TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF project

"Piloting Innovative Investments for Sustainable Landscapes" (GEF ID 9719)

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1. Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary

GEF Project ID/SMA ID[1]:	9719		
Implementing Agency (UNEP Division/Branch/Unit):	Ecosystems Division, GEF Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit	**Executing Agency:**	&Green Fund, Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH)
Sources of Funding (Co-finance):	*Country[2](ies):*	*Institution[3] Name/Type:*	
Relevant SDG(s):	Poverty Reduction (SDG #1), food security (#2), gender equality (#5), responsible consumption and production (#12), climate action (#13), and halting land degradation and biodiversity loss (#15).		
MTS (at approval):	MTS2014-2017		
POW Direct Outcome(s) number/reference ***(applicable for projects approved from 2022):*** **OR** **POW Output(s) number/reference** ***(applicable for projects approved pre-2022)***	*POW Direct Outcome:*	**MTS 2025 Outcome(s) number/reference** ***(applicable for projects approved from 2022):*** **OR** **POW Expected Accomplishment(s) number/reference** ***(applicable for projects approved pre-2022):***	*MTS 2025 Outcome:*
	POW Output: *PoW 2018-19*		*POW Expected Accomplishment:* *EA (b) Policymakers in the public and private sectors test the inclusion of the health and productivity of ecosystems in economic decision-making.*
Sub-programme:	Subprogramme 3: Healthy and productive ecosystems	**Programme Coordination Project:**	N/A
UNEP approval date:	13 January 2017	**GEF approval date:**	6 February 2018
GEF Operational Programme #:	LD-3 Program 4 Outcome 3.3: Increased investments in integrated landscape management	**GEF Strategic Priority:**	
Project type:	MSP	**Focal Area(s):**	Land Degradation
***Expected* start date:**		**Actual start date:**	29 December 2018
***Planned* completion date:**	31 December 2021	**Actual operational completion date:**	

[1] *SMA refers to the ID provided by the Integrated Planning, Management and Reporting Solution (IPMR) system, which was introduced by UNEP in July 2023.*
[2] *Where applicable, list countries who have provided project funds and/or co-finance.*
[3] *Indicate where funding institutions are any/all of the following: Foundation/NGO; Private Sector; UN Body; Multilateral Fund; Environment Fund.*

***Planned* total project budget at approval:**		**Actual total expenditures reported as of 30 June 2022:**	&Green portfolio attributable to GEF: USD 1,740,048 (1.26%)[4]
GEF grant allocation:	USD2,000,000	**GEF grant expenditures reported as of 30 June 2022:**	USD1,925,000
***Expected* Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:**	*Cash:USD52,500,000* *In-kind:*	**Secured Medium-Size Project co-financing:**	*Cash:USD730 million* *In-kind:*
No. of formal project revisions:	N/A	**Date of last approved project revision:**	N/A
No. of Steering Committee meetings:		**Date of Last Steering Committee meeting:**	
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation *(planned date):*	24 April 2020	**Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):**	August 2022
Terminal Evaluation *(planned date):*		**Terminal Evaluation (actual date):**	August 2024
Coverage - Country(ies):	Brazil, Indonesia, Liberia	**Coverage - Region(s):**	Africa, Asia and Latin America
Dates of previous project phases:	**N/A**	**Status of future project phases:**	N/A

2. Project Rationale

Forests are a vital natural resource, covering approximately 31% of global land surface and storing at least 289 gigatonnes of carbon.13 More than 1.5 billion people depend directly on forest for their livelihoods, but about 7.6 million ha of tropical forest are lost every year. Tropical deforestation threatens the biodiversity of the planet and is a major contributor to carbon emissions. Deforestation leads to land degradation which is a major factor in the progressive deterioration of ecosystem services affecting agro-ecosystems and forest landscapes globally. The loss of forest, and the accompanying loss of ecosystems and the services they provide, threatens the security and livelihoods of local communities, reduces access to clean water, decreases soil productivity and accounts for 12 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. In recent years, it has become apparent that the most significant threat to the world's remaining forests is conversion for commercial agriculture and other non-forest use.

Agriculture alone accounts for over 70 percent of all deforestation across tropical and sub-tropical countries (Hosonuma et.al., 2012), but with differences in geographic distribution of the importance of commercial versus subsistence agriculture (Kissinger et.al, 2012). Commercial actors appear to play a larger and increasing role in the expansion of agriculture into forests and for many countries commercial agriculture has been dominant over subsistence agriculture (Boucher et al. 2011). Agribusinesses, increasingly producing for international markets (cattle ranching, soybean farming and oil palm plantations) has been identified as a main driver of post-1990 deforestation (Rudel et al., 2009; Boucher et al., 2011).

Many of the environmental benefits of intact forest are unpriced 'externalities', resulting in the market mispricing natural forest assets. By converting forest to land and then producing tradeable commodities that the market can price, land users would be able to take advantage of this perceived arbitrage opportunity. Anticipated global economic growth and changing diets were expected strengthen the demand for agricultural commodities and place additional pressure on forests in the foreseeable future, meaning that the pressure would get bigger.

