalities, logical framework and indicators, as well as in relation to risk assessments and addressing of sustainability concerns.
8. The *Nature of the External Context* was rated as being *Favorable*. ICSAL was not affected by any key external features related to the implementing context, that could have been reasonably expected at the design stage to limit its performance. Two factors, however, did occasionally affect the economic and political implementation context, namely the national elections within the three focus countries and the COVID-19 pandemic.
9. The *Effectiveness* of ICSAL was assessed as being *Moderately Satisfactory*. All output targets, which were formulated as numbers of events completed and number of participants, were achieved. The expected outcome, however, has so far only materialized to a limited extent, although the continuation through a larger IKI project, and a renewed high-level political commitment and increasing interest for participation in the Environmental Alliance of America, present some positive developments in a forward-looking perspective.
10. The *Financial Management* of ICSAL was *Satisfactory*. ICSAL has fully adhered to UNEP's financial policies and procedures and financial reports have been completed with only insignificant delays. In addition, the process has benefitted from a smooth communication and continuous interaction between the involved programme and financial officers.
11. The *Efficiency* of ICSAL was rated as *Moderately Unsatisfactory*. Mainly due to COVID-19, two extensions were made to deliver postponed activities although often in adjusted forms (virtually instead of physical events). However, the spreading out of relatively few budget resources over a nearly 4-year period was not efficient and led to a number of fragmented interventions. At the same time, while there were some intentions to coordinate interventions across the three components during the first part of ICSAL, this coordination never became strong and in practice the production and consumer parts were implemented separately. Finally, it took around two years to sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the governments of Colombia, Costa Rica and Mexico due to bureaucracy and change of governments within the focus countries. This significantly delayed implementation of several planned interventions.
12. The *Monitoring and Reporting* was assessed to be *Moderately Unsatisfactory*. The monitoring design has been rather unambitious and did not tend to measure progress in terms of enhancement of capacities, skills, knowledge, adoption of new technologies, changes in companies' sales/revenues as a result of the implemented activities. In view of this, monitoring of implementation mainly consisted of 'ticking the box' when an event had been completed and counting the number of participants. ICSAL's reporting was in general timely and fulfilled UNEP's reporting requirements.

13. The *Sustainability* aspects were assessed to be *Moderately Unlikely*. While the sustainability aspects of ICSAL's interventions were in many areas weakly addressed, the possibility to continue the support to the Environmental Alliance of America through the IKI Advance project remains of critical importance together with the linking of ICSAL to the LAC Regional SCP Council and the LAC Circular Economy Coalition, to enable that project outputs can be further consolidated, institutionalized and shared at regional level. In addition, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, the issue of sustainable consumption has gained further attention in the region and may also add positively to this.
14. The Factors Affecting Performance were assessed as Moderately Satisfactory. ICSAL was well rooted and the LAC context and previous experiences and with good participation in its planning. The quality of project management and supervision was seen as good on part of UNEP. There has been a strong interest for participation in ICSAL across stakeholder groups and countries, including some good examples of cross-cooperation. A Communication and Learning Strategy was prepared and partly implemented but activity implementation lacked proper monitoring and follow-up. In terms of shortcomings, ICSAL was affected by lack of proper preparation of the legal and constitutional base for the Environmental Alliance of America together with the limited country ownership to the SCP agenda, which is still mainly driven more by individuals than through an institutional anchoring within the focus countries. In addition, ICSAL's responsiveness to human rights and gender equality issues has been weak and no social and environmental safeguarding measures were developed.
15. Overall, ICSAL demonstrates a rating of **Moderately Satisfactory**. A table with a summary of the individual ratings is provided in section 6.1.

## Conclusions

16. **KSQ f)** "To what extent has the EU Grant (ICSAL) contributed to a regional approach to ecolabelling (through the Environmental Alliance of America) and what are lessons learned with view of the upcoming UNEP-GIZ project IKI Eco-Advance. Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities?". ICSAL was instrumental in its support for establishing of a regional ecolabel scheme through the *Environmental Alliance of America*. During ICSAL's implementation period, technical normative documentation for the Alliance has been prepared and more countries from the region are expressing interest in joining the Alliance. The political commitment in the LAC region to the Alliance has been re-confirmed during high-level ministerial meetings.
17. In general, the technical part of ICSAL was well delivered. This includes the assessments and developments of technical standards and norms for ecolabeling both nationally and in relation to the regional ecolabel. Likewise, the quality of the technical assistance provided to companies and retailers in relation to certification processes and sustainable design, production and information campaigns is highly rated. At the same time, ICSAL demonstrated good value from working with SCP in a combined national and regional effort and substantive areas were well integrated.
18. **KSQ g)** "Has the division of tasks between UNEP Economy Division and Regional Offices proved to be effective in project delivery?". The UNEP regional LAC office has played a crucial role in relation to the coordination and facilitation of the implementation process, not least during the COVID-19 pandemic which required adaption from physical to virtual interventions. While this led to an extension of the implementation period, it did not significantly affect the performance of ICSAL. The division of work between the UNEP Economy Division and Regional LAC Offices also proved to be effective in project delivery,

although a stronger technical support from UNEP HQ in designing appropriate models for scaling could have been beneficial.

19. ICSAL included several interesting innovative initiatives, including the *Sustainable Consumption Week 2021 in LAC* and the national and regional *Sustainable Lifestyle Contests*. These initiatives were very well received and attended by key stakeholders.
20. ICSAL however suffered from lack of a clear strategic vision on how to link its three components which tended to work in silos. ICSAL implementation focused mainly on companies, and mainly the larger ones operating in sectors engaged in public procurement processes (such as cleaning products and paper), and to a lesser extent on private consumers. This reinforced a context with no real private consumer demand for ecolabel products within the focus countries.
21. National elections and varied political commitment within the focus countries have affected implementation to an extent which was not sufficiently covered by ICSAL's risk assessment and related mitigation strategies. The high dependency of governments and their decision-making processes has been a grand obstacle in ICSAL, including for the legal establishment of the Environmental Alliance of America. In relation to this, ICSAL stayed very much within a small network of individuals and to a lesser extent was able to develop institutions within the focus countries.
22. **KSQ c)** "What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?". While the COVID-19 pandemic caused delays in the implementation, most planned interventions were still implemented although in many cases adapted from physical events (workshops, trainings, technical assistance activities etc.) to virtual activities (online training and webinars). While this change in delivery approach allowed for an increased participation of stakeholders, it did not significantly affect the performance.
23. ICSAL's focus on gender issues and vulnerable groups was mostly indirect (e.g. number of women participating in different events). Youth was explicitly targeted through the Sustainable Lifestyle Contests. Besides that, ICSAL has not included a strategic approach and focus to this topic. A developed Gender Strategy was not implemented, and the vulnerable groups were not identified.
24. **KSQ h)** "To what extent has a conscious scaling-up and replication model been successfully demonstrated? How well has a scaling-up/replication model been articulated, and lessons captured for wider learning?". ICSAL was not successful in developing any conscious model for scaling of the demonstrated sustainable production practices nor of the campaigns targeting consumers. This is largely due to the fact that the thinking behind SCP was not institutionalized or conceptualized within business associations and consumer groups, which was again a result of lacking incentives and low political prioritization.
25. **KSQ a)** "To what extent was the EU grant (ICSAL) complementary with the other grants of the UNEP project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011), e.g. the IKI grant "Advancing and Measuring Sustainable Consumption and Production for a Low-Carbon Economy in Middle-Income and Newly Industrialized Countries"?" and **KSQ b)** "To what extent did the EU grant (ICSAL) contribute to the intervention strategy of the UNEP project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011)?". ICSAL has demonstrated a good complementary with the other grants of the PIMS ID 2011, such as the IKI grant "Advancing and Measuring Sustainable Consumption and Production for a Low-Carbon

Economy in Middle-Income and Newly Industrialized Countries". There were various examples of joint coordination, organization and financing of activities. Overall, ICSAL made a good contribution to the intervention strategy of the PIMS ID 2011. This included an effective support to coordination of the 10YFP on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns Consumer Information Programme and in particular the efforts to increase regional and, to some extent, also international cooperation. The work around the Alliance was of most importance here.

26. **KSQ e)** To what extent could the EU grant (ICSAL) have benefited from increased engagement with the European Commission and EU Delegations? The EU and the EU Delegations contributed actively and importantly to major ICSAL events, such as the National Sustainable Lifestyles Contests and the LAC Sustainable Consumption Week 2021. At national levels, the EU Delegations also contributed to an enhancement of the visibility of ICSAL in several other events. Despite this, there was limited engagement with the EU Delegations at national levels and only on a very few occasions were attempts made to connect ICSAL with other EU funded initiatives within the LAC region and focus countries.
27. **KSQ d)** To what extent was the EU grant (ICSAL) in line with the UNEP private sector engagement strategy? ICSAL was very well in line with UNEP' first private sector engagement strategy, which was adopted in 2019. ICSAL was to some extent addressing all five outcomes outlined in the strategy, but most particularly Outcome 3: *Business models based on circularity, resource efficiency and sustainability that drive cultural change amongst consumers and contribute to the decoupling of economic growth from the unsustainable use of natural resources.*

## Lessons Learned

28. **Lesson 1:** National elections need to be factored in and risk assessments conducted.
29. **Lesson 2:** Certification (ecolabeling) needs to be based on a marketing/market assessment to create incentives for companies.
30. **Lesson 3:** The choice of sectors/industries is key and it is necessary to engage them from the very beginning of the process.
31. **Lesson 4:** Regional ecolabeling is a (long) process and it is important to understand the different pace of components.
32. **Lesson 5:** Scaling and replication of ecolabeling does not happen automatically during implementation but requires use of a strategic approach, which, in the case of the Environmental Alliance of America, could include stronger link to trade treaties and initiatives in the region, banks, etc.

## Recommendations

33. **Recommendation 1:** Any follow-on or new project requiring selection and planning of ecolabeling demonstration "cases" should be done with an explicit focus on the potentials for scaling and replication.
34. **Recommendation 2:** Any follow-on or new SCP project should, to a larger extent, use regional experience (regional "peer countries") as models and inspiration for regional expansion of SCP, given the similarity of contextual factors (language, culture, trade patterns etc.) among countries in the LAC region.

- 35. Recommendation 3:** Any follow-on or new project should include a clear strategic promotion of gender equality and human rights in SCP related projects, including definition of whom the most vulnerable people are and how they are affected and targeted.

The recommendations are elaborated in more detail in Section 6.3.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

36. ICSAL was implemented by the Resource Efficiency Unit at the UNEP Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Office (Programme Management Officer under supervision of the Unit Head at the UNEP LAC Office) with the technical support of the Sustainable Consumption and Production Unit of the UNEP Industry and Economy Division (Programme Management Officer under supervision of Consumption and Production Head of Unit). The EU grant was implemented under the UNEP Project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011) which was implemented by the Sustainable Consumption and Production Unit of the UNEP Industry and Economy Division
37. ICSAL was implemented with the support of national consultants and implementing partners (Universidad de los Andes and Fundación Tecnológico (FUNDATEC) de Costa Rica) within three countries in the LAC region: Colombia, Costa Rica and Mexico. The EU grant was implemented under the Resource Efficiency (now Finance and Economic Transformations) Subprogramme in the UNEP Medium-Term Strategy 2018-2021 and contributed to the Programme of Work (PoW) 2020-2021. ICSAL was approved in November 2018 and implemented over a period of three years and 10 months (December 2018 to October 2022). The total secured extra-budgetary financing for ICSAL was USD 1,555,235.50.
38. The overall objective of ICSAL was to support governments, private sector and other stakeholders in three selected focus countries (Colombia, Costa Rica and Mexico) in the implementation of policies and practices leading to improvement in product's design and product sustainability information and increased consumer awareness to support sustainable lifestyles. Specifically, ICSAL aimed to address the following key obstacles: i) Lack of policy, financing and other incentives to foster investments in the development of more sustainable products; ii) Lack of or deficient technology and processes that could improve organizations' sustainability performance; and iii) Lack of information that supports consumer behaviour by working with intermediaries – business and government - thus indirectly reaching the individual consumer. Through this approach, ICSAL aimed to impact on the drivers of consumer behaviour related to marketing influence, the availability of more sustainable products, and fostering sustainable consumption and production.
39. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy<sup>2</sup> and the UNEP Programme Manual<sup>3</sup>, this Terminal Evaluation was undertaken at operational completion of ICSAL to assess its performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the supported interventions, including their sustainability. The Evaluation had two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, Universidad de los Andes and FUNDATEC de Costa Rica as well as other key stakeholders. Therefore, the Evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/policies-and-strategies>

<sup>3</sup> <https://wecollaborate.unep.org>



## 2 EVALUATION METHODS

### Overall approach to the evaluation

40. An Evaluation Framework (Annex III) was developed and constituted the overall guiding framework for the evaluation. The Evaluation Framework included further detailing and operationalisation of the Evaluation Questions (EQs) presented in the ToR.

41. Given the complexity and nature of this evaluation, a *theory-based approach* has been applied. A core element in this approach has been the reconstructed Theory of Change (ToC, see Figure 2) together with revised result statements (see Table 4). These illustrate and explain how the different components and interventions, introduced and supported by ICSAL, jointly were expected to lead to change.

42. The evaluator has applied a *purposive sampling strategy* for field data collection, in particular with a view to selecting intervention sites and participants for interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) (see below). More specifically, the evaluator has adhered to a *maximum variation purposive sample* which is sometimes also referred to as a *heterogeneous purposive sample*. The reason for this is that this evaluation intends to examine a wide and diverse range of activities of relevance to ICSAL's support, thus the purposive sampling approach has allowed the evaluator to gain insight from many different actors and angles, especially during the field mission.

43. The evaluation has applied a *human rights-based approach* and *mainstreamed gender* throughout the evaluation. This means that the evaluator has paid due attention to the principles of a rights-based approach by assessing the extent to which ICSAL has expressed linkage to rights, has ensured accountability, empowerment, participation, non-discrimination and attention to vulnerable groups. The evaluator has assessed the extent to which ICSAL has adhered to these principles but at the same time applied the same principles to the actual evaluation process. Different stakeholders have been included (see Table 2), and no type of stakeholders have been excluded from the process.

### Key evaluation methods applied

44. *Desk review* of relevant documentation, including semi-annual, annual and final project reports, reports from partners and consultants, financial reports and budgets, work plans, minutes from meetings, relevant correspondence, study and research work, training materials etc.

45. A *field mission* to two of the three focus countries (Costa Rica and Colombia, with a stop-over at the UNEP regional LAC office in Panama) constituted the major source for data collection, mainly through application of qualitative methods (see below).

46. *Interviews* have been conducted with key stakeholders to obtain qualitative findings on fundamental evaluation issues. The interviews were conducted either in person (during the field mission to Costa Rica – Panama – Colombia) or online. A provisional list of key stakeholders for interviews and consultations during the implementation phase was identified (Annex 7). The EQs included in the Evaluation Framework and the sub-questions were used to guide the interviews with different stakeholder groups in order to gather information in a consistent manner, covering all relevant evaluation aspects. Thus, the Evaluation Framework served as a flexible and adaptive tool as not all questions/issues were relevant to discuss with all key stakeholders.

47. FGDs were conducted as part of the country visits, to collect qualitative information from intentionally homogenous groups of stakeholders, who were gathered for more open discussions, facilitated by the evaluator, on specific topics. This allowed the evaluator to capture views and opinions from a larger group of key stakeholders. The FGDs were useful to complement and validate/verify findings from interviews and site visits (see below). The FGDs were also useful to identify any unintended outcomes/impact from the supported interventions.
48. *Site observations* were conducted by the evaluator during the country field visits. These observations covered assessments of the relevance and implementation of new technologies, techniques and practices introduced through ICSAL. This related to both companies/retailers, public/private institutions and consumers. A sample of supported companies/retailers from both Costa Rica and Colombia was selected for site visits. These companies were selected in order to represent different sectors, different stages of development, and different levels of support from ICSAL.
49. *Social media* data were collected/identified to illustrate how much attention and interest specific events have got. This was in particular done in relation to consumer-related activities.
50. Table 2 lists number of respondents per main stakeholder group, divided into gender (m/f). As can be seen from the table, there has been a good and balanced response rate across all main stakeholder groups and a good gender balance.

**Table 2: Table of respondents**

Stakeholder group	Male	Female	Total
UNEP management and staff	4	4	8
Implementing partners (institutions, consultants)	2	3	5
Government actors	2	2	4
Technical institutions/bodies	4	3	7
Private sector	8	8	16
Academics and researchers	2	2	4
Influencers, consumer representatives	1	1	2
Others (donors)	2	/	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>48</b>

### Evaluation analysis

51. The Evaluation analysis has been carried out based on data and information collected through the above-mentioned methods. Thus, the evaluator triangulated data with information from different sources, to outline a solid and robust picture of the evaluation results. The analysis included the following key features:
- An assessment of the continued relevance of ICSAL's interventions in view of the developments since its start. Here, the impact from the COVID-19 pandemic on different stakeholders (including gender, youth, marginalized and vulnerable groups), target groups and geographical areas were of particular concern.
  - An assessment of the extent to which results were achieved/not achieved through the supported interventions.

- A methodological consideration of changes in the various assumptions and contextual factors over time and how that may have influenced the implementation and resulting outcomes of the interventions.
- An assessment of the coherence which addressed the level of synergies and interlinkages to other UNEP supported interventions (internal coherence) as well as the consistency of ICSAL with other actors' interventions in the same context (external coherence).
- An assessment of the resource utilisation in ICSAL with a view to both economic, human and natural resources as well as to the level of internal coordination and collaboration.
- An assessment of the forward-looking perspectives of the supported interventions.

### Limitations to the evaluation

52. In general, it was difficult for the evaluator to identify data beyond the level of "number of participants", "number of events" etc. Efforts were not made in ICSAL to collect data on e.g. perceptions and satisfaction levels with the training and technical assistance conducted nor have intentions been made to collect data on the actual outcome of the implemented training and technical assistance activities.
53. It was not possible for the evaluator to conduct two planned online surveys with focus on outcomes from completed training and capacity building events, since contact information on participants (email addresses and corresponding names) was incomplete in the project files.
54. Due to the two extensions, a number of ICSAL's activities were implemented some years prior to the evaluation. This made it difficult for some stakeholders to clearly recall the activities they had attended and also what came out of it.
55. Due to the change of governments within all three focus countries during the implementation period, government staff had changed, and many moved to new positions and responsibilities. Generally, these staff did not make themselves available to the evaluation and new staff did not have the same institutional memory of ICSAL. In Mexico, none of the people from ministries responded to the invitations for an online interview. This represents a limitation to the representation of government perspectives in the evaluation.
56. In both Costa Rica and Colombia, the focal point for ICSAL at the EU Delegation were new in the office and had not been there during the implementation period. Those who had been focal points for ICSAL during implementation referred to the new staff. This limited the possibility to get a perspective on ICSAL implementation from EU Delegations at country level.

## 3 THE PROJECT

### 3.1 Context

57. Present consumption decisions negatively impact the environment and socio-economic development. Unsustainable consumption patterns increase the pressure on natural resources, and intensify human footprint, pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, waste generation, water degradation, resource depletion and loss of biodiversity. Unsustainable consumption can also contribute to social problems, such as unfair working conditions, social disparities, reduced quality of life and wellbeing and harm human health.
58. The economic impacts of unsustainable consumption can lead to low availability of and limited access to sustainable products, limited market rewards (premiums) to sustainable products, increased market share of unsustainable products, limited incentives to innovation, missed opportunities for circular economy, and increased risk of business exposure associated with environmental and social impacts and liabilities. These effects cannot be ignored.
59. Market-driven product information tools such as ecolabelling can offer an economic incentive for producers in developing countries to innovate and design more resource efficient products. Ecolabels based on a lifecycle approach define criteria for sustainable products comprising all stages of their lifecycle. Ecolabels communicate information about products' sustainability aspects to consumers and thereby differentiate eco-labelled products in the marketplace. In the context of SCP, ecolabels contribute to defining criteria and verifying compliance.
60. The combined approaches of voluntary and reliable ecolabelling are seen by UNEP as important elements to create a dynamic framework for improving the performance of products through-out their life cycle, stimulating demand and supply of better products, and helping consumers to make better choices.
61. ICSAL was underpinned by the idea that the lack of reliable information on sustainability aspects across products' life cycles leads to lack of informed decision making and perpetuates unsustainable consumption. Therefore, access to reliable information is one of the essential conditions for the shift towards SCP patterns.
62. The LAC region is a pioneer on SCP. It was the first region to develop a SCP regional strategy back in 2003, together with the establishment of a Regional Council of Government Experts on SCP. Both the Regional Council and the strategy have been given institutional support of the Regional Forum of Ministers of Environment. In 2015 the regional strategy was updated integrating the linkages to the SDGs and re-emphasizing the regional support to the 10-Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP) implementation and thus the One Planet network.

### 3.2 Results Framework

63. The overall objective of ICSAL was to support governments, private sector and other stakeholders in the implementation of policies and practices that will lead to improvement in product's design and product sustainability information and increase consumer awareness to support sustainable lifestyles in the LAC region. This objective was to be achieved through the use of a range of tools and partners offered by One Planet Network and responding to the regional and national SCP strategies.

64. In order to achieve its overall objective and guarantee an effective implementation of sustainable consumption patterns, ICSAL focused on: (i) Promoting the supply and demand for sustainable products for the LAC region and to ensure companies make reliable and clear claims to consumers on product-related sustainability information; (ii) Increasing the availability of certified products in the market, helping consumers to make informed decisions; and (iii) Raising awareness among society on sustainable lifestyles generating agents of change towards more sustainable consumption practices.
65. This was to be achieved through the following strategic interventions: i) Building local capacity on sustainable product design and eco-innovation and strengthening reliable communication of sustainability of products; ii) Strengthening the use of consumer information tools and enabling policy frameworks; and iii) Promoting Sustainable Lifestyles at national level targeting key groups specially youth and middle-class population through community outreach, communication campaigns, and innovation competitions in partnership with universities.
66. In ICSAL's Concept Note, the *impact* statement is formulated as to "increase the number of certified sustainable products, and availability of reliable consumer information, reducing environmental impact and increasing quality of life and sustainable lifestyles". The *intermediate state* refers to "improvement in product design and production processes and increase in consumer information to support sustainable lifestyles". One outcome is contained as "Private and public sector stakeholders increasingly use SCP tools provided by the One Planet network to change consumption practices, reducing pressure on the environment and fostering social and economic development, contributing to SDG12". Three outputs are linked to the outcome: i) "Technical assistance and capacity building provided to improve design and production processes and communicate reliable information on products' sustainability attributes to consumers"; ii) "Technical assistance and capacity building provided for public and private institutions to develop/ improve/ strengthen the use of consumer information tools and enabling policy frameworks"; and iii) "Information on eco-labels and sustainable lifestyles provided to consumers, facilitating informed decisions, targeting key groups (especially youth and middle-class population) through community outreach, innovation contests and social media campaigns".

### 3.3 Stakeholders

67. ICSAL targeted the following groups of key stakeholders: i) *Government actors* (mainly the Ministries of Environment in Costa Rica and Colombia, and the Ministry of Economy in Mexico<sup>4</sup>); ii) *Technical institutions, academics and influencers* related to standard setting, labelling and SCP; iii) *Companies and retailers*; and iv) *Consumers and community groups*. ICSAL also included work with academics, researchers and influencers to draw their attention to the importance of the provision of reliable sustainability information and to help raising awareness among consumers on sustainable consumption and improve their capacity to take informed consumption decisions.

#### Government partners

68. The design process was based on a close working relationship with the Ministers of Environment in Costa Rica and Colombia, and with the Minister of Economy in Mexico. Common for the engagement with these ministries was that it required a buy-in and

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<sup>4</sup> In case of Mexico, while the focal point was the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources also participated in the coordination of some activities associated to one of the components.

commitment from the highest political level in the ministries to make the various departments and staff prioritise ICSAL's interventions. However, national elections and/or frequent change of Ministers led to changes in political priorities during the implementation period (most notably in the case of Mexico). In addition, relatively less powerful and weakly resourced Ministries of Environment in both Costa Rica and Colombia limited opportunities to convene other governmental actors to the process.

### Technical institutions, academics and influencers

69. Another key stakeholder group in ICSAL was the technical institutions and bodies related to standard setting, labelling and SCP. These institutions included in particular: Instituto de Normas Técnicas de Costa Rica (INTECO), Ente Costarricense de Acreditación (ECA), Colombian Institute for Standardization and Certification (ICONTEC), National Entity for Accreditation (ENAC) in Colombia as well as the Mexican Entity of Accreditation (EMA) and the National Organization for Standardization and Certification for Construction (ONNCCE) in Mexico. These institutions played a key role in the development of the technical documents and norms.