The challenge would be to develop business models that could manage sustainable commodity production while also maintaining forest and forest ecosystem services. Until recently, forest protection and agricultural

[4] GEF's contribution to the &Green Fund is at a Fund level (i.e. as opposed to a transaction level) and thus its funding (together with other contributors) is spread equitably among the Fund's activities. As of 30 June 2022, GEF's contribution via UNEP constituted 1.26% of total contributions received by the &Green Fund. Total net asset value of fund: USD 103,768,764. Net asset value of GEF Investment: USD 1,957,538. Total &Green Portfolio: USD 132,960,305. &Green portfolio attributable to GEF: USD 1,740,048 (1.26%). Source: PIR (2022)

development were two separate worlds. Forests were the world of government, NGOs and public (climate) finance, while agriculture expansion and growth were in the world of banks, business and development finance. A growing number of industries and individual companies acknowledged that diminishing exposure to deforestation and other material risks would be in their collective self-interest and would require them to reduce environmental damage. Pledges such as "Zero-net deforestation pledge" and "Zero deforestation pledge" were adopted at industry-level to stimulate sector peers to take action as well.

The project "Piloting Innovative Investment for Sustainable Landscape" (GEF 9719) aimed to contribute to a long term solution for addressing the continuance loss of forest due to agro-commodities production in target landscapes by transforming the finance and business models in mainstream markets, such that they would be able to sustain land-use practices in which the increased production of agro-commodities would contribute to the protection of forests and the inclusion of smallholders and forest communities in the economy for a long period of time. The project intended to address a number of barriers to the enactment of the vision of business model transformation such as absence of a conducive (regulatory) environment for Produce, Protect and Include (PPI) land use to be upscaled, and limited private sector funding for PPI and sustainable land management (SLM).

3. Project Results Framework

The project objective was "proving the &Green Fund's 'Production- Protection- Inclusion' approach to commodity investments" by de-risking commercial financing of deforestation-free land use.[5] The project aimed to transform finance and business models in mainstream markets, such that they could sustain land use practices in which the increased production of agro-commodities would contribute to the protection of forests and the inclusion of smallholders and forest communities in the economy for a long period of time, which the project defined as Produce, Protect, and Include (PPI) by building a derisking finance facility, develop a pipeline for investments and test it by investing in selected landscapes.

The project planned to target seven landscapes in Brazil, Indonesia and Liberia, namely Brazil: (i) The State of Mato Grosso; Indonesia: (ii) South Sumatra and Jambi, (iii) West Kalimantan and (iv) Aceh; Liberia: (v) The South East Landscape, (vi) The Western Landscape and (vii) The Nimba Landscape. Actual investments were intended to take place into specific projects within those landscapes.

The finance facility was intended to contribute to countries' efforts against land degradation and SDG targets by mobilizing private finance. It would build on two other key innovations related to the change in culture within finance institutions and the fact that commercial lending could be made possible for smallholders. In terms of a cultural change within financial institutions, the prevailing paradigm was understood to be that investing or lending according to stringent sustainability criteria was not profitable. By financing business models that would focus both on generating revenue through soft commodity production – but at the same time decouple it from forest impact – the mindset of bankers was expected to change in that lending products could be offered to clients where sustainability criteria would intrinsically be embedded in the financial conditions of the loan. Second, it was assumed that it was difficult for smallholders to obtain loans, and if it was possible it would often be on short repayment periods and at high interest. By stimulating (on)lending to smallholders, banks were expected to get a better sense of the credit worthiness of these currently excluded group.

The expected impact of project was maintained, restored or increased forest cover while intensifying agricultural production and improvement of livelihoods of smallholders in the target landscapes in Brazil, Indonesia, and Liberia.

Table 2 shows the results framework and the expected project outcome of the project.

Table 2. Results framework

Outcomes	Indicators	Outputs
Outcome 1.1: To maintain, restore or increase forest cover (on and off	1. *Number of hectares of HCV/HCS conserved in 7 target landscapes*	Output 1.1: Investment pipeline developed to create proof-of-concept on solutions contributing to production,

[5] PIR FY 2022.

concession) while intensifying agricultural production and improving the livelihoods of smallholders through piloting the de-risking of private finance in sustainable landscapes in the fund's eligible jurisdictions.	2. *Number of hectares of agricultural land regenerated and intensified in 7 target landscapes* 3. *Number of hectares of avoided deforestation in target landscape in Brazil/Indonesia* 4. *Mitigated CO2*	protection, and inclusion targets established under NICFI-IDH Partnership Program.
Outcome 1.2: Private finance leveraged on a 5:1 ratio as a result of the de-risking funding provided by the &Green Fund in the fund's eligible jurisdictions.	1. *Private Finance Leveraged from mainstream finance institutions and development finance* 2. *2. Number of households benefiting directly or indirectly from fund transactions (e.g. jobs, income-generating opportunities) in 7 target landscapes* 3. *3. Share of women and men as direct beneficiaries of GEF funding through &Green Fund in 7 target landscapes*	Output 1.2: US$ 64 million (of which, $2 million are from GEF) invested through the &Green Fund to de-risk commercial financing of agricultural production in exchange for a landscape protection plans (LPP) outlining on- and off concession forest and peat protection or restoration.
		Output 1.3: Negotiations with mainstream finance institutions and development finance institutions completed to leverage non-fund capital for public good outcomes in terms of enhanced forest protection and livelihoods of local communities.
		Output 1.4: A system for monitoring the impact performance is created (satellite imagery, field inspections, interviews, and reports) to verify and track conservation performance.

Source PIR FY 2022.

There was no Theory of Change (TOC) formulated in the project document. As part of the evaluation process, a reconstructed TOC will be developed by the evaluators.

4. Executing Arrangements

The GEF project was managed by the Task Manager in the GEF Biodiversity and Land degradation Unit, with the finance facility of **&Green** as executing partner. The role of &Green was intended to be that of a facility for identifying businesses directly or indirectly involved in commodity production, downstream and upstream in the supply chain and with the condition that the businesses would have a landscape approach with their approved Jurisdictions. &Green would typically provide USD 5 million to USD 30 million in long term (5-15 year) credit or guarantees.[6]

About &Green

&Green is a public-private partnership. It is structured as a Dutch Foundation (Stichting) but acts like an investment fund in the markets in which it looks to invest.

The fund's governance structure was designed to safeguard the environmental and social return as well as the financial and commercial sustainability of the Fund and its investments.[7] The governance structure include a Board of Directors, an Advisory Board and a Credit Committee; their functions are described below.[8]

Board of Directors

[6] Source: MTR Land Use Finance.

[7] For more information about &Green governance, refer to https://www.andgreen.fund/governance/

[8] Source: GEF 9719 PIR 2022.

The Board of Directors are the legal representatives of the Fund. The Board has the general responsibility for all aspects of the administration and management of the Fund. The Board appoints all service providers to the Fund, including the Investment Advisor, and the members of the independent Credit Committee.

Advisory Board

In discharging its duty, the Board of Directors receives strategic advice from the Advisory Board. The Advisory Board is comprised of representatives of the Contributors to the Fund, as well as experts in political, policy, supply chain, and other relevant matters. The Advisory Board is also responsible for approving new jurisdictions in which the Fund may invest, and any amendments to the overall mission and vision of the Fund (including key investment principles).

Credit Committee

The Credit Committee is appointed by the Board of Directors. Its main function is to approve the transactions and investment decisions proposed by the Investment Advisor, and to review and approve any potential action needed on all relevant monitoring impacts brought forward by the Investment Advisor which occurs after an investment is made by &Green.

The fund has appointed Sail Ventures B.V., as the specialist investment advisor to &Green, and establishes solid partnership with various national and international stakeholders. Sail Ventures oversees the day-to-day business and operations related to the management of the Fund in accordance with its overall policies and the resolutions of the Board. Sail Ventures is specifically responsible for fundraising and implementing the investment strategy, which includes sourcing transactions, conducting due diligence, structuring and executing transactions, and monitoring and managing the portfolio of investments. The Investment Advisor maintains all relationships with current and potential investees, potential contributors, civil society, co-investors, and other key stakeholders; and supports the Board in engagement with contributors.

&Green works in close collaboration with existing initiatives and organizations working to protect and restore tropical forests. It's established its partnership with IDH – THE SUSTAINABLE TRADE INITIATIVE, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), Good Growth Partnership (GGP), 20×20 Initiative and AFR100. All of the Fund's collaborations are on a non-exclusive basis.

During the course of implementation of the project, &Green entered a number of deals/ transations[9]:

- *RLU Deal signed in 2019 contributes to 77,791Ha of forest conserved, in Jambi province, Indonesia.*
- *DSNG Deal signed in 2020, contribute to forest conservation of nearly 8,000 hectares.*
- *Roncador deal signed in 2020, aims to conserve 71,180 hectares of forest*
- *Marfrig deal signed in 2021 aims to conserve 1,254,500 hectares of forest.*
- *RLU Deal signed in 2019 contributes to 36,000 ha of land being intensified, in Jambi province, Indonesia*
- *DSNG Deal signed in 2020, contributes to 85,750 ha of land being intensified.*
- *Roncador Deal signed in 2020, contributes 60,000 ha of land being intensified.*
- *Marfrig Deal signed in 2021, contributes 7,000 ha of land being intensified*

About the Land Use Finance project

The &Green finance facility is associated with the UNEP "Land Use Finance" project (PIMS 2009), which hosted several complimentary finance facilities and funds. The UNEP project was implemented directly by the UNEP Climate Finance Unit, UNEP Ecosystems Division (now located in the Climate Change Division[10]), together with its main partners: the Frankfurt School of Management, UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP WCMC), World Agroforestry (ICRAF), Global Environment Facility (GEF), UNEP Climate Mitigation Unit (UNEP CMU) MU, UNEP Finance (UNEP FI).

[9] PIR FY 2022.

[10] The Climate Change Division was established February 2024.

The GEF project was expected to contribute to relevant sections of the UNDAF and National Action Programmes (NAPs) for combating land degradation in Brazil, Indonesia and Liberia.