### Companies and retailers

70. Companies and retailers composed a key stakeholder group, both in relation to sustainable design and production processes, as well as in relation to the consumer information. Since the chambers and associations of these producers/retailers were seen as powerful and politically influential organizations - and particularly important for catalysing scaling-up and replication efforts - it was critical to ensure the ownership of these stakeholders to the process. In practice, this was difficult, mainly due to lack of clear incentives.

### Consumers and community groups

71. In order to improve consumer information provided by business, national and local governments, consumers' organizations, influencers and others, ICSAL was designed to work directly with individual consumers to better understand their behaviour and decision-making. ICSAL was also designed to work with community groups, especially those representing youth and middle-income population, in order to raise awareness on sustainable consumption and improve capacity to take informed consumption decisions. This work was mainly implemented through support from influencers and through conducting national and regional sustainable lifestyle contests.

### Gender, Indigenous People, vulnerable and marginalized groups

72. ICSAL, through its indicators, made specific reference to gender considerations in relation to the training activities and there was a particular focus on youth (together with middle-income population) in relation to the consumer groups. In addition to this, the power and influence of these groups and other vulnerable and marginalised groups in ICSAL was rather low.

73. Table 3 shows a further elaborated stakeholder analysis where the above-mentioned stakeholder groups as well as the implementing partners (see section 3.4) are categorised in accordance with their respective power and interest in the grant interventions.

**Table 3: Stakeholder analysis**

Stakeholders	Power over the grant implementation and results/level of interest in grant activities	Participation in grant design	Potential roles and responsibilities during grant implementation	Expected changes in behaviour due to grant activities
Group A: High power / high interest				

Partner institutions	The institutional agendas and missions of 10YFP/One Planet network partner coincided with ICSALs objective and the indicators used in ICSAL are in line with the One Planet Indicators of Success.  EU Delegations within the focus countries were involved from the inception.	Partially	ICSAL involved 10YFP/One Planet network partner institutions in grant implementation and complemented efforts that were already ongoing.  With EU delegations', ICSAL searched for alignment with priorities and as strategic communication partners to increase the outreach of ICSAL.	Expected enhancement in technical and coordination capacities to promote the SCP agenda and to influence governments and private sector stakeholders as well as consumers in their respective countries and within the region.
Implementing partners	Institutional priorities aligned to the grant's objectives and opportunities for further developing university careers and curricula within the area of SCP.	Partially	Implemented grant activities in their respective countries in accordance with a scope of work agreed with the UNEP LAC Office and the technical guidance from UNEP Economy Division	Expected to increase their technical and coordination capacities to implement SCP-related policies and mechanisms in their respective countries and to influence government and private sector stakeholders in their respective countries.
Influencers	The power of influencers in driving all consumers' behaviour is undisputable. More and more consumers rely on social media influencers when making a consumption decision.	No	ICSAL worked with influencers to draw their attention to the importance of the provision of reliable sustainability information.	Enhanced skills /knowledge and interest in SCP when preparing product review website, consumer ratings and opinions to enable consumers to make informed consumption decisions.
Direct beneficiaries	As the level of interest and incentive of individual and groups of beneficiaries was expected to vary considerably and even change over time, the ICSAL implementation partners was expected to assess and respond accordingly to maintain adequate levels of engagement by beneficiaries.	No	Served as counterparts for the implementation of grant activities.  Beneficiaries received capacity building, technical assistance, training, awareness raising, targeted information and other types of support.	Changes in knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitudes of direct beneficiaries in response to grant activities are the most determinant factor of the success of ICSAL. In particular, enhanced technical capacities/skills and knowledge / information to raise interest and incentives for SCP-related policies, mechanisms and products.
<b>Group B: High power / low interest</b>				
National ministries	ICSAL implementation has depended on a buy-in and commitment from the highest political level in the ministries to make the various departments and staff prioritize ICSAL interventions.	No	Encourage and facilitate coordination with government agencies and other key stakeholders in their respective countries and in the region.	Expected to increase their technical and coordination capacities to promote the SCP-policy agenda and to influence other governmental and private sector stakeholders in their respective countries.
<b>Group C: Low power / high interest</b>				

Technical institutions	Provision of technical knowledge to ICSAL and advancing the interest for and level of SCP knowledge within the countries and the region.	No	Responsible for participating in sub-activities by sharing knowledge and information, providing feedback and reviews.	Expected to facilitate the validation and pilot cases in their organizations, presenting findings in regional and international conferences.
Academia and research institutions	Users of knowledge generated by the grant and potential resource people/institutions for the implementation of grant activities.	No	Potential partners for the implementation of activities that are technical in scope.	Expected to gain awareness of SCP and improve capacities to generate knowledge and science-based evidence to support decision-making in areas relevant to SCP.
Consumers (middle-income population and youth), community groups	Intended users of knowledge and information generated by the grant. Little direct influence over grant activities.	No	Target audience for communication outreach and awareness raising activities.	Expected to gain awareness of and interest in sustainable consumption and improve their capacity to take informed consumption decisions.
<b>Group D: Low power / low interest</b>				
Indigenous Peoples, vulnerable, and/or marginalized groups	Potential users of knowledge and information generated by the grant No direct influence over grant activities.	No	Potential secondary target audience for communication outreach and awareness raising activities.	Communication activities targeting middle-income consumers and youth, could have a wider outreach and help to raise awareness about sustainable consumption.

### 3.4 Project Implementation Structure and Partners

74. The overall implementation of ICSAL was led by the Resource Efficiency Unit at the UNEP LAC Office (Programme Management Officer under the supervision of the Unit Head at UNEP LAC Office) with the technical support from the Sustainable Consumption and Production Unit of the UNEP Economy Division (Programme Management Officer under the supervision of Consumption and Production Head of Unit). A *Project Technical Committee* at regional level was created and provided technical advice and supervised progress and achievements during the implementation period. The participating members of this committee were representatives from the UNEP LAC Office; representatives from national governments in Costa Rica, Colombia and Mexico; representatives from national ecolabel standardization and accreditation institutions; as well as representatives from the European Commission/EU Delegations. Within each of the three focus countries, a *National Project Committee* was supposed to be established with participation of national key stakeholders to meet regularly. However, these national committees rarely became functional in any of the three focus countries, mainly due to lack of strong leadership at national level.
75. 10YFP/One Planet network partner institutions have provided policy and technical guidance to the selection and implementation of grant activities. Costa Rica, Colombia and Mexico are all actively involved in the 10YFP/One Planet network. Beyond government involvement, other technical and non-governmental institutions are also part of the One Planet network in these countries.
76. *Multi-stakeholder Working Groups* on Sustainable Lifestyles were organized in all three focus countries based upon relevant existing expert groups/platforms to provide specific guidance and feedback for the elaboration and dissemination of awareness raising and



social media campaigns and to be part of the national contests on eco-innovation for sustainable lifestyles.

77. The EU Delegations within the focus countries were seen as key actors from the inception of the sub-activities throughout the implementation. With EU delegations', ICSAL searched for alignment with priorities and as strategic communication partners to increase the outreach of ICSAL. However, over time it became difficult to maintain a close relation and interaction with the EU Delegations at country level, partly due to the delay in implementation and difficulties with operationalization of the National Project Committees. Changes of staff at the EU Delegations further added to these challenges.

### 3.5 Changes in Design during Implementation

78. Due to delays in implementation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, ICSAL was initially granted a 1-year extension until October 2021 and then a second 1-year extension until October 2022. These extensions allowed the ICSAL to convert planned physical interventions (workshops, trainings, technical assistance activities etc.) to virtual activities (including webinars). This change in delivery approach allowed for an increased participation of stakeholders.

79. Additional funds were allocated to ICSAL for inclusion of new activities related to circular economy (a first top-up grant of USD 193,000 was allocated to ICSAL in 2021 and another top-up extension of USD 24,000 was granted in 2022). This allowed support to coordination of the Circular Economy Coalition in Latin America and Caribbean (under Output 2) to be maintained.

### 3.6 Project Financing

80. ICSAL was financed by the EU under the Environment and Natural Resources Thematic Programme (ENRTP) Strategic Cooperation Agreement (2011-2022). Initially, an amount of EUR 1,200,000 was allocated to ICSAL. During implementation, additional funds were allocated for inclusion of new activities related to circular economy (a first top-up grant of USD 193,000 was allocated to ICSAL in 2021 and another top-up extension of USD 24,000 was granted in 2022). This allowed to maintain support to coordination of the Circular Economy Coalition in Latin America and Caribbean (under Output 2). Table 3 provides an overview of the overall funding sources and amounts.

**Table 3 Project Funding Sources Table**

Funding source	Planned funding	% of planned funding	Secured funding <sup>5</sup>	% of secured funding
<i>All figures as USD</i>				
<i>Cash</i>				
Funds from the Environment Fund				
Funds from the Regular Budget				
Extra-budgetary funding (EU):	1,464,968.16	100	1,555,235.50	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,464,968.16</b>		<b>1,555,235.50</b>	

81. While the initial budget allocations were relatively even across the three components, the two top-ups made more budgetary emphasis at Component 2 (see Table 4). Since an

<sup>5</sup> Secured funding refers to received funds and does not include funding commitments not yet realised.

expenditure break-down per component has not been available to the evaluation, it has not been possible to verify the cost per component.

**Table 4 Budget Expenditure by component**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Estimated budget allocation at design</b>	<b>Estimated budget allocation after top-ups</b>
Component 1	358,750	379,299
Component 2	525,788	390,455
Component 3	437,477	360,189

## 4 THEORY OF CHANGE AT EVALUATION

82. ICSAL's Theory of Change (ToC) was depicted in many parts of its design and shows how different interventions were supposed to achieve the final goal of the grant. In the Concept Note, the ToC is developed from a thorough analysis based on a problem and solutions tree. The ToC diagram presented in the Concept Note is a simplified diagram of results and change pathways, lacking some intermediate results/states and more complex and interrelated pathways. According to the original ToC, the change pathways are linear within three main outputs and one outcome, the attainment of which, in turn, would lead to the achievement of ICSAL's intermediate state and impact.
83. The reconstructed ToC at Evaluation (identical to the rToC presented in the inception report) presented in Figure 2 illustrates more clearly the change pathways and the causal links in a *stepwise* manner. Here the path from outputs to impact illustrates the changes required in relation to the key intervention groups and areas. From the ToC at Evaluation, it is clear that the path to impact-level changes starts with three main groups of interventions: i) *Building local capacity on sustainable product design and eco-innovation and strengthening reliable communication of sustainability of products*; ii) *Strengthening the use of consumer information tools and enabling policy frameworks*; and iii) *Promoting Sustainable Lifestyles at national level*.
84. The Logical Framework in the Concept Note for ICSAL contains one outcome and three outputs. In the ToC at Evaluation, the outcome and outputs have been rephrased (see Table 4) to make them more consistent with UNEP results definitions. The originally formulated outputs referred mainly to capacity building, technical assistance, training, workshops, webinars and provision of information to public and private actors. However, the Logical Framework (and its related indicators) failed to explain how this transfer of knowledge and skills was supposed to lead to changes in knowledge levels and/or in attitudes (and for whom) and subsequently how it was expected to result in uptake and application (and for whom), ultimately leading to higher-level outcomes and impact (which would then depend not only on the implemented interventions but also on factors outside ICSAL's boundaries). These causal pathways were not clearly described in the Logical Framework in the Concept Note, making it unclear from the original ToC what kind of catalytic effects ICSAL was expected to provide in the given context.
85. Table 4 summarizes the above-mentioned issues and justification for reformulation and corrective actions to better capture and measure the intended results and identify the pathways of change from implemented activities, through outputs and outcomes. The reformulated statements have been used for the reconstruction of the ToC at Evaluation (see Figure 2).

**Table 4: Justification for reformulation of results statements**

Formulation in original grant document	Justification for reformulation	Reformulated statement in ToC at Evaluation
<b>Impact:</b> Increase the number of certified sustainable products, and availability of reliable consumer information, reducing environmental impact and increasing quality of life and sustainable lifestyles	This formulation is composed by a mix of outputs/outcomes and a rather broadly formulated impact statement	Reduced environmental impact and increased quality of life and sustainable lifestyles

Formulation in original grant document	Justification for reformulation	Reformulated statement in ToC at Evaluation
<p><b>Intermediate State:</b> Improvement in product design and production processes and increase in consumer information to support sustainable lifestyles</p>	<p>The way this intermediate state is formulated does not give the impression that it goes much beyond the level of the outcomes</p>	<p>Increased number of certified sustainable products and reliable consumer information and consumption choices to support sustainable lifestyles</p>
<p><b>Outcome:</b> Private and public sector stakeholders increasingly use SCP tools provided by the One Planet network to change consumption practices, reducing pressure on the environment and fostering social and economic development, contributing to SDG12</p>	<p>Statement revised considering that the target of the only outcome indicator reported below measures the number of countries applying SCP tools.</p> <p>Outcome indicator: Number of countries (public and private sector) applying SCP tools for policy implementation related to sustainable consumption/ lifestyles (baseline 0; target: 3)</p>	<p>Countries increasingly use SCP tools provided by the One Planet network to change consumption practices, reducing pressure on the environment and fostering social and economic development, contributing to SDG12.</p>
<p><b>Output 1:</b> Technical assistance and capacity building provided to improve design and production processes and communicate reliable information on products' sustainability attributes to consumers</p>	<p>This output is formulated as an activity and needs to be reformulated to better comply with UNEP standards. It is also composed of two different work streams which should be split into two different outputs, also considering the output indicators reported below:</p> <p>Indicator <b>1.1.1:</b> Number of companies trained on sustainable product design, eco-innovation and consumer information (baseline: 0; target: 45 (15 per country)).</p> <p>Indicator <b>1.1.2:</b> Number of women trained in the trainings along the project implementation. (baseline: 0; target 15).</p> <p>Indicator <b>1.2.1:</b> Number of companies or retailers supported to communicate reliable sustainability information to consumers to enable informed purchasing decisions (baseline: 0; target: 12 (4 per country))</p>	<p>Output 1.1: Companies enabled to improve sustainable design and production processes (measured by indicators <b>1.1.1.</b> and <b>1.1.2</b>)</p> <p>Output 1.2: Companies and retailers are capable of communicating reliable sustainability information to consumers (measured by indicators <b>1.2.1</b>)</p>
<p><b>Output 2:</b> Technical assistance and capacity building provided for public and private institutions to develop/ improve/ strengthen the use of consumer information tools and enabling policy frameworks</p>	<p>This output is formulated as an activity and needs to be reformulated to better comply with UNEP standards. It is also including both public and private institutions which could be separated into two different outputs, also considering the output indicators reported below:</p> <p>Indicator <b>2.1.1:</b> Number of assessments on enabling policy frameworks conducted (baseline 0, target 3).</p> <p>Indicator <b>2.1.2:</b> Number of countries participating in a knowledge sharing event on eco-labelling (baseline 0, target 10).</p> <p>Indicator <b>2.1.3:</b> Number of capacity development workshops for labelling,</p>	<p>Output 2.1: Key public and private institutions capacitated to develop/improve tools and enabling policy frameworks (measured by indicators <b>2.1.1, 2.1.2</b> and <b>2.1.3</b>)</p> <p>Output 2.2: Companies enabled to comply with existing standards and/or ecolabel schemes (measured by indicators <b>2.2.1</b> and <b>2.2.2</b>)</p>

Formulation in original grant document	Justification for reformulation	Reformulated statement in ToC at Evaluation
	<p>standardization and accreditation bodies (baseline 0; target 3).</p> <p>Indicator <b>2.2.1</b>: Number of companies supported to comply with existing standards and/or ecolabel schemes (baseline 0; target 12).</p> <p>Indicator <b>2.2.2</b>: Number of women trained in the trainings along the project implementation. (baseline: 0; target 15)</p>	
<p><b>Output 3:</b> Information on eco-labels and sustainable lifestyles provided to consumers, facilitating informed decisions, targeting key groups (especially youth and middle-class population) through community outreach, innovation contests and social media campaigns</p>	<p>This output is formulated as an activity and needs to be reformulated to better comply with UNEP standards. Also, it does not include the multi-stakeholder element, which should be seen as an important separate output.</p> <p>Output indicators:</p> <p>Indicator <b>3.1.1</b>: National Multi-stakeholder Committees or working groups on Sustainable Lifestyles (baseline 1, target 3).</p> <p>Indicator <b>3.2.1</b>: Number of awareness raising and social media campaigns ran (baseline 0, target 3).</p> <p>Indicator <b>3.3.1</b>: Number of national contests on eco-innovation for sustainable lifestyles implemented (baseline 0, target 3)</p>	<p>Output 3.1: National multi-stakeholder Sustainable Lifestyles Committees or working groups established, and eco-labels and sustainable lifestyles information made available to consumers (measured by indicator 3.1.1, 3.2.1 and 3.3.1)</p>

86. Together with the results statements and pathways, the ToC at Evaluation diagram (Figure 1) contains information on the preconditions for the changes to happen – the **key drivers and assumptions**<sup>6</sup>. In the ToC diagram, the drivers and assumptions are presented with red (drivers) and blue (assumptions) numbers, as reflected in Table 5. While the original ICSAL ToC included specification of both assumptions and drivers to facilitate the flow from activities to outputs and outcome and ultimate impact, these were mostly presented in more generic ways. In addition, some important assumptions and drivers were not considered in the grant design, in particular in relation to government’s involvement.

87. Table 5 provides an overview of the original assumptions and drivers from the approved ToC, together with the evaluator’s suggested changes/adjustments to these. The numbers in the column to the right refer to the ToC at Evaluation diagram.

**Table 5: Overview of critical drivers and assumptions for ICSAL**

Original Drivers and Assumptions from approved ICSAL ToC	Comments	Suggested new/revised formulation of Drivers and Assumptions

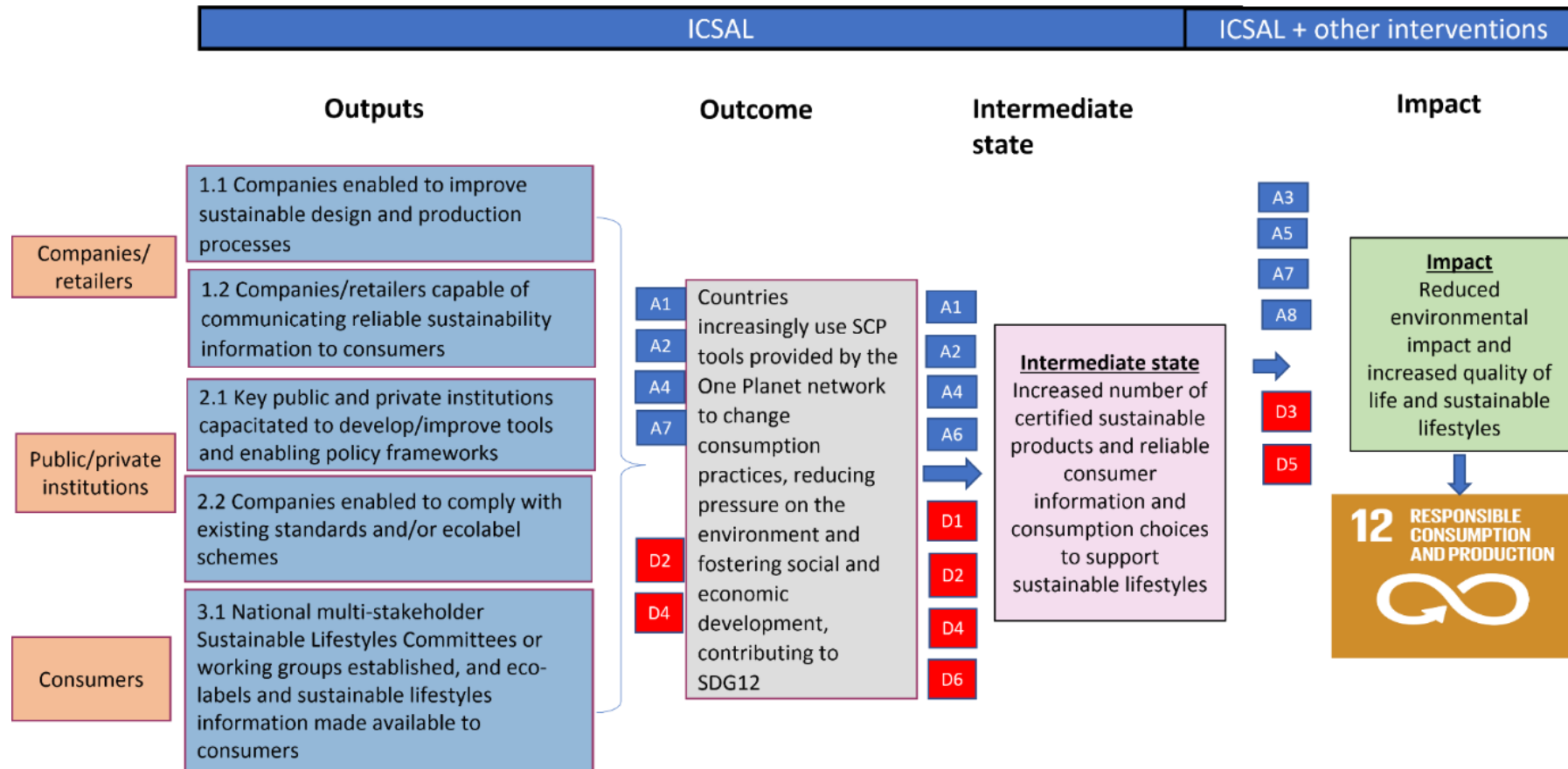
<sup>6</sup> A **driver** is a significant external factor that, if present, is expected to contribute to the realization of the intended results of a project. Drivers can be influenced by the project and its partners. An **assumption** is a significant external factor or condition that needs to be present for the realization of the intended results but is beyond the influence of the project and its partners. Assumptions are often positively formulated risks (UNEP Glossary of Results definitions, 2021).

<b>ASSUMPTIONS:</b>		
Private sector able to change production processes	No change suggested	A1
Availability of technology, data and methodologies	No change suggested	A2
Consumers increasingly educated	This is supposed to be a driver and not an assumption, since it is influenced by ICSAL.	Suggest including as a driver (see below)
Financial resources are available	This is too generic	A3: Government's commit and allocate sufficient resources in support of SCP
Stakeholders have will to change production processes and policies	Slightly change of formulation suggested	A4: Stakeholders have will and incentives to change production processes and policies
Marketing is increasingly considering sustainability	This is supposed to be a driver and not an assumption, since it is influenced by ICSAL	Suggest including as a driver (see below)
Transparent value chains allow to gather relevant and reliable information	No change	A5
Limited staff turnover among trained staff	Suggested additional assumption	A6
Continuous political will and commitment to support SCP also after election processes	Suggested additional assumption	A7
Consumers willing to change consumption patterns and pay a higher price for sustainable products	Suggested additional assumption	A8
<b>DRIVERS:</b>		
Increasing private sector ability to comply with certification	No change suggested	D1
Stakeholder collaboration to reduce fragmentation of consumer information landscape	No change suggested	D2
Enabling policy incentives, frameworks and institutions	No change suggested	D3
Ministries cooperate effectively during and, especially, after the end of ICSAL.	Suggested additional driver	D4
Consumers increasingly educated, including women, disabled, vulnerable and marginalized groups	See assumptions above. Dimension on equality added	D5
Marketing is increasingly considering sustainability	See assumptions above	D6

88. In the ToC at Evaluation, the upper bar (blue) illustrates the contribution from ICSAL vs. that from other interventions. The causal pathways, and the related assumptions and drivers, are illustrated in the diagram. ICSAL built on three different but inter-related change pathways. First, through ICSAL support companies/retailers should become enabled to enhance sustainable production design and processes and communicate this to consumers in a more reliable manner. This required that companies were able and willing to change

existing production processes and that the required technologies and data were made available (A1, A2 and A4). Second, through ICSAL support, public and private institutions should become capacitated to develop and improve relevant policy frameworks and tools and companies enabled to comply with them. This required a political will to support SCP and to change policies and production processes (A4 and A7). Third, through targeted campaigns and multi-stakeholder dialogue, consumers were expected to gain an increasing awareness and appetite for sustainable production and design. A good level of collaboration both between ministries and institutions involved as well as across the different stakeholder groups were seen as key drivers to these change pathways (D2 and D4). Subsequently, this was expected to lead to an increase in the number of SCP tools applied within the targeted countries and to more sustainable production and consumption choices, ultimately resulting in environmental and lifestyle improvements. In addition to the key assumptions referred above, for this to happen sufficient financial resources needed to be allocated to SCP by the respective governments, staff turnover within key institutions should not be too high, and value chains should be sufficiently transparent to allow gathering of relevant and reliable information (A3, A5 and A6). At the same time, an increasing ability among companies to comply with certification and a larger consideration of sustainability in marketing would help to drive this process (D1 and D6) along with continued stakeholder collaboration, enabling policy frameworks and better educated consumer groups, including with a view to gender and vulnerability considerations (D3 and D5).