5. Project Cost and Financing

The GEF one time installment was allocated to &Green. Further investment was leveraged by &Green as recorded in an overview of finance facities connected to the UNEP Land Use Finance project and shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Leveraged capital by finance facilities, including &Green

Fund	Public	Private funding for FUND	Current Clients portfolio
TLFF	Canada Grant: US$ 3,835,371 Excl. USAID Guarantee: USD 35 Mio	BNPP: US$ 90 Mio underwritten by TLFF Bond	US$ 95 Mio Bond
Agri3 Fund	Netherland: US$ 40 Mio	Rabobank: US$ 40 Mio	US$ 67 Mio with US$ 30.5 Mio Guarantee exposure
& Green	GEF: (non-grant instrument): US$ 2 Mio Other donors not linked to UNEP CFU support: Norway: USD$100 Mio FMO/UK Government: US$ 30 Mio	Unilever: US$ 25 Mio	US$ 143,13 Mio[17]
RSCF This is counted as a Separate project	Germany: US$ 20 Mio Luxemburg: US$ 5 Mio		US$ 1.88 Mio
RCF Cerrado Fund 1		Tesco, Sainsbury, Waitrose: USD 11 Mio	USD 11 Mio
Total	US$ 43,8 Mio Excl RSCF	US$ 166 Mio	US$ 316 Mio excl. RSCF

Source: MTR Land Use Finance, p. 31.

6. Implementation Issues

General impact and E&S risk

The Fund's landscape approach requires participation from more than just the &Green client and its supply chain. To safeguard the broader landscape, &Green and its clients work in close collaboration with existing global and regional initiatives and local organisations. Although &Green does not engage local government or regulators itself – the role of the &Green Fund is to be a frontrunning investor in these landscapes, but not a convenor or lobbyist – the Fund's partners are often working together with these actors within a landscape. &Green helps it partners with approaching and navigating the stakeholder universe in their respective landscapes. The primary goal for &Green is to ensure that clients are supported by strong partnerships that increase the likelihood for them to deliver on ambitious commitments and thus reduce environmental and social risks.

Perceived strengths and weaknesses of the & Green funding facility set-up

The Mid-term Review of the UNEP "Land Use Finance" project identified strengths and weaknesses[11] of the & Green facility as:

Strengths:

- *Successful Debt Fund for landscape approach.*
- *Impact could be big given the open-ended structure of the fund.*

[11] MTR Table 3: General review of the 4 financial schemes set-up (p. 27)

Weaknesses:

- *Concessional Funds contribution needs to be substantial for impact, as look at big size investment (Over US$ 50 mio).*
- *US$ 2 Mio GEF appreciated but such size required huge administrative process for the expected size of investment.*
- *Crucial to strengthen support/technical assistance to investee to ensure impact.*

Reputational risk – CSO allegation

During 2020, Mighty Earth, a global campaign organization, published a report alleging that deforestation had occurred prior to the establishment of RLU, and that Barito Pacific and Michelin Group were aware of this. Several media outlets picked up on this report and, alongside Mighty Earth, contacted &Green. That report's findings highlight the complex concession history in the area. &Green stepped into the project to make a positive impact and to contribute to landscape protection and social inclusion.

The & Green Fund continued to monitor progress closely and RLU was reported to have increased its own resources available to monitor the landscape. At the same time, following the publication of Mighty Earth's report, the Fund would work with RLU and the Tropical Landscape Finance Facility (which issued the Note that &Green bought to contribute to this project) to make sure stakeholder concerns were addressed and information is shared transparently.[12]

COVID risk

For &Green clients, the impact of COVID-19 increased in intensity as 2020 wore on. Given the general nature of agriculture, i.e. more remote, rural areas, there was less immediate impact. That said, the pandemic generally reduced physical engagement, and this was not helpful for projects such as RLU and DSNG were community engagement was a critical part of their approach. Furthermore, in the case of both of these investments, consultants supported the client and travel to the operations was delayed, which resulted in some delays in progress. At the &Green Fund level, all Advisory Board, Board of Directors and Credit Committee meetings proceeded as scheduled using video conferencing tools.[13]

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

7. Objective of the Evaluation

In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy[14] and the UNEP Programme and Project Management Manual[15], 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, & Green and relevant partners of the UNEP "Land Use Finance" Project. Therefore, the Evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation, especially where a second phase of the project is being considered. Recommendations relevant to the whole house may also be identified during the evaluation process.

8. Key Evaluation Principles

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

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[12] Source: GEF 9719 PIR 2022.

[13] Source: GEF 9719 PIR 2022.

14 https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/41114
15 https://wedocs.unep.org/20.500.11822/42752

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

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

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

9. Key Strategic Questions

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

Q1: To what extent was UNEP's protocol for working with &Green and &Green's partners suitable and adequate?

Q2: What safeguards and risk management procedures were used for the deals entered by &Green in the design and implementation of deals (investments)?

Q3: What value did UNEP add to the project? What incentives or barriers affected project implementation, replication and up-scaling?

Q4: To what extent did the project through its transactions succeed in mobilizing stakeholders, including at sub-national and community level, to commit to conservation?

Q5: What can UNEP and GEF learn from this project and engagement with &Green on how to overcome the challenge of finding suitable investment opportunities and create incentives for private sector impact investments that contribute to conservation?

For GEF-funded projects there are a series of questions that need to be uploaded to the GEF Portal. The consultants should complete the table in Annex 2 of these TOR and append it to the Final Evaluation report.

10. Evaluation Criteria

All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Sections A-I below, outline the scope of the criteria. A weightings table in excel format will be provided by the Evaluation Manager to support the determination of an overall project rating. The set of evaluation criteria are grouped in nine categories: (A) Strategic Relevance; (B) Quality of Project Design; (C) Nature of External Context; (D) Effectiveness, which comprises assessments

of the availability of outputs, achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact; (E) Financial Management; (F) Efficiency; (G) Monitoring and Reporting; (H) Sustainability; and (I) Factors Affecting Project Performance. The Evaluation Consultant(s) can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate.

A. Strategic Relevance

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

i. Alignment to the UNEP Medium-Term Strategy (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 (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The BSP relates to the capacity of governments to: comply with international agreements and obligations at the national level; promote, facilitate and finance environmentally sound technologies and to strengthen frameworks for developing coherent international environmental policies. S-SC is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries.

ii. Alignment to Donor/GEF/Partner Strategic Priorities

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

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

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

iv. Complementarity with Relevant Existing Interventions/Coherence[16]

An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization[17], 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 SubProgramme 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

[16] *This sub-category is consistent with the new criterion of 'Coherence' introduced by the OECD-DAC in 2019.*
[17] *A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.*

B. 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[18] should be entered in the final evaluation ratings table (as item B) in the Main Evaluation Report and a summary of the project's strengths and weaknesses at design stage should be included within the body of the report.

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

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

C. Nature of External Context

At evaluation inception stage a rating is established for the project's external operating context (considering the prevalence of conflict, natural disasters and political upheaval[19]). This rating is entered in the final evaluation ratings table as item C. Where a project has been rated as facing either an Unfavourable or Highly Unfavourable external operating context, and/or a negative external event has occurred during project implementation, the ratings for Effectiveness, Efficiency and/or Sustainability may be increased at the discretion of the Evaluation Consultant and Evaluation Manager together. A justification for such an increase must be given.

D. Effectiveness

i. Availability of Outputs[20]

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[21]

ii. Achievement of Project Outcomes[22]

The achievement of project outcomes is assessed as performance against the project outcomes as defined in the reconstructed[23] Theory of Change. These are outcomes that are intended to be achieved by the end of

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

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

[20] Outputs are the availability (for intended beneficiaries/users) of new products and services and/or gains in knowledge, abilities and awareness of individuals or within institutions (UNEP, 2023)

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

[22] An outcome is a change at institutional level, or changes in behaviors, attitudes or conditions achieved from the use (i.e., uptake, adoption, application) of outputs by intended beneficiaries (UNEP, 2023).

[23] All submitted UNEP project documents are required to present a Theory of Change with all submitted project designs. The level of 'reconstruction' needed during an evaluation will depend on the quality of this initial TOC, the time that has lapsed between project design

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

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

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

iii. Likelihood of Impact

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

The Evaluation will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute to, unintended negative effects (e.g. will vulnerable groups such as those living with disabilities and/or women and children, be disproportionally 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[24] 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)

and implementation (which may be related to securing and disbursing funds) and the level of any formal changes made to the project design. In the case of projects pre-dating 2016 the intervention logic is often represented in a logical framework and a TOC will need to be constructed in the inception stage of the evaluation.

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

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

E. Financial Management

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

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

- Preparation and readiness
- Quality of project management and supervision

F. Efficiency

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

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

The Evaluation will give special attention to efforts made by the project teams during project implementation to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities[25] with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency.

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

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

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

G. Monitoring and Reporting

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

i. Monitoring Design and Budgeting

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

Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART[26] results towards the provision of the project's outputs and achievement of project outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender, marginalisation or vulnerability, including those living with disabilities. In particular, the Evaluation will assess the relevance and appropriateness of the project indicators as well as the methods used for tracking progress against them as part of conscious results-based management. The Evaluation will assess the quality of the design of the monitoring plan as well as the funds allocated for its implementation. The adequacy of resources for Mid-Term and Terminal Evaluation/Review should be discussed if applicable.

ii. Monitoring of Project Implementation

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

The performance at project completion against Core Indicator Targets should be reviewed. For projects approved prior to GEF-7, these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided.

iii. Project Reporting

UNEP has a centralised project information management system[27] in which project managers upload six-monthly progress reports against agreed project milestones. This information will be provided to the Evaluation Consultant(s) by the Evaluation Manager. Some projects have additional requirements to report regularly to funding partners, which will be supplied by the project team (e.g. the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool for GEF-funded projects). The Evaluation will assess the extent to which both UNEP and donor reporting commitments have been fulfilled. Consideration will be given as to whether reporting has been carried out with respect to the effects of the initiative on disaggregated groups.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

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

H. Sustainability

Sustainability[28] 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

[26] SMART refers to results that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented. Indicators help to make results measurable.
[27] Prior to 2022 it was the Project Information Management System (PIMS) and from 2022 UNEP has the Integrated Planning Monitoring and Reporting (IPMR) solution.