Figure 1. ToC at Evaluation





## 5 EVALUATION FINDINGS

This chapter is organized according to the evaluation criteria presented in the ToRs and reflected in the performance ratings table. The Findings section provides a summative analysis of all triangulated data relevant to the parameters of the criteria.

### 5.1 Strategic Relevance

#### 5.1.1 Alignment to UNEP MTS, POW and Strategic Priorities

89. ICSAL made specific linkages to UNEP strategic priorities as expressed in the Resource Efficiency Sub-programme in the UNEP MTS 2018-2021, specifically aiming at fulfilling the target that *"Public and private sectors are increasingly aware of and support the adoption of sustainable lifestyles and sustainable consumption patterns"*.<sup>7</sup> In the MTS 2018-2021, it was further emphasized that *"UNEP will support the public and private sectors with policy options and capacity development across sectors and value chains, including with policy support, assessments and technical assistance on life cycle-based approaches, green investment, adopting sustainable consumption and production patterns..."* and that *"The subprogramme will draw on its partnerships, projects and flagship initiatives such as the International Resource Panel, the 10-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns and the Partnership for Action on Green Economy to deliver this vision and ensure that the 2030 impact is achieved"*. This was all well in line with ICSAL.

90. ICSAL was also well aligned to some of the outputs included for Resource Efficiency Sub-programme in the UNEP PoW 2020-2021.<sup>8</sup> This related in particular to outputs planned for the accomplishment of *"Science-based approaches that support the transition to sustainable development through multiple pathways, including an inclusive green economy and sustainable trade, and adoption of sustainable consumption and production patterns at all levels"*. Here Output 3 *"Capacity development, networking, knowledge, financial and information-sharing mechanisms are provided to support the delivery of the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production/One Planet Network"* and Output 5 *"Technical support provided to countries to replicate and scale up multiple successfully piloted approaches to sustainable development and related tools to mainstream resource efficiency, circular approaches and sustainable consumption and production"* are of particular relevance to ICSAL. Likewise, in relation to the accomplishment *"The public and private sectors are increasingly aware of and support the adoption of sustainable lifestyles and sustainable consumption patterns"*, ICSAL was in particular well aligned to Output 3 *"Technical guidance, tools and best practices are developed and provided to governments and other stakeholders to support the development, improvement and implementation of consumer information tools"* and Output 4 *"Sustainable lifestyles and education tools and activities for raising awareness and stimulating change, particularly at urban level, are developed and implemented"* are par. The Industry and Economy Division together with regional offices were assigned as accountable for these outputs.

91. **SKQ d)** *"To what extent was the EU grant (ICSAL) in line with the UNEP private sector engagement strategy?"*. Overall, ICSAL was very well in line with UNEP' first private sector engagement strategy, which was adopted in 2019. The strategy guides UNEP's

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<sup>7</sup> UNEP MTS, 2018-2021.

<sup>8</sup> UNEP Proposed programme of work and budget for the biennium 2020-2021.

engagement with the private sector to contribute to sustained transformative changes and innovations that are aligned with its MTS and PoW. In the strategy, five outcomes are outlined as means to achieve the desired impact and ICSAL was to some extent addressing all of them and in particular Outcome 3: *Business models based on circularity, resource efficiency and sustainability that drive cultural change amongst consumers and contribute to the decoupling of economic growth from the unsustainable use of natural resources*. Below the outcomes, four output categories are defined: i) policy development; ii) value chain and sector collaboration; knowledge sharing and best practices; and iv) collaboration with the financial sector. Here ICSAL's activities have in particular focused on the three first output categories, and to a lesser extent included engagement with the financial sector.

92. Finally, with the embedded purpose of strengthening the role of UNEP's regional office in the LAC Region, ICSAL has also been well aligned with UNEP's strategic priority of becoming more visible and active at the regional level with regional offices scaling up engagement, enhancing capacity building and coordinating implementation of the sub-programmes of the PoW at regional level, including through execution of ICSAL. This need was expressed by the General Assembly already in 2010.<sup>9</sup>

93. The rating for 'alignment to the MTS, PoW and Strategic Priorities' was **Highly Satisfactory**.

#### 5.1.2 Alignment to Donor Strategic Priorities

94. ICSAL's support to developing a common vision and consolidation of the Circular Economy Coalition for Latin America and Caribbean was particularly well-aligned to the European Green Deal (2019). The Green Deal provides a roadmap to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy, covering all sectors of the economy.

95. One of the main building blocks of the Green Deal is the new Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP II) adopted by the European Commission in March 2020. CEAP II follows CEAP I (from 2015), with measures covering the full life cycle of products: from production and consumption to waste management and the market for secondary raw materials. Building on the work done on circular economy since 2015, the CEAP II focuses more on resource intensive sectors where the potential for circularity is high. In this regard, ICSAL's support to establishing of linkages and synergies between the Circular Economy Coalition for Latin America and Caribbean and the Environmental Alliance of America as a means to promote ecolabelling and consumer information was of particular importance for the transition to circular economy in the region.

96. In addition, ICSAL's strong focus on sustainable product designs was fully aligned to a new proposed Eco-design for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), published by the European Commission in March 2022. This new regulation will constitute a cornerstone in the Commission's approach to more environmentally sustainable and circular products. It builds on the existing [Eco-design Directive](#), which currently only covers energy-related products. The new regulation will set new requirements to make products more durable, reliable, reusable, upgradable, repairable, easier to maintain, refurbish and recycle, and energy and resource efficient. In addition, product-specific information requirements should ensure that consumers will know the environmental impacts of their purchases. This part is well aligned to ICSAL's support to companies to communicate reliable

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<sup>9</sup> By its resolution 65/162 of 20 December 2010, the General Assembly called for increased support to strengthen the human, financial and programmatic capacities of all the regional offices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

sustainability information to consumers. The new proposal from the European Commission will extend the existing Eco-design framework in two ways: first, to cover the broadest possible range of products; and second, to broaden the scope of the requirements with which products are to comply.

97. The rating for 'alignment to Donor/Partner Strategic Priorities' was **Highly Satisfactory**.

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

98. At the *global* level, ICSAL was especially well-aligned to SDG 12 "Responsible Consumption and Production" and more particularly Target 12.1 *Implement the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries*", Target 12.6 *Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle*" and Target 12.8 *By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature*".

99. **SKQ f** "To what extent has the EU Grant (ICSAL) contributed to a regional approach to ecolabelling (through the Environmental Alliance of America) and what are lessons learned with view of the upcoming UNEP-GIZ project IKI Eco-Advance. Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities?". At the *regional* level, the Environmental Alliance of America was the first regional initiative to develop a common ecolabeling and environmental declarations system in the LAC region. The initiative was born in 2015, led by Costa Rica, Mexico, and Colombia, who joined efforts to develop rules and standards. In the XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (which took place on 1-2 February 2021), the Ministerial Decision *"Sustainable Consumption and Production and circular economy – key drivers for post COVID-19 sustainable recovery"* was approved during the Meeting. This decision recognized *"the good practices in the region including, amongst others, the promotion of life cycle assessments and the initiative for the development of a regional eco-label (Environmental Alliance of America), promoted by Colombia, Costa Rica, and Mexico – including the recent participation of Ecuador and Paraguay"*<sup>10</sup>.

100. **SKQ f** "To what extent has the EU Grant (ICSAL) contributed to a regional approach to ecolabelling (through the Environmental Alliance of America) and what are lessons learned with view of the upcoming UNEP-GIZ project IKI Eco-Advance. Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities?". ICSAL was instrumental in its advocacy and support for a regional approach to ecolabeling through the Environmental Alliance of America, including for the signing of the MoU between the three founding countries of the Alliance (Costa Rica, Colombia and Mexico). ICSAL has made a significant contribution to raising awareness of and interest for the Alliance within the LAC region at a difficult period of time when the Alliance still lacked a legal mandate. As a result of these efforts, Ecuador and Paraguay were attached as "observers" to the Alliance and several other countries in the region (such as Brazil, Peru, Panama, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic) have expressed interest in joining. Thus, ICSAL has served as a very important "bridge" to the UNEP-GIZ funded IKI Eco-Advance Project in support of a regional ecolabeling approach in the LAC region.

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<sup>10</sup> DECISIONS XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, February 2021.

101. Colombia has since 2005 owned its own national ecolabel ("Sello Ambiental Colombiano") and had a National Action Plan for Ecolabelling. This ecolabel is managed by the Ministry of Environment in conjunction with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism. It is voluntary, type I ecolabel, with criteria developed for goods and services and is granted through "certification bodies" (accredited by the National Accreditation Body - ONAC and authorized by the Environmental Licenses Authority - ANLA). The Ministry of the Environment formulated in 2010 the National Policy of Sustainable Production and Consumption with the purpose of modifying the production and consumption patterns of the different actors in the Colombian economy towards environmental sustainability and, therefore, contributing to business competitiveness and social development.<sup>11</sup> Since then, Colombia has participated in several SCP related projects with the support of UNEP and/or the European Union, including "Stimulating the demand and supply of sustainable products through Sustainable Public Procurement and Ecolabelling (SPPEL).
102. Costa Rica's efforts towards environmental protection and sustainable development is outlined in the National Policy for Sustainable Production and Consumption 2018-2030. This policy was developed with the support of UNEP and the 10YFP, and was promoted by several ministries. Costa Rica is one of the leading countries on sustainable public procurement and was the first country in Latin America to approve a National Policy for Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) in 2015. This work was also supported by UNEP through the SPPEL project. Costa Rica also has set up an inter-ministerial working group on sustainable lifestyles. The country has worked intensively on the development of technical standards and ecolabelling, creating a national standard for ecolabelling type 1. These efforts have focused especially on the coffee sector.
103. From 2012, Mexico started playing a leading role on SCP at the national, regional and global level. The country participated actively in the Regional Council of Government on SCP including as a member of its Advisory Committee. Mexico has also been an active member of the 10YFP Board (representing the LAC region at global level). In 2015, Mexico launched its National Strategy on Sustainable Production and Consumption followed by a Special Programme inserted in the National Development Plan (2012-2018) with the aim of linking SCP with other priority areas, such as climate change, economic growth and social equity.
104. The rating for 'Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities' was **Highly Satisfactory**.

#### 5.1.4 Complementarity with Existing Interventions/ Coherence

105. Various attempts were made during implementation to establish synergies between ICSAL and other UNEP projects. One of these is the "Advancing and Measuring Sustainable Consumption and Production for a Low-Carbon Economy in Middle-Income and Newly Industrialized Countries" (Advance SCP) which provided capacity building and technical assistance to governments, standardization and accreditation bodies across the region as part of the workstream to promote a regional approach to ecolabeling through the Environmental Alliance of America. Advance SCP also supported the "Sustainable Consumption Week LAC".
106. Linkages were also established to the UNEP project "Global Opportunities for the implementation of SDGs" in particular in relation to the celebration of the two regional Sustainable Lifestyle Contests (2021 and 2022) as well as in relation to the consolidation

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<sup>11</sup>[http://www.minambiente.gov.co/images/AsuntosambientalesySectorialyUrbana/pdf/compras\\_p%C3%BAblicas/polit\\_nal\\_produccion\\_consumo\\_sostenible.pdf](http://www.minambiente.gov.co/images/AsuntosambientalesySectorialyUrbana/pdf/compras_p%C3%BAblicas/polit_nal_produccion_consumo_sostenible.pdf)

of the Circular Economy Coalition for LAC and support for the "Sustainable Consumption Week LAC".

107. Building further on the lessons learned and advances made through ICSAL, UNEP and GIZ collaborated during 2021 and 2022 on development of the IKI project "Greening supply and demand: Advancing Eco-Labels and Sustainable Public Procurement for Climate and Biodiversity Protection". This project was initiated in December 2022 and is expected to further advance the support to the Environmental Alliance of America.

108. The rating for 'Complementarity with Existing Interventions' is **Satisfactory**.

**Overall rating for Strategic Relevance: Highly Satisfactory**

## 5.2 Quality of Project Design

109. Overall, ICSAL's design process was characterized by a strong anchoring in demand within the LAC region, using of experience from previous and ongoing projects, including as a basis for selecting focus countries, key partner institutions and relevant expertise. The design was strong in terms of its strategic relevance, showing clearly ICSAL's alignment and relevance to UNEP and regional/national priorities. The design was also strong in terms of its planned governance and supervision arrangements, communication and knowledge, financing/budgeting, and efficiency measures. On the other hand, weaknesses are identified in terms of analysis of the operating context (e.g. the political situation), results and causalities, Logical Framework and indicators, as well as in relation to risk assessments and addressing of sustainability concerns.

**Table 6. Summary table for project design quality assessment<sup>12</sup>**

	Section	Rating <sup>13</sup>	Weighting	Total
A	Operating Context	3	0,4	0,12
B	Project Preparation	4	1,2	0,48
C	Strategic Relevance	6	0,8	0,48
D	Intended Results and Causality	3	1,6	0,48
E	Logical Framework and Monitoring	3	0,8	0,24
F	Governance and Supervision Arrangements	5	0,4	0,2
G	Partnerships	4	0,8	0,32
H	Learning, Communication and Outreach	5	0,4	0,2
I	Financial Planning / Budgeting	5	0,4	0,2
J	Efficiency	5	0,8	0,4
K	Risk identification and Social Safeguards	3	0,8	0,24
L	Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic Effects	3	1,2	0,36

<sup>12</sup> Since no PCR report has been prepared for ICSAL, it is not possible to provide a score for Category M (Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps) which is weighted 0.4 in the total score. In this particular case, it will not affect the overall rating of the quality of the project design as being "Moderately Satisfactory", but it will show a slightly lower score in the total than would have been the case if the Category M had been counted in the rating.

<sup>13</sup> Rating scores: 6=highly satisfactory, 5=satisfactory, 4=moderately satisfactory, 3=moderately unsatisfactory, 2=unsatisfactory, 1=highly unsatisfactory, 0=not applicable

M	Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps*	N/A	N/A	0,40
	<b>Total Weighted Score</b>	<b>3,72</b>	<b>Moderately Satisfactory</b>	

**Rating for the Quality of Project Design: Moderately Satisfactory**

### 5.3 Nature of the External Context

110. ICSAL was not affected by any key *external* features related to the implementing context that could have been reasonably expected at the design stage to limit its performance. Two factors, however, did occasionally affect the economic and political implementation context, namely the national elections within the three focus countries and the COVID-19 pandemic.

111. While the political factors related to national elections (such as changes of Ministers and staff and adjusted political priorities) in principle should have been addressed in the design through adaptive management practices, knowing the challenges related to these processes in the LAC region, not all of these were possible to foresee at the design stage. Only the elections in Mexico, which resulted in significant changes in government priorities, were planned within the original two years implementation period. The elections in both Costa Rica and Colombia took place during the extension period. In the case of Mexico, however, the situation that developed after the national elections, revealed the significant risk related to a large dependency of governmental institutions for the implementation of ICSAL.

112. **SKQ c)** "What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?". The COVID-19 pandemic was not foreseeable at the time of ICSAL's design and the pandemic affected the implementation process in several ways. First of all, as mobility became restricted, physical activities (meetings, trainings, workshops etc.) were converted to virtual activities. Although this allowed for larger attendance to trainings and workshops, according to key stakeholders it affected the quality and impact of these events. At the same time, meetings were not planned with the same frequency and in particular government staff did not attend to the same extent anymore. For a period of time, the pandemic shifted the attention of both governments and private sector actors to the emergency situation caused by the pandemic and the economic consequences related to this.

**Rating for Nature of the external context: Favourable**

### 5.4 Effectiveness

#### 5.4.1 Availability of Outputs

Five outputs were defined in the ToC at Evaluation (see Table 4). Table 7 provides an overview of the reformulated outputs, the related indicators and their nature and level of achievement.

**Table 7. Summary of achievements at output level**

Reformulated output for ToC at Evaluation	Indicators	Nature of Achievement	Level of Achievement
Output 1.1: Companies enabled to improve sustainable design	Indicator 1.1.1: Number of companies trained on sustainable product design, eco-innovation and	The documentation confirms that 116 people from 78 companies (25 from Costa Rica, 30 from Colombia and	100% achieved and exceeded

Reformulated output for ToC at Evaluation	Indicators	Nature of Achievement	Level of Achievement
and production processes	<p>consumer information (baseline: 0; target: 45 (15 per country)).</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.2: Number of women trained in the trainings along the project implementation. (baseline: 0; target 15).</p>	<p>23 from Mexico) were trained.</p> <p>64 of the people trained were women.</p>	
Output 1.2: Companies and retailers are capable of communicating reliable sustainability information to consumers	Indicator 1.2.1: Number of companies or retailers supported to communicate reliable sustainability information to consumers to enable informed purchasing decisions (baseline: 0; target: 12 (4 per country))	The documentation confirms that a total of 15 companies were supported, five per focus country (13 of the 15 cases are available as case stories at One Planet Network)	100% achieved and exceeded
Output 2.1: Key public and private institutions capacitated to develop/improve tools and enabling policy frameworks	<p>Indicator 2.1.1: Number of assessments on enabling policy frameworks conducted (baseline 0, target 3).</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.2: Number of countries participating in a knowledge sharing event on eco-labelling (baseline 0, target 10).</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.3: Number of capacity development workshops for labelling, standardization and accreditation bodies (baseline 0; target 3).</p>	<p>One assessment conducted for each of the three focus countries (as part of national studies on sustainable consumption)</p> <p>Five countries participated in knowledge workshop in Mexico in 2019 and 48 countries in Sustainable Consumption Week LAC 2021. Both these events with strong focus on ecolabelling</p> <p>Three national and one regional capacity development workshops were organized</p>	100% achieved and exceeded
Output 2.2: Companies enabled to comply with existing standards and/or ecolabel schemes	<p>Indicator 2.2.1: Number of companies supported to comply with existing standards and/or ecolabel schemes (baseline 0; target 12)</p> <p>Indicator 2.2.2: Number of women trained in the trainings along the project implementation. (baseline: 0; target 15)</p>	<p>33 companies received capacity building (online) and six companies received technical assistance (three of these companies also attended the capacity building session)</p> <p>60 of the participants in the training were women</p>	100% achieved and exceeded
Output 3.1: National multi-stakeholder Sustainable Lifestyles Committees or working groups established, and eco-labels and sustainable lifestyles information made	Indicator 3.1.1: National Multi-stakeholder Committees or working groups on Sustainable Lifestyles (baseline 1, target 3).	The National Multi-stakeholder committees/working groups had different formats in each focus country, but became never really functional since the COVID-19 pandemic started	100% Achieved (although with limited functionality of the Multi-stakeholder groups)

Reformulated output for ToC at Evaluation	Indicators	Nature of Achievement	Level of Achievement
available to consumers	<p>Indicator <b>3.2.1</b>: Number of awareness raising and social media campaigns ran (baseline 0, target 3).</p> <p>Indicator <b>3.3.1</b>: Number of national contests on eco-innovation for sustainable lifestyles implemented (baseline 0, target 3)</p>	<p>At least eight awareness raising and media campaigns were conducted</p> <p>One national and two regional Contests were implemented</p>	

In the narrative below, more details and additional qualitative aspects are added for each of the outputs.

### **Output 1.1: Companies enabled to improve sustainable design and production processes.**

113. A total of 116 participants (of which 64 were women) representing 78 companies from key national sectors were trained through SCP workshops within the three focus countries. These events also counted on the participation of decision-makers, trade organizations, chambers of commerce and industrial associations to make them more impactful. Each workshop had a duration of three days.

114. The workshop participants consulted as part of this evaluation appreciated the wide stakeholder participation in the SCP workshops and also the technical parts of the events. However, based on the evaluators' consultations and visits to companies that participated in the workshops, it is not evident that the workshops have had any larger impact on companies' ability to improve sustainable design and production processes.

### **Output 1.2: Companies and retailers are capable of communicating reliable sustainability information to consumers.**

115. A total of 15 companies (selected through a call) received technical assistance to comply with the fundamental and aspirational principles of UNEP's "Guidelines for providing Product Sustainability Information" and to disseminate successful communication practices. Five of these companies were small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

116. From the 15 selected companies, 13 case studies were developed and published on the One Planet Network website and presented at various events including during the Sustainable Consumption Week LAC 2021. The objective of the case studies was to share a practical and didactic application of the Guidelines' principles by companies and standard-setters.

117. Most of the companies consulted by the evaluator confirmed that they are now producing and disseminating sustainability information about their products. None of these companies did this before ICSAL. The companies' motivation for communicating sustainability information to their consumers is mainly related to publicity and the feeling of "doing something good and right". None of the companies indicated that their sales had increased yet due to the communication of sustainable product information.

118. Universidad de Los Andes has developed a detailed methodology on how to provide technical assistance to private companies in the implementation of the UNEP guidelines. This methodology served as baseline for additional technical assistance provided by



UNEP in Ecuador and Paraguay (as part of the Advance SCP project). In addition to this, the University is not aware of the methodology being used by others.

**Output 2.1: Key public and private institutions capacitated to develop/improve tools and enabling policy frameworks.**

119. ICSAL has supported assessments of the enabling policy frameworks in all three focus countries. The assessments were conducted as part of national studies on sustainable consumption. In Mexico, technical assistance was provided to the Ministry of Economy with a view to also engage the chamber of paper and the national standard committee for cleaning products.
120. A Regional Workshop on "Exchanging Knowledge on Environmental Labels and Declarations" was organized by ICSAL in Mexico in 2019. A key purpose of the workshop was to support the Environmental Alliance of America in various ways such as planning of governance structure, capacities for criteria development and revision, certification, quality management and promotion of ecolabels. The workshop had participation of representatives from five internationally recognized ecolabelling programmes and technical experts from different European countries who presented lessons learned and best practices. From the LAC region, representatives from five countries attended (Costa Rica, Colombia, Mexico, Brazil and Paraguay).
121. Based on consultations conducted as part of this evaluation with workshop participants from the LAC region, the regional workshop was very well organized with useful and insightful presentations and discussions around ecolabeling programmes implemented in other regions, in particular in Europe. For the LAC participants, the workshop contributed to a better and more clear understanding of how differences in the political, social and economic/financial contexts and between Europe and LAC makes it unrealistic to try "copying" European ecolabeling schemes to the LAC region 1:1. However, the European schemes presented still provided good inspiration and many elements may still be adaptable to the LAC regional context.
122. In addition to this, ecolabeling workshops were organized through ICSAL within all three focus countries with a total participation of 74 representatives from government, standardization and accreditation bodies, companies and the Environmental Alliance of America. Key stakeholders at national levels emphasised the importance of ICSAL's strong focus on capacity building in relation to ecolabeling due to a slow learning curve within the countries and relatively few people capacitated on this topic. As an example, in Costa Rica there were very few persons capacitated to conduct compliance evaluations, thus this has become a bottleneck for the process. On the other hand, as a result of having relatively few people working in the area of ecolabeling within these countries, people tend to have strong personal relations, and this has often contributed to more smooth collaboration.
123. One challenge faced in the process of promoting a regional ecolabel scheme to the countries in the LAC region is that some of the more active countries in this process are the same time working on their own ecolabel (e.g. Costa Rica and Paraguay). The point of departure for the regional process was therefore to let the countries define their own criteria as the starting point, and then use this as a point of departure for developing regional criteria (see paragraph below). At the same time however, it was a challenge for ICSAL that national processes were moving faster than the regional one and this threatened to undermine the regional process.

124. A technical working group in ICSAL - composed of technical staff from ministries, standardization and accreditation bodies within all three focus countries – was tasked to do the technical normative work related to the regional ecolabel. This work was successfully completed. The technical working group had frequent meetings and interactions and based on the evaluator's consultations with representatives who participated in this work, the process went smooth and effective and was characterized by a good collaboration among the participants from the three countries. Since the ecolabeling scheme in Colombia was the most advanced (Colombia has had their national ecolabel for several years), it was used as a model which was then calibrated to fit the regional context. Key stakeholders from Costa Rica emphasised that ICSAL's sharing of the experiences from Colombia also helped to advance the process faster at national level.
125. While the normative documents are completed, it is still not possible to make use of them since the legal, constitutional and financial foundation for the Environmental Alliance of America is not in place. This hinders that companies can apply for the regional certificate. At a time when the legal, constitutional and financial issues may have been solved, it is likely that the normative documents may need to be updated.