[28] 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)

particular the Evaluation will consider whether individual capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

ii. Financial Sustainability

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

iii. Institutional Sustainability

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

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

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

I. Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

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

i. Preparation and Readiness

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

ii. Quality of Project Management and Supervision

In some cases, 'project management and supervision' may refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects[29], it may refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping and supervision provided by UNEP. The performance of parties playing different roles should be discussed and a rating provided for both types of supervision (UNEP/Partner/Executing Agency) and the overall rating for this sub-category established as a simple average of the two.

The Evaluation will assess the effectiveness of project management with regard to: providing leadership towards achieving the planned outcomes; managing team structures; maintaining productive partner

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

relationships (including Steering Groups etc.); maintaining project relevance within changing external and strategic contexts; communication and collaboration with UNEP colleagues; risk management; use of problem-solving; project adaptation and overall project execution. Evidence of adaptive management should be highlighted.

iii. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

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

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

iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality

The Evaluation will ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on the human rights-based approach (HRBA) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

Within this human rights context, the Evaluation will assess to what extent the intervention, following an adequate gender analysis at design stage, has implemented the identified actions and/or applied adaptive management to ensure that Gender Equality and Human Rights are adequately taken into account and the intervention adheres to UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment[30]. In particular, the Evaluation will consider to what extent project design, 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.

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

v. Environmental and Social Safeguards

UNEP projects address environmental and social safeguards primarily through the process of environmental and social screening at the project approval stage, risk assessment and management (avoidance, minimization, mitigation or, in exceptional cases, offsetting) of potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with project and programme activities. The Evaluation will confirm whether UNEP requirements[31] 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 r*eport* on the implementation of safeguard management measures taken. UNEP requirements for proposed projects to be screened for any safeguarding issues; for sound environmental and

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

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

social risk assessments to be conducted and initial risk ratings to be assigned are evaluated above under Quality of Project Design).

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

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

vi. Country Ownership and Driven-ness

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

vii. Communication and Public Awareness

The Evaluation will assess the effectiveness of: a) communication of learning and experience sharing between project partners and interested groups arising from the project during its life and b) public awareness activities that were undertaken during the implementation of the project to influence attitudes or shape behaviour among wider communities and civil society at large. The Evaluation should consider whether existing communication channels and networks were used effectively, including meeting the differentiated needs of gendered or marginalised groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project the Evaluation will comment on the sustainability of the communication channel under either socio-political, institutional or financial sustainability, as appropriate.

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

Section 3. EVALUATION APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

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

The evaluation of the UNEP/GEF project "Piloting Innovative Investment for Sustainable Landscape" will be conducted in parallel with the evaluation of the UNEP "Land Use Finance" project and data collection approaches will be optimized to support both evaluations.

The findings of the Evaluation will be based on the following: A **desk review** of:

- Relevant background documentation, including the project document for CEO approval;

- 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 annual PIR reports, six-monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence and including the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool, etc.;
- Project deliverables: Documents pertaining to projects/deals/transactions, Jurisdictional Eligibility Criteria (JEC) Assessments, knowledge products such as &Green annual report, testimonial videos, postings on &Green social media channels (LinkedIn and X);
- Mid-Term Review of the UNEP "Land Use Finance" project (August 2022);
- Evaluations/reviews of similar projects such as the evaluation of the UNEP Inquiry project or other projects implemented by the Climate Finance Unit, UNEP Climate Change Division.

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

- UNEP Task Manager (TM);
- Project management team, including the Project Manager within the Executing Agency, where appropriate;
- UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO);
- Portfolio Manager and Subprogramme Coordinators, where appropriate;
- Project partners of &Green;
- Relevant resource persons;
- Representatives from civil society and specialist groups, indigenous groups, private sector and others in target landscapes in Brazil, Indonesia and Liberia.

(b) **Portfolio review** of deals entered by &Green based on core concepts of blended finance (additionality, mobilisation, concessionality and sustainability).

(c) **Field visits,** if deemed useful in support of a selected case study of a &Green deal in a target landscape.

(d) **Other data collection tools**, as appropriate, including GIS satellite imagery.

11. Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

The Evaluation Team will prepare:

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

An **Evaluation Brief,** (a 2-page overview of the evaluand and key 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 Consultants will submit a draft report to the Evaluation Manager and revise the draft in response to their comments and suggestions. Once a draft of adequate quality has been peer-reviewed and accepted, the Evaluation Manager will share the cleared draft report with the Task

Manager, 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 Consultants 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 Consultants for consideration in preparing the final report, along with guidance on areas of contradiction or issues requiring an institutional response.

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

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

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

12. The Evaluation Team

For this Evaluation, the Evaluation Team will consist of a Principal Evaluator and two Evaluation Specialists who will work under the overall responsibility of the Evaluation Office represented by an Evaluation Manager, Susanne Bech, in liaison with the Director of the Evaluation Office, Michael Spilsbury, in consultation with the Project Task Manager and Focal Point for the Evaluation, Ersin Esen, and Fund Management Officer, George Saddimbah and the Subprogramme Coordinator of Nature Action (formerly Healthy and productive ecosystems) Marieta Sakalian. The consultants 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 **Principal Evaluator** will be hired over a period of nine months from July 2024 to March 2025 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 10 years of technical / evaluation experience is required, preferably including evaluating and leading evaluations of large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; and a good understanding of private sector investment in environmental commodities and sustainable land use 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 French, Spanish and/or Portuguese is desirable. 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.

Evaluation Specialist 1 will be hired over a period of nine months from July 2024 to March 2025 and should have the following: an undergraduate university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other relevant political or social sciences area is required; a minimum of five years of technical/monitoring/evaluation experience is required and a broad understanding of sustainable environmental management is required. Degree in or professional experience in statistics 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 French, Spanish or Portuguese is desirable. 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.

Evaluation Specialist 2 will be hired over a period of nine months July 2024 to March 2025 and should have the following: an undergraduate university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other relevant political or social sciences area is required; a minimum of 10 years of technical experience is

required and good understanding of blended finance facilities and funds and impact investment is required. Broad understanding of sustainable land use is desirable. 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 French and Spanish or Portuguese is desirable. 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 Principal Evaluator 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. The Evaluation Specialists will make substantive and high- quality contributions to the evaluation process and outputs. The consultants will ensure together that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered.

Specifically, Evaluation Team members will undertake the following:

Specific Responsibilities for Principal Evaluator:

The Principal Evaluator will be responsible, in close consultation with the Evaluation Manager, for overall management of the Evaluation and timely provision of its outputs, described above in Section 11 Evaluation Deliverables.

Travel for field visits as part case studies to be expected.

Specific Responsibilities for the Evaluation Specialists:

The Evaluation Specialist 1, a data specialist, will make substantive and high-quality contributions to the evaluation process and outputs. The evaluation team consultants will ensure together that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered.

The Evaluation Specialist 2, a credit analyst/ impact investment finance specialist, will make substantive and high-quality contributions to the evaluation process and outputs. The evaluation team consultants will ensure together that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered.

Travel for field visits as part case studies to be expected by the evaluation specialists.

Responsibilities of the Evaluation Team during the main phases of the evaluation pertain to:

Inception phase of the Evaluation, including:

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

Data collection and analysis phase of the Evaluation, including:

i. conduct further desk review and in-depth interviews with project implementing and executing agencies, project partners and project stakeholders;
j. (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.
k. regularly report back to the Evaluation Manager on progress and inform of any possible problems or issues encountered and;
l. keep the Project Manager informed of the evaluation progress.

Reporting phase, including:

m. 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;
n. 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
o. 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
p. (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:

q. 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;
r. communicate in a timely manner with the Evaluation Manager on any issues requiring its attention and intervention.

13. Schedule of the Evaluation

The table below presents the tentative schedule for the Evaluation.

Table 3. Tentative schedule for the Evaluation

Milestone	Tentative Dates
Evaluation Initiation Meeting	July 2024
Inception Report	August 2024
Evaluation Mission	September-October 2024
E-based interviews, surveys etc.	September-November 2024
Powerpoint/presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations	November 2024
Draft report to Evaluation Manager (and Peer Reviewer)	December 2024
Draft Report shared with UNEP Project Manager and team	January 2025
Draft Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	February 2025
Final Report	March 2025
Final Report shared with all respondents	March 2025

14. Contractual Arrangements

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

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

Schedule of Payment for the [Evaluation Consultant/Principal Evaluator]:

Deliverable	Percentage Payment
Approved Inception Report ***(as per Guidance Note)***	30%
Approved Draft Main Evaluation Report ***(as per Guidance Note)***	30%
Approved Final Main Evaluation Report ***(as per Report Template)***	40%

[Schedule of Payment for the Evaluation Specialist]:

Deliverable	Percentage Payment
Approved Inception Report ***(as per Guidance Note)***	30%
Approved Draft Main Evaluation Report ***(as per Guidance Note)***	30%
Approved Final Main Evaluation Report ***(as per Report Template)***	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 consultants 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[32].

[32] *This may include contract cancellation in-line with prevailing UN Secretariat rules.*

Annex 1: Tools, Templates and Guidance Notes for use in the Evaluation

The tools, templates and guidance notes listed in the table below, and available from the Evaluation Manager, are intended to help Evaluation Managers and Evaluation Consultants to produce evaluation products that are consistent with each other and which can be compiled into a biennial Evaluation Synthesis Report. The biennial summary is used to provide an overview of progress to UN Environment and the UN Environmental Assembly.

This suite of documents is also intended to make the evaluation process as transparent as possible so that all those involved in the process can participate on an informed basis. It is recognised that the evaluation needs of projects and portfolio vary and adjustments may be necessary so that the purpose of the evaluation process (broadly, accountability and lesson learning), can be met. Such adjustments should be decided between the Evaluation Manager and the Evaluation Consultants in order to produce evaluation reports that are both useful to project implementers and that produce credible findings.