**Output 2.2: Companies enabled to comply with existing standards and/or ecolabel schemes.**

126. Capacity building was provided to 33 companies on how to comply with existing standards and ecolabeling schemes (nearly two-thirds of the participants were women). These capacity building events were conducted online. The impact of this wider capacity building effort seems to have been limited. Several of the company representatives that attended the capacity building (according to the attendance sheet) did not remember the event at all and very few could recall specific elements or topics from this training.
127. Additional technical assistance was provided to six companies (three in Costa Rica, two in Mexico and one in Colombia) by a regional LAC consultant. Three of these companies also attended the above-mentioned capacity building. This technical support, and the analyses conducted as part of it, was in general well received by the companies and it has enabled them to better understand these technical processes. While the companies were very satisfied with the technical support received, they were however surprised that there had not been any follow-up at all from ICSAL since the consultant completed the technical assistance work. The companies all expressed a need for such follow-up assistance.
128. At the same time, the companies receiving the technical assistance expressed disappointment that ICSAL had not informed them better about the (resource) requirements related to the last stages of the ecolabeling process (the certification) as well as the existing gaps in relation to the commercialization part (the consumers/market). In particular, the companies found that ICSAL had not been sufficiently clear in explaining what the specific advantages would be in obtaining a certificate and how to communicate to consumers who do not understand the importance of the certificate neither. As a consequence of this, in the end, the technical assistance provided no, or only limited, results for the companies involved. Only one of the four supported companies that were consulted by the evaluation managed to obtain a certificate (in 2021). However, this company decided not to renew it again in 2022 since it did not have any economic benefit for the company.

**Output 3.1: National multi-stakeholder Sustainable Lifestyles Committees or working groups established, and ecolabels and sustainable lifestyles information made available to consumers.**

129. ICSAL's support to establishment of *Sustainable Lifestyle Committees* or working groups was only partly successful and mainly during the first part of ICSAL. When the COVID-19 pandemic started, it became very difficult to maintain the cross-sectoral coordination and interaction on this topic. As part of these efforts, ICSAL supported development of a Road Map for Sustainable Lifestyles in Mexico through support from a national consultant. The process of developing the road map involved 28 persons, however in the end the product was never really discussed. According to stakeholders consulted by the evaluation, the road map development did not include commitments for its instrumentalization (mandate, funds to implement, human resources etc.). In addition, the initiative did not have a push from higher policy level and suffered from poor dissemination. As a consequence, the actions and recommendations from the developed road map have never been implemented.
130. The *Sustainable Consumption Week in LAC* in 2021 was organized by UNEP through ICSAL as a virtual event.<sup>14</sup> The event included seven sessions with a total of 1,365 participants (44% women, 56% men) from 48 countries and 32 speakers and panelists presenting experiences and best practices from the region. This included a One Planet side event on Consumer Information and Sustainable Consumption. Around half of the stakeholders consulted during the evaluation process (mainly those from governments, academia and private sector associations/institutions) were well aware of the Sustainable Consumption Week and most of these had attended at least one of the sessions. In general, the stakeholders found the event useful for them, as it presented new and relevant information from the region on a topic they still find difficult to address properly. In particular, it was noted from the interviews that the event had been an 'eye-opener' to people from governments.
131. Sustainable Lifestyles Contests were first organized as national events in 2020 and then as regional events in 2021 and 2022. Table 8 shows the level of participation for each year. The participants from the Sustainable Lifestyles Contests consulted during this evaluation (all from top 3) were all still engaged with developing of their own project and some had reached the stage of marketing and commercialization. They all highly praised the initiative with the Contest which they saw as a unique opportunity for them, both for promoting and receiving support to their own project idea but also for meeting other young people with similar ambitions to contribute to more sustainable lifestyles. The only disappointment reflected was that not more follow-up support had been provided after the Contest. This relates in particular to market and marketing aspects and to entrepreneurship. Some participants also mentioned the need for more support to publicity and promotion of their products and for identifying potential customers at an earlier stage of the process.

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<sup>14</sup> The event was organized jointly with two other UNEP projects: "Global Opportunities for the Implementation of the SDGs" and "Advance SCP". In addition, the event had as co-organizer the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia.

**Table 8: Overview of participation in Sustainable Lifestyle Contests**

Stakeholder group	# of universities	# of countries	Number of proposals received
Sustainable Lifestyles National Contest 2020 – Colombia	15	1	59
Sustainable Lifestyles National Contest 2020 – Costa Rica	5	1	15
Sustainable Lifestyles National Contest 2020 – Mexico	20	1	50
Sustainable Lifestyles Regional Contest 2021	N.A,	12	76
Sustainable Lifestyles Regional Contest 2022	N.A.	12	73

132. ICSAL supported a 15-day media challenge (“Manos a la Acción”) launched together with Universidad de los Andes and regional young influencers. The aim of this event was to create a sustainable actions movement in Latin America. During the event, seven livestreams gathered a combined audience of more than 15,000 viewers. The challenge received nearly 70,000 impressions and more than 2,500 content interactions on Instagram. The influencers consulted as part of this evaluation emphasized that while they found this challenge highly interesting and motivating, it was a stand-alone intervention which they doubted would have any real impact in the absence of any follow up interventions.

133. Despite these efforts and initiatives by ICSAL, the consumer link is still by most stakeholders seen as the weakest link in the chain. Focus within the countries continues to be mainly on the production side and the work with companies. The consumer side mostly became an add-on and not a strategic target in itself.

134. An increasing interest in the LAC region for circular economy allowed ICSAL to successfully link sustainable consumption tools and instruments to the regional circular economy agenda. And most recently, in 2021 and 2022, the Circular Economy Coalition for the LAC region, with the support from ICSAL, has gained strong traction in the region and become a Knowledge Hub for Circular Economy. The Coalition is being led by four countries, has nine strategic partners, 13 member countries and 23 non-government members. ICSAL also supported the launch of the regional report “Unlocking Circular Economy in Latin America and the Caribbean” as part of the Stockholm 50+ (June 2022).

The Rating for ‘Availability of Outputs’ is **Highly Satisfactory**

#### 5.4.2 Achievement of Project Outcomes

One outcome has been identified in the ToC at Evaluation (see Table 4). Table 9 provides an overview of the reformulated outcome statements, the related indicator and their nature and level of achievement.

**Table 9. Summary of achievements at outcome level**

Reformulated outcomes for ToC at Evaluation	Indicator	Nature of Achievement	Level of Achievement
<b>Outcome:</b> Countries increasingly use SCP tools provided by the One Planet network to change consumption practices, reducing	Number of countries (public and private sector) applying SCP tools for policy implementation related to	Only limited tangible progress made so far, but the outlook in	Low in the short term but promising in the medium term

Reformulated outcomes for ToC at Evaluation	Indicator	Nature of Achievement	Level of Achievement
pressure on the environment and fostering social and economic development, contributing to SDG12.	sustainable consumption/ lifestyles (baseline 0; target: 3)	relation to the Environmental Alliance of America seems promising	

In the narrative below, more details and additional qualitative aspects are added to the outcome.

**Outcome: Countries increasingly use SCP tools provided by the One Planet network to change consumption practices, reducing pressure on the environment and fostering social and economic development, contributing to SDG12.**

135. The most important achievement of ICSAL, although indirect, is the development of the much better resourced IKI project "Greening supply and demand: Advancing Eco-Labels and Sustainable Public Procurement for Climate and Biodiversity Protection", which was initiated in December 2022 and is expected to further advance the support to the Environmental Alliance of America. ICSAL was fundamental in paving the way and preparing for this new project and has managed to serve as a "bridge" for previous important projects in the area (such as the SPPEL project) with the new ECO-advance project.

136. At the regional level, the delay in the legal establishment of the Environmental Alliance of America is the major reason that still only few countries in the region are using SCP tools. At the same time, it is to be noted that with the contribution from ICSAL, the interest among countries in the region for joining the Environmental Alliance of America was increasing during the implementation period. This has enhanced the potential for this Alliance to now be further developed in the ECO-Advance project.

137. Within the three ICSAL focus countries, the major progress towards achievement of this outcome was noted in Costa Rica, where a new Public Procurement Law was approved during 2002 and has been applicable from December 2022. The new law is fundamentally changing the way in which the procurement of goods, services and public works by the public sector. Amongst its main innovations which is impacting all suppliers is that in addition to economic criteria, social, environmental and innovation criteria are now also forming part of the Request for Proposal scoring model. This new law has been under preparation for some time and its approval and implementation is seen as a major achievement and progress towards promotion and incentivizing more sustainable production processes.

138. In case of both Mexico and Colombia, no notable progress has taken place in terms of enhancing the application of SCP tools. On the contrary, in Mexico, the change of government resulted in less prioritization within the new government on SCP aspects.

**Intermediate state: Increased number of certified sustainable products and reliable consumer information and consumption choices to support sustainable lifestyles**

139. A key factor affecting the achievement of the outcomes in the focus countries is a limited public and private demand for sustainable products. Challenged by the limited driving factors for implementation of ecolabelling, ICSAL did not succeed in changing the overall perception of ecolabel systems as being cumbersome, expensive and out of businesses' immediate sphere of interest and concern.

140. **SKQ h)** "To what extent has a conscious scaling-up and replication model been successfully demonstrated? How well has a scaling-up/replication model been articulated, and lessons captured for wider learning?". Given the relatively limited budget size and resources available for ICSAL, it was critical to identify potential and suitable models for upscaling of demonstrated (best) practices to achieve the stated outcome and impact. The evaluator, however, does not find evidence that it was possible through ICSAL to catalyze any upscaling of the demonstrated sustainable production practices nor of the campaigns targeted consumers. This was largely due to the fact that it was not possible through ICSAL to institutionalize and conceptualize the thinking behind SCP within business associations and consumer groups, which was again a result of lacking incentives and low political prioritization.
141. However, while the actual outcomes of the ICSAL supported interventions may still only have materialized to a certain degree, the "continuous political will and commitment to support SCP" is still a driving factor at a *regional* level evidenced by a continued and increasing commitment and interest by more countries in the region for the Environmental Alliance of America.
142. As noted above, the delay in the establishing of the legal foundation for the Environmental Alliance of America postponed the process for uptake of additional countries in the Alliance as well as the launch of a regional ecolabelling scheme. This again delayed the expected results from the Alliance in relation to certification of products and support to sustainable consumption choices.
143. Recent developments indicate that the pending issues related to the formal establishing of the Alliance is progressing, after completion of ICSAL. At the sidelines of the Global Conference of the One Planet Network's Consumer Information Programme, held in Bogotá in November 2023, representatives of the Environmental Alliance of America convened to advance the establishment of a legal and institutional framework for a common and reliable environmental labelling platform. This came just after the XXIII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in October 2024, endorsed the efforts of the Environmental Alliance of America.

Rating for 'Achievement of Project Outcomes' is ***Moderately Unsatisfactory***.

#### 5.4.3 Achievement of Likelihood of Impact

##### **Impact: Reduced environmental impact and increased quality of life and sustainable lifestyles**

144. The likelihood of impact to a large degree depends on whether the *assumptions* and *drivers* presented in relation to the ToC are being fulfilled, including in relation to the outcome (see above). Based on the consultations and site observations conducted as part of this evaluation, the evaluator finds that most assumptions and drivers related to the SCP processes within the focus countries are still not being fulfilled. This relates, in particular, to the assumed political will and commitment by national governments to support SCP also after election processes, which remained a key challenge during the implementation of ICSAL. Likewise, the assumption that consumers are willing to change consumption patterns and pay a higher price for sustainable products is still not being fulfilled to any significant extent, and this still provides a major disincentive for the producers to invest own resources into ecolabel certification processes. In terms of drivers, there are still only weak signs of national governments providing real policy incentives and frameworks and dedicated institutions to promote sustainable consumption practices and consumer education is still mainly taking place ad-hoc.

145. As a consequence, the three different but inter-related change pathways illustrated in the ToC (Figure 1) have only materialized to a smaller extent. *First*, through support and technical assistance provided by ICSAL, companies/retailers should be enabled to enhance their sustainable production design and processes and communicate this to consumers in a more reliable manner. Some enhancements have taken place in the production processes and been communicated to consumers. This has however not resulted in larger sales or price increases. *Second*, through ICSAL public and private institutions have become capacitated to develop and improve relevant policy frameworks and tools and companies enabled to comply with them. These processes have however suffered from lack of the required political will by governments to support SCP and change policies and by companies to adapt production processes. *Third*, through targeted campaigns and multi-stakeholder dialogue, consumers were expected to gain an increasing awareness and appetite for sustainable production and design. While some campaigns and dialogues were launched through ICSAL, these were too fragmented and isolated to catalyze any notable change at the customer side and in their demand for products.

146. Subsequently, the change pathways were expected to lead to an increase in the number of SCP tools applied within the targeted countries and to more sustainable production and consumption choices, ultimately resulting in environmental and lifestyle improvements. In order for this to happen, there is still need for much better collaboration and trust between ministries and institutions involved as well as across the different stakeholder groups to facilitate these change pathways. Additional financial resources will also need to be allocated to SCP by the respective governments and value chains will need to become more transparent to allow gathering of relevant and reliable information. At the same time, an increasing ability among companies to comply with certification and a larger consideration of sustainability in marketing will be needed to drive this process along with better educated consumer groups, including a much stronger attention to gender and vulnerability considerations.

From a macro-level perspective, the high-level political commitment from many countries in the LAC region to the Environmental Alliance of America is obviously a great achievement which has the potential to pave the way for much larger impact within the region in the future. The COVID-19 pandemic also contributed to an increasing attention to sustainable consumption patterns and focus on regional value-chains which is well aligned to the concept of the Alliance. Through the high-level political endorsement, the Alliance is uniquely positioned to offer a common and reliable environmental ecolabelling platform in the LAC region. It may also have the potential of integrating the regional eco-label in sustainable public procurement.

147. It is however important to note that many of the preconditions for being able to benefit from the Alliance initiative within the countries still need to be developed and implemented at national level. This will still include commitment of national governments for additional resources for SCP, development of concrete SCP visions/targets, prioritization of SCP within the Ministry of Finance, mandatory use of ecolabels in public procurement tenders, more systemic trust building and education of consumers in relation to the ecolabelling, particular attention to gender and vulnerability concerns etc.

Rating for 'Likelihood of Impact' is **Moderately Likely**

**Rating for Effectiveness: Moderately Satisfactory**

## 5.5 Financial Management

### 5.5.1 Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures

148. Both the regional LAC office and partners in the focus countries found that the financial management model applied for ICSAL contributed to a smooth implementation process, since funds releases were (relatively) predictable and the procedures were clear. It was also found that the model of releasing funds had low transaction costs and made planning (of, e.g., training events) easier.

149. While the financial management model provided national partner institutions with a relatively large scope for planning and implementation of their activities and an incentive to stick to the implementation plan, at the same time it allowed UNEP to continuously monitor and control the disbursement process and ensure that key principles for managing procurement processes and financial reporting were fulfilled.

150. Based on the assessed documentation and interviews conducted with management and staff from both UNEP and national partner institutions, there were no reported cases of mismanagement of funds or other kinds of deviations from the financial agreements.

151. The financial closure of ICSAL took place during the first quarter of 2023. It took a bit longer than expected, mainly due to delays in submissions from national partner institutions.

Rating for 'Adherence to UNEP's Financial Policies and Procedures' is **Satisfactory**.

### 5.5.2 Completeness of Financial Information

152. All types of relevant financial information were available on a yearly basis. All reviewed financial data seemed to be accurate, this included 4-monthly and Annual Reports submitted to the EU, including both financial status and progress towards expected achievements.

153. An expenditure breakdown was available per budget category but not per component level. No Financial Summary report was available, but Annual Financial Reports (last one from 2022, signed in March 2023).

154. The rating for 'Completeness of Financial Management' is **Satisfactory**.

**Table 103. Financial Management Table**

NON-GEF AND GEF PROJECTS		
Financial management components:	Rating	Evidence/ Comments
<b>1. Adherence to UNEP's/GEF's policies and procedures:</b>	<b>S</b>	
Any evidence that indicates shortcomings in the project's adherence <sup>15</sup> to UNEP or donor policies, procedures or rules	No	No remarks or errors detected in financial and audit reports.
<b>2. Completeness of project financial information<sup>16</sup>:</b>	<b>S</b>	

<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> See also document 'Criterion Rating Description' for reference



Provision of key documents to the evaluator (based on the responses to A-H below)			
A.	Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines)	Yes	UMOJA DEVCO 31.10.18
B.	Revisions to the budget	Yes	Two top-up grants were allocated
C.	All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA)	Yes	SSFA's signed with FUNDATEC and Universidad de los Andes
D.	Proof of fund transfers	Yes	Various
E.	Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind)	N/A	
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	Annual Financial Reports available, but no summary report
G.	Copies of any completed audits and management responses ( <i>where applicable</i> )	N/A	
H.	Any other financial information that was required for this project (list):	N/A	
<b>3. Communication between finance and project management staff</b>		<b>S</b>	
Project Manager and/or Task Manager's level of awareness of the project's financial status.		S	Interviews and email communication
Fund Management Officer's knowledge of project progress/status when disbursements are done.		S	Interviews and email correspondence
Level of addressing and resolving financial management issues among Fund Management Officer and Project Manager/Task Manager.		S	Interviews and email correspondence
Contact/communication between by Fund Management Officer, Project Manager/Task Manager during the preparation of financial and progress reports.		S	Interviews and email correspondence
Project Manager, Task Manager and Fund Management Officer responsiveness to financial requests during the evaluation process		S	
<b>Overall rating</b>		<b>S</b>	

### 5.5.3 Communication Between Finance and Project Management Staff

155. According to the interviews conducted, communication between the finance in the UNEP LAC office and UNEP HQ went rather smooth. The office in HQ was open to support and review of financial reports. The Admin Assistant at the LAC Office was in close contact and dialogue with the Implementing Partners. There were no serious delays in the process.

156. At both central, regional and national level, the evaluator found an appreciation of the communication that had taken place between finance and project management staff. Despite the adjustments made in the work plan and budgeting due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was possible to get implementation back on track within a relatively short timeframe, and partners largely contributed to an effective communication process that took place.

157. The UNEP LAC Office has provided support to the financial management of the implementation process and has constituted the bridging between UNEP HQ and national partner institutions in the region. It has been considered a clear advantage that the regional office has had strong inter-personal relationships and working relations both with central UNEP office staff as well as with national partner institutions.

The rating for 'Communication Between Finance and Project Management Staff' is **Satisfactory**

**Rating for Financial Management: Satisfactory**

## 5.6 Efficiency

158. **SKQ c)** What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance? ICSAL built further on collaboration from previous projects with a number of ministries, technical institutions, consultants and other project partners. This has contributed to a smoother implementation process, in particular during the COVID-19 pandemic where physical interventions shifted to virtual events. Here, the trust and relationships that had been built over time among key stakeholders became of particular importance to ensure a continuation of the implementation. This also related to the cooperation between UNEP central and regional levels and the national partners which, according to interviews, has been smooth. In addition, ICSAL has counted on extensive use of regional LAC experts and experiences which was found to be of particularly high value and applicable to the context.
159. Mainly due to COVID-19, two extensions were made to the project. These extensions allowed the project to deliver postponed activities, although often in adjusted forms (virtually instead of physical events). This also saved some funds originally planned for travelling and contractual services, and these funds were used instead to scale-up on already planned interventions and to add new ones.
160. It took around two years to sign the MoU between the governments of Costa Rica, Colombia and Mexico due to bureaucracy and change of governments within the focus countries. This significantly delayed implementation of several planned interventions, in particular related to the establishment of the Environmental Alliance of America. Likewise, the normative documents that were prepared by the technical working group (see above) are currently not possible to use. In the end, the MoU has not become a legally binding document, thus it basically serves as an expression of interest for collaboration among the three focus countries.
161. In Mexico, despite a good start with some early results, the political development in the country seriously hampered the efficiency of the supported interventions. Within a rather short time period, the Ministry of Economy changed the Minister three times. This resulted in many disruptions and discontinuity, as the activities had to be re-started each time. In the end, the interest from the Mexican government in ICSAL also diminished significantly.
162. The spreading out of relatively modest budgetary resources over a nearly 4-year period was not efficient. It was difficult to maintain the momentum and dynamics over this long period of time, and resources to follow up on activities implemented at the initial stage of ICSAL were not available. This led to a number of fragmented interventions.
163. While there were some intentions to coordinate interventions across the three components, in particular during the first part of the implementation period, this coordination never became very strong and in practice ICSAL was largely implemented as three separate components. Thus, the production and consumer parts were mainly implemented separately. Despite being there, the communication mainly took place through sharing of information.

**Rating for Efficiency: Moderately Unsatisfactory**

## 5.7 Monitoring and Reporting

### 5.7.1 Monitoring Design and Budgeting

164. While ICSAL's results indicators have fulfilled many of the requirements of being "SMART" (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound), they were not useful to effectively measure and track progress towards ICSAL's objective and intermediate state. In particular, ICSAL's result indicators have stayed at the surface of the supported interventions and mainly focused on tracking activity implementation (# of events organized, # of participants in the events etc.). The indicators did not really reflect the *quality* dimensions related to measuring progress in outputs and outcome. Thus, while the indicators were very simple and easy to measure, they lacked important information to become of real relevance.

165. No baseline study was prepared to inform the planned interventions. In ICSAL's results framework the baseline was in general referred to as "0", indicating e.g. that no workshop/training event had taken place prior to ICSAL and no one had attended. In this case, it would have made more sense if a baseline survey had been conducted with a focus on assessing training participants' knowledge and perceptions prior to attending a workshop/training session. Subsequently, an ex-post training survey could have been conducted to assess the quality and knowledge gained from the workshop/training conducted. This would have provided useful insights and learning for other of ICSAL's planned interventions.

166. While monitoring activities were budgeted for, it was in practice rather simple to collect the required information, as it has basically been related to counting of the number of organized events and the number of participating companies/persons. Thus, in most cases the attendance sheets from the workshop/training events and reports from consultants (for technical assistance activities) would have been sufficient to monitor progress of the indicators.

Rating for 'Monitoring Design and Budgeting' is ***Moderately Unsatisfactory***

### 5.7.2 Monitoring of Project Implementation

167. While the monitoring of ICSAL's implementation was performed regularly and in accordance to the plan, it was not done with a view to extract learning for the remaining implementation period. There are no indications that the monitoring data and information was used to adapt or correct interventions in ICSAL. As mentioned above, the nature of the monitoring data made them of limited use for learning. However, for instance, the reports prepared by the technical assistance Consultants included more substantial and qualitative information that could have been used more systematically for learning purposes. There was no attempt to follow up on the technical assistance provided during the first part of ICSAL to selected companies. This could have been useful also for the companies involved to learn from.

168. For some of the workshops and training events conducted, the collected data on attendance was disaggregated by gender in order to address specific gender targets in the results framework. These data only reflect the gender participation in quantitative terms and do not address qualitative gender aspects. Besides these gender data, the monitoring data does not offer any further disaggregation in terms of vulnerable or marginalized groups. There was no attempt in ICSAL to follow up on the technical assistance provided during the first part of ICSAL to selected companies. This could have been useful for the companies involved as well as for ICSAL to learn from.

Rating for 'Monitoring of Project Implementation' is **Moderately Satisfactory**

### 5.7.3 Project Reporting

169. The project reporting was in general timely and accurate and in accordance to the established procedures. Only minor delays occurred, especially around the COVID-19 pandemic when it became more difficult for the partners to ensure timely reporting. In these cases, agreements were made and it did not affect the further implementation of activities.

170. The reporting and documentation submitted by the Implementing Partners and the Consultants to the LAC Office was in general comprehensive and with the required documentation attached, including presentations and teaching materials. In particular, the Consultants were good at documenting different steps in the process as well as highlighting any challenges encountered during the implementation process.

171. The reported data was disaggregated by gender for some activities. No further disaggregation was reported in terms of vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Rating for 'Project Reporting' is **Satisfactory**

**Rating for Monitoring and Reporting: Moderately Satisfactory**

## 5.8 Sustainability

### 5.8.1 Socio-political Sustainability

172. Overall, the evaluation evidence suggests that the sustainability of ICSAL's outcome has a high degree of dependency on social/political factors within the three focus countries. The fragility of changes in the national political landscape was most clearly demonstrated in the case of Mexico, where political changes radically reduced the ownership and interest to the SCP agenda. In both Colombia and Costa Rica, political changes also challenged the level of ownership and interest from the Government's during the implementation period, although in a less drastic manner. It also made a difference here.

173. At the same time, in both Costa Rica and Colombia the evaluator found a fairly strong ownership, interest and commitment among those government actors and other key stakeholders who really took a stake in the implementation process. While these individuals made strong efforts both individually and jointly to drive the SCP agenda within their countries, they do not currently have the power to sustain the ICSAL outcome. It is noted however, that there a good dialogue and communication on SCP issues between Costa Rica and Colombia in both political and technical areas has now been established, to which ICSAL contributed.

174. Within all three focus countries, as well as in the LAC region in general, the socio-political situation is still challenging from a SCP perspective. In general, inequality is high and consumers are rather fragmented and not well-organized within the focus countries. This made the consumer part of ICSAL more difficult to address from a sustainability perspective, as there was no clear ownership and interest reflected from consumer groups.

175. In a wider and forward-looking perspective, it is important to note that the three focus countries, together with other countries in the LAC region, share similar socio-political characteristics which make them more homogeneous and therefore also easier to

integrate into a common scheme or framework (e.g. in relation to the Environmental Alliance of America). This may become an important socio-political sustainability factor for the future of the Alliance moving forward.

Rating for 'Socio-political Sustainability' is **Moderately Unlikely**

### 5.8.2 Financial Sustainability

176. It is evident that ICSAL's outcome would have a high dependency on future funding and financial flows to persist. No official exit plan/financial plan was prepared by ICSAL to address this. It is very important here, however, to understand the role of the new IKI ECO-Advance project and its linkages to ICSAL. The IKI project could to a large extent be recognized as ICSAL's "exit plan", since IKI directly continues and follows up on ICSAL's efforts to establish a regional ecolabel in the LAC region. IKI also has a particularly strong focus on developing a sustainable financial model for the Alliance, which considers both the short-term (1-2 years) and the longer term, in view of the model decided for the legal foundation for the Alliance.

177. None of the government representatives consulted within the three focus countries could point to any concrete increases in budgets or resource allocations to SCP at national level over the implementation period. Likewise, they had no indications that this would change in the near future.

178. The evaluator's findings from the three focus countries showed that companies are still reluctant to invest their own resources in ecolabelling as they do not see the economic benefit from such investment. Still a lot needs to be done at country level to educate and convince consumers of the rationale for paying extra for more sustainable products.

179. While some interesting innovative initiatives like the Sustainable Consumption Week and the Sustainable Lifestyle Contest were very well received and generated a lot of traction, it has so far not been possible to identify funding sources outside ICSAL for continuation of these activities.

Rating for Financial Sustainability is **Moderately Unlikely**

### 5.8.3 Institutional Sustainability

180. No official exit plan has been prepared in relation to ICSAL's institutional component. However, as in the case with the financial sustainability mentioned above, the new IKI project is very much fulfilling this function here, as it has an explicit focus on further developing the institutional structure and capacities of the Alliance.

181. Similarly, as for Financial Sustainability, it is very important to understand the role of the new IKI ECO-Advance project and its linkages to ICSAL. The IKI project could to a large extent be recognized as ICSAL's "exit plan", since IKI directly continues and follows up on ICSAL's efforts to establish a regional ecolabel in the LAC region.

182. The evaluation findings from the three focus countries show that in general the institutional sustainability of ICSAL's support is fragile. SCP is still a relatively new concept to many governments in the region and it becomes easily squeezed in relation to election processes.

183. An unstable and changing political context within the three focus countries seriously threatened the sustainability of many supported interventions. ICSAL's design was based on a close working relation with the Ministers of Environment in Costa Rica and Colombia, and with the Minister of Economy in Mexico. Common for the engagement with these

ministries was the required buy-in and commitment from the highest political level in the ministries to make the various departments and staff prioritize the supported interventions. This included the inherent risk that national elections and/or change of Ministers could lead to changes in political priorities during the implementation period (as it was seen in the case of Mexico).

184. Another political dimension to factor in is the power relations between different ministries within the countries. In many countries, including the focus countries for ICSAL, the Ministry of Environment tends to be a relatively weak ministry with scarce resources and often with limited opportunities to influence the national budget allocations.

185. On the other hand, the Environmental Alliance of America seems to present an institutionally stronger case. The high-level political endorsement and commitment to the Alliance initiative during the recent Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean is an important milestone in this process. Likewise, the increasing interest from countries in the region to become part of the Alliance shows an important momentum which may also strengthen the institutionalization aspect. In addition, it is to be noted that sustainability was actively pursued through ICSAL by linking to the LAC Regional SCP Council and the LAC Circular Economy Coalition, to enable that project outputs can be further consolidated, institutionalized and shared at regional level.

Rating for 'Institutional Sustainability' is **Moderately Likely**

Rating for Sustainability:	<b>Moderately Unlikely</b>
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## 5.9 Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

### 5.9.1 Preparation and Readiness

186. A regional inception meeting was held in Costa Rica in February 2019 back-to-back to the Regional Workshop on 10YFP Programme on Sustainable Food Systems. This allowed for enhanced visibility to ICSAL from the beginning. National inception workshops were conducted in each of the three focus countries with engagement of key stakeholders from both the public and private sector and where national workplans were approved. Partners were identified in each focus country and National Steering Committees established, with participation of government representatives, private sector actors and the EU Delegation.

187. Overall, ICSAL's design was well-prepared and well thought through the design process was strongly rooted in the regional LAC context and previous experiences and collaborations within the region (such as the SPPEL project). This contributed to a high degree of ownership to ICSAL among key stakeholders within the focus countries and to an easier start-up process where many of the key stakeholders already had well-established working relations and often also good personal relationships.

188. The design process, however, did not include a proper risk and capacity assessment of the process required for the legal and constitutional establishing of the Environmental Alliance of America. This was a major shortcoming in the design process which affected various parts of the implementation and contributed to significant delays.

Rating for 'Preparation and Readiness' is **Moderately Satisfactory**.

### 5.9.2 Quality of Project Management and Supervision

#### 5.9.2.1 UNEP/Implementing Agency:

189. The UNEP LAC Office played a crucial role as facilitator in the implementation process. This became of particular importance during the COVID-19 pandemic, when activities were adjusted (from physical to virtual interventions) and the commitment and engagement from some stakeholders (in particular government actors) started to decline. In this situation, the physical presence of the UNEP Office within the LAC region and dedicated and engaged staff with a clear understanding of the socio-political context, became fundamental factors to push the process forward under very difficult conditions. In addition, it was mainly due to the UNEP LAC Office staff that the technical committee at regional level continued to function well throughout the implementation period. Good examples of adaptive management practices were noted during the COVID-19 pandemic, where planned physical events were converted into virtual events (online training, webinars) which also allowed for higher attendance. Likewise, in the case of Mexico, the challenge to identify a suitable institutional implementing partner was solved by identifying suitable national consultants.

190. **SKQ g)** "Has the division of tasks between UNEP Economy Division and Regional Offices proved to be effective in project delivery?". In general, the division of tasks between UNEP Economy Division and the Regional LAC Office was clear and worked smoothly. This contributed to a rather effective performance in terms of activity implementation and output delivery. As mentioned above, the importance of the Regional LAC Office in day-to-day management and operations cannot be underestimated. At the same time, however, it was difficult for the LAC Office to provide follow-up on technical assistance interventions (delivered by consultants) and introduce effective mechanisms for up-scaling. Here, stronger technical support from UNEP HQ could have been beneficial.

Rating for 'UNEP/Implementing Agency' is **Satisfactory**.

#### 5.9.2.2 Partners/Executing Agency:

191. The implementing partners (Universities) had a clear benefit from ICSAL as it has contributed to the further development and promotion of the curricula and careers related to sustainable consumption and production within the universities. Some activities, e.g. the Contests of Sustainable Lifestyles, were implemented at the universities and contributed to an enhanced visibility. On the other hand, it has been challenging for the universities to play the coordinating and convening role at national level which they were expected to play. The dialogue between the ICSAL Coordinators at the universities and the other key stakeholders at national level has not been regular and often been limited to participation in official events. This has challenged the ability to coordinate and create synergies across different intervention areas.

192. **SKQ e)** To what extent could the EU grant (ICSAL) have benefited from increased engagement with the European Commission and EU Delegations? The EU and the EU Delegations within the three focus countries were invited for and attended several important events, organized by ICSAL. This included the National Contests of Sustainable Lifestyles and the LAC Sustainable Consumption Week, where the EU was very active and visible in several of the sessions. At national levels, the EU Delegations also contributed to an enhancement of the visibility of ICSAL in several other events. In addition to these official events however, it has been difficult to engage the European Commission and EU Delegations in supporting the ICSAL implementation process, for instance by connecting ICSAL to other EU funded initiatives within the LAC region and focus countries. The dysfunctionality of the National Steering Committees has contributed to this shortcoming, together with the COVID-19 pandemic and staff rotations.

Rating for 'Partners/Executing Agency' is **Moderately Unsatisfactory**

Rating for "Quality of Project Management and Supervision" is **Moderately Satisfactory**.

### 5.9.3 Stakeholders Participation and Cooperation

193. The design process, including the inception workshop, included a thorough analysis and discussion of which key stakeholder groups to involve in ICSAL. A Gender Analysis was also conducted at this stage. During the implementation process, the ownership and communication process ended up relying on rather few individuals within the three focus countries to drive the process forward. It has been difficult to institutionalize these processes.

194. Overall, there was a good level of interest among different stakeholder groups to participate in the various activities organized through ICSAL. There were also very good examples of cooperation between stakeholder groups, both nationally and regionally. This contributed to cross-country learning and strengthening of network relations both nationally and regionally. These examples have however mainly taken place *within* the components and not *across* them. In particular, there was limited interaction and sharing of information across the production and consumption related interventions.

Rating for 'Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation' is **Satisfactory**.

### 5.9.4 Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

195. ICSAL only to a limited extent, and mainly indirectly, addressed human rights and gender equality issues. This was not done from a strategic perspective. Gender issues were mainly reflected quantitatively as the "share of female participants" in different events. There were few attempts to address gender issues from a more qualitative perspective (e.g. how women and men become affected differently as consumers). Gender and youth were explicitly addressed through the Sustainable Lifestyle Contests where a gender criterion was also included among the criteria for evaluation of candidates/projects (additional points were given to teams with female members). This criterion impacted on the results of the contests which also aimed at having gender balance in the panels. ICSAL did not include any particular focus on marginalized and people living with a disability.

196. A Gender Analysis was included in the Concept Note for ICSAL. According to this analysis, consumer information should take into consideration the gender perspective. It was stated that ICSAL would "further explore this perspective while gathering information and promoting the 10 principles of the Guidelines for Providing Product Sustainability Information, in special the aspirational principle "three dimensions of sustainability". It was also emphasized that ICSAL would "...include the gender component while working with social standards to ensure that the impacts on men and women are being assessed and monitored accordingly (i.e. working conditions, health and safety, education, and leadership)" and that ICSAL during its implementation would aim to "...monitor the gender component in the trainings and activities developed..." to ensure that women are being trained and positively impacted by the interventions. However, in addition to the above-mentioned quantitative gender targets, there was no indication that these intentions have been implemented in practice.

Rating for 'Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality' is **Unsatisfactory**.

### 5.9.5 Environmental and Social Safeguards

197. While no explicit environmental and social safeguard measures were introduced by ICSAL, the whole focus of this EU grant was on sustainable environmental development. ICSAL was underpinned by the idea that economic impact from unsustainable



consumption can lead to limited access and availability of sustainable products which in turn will increase the risk of business exposure associated with social and environmental impacts and liabilities.

198. When this said, ICSAL did not disaggregate the specific environmental and social impacts to the different key stakeholder groups and, in particular, the most marginalized and vulnerable groups were not explicitly considered or addressed. Likewise, no management or monitoring plan was developed for addressing safeguarding issues and no reporting on safeguarding issues was produced to indicate any changes or development in safeguarding issues during the implementation period.

Rating for 'Environmental and Social Safeguards' is ***Moderately Unsatisfactory***.

#### 5.9.6 Country Ownership and Drivenness

199. The country ownership (in case of the three focus countries) was strong, but also mostly rested, among those individuals who had already been driven the processes at national level within the area of ecolabelling and sustainable consumption and production for years. In general, it was not possible through the implementation period to ensure a stronger institutionalization and national ownership to the sustainable consumption and production agenda within the three focus countries. As discussed in other parts of this evaluation report, elections and political developments within the focus countries strongly impacted on this.

200. Evidence from the evaluation suggests that within the focus countries, very few of those Government ministries and public sector agencies that are essential for moving from the outputs to the outcome level (and from the outcome to the intermediate state) managed to take a leadership role to facilitate strategic guidance of project delivery at national level. In some cases, this was further challenged by weak power positions of key ministries (e.g. Ministries of Environment in both Costa Rica and Colombia) and changes in the prioritization of working tasks within key public institutions (as in the case of Mexico). In none of the focus countries did the evaluation find any evidence of additional budget allocations or resources allocated to sustainable production and consumption activities as a result of ICSAL. In view of this, it was an increasing political interest and commitment to a *regional* ecolabeling that worked as the main driving force for change to higher level results.

Rating for 'Country Ownership and Drivenness' is ***Moderately Unsatisfactory***.

#### 5.9.7 Communication and Public Awareness

201. A Communication and Learning Strategy was prepared during the ICSAL design process and has been partially implemented. The strategy focused on four different communication approaches: i) awareness raising; ii) consumer information tools; iii) awareness raising campaigns and communication info in the social media; and iv) trainings and knowledge exchange events. All these four approaches were to some extent implemented together with different tools to reach the target audiences. Examples of this is that a number of knowledge products (e.g. case studies) that were made available at the One Planet Network website; ICSAL have promoted and presented knowledge in various relevant events related to consumer information (e.g. the LAC Sustainable Consumption Week 2021); training materials/methodologies were developed and made available (e.g. the detailed methodology developed by Universidad de Los Andes on how to provide technical assistance to private companies in the implementation of UNEP's "Guidelines for Providing Product Sustainability"; and influencers and social media have been used for consumer information campaigns. The EU Delegation has also been useful

in some instances to help expand the outreach and awareness of key messages and the visibility of ICSAL.

The main challenge related to the communication and learning part is that it lacked a proper monitoring and follow-up and that activities often were implemented as isolated interventions within the components. Thus, while the communication activities and channels in most cases were well-targeted to their audiences, there anywhere no systematic attempts to collect feedback and measure the effectiveness of these interventions. Likewise, between ICSAL partners, the communication and sharing of information mainly took place *within* and not *across* components.

Rating for 'Communication and Public Awareness' is ***Moderately Satisfactory***.

**Rating for Factors Affecting Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues: *Moderately Satisfactory***

## 6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Conclusions

202. UNEP holds a strong reputation as a provider of support to SCP within the LAC region and is an international key actor in defining best practice in relation to developing and implementing relevant policies. ICSAL included many valuable elements and was appreciated by the beneficiary countries. SCP is however still a premature theme in these countries and the governments hesitate allocating resources and commitment to the area. While this barrier is still challenging to overcome, ICSAL contributed by planting some seeds which may be able to grow and create a larger consciousness.
203. **KSQ d)** "To what extent was the EU grant (ICSAL) in line with the UNEP private sector engagement strategy?". ICSAL was very well in line with UNEP' first private sector engagement strategy, which was adopted in 2019. ICSAL was to some extent addressing all five outcomes outlined in the strategy, but most particularly Outcome 3: *Business models based on circularity, resource efficiency and sustainability that drive cultural change amongst consumers and contribute to the decoupling of economic growth from the unsustainable use of natural resources.*
204. **KSQ f)** "To what extent has the EU Grant (ICSAL) contributed to a regional approach to ecolabelling (through the Environmental Alliance of America) and what are lessons learned with view of the upcoming UNEP-GIZ project IKI Eco-Advance. Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities?". While broadly designed, ICSAL provided *large flexibility* in relation to implementation at country level. In particular, ICSAL was instrumental in maintaining support to the Environmental Alliance of America at a time when no other projects were there to support. ICSAL was a frontrunner for the recognition of a regional ecolabel in the LAC region, and without the EU grant this topic would be a very difficult place now. Instead, it is seen that the Environmental Alliance of America is attracting interest from more countries and the contacts and network stakeholders in the region were maintained and further strengthened as part of this process.
205. Another important result was the *strengthening and expansion of capacities* in critical areas of sustainable consumption and ecolabeling. From being a rather small group of people having the required skills and knowledge within the focus countries, it was possible through ICSAL to train and build the capacity of a larger group of people, including within the technical areas.
206. In particular the *technical part* of ICSAL was well delivered. This relates to the assessments and developments of technical standards and norms for ecolabeling both nationally and in relation to the regional ecolabel. Likewise, the quality of the technical assistance provided to companies and retailers in relation to certification processes and sustainable design, production and information campaigns was also rated high.
207. **KSQ c)** "What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?". ICSAL has demonstrated good value from working with SCP in a combined national and regional effort and the project levels and substantive areas have been well integrated. Many challenges within the substantive areas are recognizable from one country to another. The regional LAC office has played a crucial role in relation to the coordination and facilitation of the implementation process not least during the COVID-19 pandemic which caused delays in the implementation. Most planned interventions, however, were still implemented although in many cases adapted

from physical events (workshops, trainings, technical assistance activities etc.) to virtual activities (online training and webinars). While this change in delivery approach allowed for an increased participation of stakeholders, it did not significantly affect the performance.

208. **KSQ g)** "Has the division of tasks between UNEP Economy Division and Regional Offices proved to be effective in project delivery?". The COVID-19 pandemic made it more difficult to convene stakeholders, in particular at national level and with government actors who also got other priorities after the outbreak of the pandemic. In this process, the division of work between the UNEP Economy Division and Regional LAC Offices proved to be effective in project delivery, although a stronger technical support from UNEP HQ in designing appropriate models for scaling could have been beneficial.
209. ICSAL has included several interesting innovative initiatives, such as the *Sustainable Consumption Week 2021 in LAC* and the national and regional *Sustainable Lifestyle Contests*. These initiatives were very well received and attended by key stakeholders.
210. At the same time, it is concluded that ICSAL suffered from lack of a clear strategic vision on how to link its three components which somehow worked in silos. There was limited coordination and interaction across the three components in the implementation process. In addition, while the project implementation concentrated mainly in its technical parts and a number of technical products were developed, not all of them have been possible to use afterwards. Likewise, the project implementation focused mainly on companies (and production aspects) and to less extent on the consumers.
211. Within all three focus countries, the consumer element is considered very weak and in most cases the consumers lack basic knowledge. Thus, currently there is no real demand, and therefore no market, for ecolabel products within the focus countries. In this situation, it was not a good strategy for ICSAL to support development of (ecolabel) products which did not have a market (where consumers were willing to pay extra for the ecolabeling).
212. Based on the contextual political factors (governments in LAC being often instable and with frequent change of Ministers), ICSAL has suffered from not having included a more elaborate risk assessment and related mitigate strategies in its design. The main challenge in ICSAL was related to the work with governments which caused delays and set-backs in all three focus countries. The large dependency of governments and their decision-making processes was a gran obstacle in ICSAL. For instance, it was a major shortcoming that the legal and constitutional requirements to the Environmental Alliance of America were not clarified when ICSAL started. This caused a number of delays and inefficiencies in the implementation process.
213. Despite the ability to include a larger group of people in the training and capacity building, ICSAL has stayed very much within a small network of *individuals* and to less extent been able to develop *institutions*. While good individual connections have facilitated a smoother implementation process, it hampers the possibilities for developing more sustainable institutional structures within the countries. This also relates to ICSAL's tendency to mainly use regional and national consultants for the technical support instead of making use of national institutions.
214. **KSQ h)** "To what extent has a conscious scaling-up and replication model been successfully demonstrated? How well has a scaling-up/replication model been articulated and lessons captured for wider learning?" **KSQ i)** "Going forward, what are the key lessons learned for further scaling up consumer information in general and ecolabelling in specific, and using it as a policy tool and catalyst for jobs, income and environmental sustainability?"

Are there any suggestions for further work on the promotion and application of project results?". The companies that have received technical assistance through ICSAL were spread over different sectors and countries which has made it very difficult to obtain a scaling effect. In addition, it was mainly larger companies that were invited and benefitted from the technical assistance, and only to a lesser extent was it possible to involve SME's. Overall, ICSAL was not successful in developing any conscious model for scaling of the demonstrated sustainable production practices nor of the campaigns targeted consumers. This is largely due to the fact that the thinking behind SCP was not institutionalized or conceptualized within business associations and consumer groups, which is again a result of lacking incentives and low political prioritization.

215. ICSAL's focus on gender issues and vulnerable groups has been mostly indirect (e.g. number of women participating in different events), except from the Sustainable Lifestyle Contests where gender and youth was explicitly targeted. Besides that, the project has not included a strategic approach and focus to this topic. A developed Gender Strategy was never implemented and the vulnerable groups were not identified.

216. While the sustainability aspects of ICSAL's interventions are in many areas weakly addressed, the possibility to continue the support to the Environmental Alliance of America through the IKI Advance project, is critical. In addition, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, the issue of sustainable consumption has gained further attention in the region and may also add positively to this.

217. **KSQ a)** "To what extent was the EU grant (ICSAL) complementary with the other grants of the UNEP project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011), e.g. the IKI grant "Advancing and Measuring Sustainable Consumption and Production for a Low-Carbon Economy in Middle-Income and Newly Industrialized Countries"?" **KSQ b)** "To what extent did the EU grant (ICSAL) contribute to the intervention strategy of the UNEP project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011)?" ICSAL demonstrated a good complementarity with the other grants of the PIMS ID 2011, such as the IKI grant "Advancing and Measuring Sustainable Consumption and Production for a Low-Carbon Economy in Middle-Income and Newly Industrialized Countries". There are various examples of joint coordination, organization and financing of activities. Overall, ICSAL made a good contribution to the intervention strategy of the PIMS ID 2011. This has included an effective support to coordination of the 10YFP on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns Consumer Information Programme and in particular the efforts to increase regional and, to some extent, also international cooperation. The work around the Alliance was of most importance here.

218. **KSQ e)** "To what extent could the EU grant (ICSAL) have benefited from increased engagement with the European Commission and EU Delegations?". The EU and the EU Delegations contributed actively and importantly to major ICSAL events, such as the National Sustainable Lifestyles Contests and the LAC Sustainable Consumption Week 2021. At national levels, the EU Delegations also contributed to an enhancement of the visibility of ICSAL in several other events. Despite this, there was limited engagement with the EU Delegations at national levels and only on a very few occasions were attempts made to connect ICSAL with other EU funded initiatives within the LAC region and focus countries.

The table below provides a summary of the ratings and finding discussed in Chapter 5. Overall, ICSAL demonstrates a rating of **Moderately Satisfactory**.

**Table 114. Summary of project findings and ratings**

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Summary assessment</b>	<b>Rating</b>
<b>Strategic Relevance</b>		<b>HS</b>
1. Alignment to UNEP MTS, POW and Strategic Priorities	Very well aligned, fits directly into priority areas.	<b>HS</b>
2. Alignment to Donor strategic priorities	Very well aligned to the European Green Deal roadmap and other recent EU initiatives.	<b>HS</b>
3. Relevance to global, regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities	Very well-aligned to the SDG's as well as to the regional agenda. The regional political commitment to the Environment Alliance of the Americas re-confirmed during high-level Ministerial Meeting between Ministers of Environment in the LAC region.	<b>HS</b>
4. Complementarity with existing interventions/ Coherence	There have been several concrete complementary actions between ICSAL and Advance SCP as well as with other UNEP projects. ICSAL has prepared the way for new IKI project.	<b>S</b>
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>	Strong anchoring within the LAC region and use of experience from previous and ongoing projects. High strategic relevance, well-planned governance and supervision arrangements, communication and knowledge, financing/budgeting, and efficiency measures. Weaknesses in terms of limited analysis of the operating context, results and causalities, logical framework and indicators, risk assessments and addressing of sustainability concerns.	<b>MS</b>
<b>Nature of External Context</b>	ICSAL was not affected by any key external features related to the implementing context, that could have been reasonably expected at the design stage to limit its performance. Two factors, however, did occasionally affect the economic and political implementation context, namely the national elections within the three focus countries and the COVID-19 pandemic.	<b>F</b>
<b>Effectiveness</b>		<b>MS</b>
1. Availability of outputs	Targets achieved, however all formulated as number of events/participants.	<b>HS</b>
2. Achievement of project outcomes	So far only materialized to a limited extent, but continuation (new IKI project) ensured.	<b>MU</b>
3. Likelihood of impact	Renewed high-level political commitment and increasing interest for participation in the Environmental Alliance of America provide some optimism for the future.	<b>ML</b>
<b>Financial Management</b>		<b>S</b>
1. Adherence to UNEP's financial policies and procedures	No non-compliance detected.	<b>S</b>
2. Completeness of project financial information	Project financial reports completed with only insignificant delays. Financial summary report missing.	<b>S</b>
3. Communication between finance and project management staff	Smooth communication and continuous interaction.	<b>S</b>

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Summary assessment</b>	<b>Rating</b>
<b>Efficiency</b>	Thee spreading out of relatively few budget resources over a nearly 4-year period was not efficient and led to a number of fragmented interventions. At the same time, coordination never became strong and in practice the production and consumer parts were implemented separately. Finally, it took around two years to sign the MoU between the governments of Colombia, Costa Rica and Mexico due to bureaucracies and change of governments within the focus countries. This significantly delayed implementation of several planned interventions.	<b>MU</b>
<b>Monitoring and Reporting</b>		<b>MS</b>
1. Monitoring design and budgeting	The monitoring design rather unambitious and did not intend to measure progress in performance as a result of ICSAL's support. Only indicators related to number of participants and number of events organised have been included.	<b>MU</b>
2. Monitoring of project implementation	Following the above, monitoring of ICSAL implementation has mainly consisted of ticking the box when an event had been completed and counting the number of participants.	<b>MS</b>
3. Project reporting	Reporting has in general been timely and fulfilled UNEP's reporting requirements.	<b>S</b>
<b>Sustainability</b>		<b>MU</b>
1. Socio-political sustainability	The sustainability of ICSAL's outcome has a high degree of dependency on social/political factors within the three focus countries. The political part has been fragile during ICSAL and social and consumer groups fragmented. On the positive side, countries in the region are characterised by a certain homogeneity and similarities (e.g. culture and language) which seems to unite them towards the Alliance.	<b>MU</b>
2. Financial sustainability	The issue of financing still constitutes a major constraint for SCP development in the focus countries. However, it is a focus area of the new IKI project to develop a Financial Model for a regional ecolabel.	<b>MU</b>
3. Institutional sustainability	The commitment from Government's in the LAC region to the Environmental Alliance of America has been re-confirmed recently and the institutionalisation of the Alliance is a key focus area of the new IKI project.	<b>ML</b>
<b>Factors Affecting Performance</b>		<b>MS</b>
1. Preparation and readiness	Both regional and national workshops organized and ICSAL rooted in LAC context and previous experiences. Adaptive management demonstrated. However, the missing preparation of the legal and constitutional base for the Environmental Alliance of America has been a major shortcoming in ICSAL.	<b>MS</b>
2. Quality of project management and supervision	ICSAL was well-managed and facilitated on behalf of UNEP. At national levels, the partners had more difficulties in convening.	<b>MS</b>
<i>2.1 UNEP/Implementing Agency:</i>	The UNEP LAC Office played a crucial role as facilitator in the implementation process. This became of particular importance during COVID-19 where adaptive management was needed. Good and clear division of work and responsibilities between the LAC Regional Office and UNEP Economy Division.	<b>S</b>

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
2.2 Partners/Executing Agency:	It has been challenging for the universities to play the coordinating and convening role at national level which they were expected to play. The dialogue between the ICSAL Coordinators at the universities and the other key stakeholders at national level was not regular and often limited to participation in official events. This challenged the ability to coordinate and create synergies across different intervention areas. The EU and EU Delegations were visible and contributed importantly to larger ICSAL central events. It became more difficult to engage continuously with the EU Delegations at national level.	<b>MU</b>
3. Stakeholders' participation and cooperation	There has been a good interest for participation across stakeholder groups and countries and good examples of stakeholder cooperation also across countries.	<b>S</b>
4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equality	This area has mostly been very indirectly addressed in ICSAL. While a Gender Strategy was referred to in the Concept Note, it was never implemented. A gender criterion was however included among the criteria for evaluation of candidates/projects participating in the Sustainable Lifestyles Context.	<b>U</b>
5. Environmental and social safeguards	While environmental and social aspects are directly linked to the sustainable production and consumption agenda, more explicit environmental and social safeguarding measures have not been implemented through ICSAL and not disaggregated according to social groups.	<b>MU</b>
6. Country ownership and driven-ness	Within the focus countries, the country ownership to the SCP agenda is still mainly driven by relatively few individuals and not through an institutional anchoring.	<b>MU</b>
7. Communication and public awareness	A Communication and Learning Strategy has been partly implemented, however the activities lacked coherence and follow-up.	<b>MS</b>
<b>Overall Project Performance Rating</b>		<b>MS</b>

## 6.2 Lessons learned

<b>Lesson Learned #1:</b>	National elections need to be factored in and risk assessments conducted.
<b>Context/comment:</b>	Elections in all three focus countries have illustrated this challenge. Ecolabeling and SCP are still fragile topics, that can easily be squeezed out when new governments come in power.
<b>Lesson Learned #2:</b>	Certification (ecolabeling) needs to be based on a marketing/market assessment to create incentives for companies
<b>Context/comment:</b>	Currently there is no real demand, and therefore no market, for ecolabel products within the focus countries. Consumers are not willing to pay extra for the ecolabeling.
<b>Lesson Learned #3:</b>	The choice of sectors/industries is key, and it is necessary to engage them from the very beginning of the process. However, defining regional priorities is



	challenging given the non-sustainability that plays a role such as national economic interests and sector/industry lobbies.
<b>Context/comment:</b>	In Mexico, the paper sector turned out not to be interested when it finally became involved (too late in the process).

<b>Lesson Learned #4:</b>	Regional ecolabeling is a (long) process and it is important to understand the different pace of components.
<b>Context/comment:</b>	The regional ecolabeling process has shown to move slower than national processes which may undermine its potential.

<b>Lesson Learned #5:</b>	Scaling and replication of ecolabeling does not happen automatically during implementation but requires use of a strategic approach which, in the case of the Environmental Alliance of America, could include stronger link to trade treaties and initiatives in the region, banks, etc.
<b>Context/comment:</b>	The ecolabeling support provided to companies during ICSAL did not result in any scaling or replication effects.

### 6.3 Recommendations

<b>Recommendation #1:</b>	<p><b>Any follow-on or new project requiring selection and planning of ecolabeling demonstration "cases" should be done with an explicit focus on the <i>potentials for scaling and replication</i>.</b> This should include particular attention to the following in the design and planning process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identification of specific sectors/industries at regional/country level with a keen interest and incentive in ecolabel certification.</li> <li>- Engagement of relevant branch organizations, chambers of commerce etc. at regional/national levels from the early stage of project implementation.</li> <li>- Development of differentiated approaches and supporting lines (technical, financial, implementation time) to target a) larger companies and b) SMEs for ecolabeling.</li> <li>- Allocation of resources for follow-up support to companies after receiving of technical assistance.</li> </ul> <p>Could potentially be implemented under the IKI Advance project.</p>
<b>Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:</b>	In ICSAL, technical assistance on ecolabelling was provided to a very few companies within the three focus countries, across a range of different sectors and with no plan for any follow-up or scaling of the support provided.
<b>Priority Level:</b>	Important
<b>Type of Recommendation</b>	Project-level
<b>Responsibility:</b>	UNEP LAC Office
<b>Proposed implementation time-frame:</b>	6-12 months

<b>Recommendation #2:</b>	<p><b>Any follow-on or new SCP project should, to a larger extent, use regional experience (regional "peer countries") as models and inspiration for regional expansion of SCP, given the similarity of contextual factors (language, culture, trade patterns etc.) among countries in the LAC region.</b> This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction of country "mentors" who could be called/contacted by other countries for advice/sparring along the process.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishing and facilitation of fora (e.g. WhatsApp group, blog etc.) for continuous and open discussions and sharing of views across countries.</li> <li>- Planning of study visit(s) to show concrete experiences from more advanced countries (e.g. division of countries into sub-regional groups).</li> </ul> <p>Could potentially be implemented under the IKI Advance project.</p>
<b>Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:</b>	Governments in the LAC region are reluctant to allocate budget and resources to SCP as long as they do not see the clear need and benefits from this.
<b>Priority Level:</b>	Important
<b>Type of Recommendation</b>	Project-level
<b>Responsibility:</b>	UNEP LAC Office
<b>Proposed implementation time-frame:</b>	6-12 months

<b>Recommendation #3:</b>	<p><b>Any follow-on or new project should include a clear strategic promotion of gender equality and human rights in SCP related projects, including definition of whom the most vulnerable people are and how they are affected and targeted.</b></p> <p>More specifically, project designs should include the following considerations :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proper analysis of <b>whom</b> the most vulnerable people are and gender dimensions in relation to the key project interventions.</li> <li>- Definition of targets for both gender and vulnerable people in the results framework.</li> <li>- Development of <b>data collection tools</b> that allow for disaggregation by gender and vulnerability.</li> <li>- <b>Collection of data</b> that reports on not only how many women and men are reached but also youth, people living with a disability etc. and other vulnerable groups considered a target group for the specific intervention. An ongoing analysis of these data during implementation is essential to understand whether the intended target groups are reached or other strategies are required.</li> <li>- A dedicated focus to ensuring <b>consultations</b> of women and people living with a disability (or organizations representing these groups) in e.g. research and policy development processes to ensure their perspectives and needs are duly taken into account.</li> <li>- In order to influence policy and advocate for a greater level of inclusion, it is crucial that <b>research papers and studies</b> (e.g. on consumer behaviour) include analysis of human rights, gender dimensions and considerations of whom the most vulnerable people are and how they may be reached.</li> <li>- A dedicated <b>outreach and communication strategy</b> is required to ensure reaching of vulnerable groups and people living with a disability etc. In order to ensure enrolment of such target groups in consumer groups, training courses etc., a more direct communication may be needed (e.g. through organizations working with people living with a disability) to ensure that the messages are being communicated to the right people/community.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenge/problem to be addressed by the recommendation:</b>	In ICSAL, gender issues were only addressed thorough counting of events and/or of participants (m/f) in training event but not from a qualitative perspective. Marginalised and vulnerable groups were not explicitly addressed in the implementation (with the exception of youth).
<b>Priority Level:</b>	Important
<b>Type of Recommendation</b>	UNEP wide
<b>Responsibility:</b>	UNEP
<b>Proposed implementation time-frame:</b>	6-12 months

## ANNEX I. RESPONSE TO STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

**Response to stakeholder comments received but not (fully) accepted by the evaluator, where appropriate**

Page Ref	Stakeholder comment	Evaluator(s) Response	UNEP Evaluation Office Response
	Xxx	Xxx	

## ANNEX II. PEOPLE CONSULTED DURING THE EVALUATION

### People consulted during the Evaluation

Organisation	Name	Position	Gender
UNEP	Juan Bello	Regional Director and Representative, LAC Office	M
UNEP	Elisa Tonda	Chief of Resources and Markets Branch	F
UNEP	Ignacio Sanchez	Programme Management Officer	M
UNEP	Beatriz Martins Carneiro	Sub-programme Coordinator Finance and Economic Transformations LAC Office	F
UNEP	Tomas Declercq	Programme Management Officer, LAC Office	M
UNEP	Gloria Ordonez	Programme Officer, LAC Office	F
UNEP	Victor Edo	Admin Officer HR/Finance, LAC Office	M
UNEP	Dolores Barrientos	UNEP's Representative Officer in Mexico	F
Universidad de los Andes	Carlos Andres Trujillo Valencia	Project Manager	M
Frasoalliance	Veronica Garcia	Technical Consultant, UNEP	F
Independent Consultant	Tabaré Arroyo	UNEP National Technical Consultant, Mexico	M
Independent Consultant	Nydia Suppen	UNEP National Technical Consultant, Mexico	F
FUNDATEC	Ana Laura	Administration Officer	F
Ministry of Environment, Colombia	Carolina Rivera	Policy focal point	F
Ministry of Environment, Colombia	Vivian Rodriguez	Policy focal point	F
Ministry of Environment and Energy, Costa Rica	Luis Rodriguez	Director of Environmental Quality Management, President AAA	M
Ministry of Commerce, Colombia	Nelson Rivera	Contractor	M
Instituto Colombiano de Normas Técnicas y Certificación (ICONTEC)	Daniel Trillos	Subdirector de Normalización, ICONTEC	M
Organismo Nacional de Acreditación de Colombia (ONAC)	Ferney Chaparro	Steering Committee ICSAL Colombia	M
ECA (Accreditation entity), Mexico	Mariluz Quiros Lopez	Steering Committee ICSAL Costa Rica	F
EMA (Accreditation entity), Mexico	Maribel López	Steering Committee ICSAL Mexico	F
EMA (Accreditation entity), Mexico	Martha Mejia Luna	Steering Committee ICSAL Mexico	F
National Normalization and Certification Agency (ONNCCE), Mexico	Joel Ruíz	Director	M
INTECO (Standardization entity), Costa Rica	Diego Cordero	Steering Committee ICSAL Costa Rica	M
European Commission	Tibor Sztaricskai	EU focal point	M

Organisation	Name	Position	Gender
European Commission	Jerome Poussiégue	EU delegation focal point Mexico	M
Aires del Campo (organic food), Mexico	Raúl Moreno	Training participant, private sector	M
Coopeagropal, Costa Rica	Marianela Ávila Hernández	Private sector technical assistance beneficiary	F
Coopeagropal, Costa Rica	Heynor	Private sector technical assistance beneficiary	M
Florex, Costa Rica	Silvia Chaves	Private sector technical assistance beneficiary	F
Florex, Costa Rica	Maynor Arias	Private sector technical assistance beneficiary	M
Cory Colombia	Mary Alice Jimenez	Private sector technical assistance beneficiary	F
CEMEX	Arturo Gaytan Covarrubias	Training participant, private sector	M
Corporación de Compañías Agroindustriales, CEDI Hortifruti Coris, Costa Rica	Andrea Calvo Sanchez	Private sector technical assistance beneficiary	M
Ruby Canyon Engineering	Minerva López Pérez	Training participant, private sector	F
SOLAL, S.C., Mexico	José Antonio Ramirez Zuniga	Training participant, private sector	M
Icafe	Rolando Chacón Araya	Private sector technical assistance beneficiary	M
AGROINPAL, Columbia	Martha Lucía Pinzón	Private sector technical assistance beneficiary	F
Ambiental AP, Mexico	Norma Alejandra Portillo Nunez	Training participant, private sector	F
Addere Solutions, Mexico	Beatriz Martínez Ocampo	Training participant, private sector	F
Sublime, Colombia	María Paula Luna López	Private sector, Sustainable Lifestyles national innovation contest 2020, Colombia	F
Acuaponia Digital para Todos, Colombia	Camila Andrea Benavides Claros	Private sector, Sustainable Lifestyles national innovation contest 2020, Colombia	M
Sitopia	Scarlet Dergal	Influencer, ICSAL Sustainable Lifestyles component	F
La Mano Del Mono	Mauricio Martínez Miramontes	Influencer, ICSAL Sustainable Lifestyles component	M
Eco Blist, Costa Rica	Álvaro Esteban Alfaro Alfaro	Academia, Sustainable Lifestyles innovation national contest 2020, Costa Rica	M
Eco Blist, Costa Rica	María Alejandra Jiménez al correo	Academia, Sustainable Lifestyles innovation national contest 2020, Costa Rica	F
Ento Food, Colombia	Juan Sebastián Muñoz Castillo	Academia, Sustainable Lifestyles innovation regional contest 2022	M
Ento Food, Colombia	Katherine Rocha	Academia, Sustainable Lifestyles innovation regional contest 2022	F

## ANNEX III. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Judgement criteria/Indicators	Source/means of Verification
<b>A. Strategic Relevance</b>			
<b>Are the objectives and the design of ICSAL still valid for UNEP and the supported countries?</b>	Sub-criterion i) <i>Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy<sup>17</sup> (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities</i>	Level of alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy, Programme of Work and Strategic Priorities	Review of relevant UNEP strategy documents
	To what extent is SPP embedded in UNEP strategic priorities?	Extent to which ICSAL is suited to, or responding to, donor priorities.	Review of ICSAL project documentation
	Sub-criterion ii) <i>Alignment to Donor/Partner Strategic Priorities:</i>	Extent to which ICSAL is in line with global priorities such as the SDGs and Agenda 2030 as well as relevant UN, sub-regional and national strategic frameworks	Review of documentation from other related programmes/projects/grants
	To what extent is ICSAL aligned to Donor/Partner Strategic Priorities?	Extent to which ICSAL took account of related ongoing and/or planned initiatives	Review of relevant global, regional and national strategy and policy documents
	Sub-criterion iii) <i>Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities</i>	Level of alignment to the UNEP private sector engagement strategy	Key stakeholder interviews
	What is the relevance of ICSAL in view of Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities	Extent to which ICSAL has managed to identify and pursue partnerships with other related projects/programmes to address the regional agenda	
	Sub-criterion iv) <i>Complementarity with Relevant Existing Interventions/Coherence</i>	Mechanisms established/actions taken to share information and work planning with other related programmes/projects	
	Is ICSAL complementarity/coherent with other interventions?	Extent to which ICSAL interventions have been important for achievements in the PIMS ID 2011	
	<b>Key Strategic questions:</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent was the EU grant (ICSAL) in line with the UNEP private sector engagement strategy?</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent has the EU Grant (ICSAL) contributed to a regional approach to</li> </ul>		

<sup>17</sup> 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>

Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Judgement criteria/Indicators	Source/means of Verification
	ecolabelling (through the Environmental Alliance of America) and what are lessons learned with view of the upcoming UNEP-GIZ project IKI Eco-Advance. Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities?		
<b>B. Quality of Project Design</b>			
See Annex 4 of this report	See Annex 4 of this report	See Annex 4 of this report	Review of project documentation Scoping interviews
<b>C. Nature of External Context</b>			
See Annex 4 of this report, Section A "Operating Context"	See Annex 4 of this report, Section A "Operating Context"	See Annex 4 of this report, Section A "Operating Context"	Review of project documentation Scoping interviews
<b>D. Effectiveness</b>			
<b>Have the objectives of ICSAL been achieved in accordance to expectations?</b>	Sub-criterion i) <i>Availability/produce of outputs</i>  To what extent has the project delivered the expected project outputs? What have been enabling/hindering factors?  Sub-criterion ii) <i>Achievement of project outcomes</i>  To what extent has the project delivered the expected project outcome? What have been enabling/hindering factors?  Sub-criterion iii) <i>Likelihood of impacts</i>  What are the indications that expected impact will be achieved. What seems to enable/hinder this process?  <b>Key strategic question:</b>	Level of achievement of project milestones/targets  Extent to which different types and levels of capacities have been strengthened  Extent to which incentive structures have been developed  Extent to which project arrangements (choice of partners and modalities) have been supportive to the targets and objectives  Extent to which the (reconstructed) ToC has worked as expected  Extent to which COVID-19 adapted project changes have impacted on the quality and suitability of project outputs  Changes in governments' and consumers consumption patterns and priorities  Changes in business interests for SCP and eco-labelling	Review of project documentation  Assessment of regional and national data and statistics  Assessment of baseline and monitoring reports  Key stakeholder interviews FGD's Project site observations  Online survey

Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Judgement criteria/Indicators	Source/means of Verification
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?</li>   <li>•To what extent has a conscious scaling-up and replication model been successfully demonstrated? How well has a scaling-up/replication model been articulated and lessons captured for wider learning?</li>   <li>•Going forward, what are the key lessons learned for further scaling up consumer information in general and ecolabelling in specific, and using it as a policy tool and catalyst for jobs, income and environmental sustainability? Are there any suggestions for further work on the promotion and application of project results?</li> </ul>	Changes in resource flows	
<b>E. Financial Management</b>			
Has financial management been adequate?	<p><i>Sub-criterion a) Adherence to UNEP's financial policies and procedures</i></p> <p>Have all financial transactions taken place in accordance to UNEP financial policies and procedures?</p> <p><i>Sub-criterion b) Completeness of financial information.</i></p> <p>Have all financial reports been submitted with all required information included?</p> <p><i>Sub-criterion c) Communication between financial and project management staff.</i></p> <p>Has there been a regular communication and information flow between financial and project management staff?</p>	<p>Extent to which UNEP's financial policies and procedures are referenced in relation to financial transactions</p> <p>Extent to which financial information on all relevant project transactions</p> <p>Extent to which communication lines are well documented</p>	<p>Project documentation</p> <p>Financial reports/audits</p> <p>Key stakeholder interviews</p>



Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Judgement criteria/Indicators	Source/means of Verification
<b>F. Efficiency</b>			
<b>To what extent have interventions been cost/time effective?</b>	<p>a) Has the project delivered maximum results from the given resources</p> <p>b) Were planned activities delivered according to expected timeframes?</p>	Resources have been put to good use in terms of: realistic programming, logic sequencing, timely disbursements, critical reflection, adaptive planning and continuous monitoring and follow-up	<p>Project documentation, including work plans and budgets, progress reports</p> <p>Baseline and monitoring reports</p> <p>Key stakeholder interviews</p>
<b>G. Monitoring and Reporting</b>			
<b>What has been the adequacy of project monitoring and reporting?</b>	<p>Sub-criterion i) <i>Monitoring design and budgeting</i></p> <p>Has the budgeting of project monitoring sufficiently reflected the monitoring design?</p> <p>Sub-criterion ii) <i>Monitoring of project implementation</i></p> <p>Has the project monitoring allowed for sufficient follow-up, learning and adjustments during implementation?</p> <p>Sub-criterion iii) <i>Project reporting</i></p> <p>Has the project reporting been adequate to follow progress in project implementation?</p>	<p>Existence and applicability of monitoring plan</p> <p>Level of operationality of data collection</p> <p>Level of compliance with UNEP reporting requirements (PIMS)</p>	<p>Project documentation</p> <p>Progress reports</p> <p>Review of monitoring plan and system</p> <p>Data collection tools</p>
<b>H. Sustainability</b>			
<b>What is the probability of the benefits derived from the achievement of project outcomes being maintained and further developed after the</b>	<p>Sub-criterion i) Socio-political sustainability</p> <p>To what extent are mechanisms in place to</p>	<p>Extent to which national governments are taken ownership of SCP process</p> <p>Level of budget and human resources allocated to SPP within the countries</p>	<p>Review of project documentation</p> <p>Government's planning documents and budgets</p> <p>Companies/retailers strategies and business plans</p>

Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Judgement criteria/Indicators	Source/means of Verification
close of the intervention?	<p>continue multi-stakeholder dialogue?</p> <p>Sub-criterion ii) Financial sustainability</p> <p>To what extent are budgets and resources allocated for continuation, replication/scaling-up of supported project interventions?</p> <p>Sub-criterion iii) Institutional sustainability</p> <p>To what extent are procedures in place to institutionalize results from the project support?</p>	<p>Extent to which relevant policies and legislation is being put in place and enforced</p> <p>Types of incentives introduced in support of SCP</p> <p>Extent to which cost/sales prices are attractive to, respectively, companies/retailers and consumers</p> <p>Extent to which multi-stakeholder platforms are viable</p>	<p>Assessment of baseline and monitoring reports</p> <p>Key stakeholder interviews</p> <p>FGD's</p> <p>Project site observations</p> <p>Online survey</p>
<b>I. Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues</b>			
Rated in the ratings table and will be discussed within the Main Evaluation Report as cross-cutting themes as appropriate under the other evaluation criteria mentioned above	<p><b>Key Strategic questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•To what extent could the EU grant (ICSAL) have benefited from increased engagement with the European Commission and EU Delegations?</li> <li>•Has the division of tasks between UNEP Economy Division and Regional Offices proved to be effective in project delivery?</li> </ul>	<p>Level of engagement with the European Commission and EU Delegations across focus countries and in view of results</p> <p>Extent to which working tasks, roles and responsibilities have been divided in accordance to competencies within UNEP and delivered the expected results</p>	<p>Review of work, meetings and engagement plans</p> <p>Key stakeholder interviews (UNEP staff and consultants, EU Delegations, European Commission)</p>
<b>Additional Key Strategic Questions</b>			
	To what extent was the EU grant (ICSAL) complementary with the other grants of the UNEP project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011), e.g. the IKI grant "Advancing and Measuring Sustainable Consumption and Production for a Low-Carbon Economy in Middle-Income and Newly Industrialized Countries"?	Extent to which ICSAL interventions have been important for achievements in the PIMS ID 2011	<p>Review of relevant UNEP strategy documents</p> <p>Review of ICSAL project documentation</p> <p>Review of work, meetings and engagement plans</p> <p>Key stakeholder interviews (UNEP staff and consultants, EU Delegations, European Commission)</p>
	To what extent did the EU grant (ICSAL) contribute	Extent to which ICSAL interventions have been aligned with the	Review of relevant UNEP strategy documents

Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Judgement criteria/Indicators	Source/means of Verification
	to the intervention strategy of the UNEP project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011)?	intervention strategy of PIMS ID 2011	Review of ICSAL project documentation Review of work, meetings and engagement plans Key stakeholder interviews (UNEP staff and consultants, EU Delegations, European Commission)
	What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?	Extent to which COVID-19 adapted project changes have impacted on the quality and suitability of project outputs	Review of ICSAL project documentation Key informant interviews FGDs Online survey
	What opportunities has the evaluation identified to improve the integration of gender and human rights considerations in sustainable consumption and production, and with what foreseeable benefits to the sustainability of results?	Extent to which gender and human rights considerations have been reflected in both design, planning and implementation of the project  Extent to which project results are taking into account gender and human rights aspects	Review of ICSAL project documentation Key informant interviews FGDs Online survey

## ANNEX IV. KEY DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

### Project planning and reporting documents:

- Project Document (PIMS ID 2011)
- Concept Note
- Project document (revised)
- ICSAL Indicators
- Progress and activity reports
- Attendance sheets
- Final project report

### Project budgets and financial information:

- Budget balances
- Budget revisions
- Expenditure overviews

### Sustainable Lifestyle Contests:

- Programme
- Guidelines and materials
- Presentations (webinars)

### Sustainable Consumption Week LAC 2021:

- Programme
- Presentations
- Background material

### Communication material:

- Communication and Learning Strategy
- Various communication and visibility products

### Training materials:

- Various documents

## ANNEX V. BRIEF CV OF THE EVALUATOR

<b>Name</b>	<b>Carsten Schwensen</b>
<b>Profession</b>	Independent Consultant
<b>Nationality</b>	Danish
<b>Country experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Latin America</u>: Nicaragua, Honduras, Panama, Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, Brazil, Costa Rica, Panama, Dominican Republic</li> <li>• <u>Africa</u>: Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Egypt</li> <li>• <u>Asia</u>: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Thailand, Laos, Bhutan, Malaysia, Vietnam, India</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Economist</li> </ul>

### Short biography:

Mr. Carsten Schwensen is a Danish Development Economist, with strong theoretical and practical experience from leading and implementing multi-disciplinary evaluations of development cooperation. He has more than 25 years of experience from development work and has been Team Leader/Core Team Member on 30+ large complex evaluation assignments of development assistance, using OECD DAC evaluation standards. The evaluations have covered a large number of countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Mr. Schwensen's practical experience from evaluation work includes strategic global evaluations; joint UN/multi-donor evaluations; impact evaluations; country programme evaluations; thematic multi-country and regional evaluations; evaluations of different aid modalities and financing instruments. Substantial experience from conducting evaluations in view of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### Key specialties and capabilities cover:

- Complex evaluations
- Impact evaluations
- Multi-country evaluations
- Mixed-methods approaches
- Multi-stakeholder engagements

### Selected recent assignments and experiences:

- Evaluation of the United Nations Development Account 12th tranche "Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics". UNCTAD, 2023
- Strategic Joint Evaluation of the Collective International Development and Humanitarian Assistance Response to COVID-19. OECD/DAC, 2023
- Independent evaluation of UNCTAD's E-commerce and Digital Economy (ECDE) Programme. UNCTAD, 2022
- External evaluation of the UNCTAD project "Development policies for sustainable economic growth in Southern Africa. UNCTAD, 2021
- Evaluation of FAO's contributions to Sustainable Development Goal 2. FAO, 2020
- Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment project 'Delivering Sustainable Development and Enabling the Transition to Greener Economies through Sustainable Public Procurement. UNEP, 2019

## ANNEX VI. EVALUATION TORS (WITHOUT ANNEXES)

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Terminal Evaluation of the EU grant "Driving sustainable consumption in Latin America with better product information and design" (contributing to the UNEP project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" - PIMS ID 2011)<sup>18</sup>**

#### Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

##### Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary

UNEP PIMS ID:	2011		
Implementing Partners	Universidad de los Andes, Fundación Tecnológico de Costa Rica (FUNDATEC)		
Relevant SDG(s) and indicator(s):	<p>Target 12.1: Implement the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries</p> <p>Indicator 12.1.1: Number of countries developing, adopting or implementing policy instruments aimed at supporting the shift to sustainable consumption and production</p> <p>Target 12.6: Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle</p> <p>Indicator 12.6.1: Number of companies publishing sustainability reports</p> <p>Target 12.8: By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature</p> <p>Indicator 12.8.1: Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment</p>		
Sub-programme:	Resource Efficiency, now Finance and Economic Transformations	Expected Accomplishment(s):	EA (a) Science-based approaches that support the transition to

<sup>18</sup> This grant was implemented as part of the UNEP project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011).

**Note:** The UNEP Evaluation Office decided that instead of conducting a Terminal Evaluation of the overall PIMS ID 2011, it will conduct separately yet concurrently the Terminal Evaluations of its two main grants, namely, "**Driving sustainable consumption in Latin America with better product information and design**" (ICSAL) and "**Advancing and Measuring Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) for a Low-Carbon Economy in Middle-Income and Newly Industrialized Countries**" (Advance SCP).

Annex 2 at the end of the ToR presents the results (outputs and outcomes) of the project (ID 2011) and of its grants.

	Subprogramme in the UNEP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025.		<p>sustainable development through multiple pathways, including inclusive green economy and sustainable trade, and the adoption of sustainable consumption and production patterns at all levels</p> <p>EA (c) Public and private sectors increasingly aware of and support the adoption of sustainable lifestyles and sustainable consumption patterns</p>
UNEP approval date <sup>19</sup> :	November 2018	Programme of Work Output(s):	<p>PoW 2020 – 2021: 633.1</p> <p>Primary SP6 Indicator (c) (ii) Increase in the number of countries that implement campaigns, awareness-raising, advocacy and educational initiatives that promote sustainable lifestyles, consumption and production, including gender equality</p> <p>Secondary: SP6 Indicator (a) (i) Increase in the number of countries transitioning to sustainable development through multiple pathways, including through implementing</p>

<sup>19</sup> As confirmed by the project manager and the UNEP Liaison Office in Brussel, the EC approved the Concept Note of "Driving sustainable consumption in Latin America with better product information and design" in November 2018 and agreed to use that in place of the UNEP ProDoc.

			inclusive green economy, sustainable consumption and production, and sustainable trade policies.	
Expected start date:	November 2018	Actual start date:	December 2018	
Planned operational completion date:	November 2020	Actual operational completion date:	October 2022	
Planned total project budget at approval:	USD 1,464,968.16	Actual total expenditures reported as of January 2023:	USD 1,511,053.23	
Planned Environment Fund allocation:	N/A	Actual Environment Fund expenditures reported as of [date]:	N/A	
Planned Extra-Budgetary Financing:	USD 1,464,968.16	Secured Extra-Budgetary Financing:	USD 1,555,235.50	
		Actual Extra-Budgetary Financing expenditures reported as of January 2023:	USD 1,511,053.23	
First disbursement:	526,604 USD	Planned date of financial closure:	21 January 2019	
No. of formal project revisions:	2	Date of last approved project revision:	14/10/2020	
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	10 (at national level)	Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last: April 2021	Next:
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation <sup>20</sup> (planned date):	N/A	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	N/A	
Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	November 2020	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	January 2023	
Coverage - Country(ies):	Colombia, Costa Rica and Mexico	Coverage - Region(s):	Latin America and the Caribbean	
Dates of previous project phases:	N.A	Status of future project phases:	IKI Eco-advance project in Jan 2023 to continue with regional approach to ecolabelling (Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico)	

<sup>20</sup> UNEP policies require projects with planned implementation periods of 4 or more years to have a mid-point assessment of performance. For projects under 4 years, this should be marked as N/A.



## Project Rationale

Present consumption decisions negatively impact the environment and socio-economic development. Unsustainable consumption patterns increase the pressure on natural resources, and intensify human footprint, pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, waste generation, water degradation, resource depletion and loss of biodiversity. Unsustainable consumption can also contribute to social problems, such as unfair working conditions, social disparities, reduced quality of life and wellbeing and harm human health.

The economic impacts of unsustainable consumption can lead to low availability of and limited access to sustainable products, limited market rewards (premiums) to sustainable products, increased market share of unsustainable products, limited incentives to innovation, missed opportunities for circular economy, and increased risk of business exposure associated with environmental and social impacts and liabilities.

The UNEP project "**Driving sustainable consumption in Latin America with better product information and design**" was underpinned by the idea that the lack of reliable information on sustainability aspects across products' life cycles leads to lack of informed decision making and perpetuates unsustainable consumption. Therefore, access to reliable information is one of the essential conditions for the shift towards Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) patterns.

1) The overall objective of this project was to support governments, private sector and other stakeholders in three selected countries in the implementation of policies and practices that lead to improvement in product's design and product sustainability information and increase consumer awareness to support sustainable lifestyles. The objective was intended to be achieved through the use of a range of tools and partners offered by One Planet Network and responding to the regional and national SCP strategies.

Specifically, the project aimed to address the following key obstacles:

- Lack of policy, financing and other incentives to foster investments in the development of more sustainable products.
- Lack of or deficient technology and processes that could improve organizations' sustainability performance, and
- Lack of information that supports consumer behaviour by working with intermediaries – business and government - thus indirectly reaching the individual consumer.

Through this approach, the project aimed to impact on the drivers of consumer behaviour related to marketing influence, the availability of more sustainable products, and fostering sustainable consumption and production.

2) The project was implemented in Colombia, Costa Rica and Mexico. These countries were selected as they already presented:

- National SCP-relevant policies, including SCP National Action Plans;
- Key priorities and sectors identified in such policies, elements of an existing inter-ministerial coordination mechanism and One Planet Network partners located in the country, and
- Existing partnerships at national or regional level, which were already jointly implementing SCP projects, or already designed them requiring only support for implementation.

3) The three countries are also members of the Regional Council of Government Experts on SCP for LAC and have worked on specific SCP initiatives such as eco-innovation, sustainable public procurement and sustainable lifestyles.

4) The project aimed to respond to national and regional priorities building upon existing initiatives, applying tools and identifying strategic synergies to advance the One Planet Network

Strategy delivering national implementation of SCP. To strengthen linkages between national implementation and the One Planet Network Programmes, SCP tools applied through the project were either tools already part of the One Planet network portfolio, or that became part of the relevant One Planet Programmes' portfolios during the project implementation.

## Project Results Framework<sup>21</sup>

To reach the project objective and guarantee an effective implementation of sustainable consumption patterns, it was deemed necessary to:

- Promote the supply and demand for sustainable products for the LAC region and to ensure companies make reliable and clear claims to consumers on product-related sustainability information.
- Increase the availability of certified products in the market, helping consumers to make informed decisions, and
- Raise awareness among society on sustainable lifestyles generating agents of change towards more sustainable consumption practices.

Therefore, the project focused on:

- a) **Building local capacity on sustainable product design and eco-innovation and strengthening reliable communication of sustainability of products.** This aimed to improve companies' knowledge on sustainability performance and enable consumers to make sustainable decisions based on reliable information. This activity was based on existing tools and best practices, through trainings on eco-innovation, and implementation of the "Guidelines for Providing Product Sustainability Information".
- b) **Strengthening the use of consumer information tools and enabling policy frameworks.** This aimed to increase the number of certified products in the market, as well as the availability of national and regional labelling schemes, aligned with international best practices.
- c) **Promoting Sustainable Lifestyles at national level** targeting key groups specially youth and middle-class population through community outreach, communication campaigns, and innovation competitions in partnership with universities. The activities focused on national priorities (such as: plastics, mobility and food waste prevention). Awareness raising of eco-labels, to support changes in consumption behavior based on the information provided by eco-labels was a key priority.

The project Theory of Change (ToC) presented the following **impact** statement: "increase the number of certified sustainable products, and availability of reliable consumer information, reducing environmental impact and increasing quality of life and sustainable lifestyles" (UNEP Concept Note, 2018). Moreover, the ToC presented the following **intermediate state**: "improvement in product design and production processes and increase in consumer information to support sustainable lifestyles" (UNEP Concept Note, 2018).

The table below reports the project outcome and outputs, as presented in the Logical Frameworks of the UNEP Concept Note.

**Table 2. Logical Framework (Concept Note, 2018)**

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<sup>21</sup> Note: 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) should be included within the TOC as a general driver or assumption where there is no dedicated result within the results framework. If an explicit commitment on this topic is made within the project document, then the driver/assumption should also be specific to the described intentions.

<b>Outcome 1</b>	Private and public sector stakeholders increasingly use SCP tools provided by the One Planet network to change consumption practices, reducing pressure on the environment and fostering social and economic development, contributing to SDG12
<b>Output 1</b>	Technical assistance and capacity building provided to improve design and production processes and communicate reliable information on products' sustainability attributes to consumers
<b>Output 2</b>	Technical assistance and capacity building provided for public and private institutions to develop/ improve/ strengthen the use of consumer information tools and enabling policy frameworks
<b>Output 3</b>	Information on eco-labels and sustainable lifestyles provided to consumers, facilitating informed decisions, targeting key groups (especially youth and middle-class population) through community outreach, innovation contests and social media campaigns.

## Executing Arrangements

The project was implemented by the Resource Efficiency Unit at the UNEP Latin America and the Caribbean Office (Programme Management Officer under supervision of unit head at UNEP LAC Office) with the technical support of the Sustainable Consumption and Production Unit of the UNEP Economy Division (Programme Management Officer under supervision of Consumption and Production Head of Unit).

The project was implemented with the support of national consultants and implementing partners (Universidad de los Andes, Tecnológico de Costa Rica). A regional consultant supported the ecolabelling component across the three partner countries, providing technical assistance and capacity building to public and private sector, including the strengthening of the regional ecolabel "Sello Ambiental America".

A project technical committee at regional level was created to provide technical advice and supervise progress and achievements of the project. The following institutions were invited to be part of the project technical committee: UNEP, European Commission / EU Delegations, representatives from national Governments (Ministry of Environment), quality infrastructure national institutes (standardization and accreditation), representatives from the committee of Sello Ambiental America, the National Metrology Institute of Germany, and Pan American Standards Commission (COPANT).

National Project Committees were established in each target country, including UNEP, national political focal points and representatives from national governments, EU Delegations, quality infrastructure national institutes (standardization and accreditation)

Partners selected from national governments as well as from the private sector and technical institutions were responsible for participating in the sub-activities by sharing knowledge and information, providing feedback and reviews when needed, facilitating the validation and pilot cases in their organizations, presenting their findings in the regional and international conferences.

Multi-stakeholder Working Groups on Sustainable Lifestyles were organised in the three countries based upon relevant existing expert groups/platforms to provide specific guidance and feedback for the elaboration and dissemination of awareness raising and social media campaigns and to be part of the national contests on eco-innovation for sustainable lifestyles. These groups worked in close cooperation with the focal points of the Regional Council on SCP and the Regional Network on Environmental Education.

## Project Cost and Financing

The project was financed by the European Union under the Environment and Natural Resources Thematic Programme (ENRTP) Strategic Cooperation Agreement (2011-2022). The European Union provided a contribution of USD 1,464,968.16. Table 3 below presents the project budget.

**Table 3: Project Budget (USD)**

TYPE OF FUNDING	SOURCE OF FUNDING	Details	Total	
CASH	Environment Fund activity budget		0	
	Regular Budget activity budget		0	
	Extra budgetary Funding (posts + non-post + PMC)	EC DG DEVCO GPGC 11229 &1266		1,249,477.00
		PSC on Secured funds		88,758.5
		Two top-up extension grants not reflected in PRODOC (ToRs ref. 23)		217,000
		Other posts		/
		XB Sub-total		1,555,235.50
	<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>		1,555,235.50	
<b>TOTAL PROJECT PLANNED BUDGET (without EF &amp; RB posts)</b>				
In Kind EF & RB Posts	Environment Fund post costs		/	
	Regular Budget post costs		/	
<b>TOTAL PROJECT PLANNED BUDGET</b>				
	Funding secured		100%	
	Allocation to Regional Offices			

## Implementation Issues

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the confinement situation in many countries, project activities were delayed, and some delivered virtually. Activities that required engagement with public and private sector representatives were particularly affected, as government and companies could not participate in the capacity building and technical assistance activities. Such activities were suspended for several months and eventually implemented virtually using existing platforms and adapting capacity building materials.

Due to the delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was initially granted a 1-year extension until October 2021, and then a second 1-year extension until October 2022.

Additional funds were allocated to the project to include new activities related to circular economy. The budget table above shows the total amount including the additional 193,000 USD allocated in 2020. Another top-up extension of 24,000 USD was allocated in 2022 in order to maintain the support to the coordination of the Circular Economy Coalition of Latin America and the Caribbean under output 2 of the project.

No mid-term review or evaluation of the project was conducted.

## Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

### Objective of the Evaluation

In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy<sup>22</sup> and the UNEP Programme Manual<sup>23</sup>, 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, Universidad de los Andes and Tecnológico de Costa Rica. 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.

### 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 on regional ecolabeling is kicking off in 2023 (IKI EcoAdvance), 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

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/policies-and-strategies>

<sup>23</sup> <https://wecollaborate.unep.org>

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.

## Key Strategic Questions

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:

To what extent was the EU grant (ICSAL) complementary with the other grants of the UNEP project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011), e.g. the IKI grant "Advancing and Measuring Sustainable Consumption and Production for a Low-Carbon Economy in Middle-Income and Newly Industrialized Countries"?<sup>24</sup>

To what extent did the EU grant (ICSAL) contribute to the intervention strategy of the UNEP project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011)?

What changes were made to adapt to the effects of COVID-19 and how might any changes affect the project's performance?

To what extent was the EU grant (ICSAL) in line with the UNEP private sector engagement strategy? (**to be addressed under Strategic Relevance**)

To what extent could the EU grant (ICSAL) have benefited from increased engagement with the European Commission and EU Delegations? (**to be addressed under Factors Affecting Project Performance**)

To what extent has the EU Grant (ICSAL) contributed to a regional approach to ecolabelling (through the Environmental Alliance of America) and what are lessons learned with view of the upcoming UNEP-GIZ project IKI Eco-Advance. Relevance to Global, Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities? (**to be addressed under Strategic Relevance**)

Has the division of tasks between UNEP Economy Division and Regional Offices proved to be effective in project delivery? (**to be addressed under Factors Affecting Project Performance**)

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<sup>24</sup> **Note:** the Evaluation Consultant will address the first two strategic questions providing a 3-page Annex at the end of the Terminal Evaluation report and including a summary note in the report.

To what extent has a conscious scaling-up and replication model been successfully demonstrated? How well has a scaling-up/replication model been articulated and lessons captured for wider learning? **(to be addressed under Effectiveness)**

Going forward, what are the key lessons learned for further scaling up consumer information in general and ecolabelling in specific, and using it as a policy tool and catalyst for jobs, income and environmental sustainability? Are there any suggestions for further work on the promotion and application of project results? **(to be addressed under Effectiveness)**

## 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.

### **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:

#### **Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy<sup>25</sup> (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 Building<sup>26</sup> (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.

#### **Alignment to Donor/Partner Strategic Priorities**

Donor strategic priorities will vary across interventions. 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.

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<sup>25</sup> 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>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.unep.fr/ozonaction/about/bsp.htm>

### **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) or 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.

### **Complementarity with Relevant Existing Interventions/Coherence<sup>27</sup>**

An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization<sup>28</sup>, 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

### **Quality of Project Design**

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 rating<sup>29</sup> 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

### **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 upheaval<sup>30</sup>). 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

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<sup>27</sup> This sub-category is consistent with the new criterion of 'Coherence' introduced by the OECD-DAC in 2019.

<sup>28</sup> 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.

<sup>29</sup> 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.

<sup>30</sup> 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.



Evaluation Consultant and Evaluation Manager together. A justification for such an increase must be given.

## **Effectiveness**

### **i. Availability of Outputs<sup>31</sup>**

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 supervision<sup>32</sup>

### **Achievement of Project Outcomes<sup>33</sup>**

The achievement of project outcomes is assessed as performance against the project outcomes as defined in the reconstructed<sup>34</sup> 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

### **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

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<sup>31</sup> 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)

<sup>32</sup> 'Project management and supervision' refers to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments.

<sup>33</sup> 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)

<sup>34</sup> All submitted UNEP project documents are required to present a Theory of Change. 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.

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.

The Evaluation will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role<sup>35</sup> or has promoted scaling up and/or replication as part of its Theory of Change (either explicitly as in a project with a 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

### **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 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

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<sup>35</sup> 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.

## **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 complementarities<sup>36</sup> 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

## **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 SMART<sup>37</sup> 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.

### **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

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<sup>36</sup> Complementarity with other interventions during project design, inception or mobilization is considered under Strategic Relevance above.

<sup>37</sup> SMART refers to results that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented. Indicators help to make results measurable.

Evaluation should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring were used to support this activity.

### **Project Reporting**

UNEP has a centralised Project Information Management System (PIMS) 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. 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.

#### 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)

### **Sustainability**

Sustainability<sup>38</sup> 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.

#### **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.

#### **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

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<sup>38</sup> 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*)

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

**Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues**

*(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).*

**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, it may refer to the project management performance of an implementing partner 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/Implementing Agency; 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.

**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 implementing partner(s). 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.

**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 Environment<sup>39</sup>.

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.

Note 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) should be included within the TOC as a general driver or assumption where there is no dedicated result within the results framework. If an explicit commitment on this topic is made within the project document then the driver/assumption should also be specific to the described intentions.

### **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 requirements<sup>40</sup> 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.

### **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 gender and marginalised groups.

### **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

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<sup>39</sup> The Evaluation Office notes that Gender Equality was first introduced in the 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 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](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)

<sup>40</sup> 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 design since 2011.

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 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.

### **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 desk review of:

- Relevant background documentation, inter alia: UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) 2022-2025; Global Strategy for Sustainable Consumption and Production 2023-2030; Regional Strategy of Sustainable Consumption and Production of LAC, 2015-2022; Decision 2 Sustainable Consumption and Production and Circular Economy. XXII Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean; UNEP Guidelines for Providing Product Sustainability Information; Programme Framework document '633.1 Strengthening Consumer Information For Sustainable Consumption and Production'
- Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework and its budget;
- Project reports such as six-monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence etc.;
- Project deliverables: Capacity development workshops (for public and private sector), knowledge exchange workshops (Environmental Alliance of America; One Planet Network; Regional Coalition on Circular Economy), events and campaigns (sustainable lifestyles contests at regional and national level; innovation bootcamps, awareness raising campaigns), surveys and assessments (consumer awareness; behavioural studies);
- Mid-Term Review or Mid-Term Evaluation of the project;
- Evaluations/reviews of similar projects.

**Interviews** (individual or in group) with:

- UNEP Project Manager (PM);
- Project management team, where appropriate;
- UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO);
- Project partners, including: Universidad de los Andes, Fundación Tecnológico de Costa Rica (FUNDATEC);
- Sub-Programme Coordinator;
- Relevant resource persons;
- Representatives from civil society and specialist groups (such as women's, farmers and trade associations etc).

**Surveys:** as will be deemed appropriate by the evaluator.

**Field visits:** to be determined during the evaluation inception phase.

**Other data collection tools:** as will be deemed appropriate by the evaluator.

## Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

The Evaluation Consultant 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:** 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 **Evaluation Brief** (a 2-page overview of the evaluation and evaluation findings) for wider dissemination through the UNEP website may be required. This will be discussed 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 Project Manager/Implementing Partner, 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 Consultant(s) and the internal consistency of the report, the Evaluation Manager will provide an assessment of the ratings in the final Main 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 Project Manager. The Evaluation Office will track compliance against this plan on a six-monthly basis for a maximum of 12 months.

## The Evaluation Consultant



For this Evaluation, the Evaluation Consultant will work under the overall responsibility of the Evaluation Office represented by an Evaluation Manager (Fabio Fiscaro), in consultation with the UNEP Project Manager (Tomas Declercq), Fund Management Officer (Maria Chiappara Cabrera) and the Subprogramme Coordinator of the Resource Efficiency Subprogramme (Djaheezah Subratty), now Finance and Economic Transformations Subprogramme in the UNEP Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2025. The consultant will liaise with the Evaluation Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the Evaluation, including travel. It is, however, each consultants' 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 Project 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 7 months [1 February 2023 - 31 August 2023] 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 5 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 consumption and production is desired. English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For this consultancy, fluency in oral and written English is a requirement and proficiency in Spanish is required. 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.

#### 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 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.

**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	1 February 2023
Inception Report	28 February 2023
Evaluation Mission	March 2023
E-based interviews, surveys etc.	February – July 2023
Powerpoint/presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations	31 March 2023
Draft report to Evaluation Manager (and Peer Reviewer)	15 May 2023
Draft Report shared with UNEP Project Manager and team	15 June 2023
Draft Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	15 July 2023
Final Report	31 August 2023
Final Report shared with all respondents	31 August 2023

**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
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 VII. QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

Evaluand Title:

Terminal Evaluation: Driving sustainable consumption in Latin America with better product information and design (ICSAL)

Evaluator: Carsten Schwensen

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
<b>Report Quality Criteria</b>		
<p><b>Quality of the Executive Summary</b>  <u>Purpose:</u> acts as a stand alone and accurate <u>summary</u> of the main evaluation product, especially for senior management.                      To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concise overview of the evaluation object</li> <li>• clear summary of the evaluation objectives and scope</li> <li>• overall evaluation rating of the project and key features of performance (strengths and weaknesses) against exceptional criteria</li> <li>• reference to where the evaluation ratings table can be found within the report</li> <li>• summary response to key strategic evaluation questions</li> <li>• summary of the main findings of the exercise/synthesis of main conclusions</li> <li>• summary of lessons learned and recommendations.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b>                      All required elements are addressed. The Executive Summary also includes a summary response to the key strategic questions.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b>                      The Executive Summary represents a stan-alone and accurate summary of the evaluation report.</p>	5
<p><b>Quality of the 'Introduction' Section</b>  <u>Purpose:</u> introduces/<u>situates</u> the evaluand in its institutional context, establishes its main parameters (time, value, results, geography) and the purpose of the evaluation itself.                      To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• institutional context of the project (sub-programme, Division, Branch etc)</li> <li>• date of PRC approval, project duration and start/end dates</li> <li>• number of project phases (where appropriate)</li> <li>• results frameworks to which it contributes (e.g. POW Direct Outcome)</li> <li>• coverage of the evaluation (regions/countries where implemented)</li> <li>• implementing and funding partners</li> <li>• total secured budget</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b>                      All elements addressed.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b>                      The Introduction well situates the evaluand identifying the main parameters.</p>	5

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether the project has been evaluated in the past (e.g. mid-term, external agency etc.)</li> <li>• concise statement of the purpose of the evaluation and the key intended audience for the findings.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Quality of the 'Evaluation Methods' Section</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> provides reader with clear and comprehensive description of evaluation methods, demonstrates the <u>credibility</u> of the findings and performance ratings.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• description of evaluation data collection methods and information sources</li> <li>• justification for methods used (e.g. qualitative/ quantitative; electronic/face-to-face)</li> <li>• number and type of respondents (<i>see table template</i>)</li> <li>• selection criteria used to identify respondents, case studies or sites/countries visited</li> <li>• strategies used to increase stakeholder engagement and consultation</li> <li>• methods to include the voices/experiences of different and potentially excluded groups (e.g. vulnerable, gender, marginalised etc)</li> <li>• details of how data were verified (e.g. triangulation, review by stakeholders etc.)</li> <li>• methods used to analyse data (scoring, coding, thematic analysis etc)</li> <li>• evaluation limitations (e.g. low/ imbalanced response rates across different groups; gaps in documentation; language barriers etc)</li> <li>• ethics and human rights issues should be highlighted including: how anonymity and confidentiality were protected. Is there an ethics statement? E.g. <i>'Throughout the evaluation process and in the compilation of the Final Evaluation Report efforts have been made to represent the views of both mainstream and more marginalised groups. All efforts to provide respondents with anonymity have been made.'</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b></p> <p>Elements addressed to a satisfactory manner.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b></p> <p>The section presents a comprehensive description of the evaluation methods used, including the key evaluation methods applied, evaluation analysis and the limitations of the evaluation.</p>	5.5
<p><b>Quality of the 'Project' Section</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> describes and <u>verifies</u> key dimensions of the evaluand relevant to assessing its performance.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <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)</li> <li>• <i>Results framework:</i> summary of the project's results hierarchy as stated in the ProDoc (or as officially revised)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b></p> <p>All elements are well addressed.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b></p> <p>The report presents a comprehensive analysis of the key dimensions of the evaluand required.</p>	5

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stakeholders:</b> description of groups of targeted stakeholders organised according to relevant common characteristics</li> <li>• <b>Project implementation structure and partners:</b> description of the implementation structure with diagram and a list of key project partners</li> <li>• <b>Changes in design during implementation:</b> any key events that affected the project's scope or parameters should be described in brief in chronological order</li> <li>• <b>Project financing:</b> completed tables of: (a) budget at design and expenditure by components (b) planned and actual sources of funding/co-financing</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Quality of the Theory of Change</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to set out the TOC at Evaluation in diagrammatic and narrative forms to support consistent project performance; to articulate the causal pathways with drivers and assumptions and justify any reconstruction necessary to assess the project's performance.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• description of how the <i>TOC at Evaluation</i><sup>41</sup> was designed (who was involved etc)</li> <li>• confirmation/reconstruction of results in accordance with UNEP definitions</li> <li>• articulation of causal pathways</li> <li>• identification of drivers and assumptions</li> <li>• identification of key actors in the change process</li> <li>• summary of the reconstruction/results re-formulation in tabular form. <i>The two results hierarchies (original/formal revision and reconstructed) 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> This table may have initially been presented in the Inception Report and should appear somewhere in the Main Evaluation report.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b></p> <p>All elements well addressed. The table with the reformulated results statements is also included in this section.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b></p> <p>The ToC at Evaluation is well presented both in narrative and diagrammatic forms. The causal pathways are articulated, and the drivers and assumptions presented.</p>	5.5
<p><b>Quality of Key Findings within the Report</b></p> <p><u>Presentation of evidence:</u> nature of evidence should be clear (interview, document, survey, observation, online resources etc) and evidence should be explicitly triangulated unless noted as having a single source.</p> <p><u>Consistency within the report:</u> all parts of the report should form consistent support for findings and performance ratings, which should be in line with</p>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b></p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b></p> <p>Although the report does not contain specifically labelled 'Findings Statements' it does provide insights into the challenges faced by the</p>	5.5

<sup>41</sup> 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*.

<p>UNEP's Criteria Ratings Matrix.</p> <p><u>Findings Statements (where applicable):</u> The frame of reference for a finding should be an individual evaluation criterion or a strategic question from the TOR. <b>A finding should go beyond description and uses analysis to provide insights that aid learning specific to the evaluand.</b> In some cases a findings statement may articulate a key element that has determined the performance rating of a criterion. Findings will frequently provide insight into 'how' and/or 'why' questions.</p>	<p>project and its achievements. Nature of evidence is also clear.</p>	
<p><b>Quality of 'Strategic Relevance' Section</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present evidence and analysis of project strategic relevance with respect to UNEP, partner and geographic policies and strategies at the time of project approval.</p> <p>To include:</p> <p>Assessment of the evaluand's relevance vis-à-vis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities</li> <li>• Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partners Strategic Priorities</li> <li>• Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities</li> <li>• Complementarity with Existing Interventions: complementarity of the project at design (or during inception/mobilisation<sup>42</sup>), with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Final report (coverage/omissions):</i></p> <p><i>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</i></p> <p>All elements are covered to a satisfactory level.</p>	5.5
<p><b>Quality of the 'Quality of Project Design' Section</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the project design, on the basis that the detailed assessment was presented in the Inception Report.</p>	<p><i>Final report (coverage/omissions):</i></p> <p><i>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</i></p> <p>The section presents a good summary of the project design's strengths and weaknesses.</p>	5
<p><b>Quality of the 'Nature of the External Context' Section</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to describe and recognise, when appropriate, key <u>external</u> features of the project's implementing context that limited the project's performance (e.g.</p>	<p><i>Final report (coverage/omissions):</i></p> <p><i>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</i></p> <p>The section well describes the events that affected the project implementation.</p>	5

<sup>42</sup> 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.

<p>conflict, natural disaster, political upheaval<sup>43</sup>), and how they affected performance.</p> <p>While additional details of the implementing context may be informative, this section should clearly record whether or not a major and unexpected disrupting event took place during the project's life in the implementing sites.</p>		
<p><b>Quality of 'Effectiveness' Section</b></p> <p><b>(i) Availability of Outputs:</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the outputs made available to the intended beneficiaries.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a convincing, evidence-supported and clear presentation of the outputs made available by the project compared to its approved plans and budget</li> <li>• assessment of the nature and scale of outputs versus the project indicators and targets</li> <li>• assessment of the timeliness, quality and utility of outputs to intended beneficiaries</li> <li>• identification of positive or negative effects of the project on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b></p> <p>All elements addressed to a satisfactory manner.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b></p> <p>A complete analysis on the availability of the project outputs is presented, including a table that indicate the degree of achievement of their respective targets.</p>	5
<p><b>ii) Achievement of Project Outcomes:</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the uptake, adoption and/or implementation of outputs by the intended beneficiaries. This may include behaviour changes at an individual or collective level.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a convincing and evidence-supported analysis of the uptake of outputs by intended beneficiaries</li> <li>• assessment of the nature, depth and scale of outcomes versus the project indicators and targets</li> <li>• discussion of the contribution, credible association and/or attribution of outcome level changes to the work of the project itself</li> <li>• any constraints to attributing effects to the projects' work</li> <li>• identification of positive or negative effects of the project on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b></p> <p>Elements are well addressed.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b></p> <p>The report presents an evidence-based assessment of the achievement of project outcome.</p>	5

<sup>43</sup> 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.



<p>gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability).</p>		
<p><b>(iii) Likelihood of Impact:</b>  <u>Purpose:</u> to present an integrated analysis, guided by the causal pathways represented by the TOC, of all evidence relating to likelihood of impact, including an assessment of the extent to which drivers and assumptions necessary for change to happen, were seen to be holding.          To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an explanation of how causal pathways emerged and change processes can be shown</li> <li>• an explanation of the roles played by key actors and change agents</li> <li>• explicit discussion of how drivers and assumptions played out</li> <li>• identification of any unintended negative effects of the project, especially on disadvantaged groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation (e.g. through disability).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b>          Most elements are addressed.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b>          The section well discusses to what extent drivers and assumptions are expected to hold. An analysis regarding the causal pathways is also included.</p>	5
<p><b>Quality of 'Financial Management' Section</b>  <u>Purpose:</u> to present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under financial management and include a completed 'financial management' table (may be annexed).          Consider how well the report addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>adherence</i> to UNEP's financial policies and procedures</li> <li>• <i>completeness</i> of financial information, including the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used</li> <li>• <i>communication</i> between financial and project management staff</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b>  <b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b>          The section presents a detailed and integrated analysis of the three dimensions evaluated under financial management.</p>	5
<p><b>Quality of 'Efficiency' Section</b>  <u>Purpose:</u> to present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under efficiency (i.e. the primary categories of cost-effectiveness and timeliness).          To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• implications of any delays and no cost extensions</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b>          Elements addressed to a satisfactory manner.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b>          The section discusses the challenges that affected the timeliness of project execution. Overall, the project had two no-cost extensions which extended the project duration by two years.</p>	5

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Quality of 'Monitoring and Reporting' Section</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the evaluand's monitoring and reporting.</p> <p>Consider how well the report addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>quality of the monitoring design and budgeting (<i>including SMART results with measurable indicators, resources for MTE/R etc.</i>)</li> <li>quality of monitoring of project implementation (<i>including use of monitoring data for adaptive management</i>)</li> <li>quality of project reporting (e.g. PIMS and donor reports) \</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b></p> <p>Elements addressed to a satisfactory manner.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b></p> <p>The section presents a detailed and integrated analysis of the three dimensions evaluated under 'Monitoring and Reporting'.</p>	5
<p><b>Quality of 'Sustainability' Section</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under sustainability (i.e. the endurance of benefits achieved at outcome level).</p> <p>Consider how well the report addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>socio-political sustainability</li> <li>financial sustainability</li> <li>institutional sustainability</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b></p> <p>Elements addressed to a satisfactory manner.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b></p> <p>An integrated analysis of the three dimensions under sustainability is provided with sufficient evidence.</p>	5
<p><b>Quality of Factors Affecting Performance Section</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> These factors are not always discussed in stand-alone sections and may be integrated in the other performance criteria as appropriate. However, if not addressed substantively in this section, a cross reference must be given to where the topic is addressed and that entry must be sufficient to justify the performance rating for these factors.</p> <p>Consider how well the evaluation report, either in this section or in cross-referenced sections, covers the following cross-cutting themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>preparation and readiness</li> <li>quality of project management and supervision<sup>44</sup></li> <li>stakeholder participation and co-operation</li> <li>responsiveness to human rights and gender equality</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b></p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b></p> <p>All elements addressed and discussed as stand-alone sections.</p>	5

<sup>44</sup> 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. This includes providing the answers to the questions on Core Indicator Targets, stakeholder engagement, gender responsiveness, safeguards and knowledge management, required for the GEF portal.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• environmental and social safeguards</li> <li>• country ownership and driven-ness</li> <li>• communication and public awareness</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Quality of the Conclusions Section</b></p> <p><b>(i) Conclusions Narrative:</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present summative statements reflecting on prominent aspects of the <u>performance of the evaluand as a whole</u>, they should be derived from the synthesized analysis of evidence gathered during the evaluation process.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compelling narrative providing an integrated summary of the strengths and weakness in overall performance (achievements and limitations) of the project</li> <li>• clear and succinct response to the key strategic questions</li> <li>• human rights and gender dimensions of the intervention should be discussed explicitly (e.g. how these dimensions were considered, addressed or impacted on)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b></p> <p>A succinct response to the key strategic questions is included in this section.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b></p> <p>The section presents a summary of the project strengths and weaknesses, findings and ratings.</p>	5
<p><b>ii) Utility of the Lessons:</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present both positive and negative lessons that have potential for wider application and use (replication and generalization)</p> <p>Consider how well the lessons achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are rooted in real project experiences (i.e. derived from explicit evaluation findings or from problems encountered and mistakes made that should be avoided in the future)</li> <li>• briefly describe the context from which they are derived and those contexts in which they may be useful</li> <li>• do not duplicate recommendations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b></p> <p>Four lessons learned identified.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b></p> <p>The lessons learned are derived from project experiences and challenges identified.</p>	5
<p><b>(iii) Utility and Actionability of the Recommendations:</b></p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> to present 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.</p> <p>Consider how well the lessons achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are feasible to implement within the timeframe and resources available (including local capacities) and specific in terms of who would do what and when</li> <li>• include at least one recommendation relating to strengthening the human rights and gender dimensions of UNEP interventions</li> <li>• represent a measurable performance target in order that the Evaluation Office can monitor</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final report (coverage/omissions):</b></p> <p>Three recommendations were identified.</p> <p><b>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</b></p> <p>The recommendations are feasible to implement and have a measurable performance target.</p>	5

<p>and assess compliance with the recommendations.</p> <p><b>NOTES:</b></p> <p><b>(i)</b> 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><b>(ii)</b> 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><b>Quality of Report Structure and Presentation</b></p> <p><b>(i) Structure and completeness of the report:</b></p> <p>To what extent does the report follow the Evaluation Office structure and formatting guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included and complete?</p>	<p><i>Final report (coverage/omissions):</i></p> <p><i>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</i></p> <p>The report is complete and follows the Evaluation Office guidelines.</p>	<p>5.5</p>
<p><b>(ii) Writing and formatting:</b></p> <p>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?</p>	<p><i>Final report (coverage/omissions):</i></p> <p><i>Final report (strengths/weaknesses):</i></p> <p>The report is clear and well written. The tone is adequate.</p>	<p>5</p>
<p><b>OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING</b></p>		<p><b>5.1</b></p>

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
<b>Independence:</b>		
1. Were the Terms of Reference drafted and finalised by the Evaluation Office?	X	
2. Were possible conflicts of interest of proposed Evaluation Consultant(s) appraised and addressed in the final selection?	X	
3. Was the final selection of the Evaluation Consultant(s) made by the Evaluation Office?	X	
4. Was the evaluator contracted directly by the Evaluation Office?	X	
5. Was the Evaluation Consultant given direct access to identified external stakeholders in order to adequately present and discuss the findings, as appropriate?	X	
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?		X
7. If Yes to Q6: Were these concerns resolved to the mutual satisfaction of both the Evaluation Consultant and the Evaluation Manager?		
<b>Financial Management:</b>		
8. Was the evaluation budget approved at project design available for the evaluation?	X	
9. Was the final evaluation budget agreed and approved by the Evaluation Office?	X	
10. Were the agreed evaluation funds readily available to support the payment of the evaluation contract throughout the payment process?	X	
<b>Timeliness:</b>		
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?	X	
12. Were all deadlines set in the Terms of Reference respected, as far as unforeseen circumstances allowed?	X	
13. Was the inception report delivered and reviewed/approved prior to commencing any travel?	X	
<b>Project's engagement and support:</b>		
14. Were the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and identified project stakeholders given an opportunity to provide comments on the evaluation Terms of Reference?	X	
15. Did the project make available all required/requested documents?	X	
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?	X	
17. Was adequate support provided by the project to the evaluator(s) in planning and conducting evaluation missions?	X	
18. Was close communication between the Evaluation Consultant, Evaluation Office and project team maintained throughout the evaluation?	X	
19. Were evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations adequately discussed with the project team for ownership to be established?	X	
20. Were the project team, Sub-Programme Coordinator and any identified project stakeholders given an opportunity to provide comments on the draft evaluation report?	X	
<b>Quality assurance:</b>		
21. Were the evaluation Terms of Reference, including the key evaluation questions, peer-reviewed?	X	
22. Was the TOC in the inception report peer-reviewed?	X	
23. Was the quality of the draft/cleared report checked by the Evaluation Manager and Peer Reviewer prior to dissemination to stakeholders for comments?	X	
24. Did the Evaluation Office complete an assessment of the quality of both the draft and final reports?	X	
<b>Transparency:</b>		
25. Was the draft evaluation report sent directly by the Evaluation Consultant to the	X	

Evaluation Office?		
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?	X	
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?	X	
28. Were all stakeholder comments to the draft evaluation report sent directly to the Evaluation Office	X	
29. Did the Evaluation Consultant(s) respond adequately to all factual corrections and comments?	X	
30. Did the Evaluation Office share substantive comments and Evaluation Consultant responses with those who commented, as appropriate?	X	

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

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

## ANNEX VIII. ADDRESSING THE FIRST TWO STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

**SKQ a) To what extent was the EU grant (ICSAL) complementary with the other grants of the UNEP project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011), e.g. the IKI grant "Advancing and Measuring Sustainable Consumption and Production for a Low-Carbon Economy in Middle-Income and Newly Industrialized Countries"?**

Both ICSAL and the IKI grant "Advancing and Measuring Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) for a Low-Carbon Economy in Middle-Income and Newly Industrialized Countries" (Advance SCP) aimed to contribute to the 10YFP SCP, more specifically to the Consumer Information Programme. Both grants built on the premise that SCP patterns constitute an essential building block of a low-carbon economy and that access to credible, reliable and 'user-friendly' sustainability information is one of the essential conditions for the shift towards SCP.

ICSAL has complemented the IKI grant (Advance SCP) in various ways. Firstly, Advance SCP supported the development and implementation of Sustainability Information Systems (SIS). By supporting enhanced access, communication and use of information related to the environmental, social and economic impacts of goods and services, SIS form the basis for informed consumer decisions. This complemented very well ICSAL's efforts in this area. Second, with regards to implementation of SIS, Advance SCP supported the creation of a market for climate-friendly products and regional and global trade and investments were promoted through the harmonization of eco-labels. This also complemented very well ICSAL's support and promotion of the Environmental Alliance of America. Secondly, Advance SCP focused mainly on institutional strengthening, the design of integrated policy frameworks, technical capacity development, implementation of SIS and knowledge transfer. This complemented very well ICSAL's more explicit focus on supporting producers (companies) and consumers through targeted interventions together with the support to multi-stakeholder dialogue processes.

In addition, to guarantee an effective implementation of sustainable consumption patterns in Advance SCP, it was deemed necessary to promote the supply and demand for sustainable products for the LAC region and ensure companies make reliable and clear claims to consumers on product-related sustainability information. This included to increase the availability of certified products in the market, helping consumers to make informed decisions; and raising awareness among society on sustainable lifestyles generating agents of change towards more sustainable consumption practices. This approach was very similar to the one applied by ICSAL and allowed for scaling up support.

While ICSAL had its explicit focus on the LAC region, the IKI grant had a much wider scope as it focused on eleven countries across three regions (Africa, Latin America and Southeast Asia). As UNEP implemented the project in the LAC region (five countries: Chile, Peru, Brazil, Ecuador and Paraguay), this provided good opportunities to generate synergies with ICSAL. In Latin America, the IKI grant focused on the development and strengthening of national Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) policies and eco-labelling systems (including reinforcing the synergies between the instruments). This complemented very well ICSAL's strong focus on the regional dimension, through the Environmental Alliance of America.

There are several concrete examples of complementary and coordinated actions between the two projects. One example of complementarity from the implementation process of ICSAL and Advance SCP, is the detailed methodology developed by Universidad de Los Andes on how to provide technical assistance to private companies in the implementation of the UNEP

guidelines. This methodology served as baseline for additional technical assistance provided by UNEP in Ecuador and Paraguay, as part of Advance SCP. In addition, the Sustainable Consumption Week in LAC 2021 was organized by ICSAL in cooperation with Advance SCP and a regional training on ecolabelling in 2022 was jointly organized and implemented by the two projects.

**SKQ b) To what extent did the EU grant (ICSAL) contribute to the intervention strategy of the UNEP project "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011)?**

Since ICSAL was implemented as part of the UNEP project on "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" (PIMS ID 2011), ICSAL shared the same intention to address the challenge that current consumption decisions, negatively impact the environment, social and economic development. Like PIMS ID 2011, ICSAL also aimed at increasing the provision of reliable consumer information to empower and encourage sustainable choices in consumption and production and behavior change. This included both using consumer information as a tool for producers to improve and manage their more sustainable production processes (supply) and as a tool for consumers to take informed decisions (demand). In the implementation of ICSAL, the focus became strongest on the supply-side element (the producers) and less pronounced at the demand side (the consumers).

In line with PIMS ID 2011, ICSAL also focused on the provision of technical support/technical assistance and on building the capacity of public and private entities to develop, strengthen and use consumer information tools. ~~Both projects~~ ICSAL also intervened by firstly providing the required knowledge products and technical tools to increase the awareness and ability of stakeholders to provide reliable consumer information. ~~Both projects~~ Finally, ICSAL also tried to develop knowledge around the recognition and effectiveness of consumer information, by convening influencers to map and consolidate relevant research on behavioral science and nudging.

The most important contribution from ICSAL to the interventions of PIMS ID 2011 has been through ICSAL's specific efforts to support and promote a regional ecolabel scheme in the LAC region through the Environmental Alliance of America. While the Alliance is not fully "flying" yet, important advances have been made in its preparation and, most importantly, the Alliance has received the full political commitment from high-level ministerial meetings in the LAC region. This should be seen as a very important contribution to the "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" project's ambition to deliver an effective coordination of the 10YFP on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns Consumer Information Programme, in order to strengthen awareness and knowledge on consumer information, foster stakeholder engagement and partnership to build synergies and consensus on key topics, and to replicate and upscale good practices.

The efforts by ICSAL in this area has contributed to increased regional and, to some extent, also international cooperation. The regional knowledge workshop organized in Mexico in 2019 by ICSAL on ecolabelling made a specific contribution to this as it included participation of representatives from five internationally recognized ecolabelling programmes and technical experts from different European countries who presented lessons learned and best practices. The Sustainable Consumption Week LAC 2021 was also an important contributor to facilitate enhanced ecolabel regional cooperation with participation of representatives from 48 countries. In addition, through its strong regional approach, ICSAL was fundamental in supporting the focus countries (Costa Rica, Colombia and Mexico) in harmonizing and coordinating existing consumer information tools as well as supporting standard



setting/labelling bodies in criteria development and harmonization. These issues have all been key focus areas of the "Strengthening Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption and Production" project.