ADVICE TO CONSULTANTS: As our tools, templates and guidance notes are updated on a continuous basis, kindly download documents from the link below and use those versions throughout the Evaluation.

https://communities.unep.org/display/EOU/INDEPENDENT+EVALUATION+TOOLS+AND+TEMPLATES

List of tools, templates and guidance notes available:

Terminal Evaluation Essential Tools

- 00 Evaluation Tools Description 09.11.21
- 00a_UNEP Glossary of results definitions_December 2023
- 00b_List of Documents for Evaluation 31.01.2024
- 01_Evaluation Criteria 31.01.2024
- 02_Criterion Rating Descriptions Matrix 31.01.2024
- 03_Evaluation Criteria Ratings Table 31.01.2024
- 04_Weighted Ratings Table 31.01.2024
- 05_Evaluation Methodology Guidance 31.01.2024

Terminal Evaluation Inception Report

- 06_Project Identification Table 31.01.2024
- 07_Inception Report Structure and Contents 31.01.2024
- 08_TOC Reformulation Justification Table 31.01.2024
- 09_Quality of Project Design Table 31.01.2024
- 09a_Quality of Project Design Template 31.01.2024
- 10_Stakeholder Analysis Guidance 31.01.2024
- 11_Gender Methods Guidance 31.01.2024
- 12_Safeguards Assessment Template 31.01.2024

Terminal Evaluation Main Evaluation Report

- 13_Evaluation Report Structure and Contents 10.05.22
- 14_Use of TOC in Project Evaluation 31.01.2024
- 15_Financial Tables 31.01.2024
- 16_Likelihood of impact Flow Chart 31.01.2024
- 16a_Likelihood of impact Test Case 31.01.2024
- 17_GEF_Evaluation Main Report Template 31.01.2024
- 18_NonGEF Evaluation Main Report Template 31.01.2024
- 19_Quality Of Eval Report FINAL ONLY 31.01.2024 FOR USE BY UNEP
- 20_Recommendations Quality Guidance 31.01.2024
- 20a_In Report Template Presenting Recs and LL 31.01.2024
- 21_GEF Portal Annex Template 31.01.2024

Terminal Evaluation Process Guidance

- Process 1_Evaluation Process Guidelines for Consultants 31.01.2024
- Process 2_Template for Attestation Letter 31.01.2024
- Process 3_Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form 31.01.2024
- Process 4_Guidelines for Field Work During Coronavirus 31.01.2024
- Process 5_Evaluation Consultants Team Roles 31.01.2024
- Process 6_ Template for Reference Checks 31.01.2024
- Process 7_Letter of Introduction for Visa Applications Template 31.01.2024

Annex 2: GEF Portal Inputs

The following table contains text to be uploaded to the GEF Portal. **It will be drawn from the Evaluation Report, either as copied or summarised text.** In each case, references should be provided for the paragraphs and pages of the report from which the responses have been copied or summarised.

Table II: GEF portal inputs

Question: What was the performance at the project's completion against Core Indicator Targets? (For projects approved prior to GEF-7[33], these indicators will be identified retrospectively and comments on performance provided[34]).
Response: *(Might be drawn from Monitoring and Reporting section)*
Question: What were the progress, challenges and outcomes regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project/program as evolved from the time of the MTR? *(This should be based on the description included in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent documentation submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval)*
Response: *(Might be drawn from Factors Affecting Performance section)*
Question: What were the completed gender-responsive measures and, if applicable, actual gender result areas? *(This should be based on the documentation at CEO Endorsement/Approval, including gender-sensitive indicators contained in the project results framework or gender action plan or equivalent)*
Response: *(Might be drawn from Factors Affecting Performance section/Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equality)*
Question: What was the progress made in the implementation of the management measures against the Safeguards Plan submitted at CEO Approval? The risk classifications reported in the latest PIR report should be verified and the findings of the effectiveness of any measures or lessons learned taken to address identified risks assessed. *(Any supporting documents gathered by the Consultant during this review should be shared with the Task Manager for uploading in the GEF Portal)*
Response: (Might be drawn from Factors Affecting Performance section/Environmental and Social Safeguards)
Question: What were the challenges and outcomes regarding the project's completed Knowledge Management Approach, including: Knowledge and Learning Deliverables (e.g. website/platform development); Knowledge Products/Events; Communication Strategy; Lessons Learned and Good Practice; Adaptive Management Actions? *(This should be based on the documentation approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval)*
Response: *(Might be drawn from Factors Affecting Performance section/Communication and Public Awareness)*

[33] The GEF is currently operating under the seventh replenishment period of the GEF Trust Fund covering the period July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2022. The GEF Portal Reporting Guide for FY20 Reporting Process indicates that GEF-6 projects that have yet to map existing indicators to GEF-7 Core Indicators need to do so at MTR stage or (if already there) at the time of the TE. .(i.e. not GEF projects approved before GEF-6)
[34] This is not applicable for Enabling Activities

Question: What are the main findings of the evaluation?
Response: