



GEF Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation (1991–2012)

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CPE	Country portfolio evaluation
DEPC	Department of Environment Protection and Conservation
EU	European Union
FSP	Full-size project
GDP	Gross domestic product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse gas
IWCRM	International Waters and Coastal Resource Management in the Pacific Islands
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MSP	Medium-size project
NCCDRRB	National Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Board
NCSA	National capacity self-assessment
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
ODS	Ozone-depleting substances
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PACC	Pacific Adaption to Climate Change
PDF	Project development facility
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PIGGAREP	Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gases Abatement and Renewable Energy Program
PIR	Project implementation report
PMIS	Project Management Information System
POP	Persistent organic pollutant
PPCR	Pilot Program on Climate Resilience
PPG	Project preparation grant
RAF	Resource Allocation Framework
ROtI	Review of outcomes to impacts
SAP IW	Strategic Action Plan for International Waters
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SIDS	Small island developing states
SPBCP	South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Program
SPC	Secretariat for the Pacific Community
SPREP	Secretariat for the Pacific Islands Regional Environment Program
STAR	System for the Transparent Allocation of Resources
TE	Terminal evaluation
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

1 – MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 – Background

At the request of the GEF Council, the Evaluation Office conducts country portfolio evaluations (CPEs) every year. CPEs aim to provide the GEF Council and the national governments with an assessment of results and performance of GEF-supported activities at the country level, and of how GEF-supported activities fit into the national strategies and priorities as well as within the global environmental mandate of the GEF. In 2012, the Vanuatu national project portfolio and the SPREP-executed regional project portfolio were selected for evaluation.

In Vanuatu, the GEF has supported a portfolio totalling US\$17.9 million with US\$70.0 million in co-financing for 13 national projects. As shown in Table 1.1, these include five climate change (CC) projects, five biodiversity (BD) projects, one in land degradation (LD), one in persistent organic pollutants (POPs), and one multifocal area (MF) project. These 13 national projects have been implemented solely in Vanuatu. Nine projects have been completed, one is ongoing, and three are in the pipeline. Eight of the 13 projects are enabling activities (EAs). The projects have been implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Bank.

Table 1.1

Vanuatu National Projects in the GEF Portfolio, by Focal Area and Funding

Focal Area	Number of projects	Total GEF Support	Total Cofinancing	Percentage of GEF Support by Focal Area
BD	5	\$1.24M	\$0.84M	6.95%
CC	5	\$15.52M	\$68.68M	86.80%
LD	1	\$0.50M	\$0.43M	2.80%
MF	1	\$0.22M	\$0.06M	1.26%
POPs	1	\$0.39M	\$0.02M	2.20%
Total	13	\$17.88M	\$70.03M	100.00%

Since 1991, the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) has been involved as regional executing agency through various GEF Agencies (UNDP, World Bank, UNEP and the Food and Agriculture Organization) in 11 projects totalling over US\$63.1 million in GEF financing or US\$204.4 million with co-financing.¹ Regional projects include multiple countries throughout the Pacific region; all but one SPREP-executed project included Vanuatu.² As shown in the top half of Table 1.2, these include six climate change projects, three biodiversity projects, one international waters project, and one persistent organic pollutants (POPs) project. Eight of the 11 SPREP regional projects are full-sized projects (FSPs), one is a medium-sized project (MSP), and two are EAs. Seven out of the 21 SPREP-member Small Island Developing States (SIDS) –Cook Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Samoa and Tuvalu – are involved in at least nine SPREP-executed GEF projects.

¹ Previously, SPREP was known as the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

² The exception is: PAS Implementing the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by Integrating the Conservation Management of Island Biodiversity (GEF ID 4023).

As shown in the bottom half of Table 1.2, GEF has also committed US\$119.6 million for other regional projects in which Vanuatu participates, but which are *not* executed by SPREP. All of these projects are FSPs, and the majority of the funding has gone to projects in the multifocal area, notably the project 'Implementation of Global and Regional Oceanic Fisheries Conventions and Related Instruments in the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS)' (GEF ID 4746), which received US\$45.6 million. Most of these projects are in the pipeline or ongoing.

Table 1.2

Vanuatu Regional Projects in the GEF Portfolio, by Focal Area and Funding

Project Scope	Focal Area	Number of projects	Total GEF Support	Total Cofinancing	Percentage of GEF Support by Focal Area
SPREP Regional	BD	3	\$15.00M	\$10.84M	8.21%
	CC	6	\$32.32M	\$116.28M	17.69%
	IW	1	\$12.29M	\$8.12M	6.73%
	POPs	1	\$3.50M	\$6.05M	1.92%
Vanuatu Regional	BD	1	\$6.63M	\$11.79M	3.63%
	CC	2	\$19.95M	\$57.54M	10.92%
	IW	3	\$31.59M	\$239.98M	17.29%
	MF	3	\$59.39M	\$362.31M	32.51%
	POPs	1	\$2.00M	\$4.13M	1.09%
Grand Total		21	\$182.68M	\$817.03M	100.00%

1.2 – Objectives, Scope and Methodology

As noted in the Terms of Reference (TOR): 'The purpose of the Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation is to provide the GEF Council with an assessment of how GEF is implemented in Vanuatu and more broadly in the Pacific region, report on results from projects and assess how these projects are linked to national and regional environmental and sustainable development agendas as well as to the GEF mandate of generating global environmental benefits within its focal areas.'³ The evaluation assesses the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, and efficiency of the GEF project portfolio in Vanuatu and the South Pacific from 1991-2012. Intended audiences for the evaluation results include the GEF Council, SPREP countries, GEF Agencies, and partners.

The evaluation was conducted between October 2012 and August 2013 by an evaluation team comprised of staff from the GEF Evaluation Office and consultants with extensive knowledge of environmental program evaluation, the environmental sector in Vanuatu, and SPREP. The methodology employed several qualitative and quantitative methods, including: (i) interviews conducted with 40 people from 12 institutions; (ii) quantitative analysis examining the efficiency of GEF support using standard metrics (e.g., the time and cost of preparing and implementing projects); (iii) use of standardized analytic tools and project review protocols adapted to the Pacific context; and (iv) development of Review of Outcomes to Impact (ROtI) field studies for two completed projects: Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Programme (GEF ID 1058) and Local Conservation Initiatives (GEF ID 1682). The evaluators triangulated across qualitative and quantitative data sources to confirm findings and strengthen confidence in the results.

³ GEF Evaluation Office, *Terms of Reference for GEF Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation (1991-2012)*, December 2012.

1.3 – Conclusions

1.3.1 – Results, Effectiveness and Sustainability

Conclusion 1: The GEF helped pave the way for the development of national plans, establishment of environmental agencies, and establishment of relevant environmental legislative frameworks in Vanuatu and SPREP countries in all focal areas through enabling activities.

In Vanuatu, GEF support has focused primarily on EAs to develop national sectoral plans for climate change, POPs, land degradation, biodiversity and capacity building self-assessments, and establishment or strengthening of legislative frameworks and environmental institutions. EAs have played a valuable role in the portfolio by enhancing capacity and building awareness of global environmental issues at the national level. GEF support through EAs has also facilitated implementation of international conventions on the environment by providing a regular, if limited, stream of support to key government agencies responsible for the conventions, and providing technical and financial assistance to develop capacity within these ministries and enhance multi-sectoral collaboration across government ministries, the private sector, and civil society.

EA projects generate information and build capacity for addressing environmental challenges and fulfilling commitments to international conventions, thereby laying the groundwork for MSPs and FSPs. Prior to GEF EAs, there was limited information on each of the GEF focal areas in Vanuatu and other SPREP countries. Through these EAs, Vanuatu produced its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), the National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA) and Climate Change Policy Framework (CCPF), the National Implementation Plan (NIP) for Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), and the National Action Plan (NAP) for land degradation, which provided the baseline information and assessment of threats at the country level, and identified the priority actions for each focal area. The NBSAP, in turn, directly contributed to the development of the Environmental Protection and Management Act 2006, identifying and developing multi-stakeholder consensus on priority issues, and proposing inputs that were mainstreamed into the approved legislation.

GEF-supported EAs have built awareness of environmental issues and helped attract donor funding to implement several of the priority actions identified in the national plans that were developed with GEF support. EAs have also strengthened institutional capacity and multi-sectoral coordination, because all the EAs require multi-sectoral steering committees to produce these plans, and promote inclusive multi-stakeholder consultative processes.

At the regional level, the level of technical capacity across focal areas was also quite limited prior to GEF support. In climate change, the need to address this limited technical capacity prompted the Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Program (PICCAP) (GEF ID 336), which was executed by SPREP to assist countries in building their capacity. The PICCAP produced national communications plans and conducted inventories and vulnerability assessments for climate change, which became the basis for much of the climate change work currently being implemented. The project also established multi-sector country teams that continue to spearhead the implementation of climate change actions at the national level as well as the effective participation of SPREP countries at international climate change forums.

The Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Program (PIREP) (GEF ID1058), another SPREP-executed project, compiled national renewable energy assessments that have since been widely used to develop

national plans for renewable energy in Pacific Island Countries (PICs). The PIREP also established national committees that have since been used to further implement the follow-up GEF project on Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gases Abatement and Renewable Energy Program (PIGGAREP) (GEF ID2699). Some PICs have gone on to develop and adopt renewable energy legislation and policies. For example, Tonga's Renewable Energy Bill 2008 was developed with the support of the PIGGAREP.⁴ Cook Islands announced its Renewable Energy Chart in July 2011, acknowledging support from PIGGAREP and GEF.⁵ Changes in legislation and policies in Vanuatu, Samoa, and other countries are strongly linked to and built on the national renewable energy assessments carried out under PIREP and later continued with PIGGAREP.

Conclusion 2: Replication and scaling up of community-based project outcomes has occurred at the sub-national level; however, projects have faced constraints in scaling up to the national level.

GEF project outcomes have been sustained when they could be replicated at a sub-national scale (e.g., at the local community level) and with direct impact on individuals. This is reflected in the establishment of community conservation areas, which are managed by traditional communities, as generated by the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Project (SPBCP) (GEF ID 403), the International Waters Project (IWP) (GEF ID 530), the Vanuatu Local Conservation Initiatives (LCI) project (GEF ID 1682), and the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP). The community-based conservation approach piloted in the SPBCP is now widely adopted throughout the Pacific, in various forms and scales. The scaled-down version is helping overcome difficulties with shared boundaries on customary-owned lands and other land tenure issues and village capacities, while the integration of community livelihood issues into conservation plans strengthens their relevance and appeal to local communities.

The SPBCP supported 17 conservation areas projects (CAPs) spread over 12 PICs. At least 12 are still operating, some as part of new larger-scale initiatives, while others are maintained by local communities at a low level of activity, with varying levels level of external funding and technical support. In this way, initial threats to biodiversity have been reduced or eliminated. Although some efforts have floundered due to internal village conflicts, others such as the Takitimu CAP in Cook Islands and the Kosrae Conservation Project in the Federated Islands of Micronesia have continued to flourish and grow – the former with strong ecotourism linkages, and the latter with increasing partnerships and support from several international conservation organizations and funders.

However, sustaining and scaling up community activities to the *national* level has been limited, mostly by the lack of continued funding and technical support from government agencies or other donors after the end of GEF support. The projects generally did not develop financial sustainability strategies or mechanisms to sustain efforts at the same scale beyond the GEF funding period. In addition, the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation's (DEPC) acute lack of capacity (both in terms of local budgetary resources and personnel) severely limits its ability to play an effective technical support role. Moreover, the Conservation Area Regulation drafted in 2009 as part of the LCI to legalize conservation areas and provide national support to traditional communities in managing conservation areas still has not been enacted, contributing to the uncertain state of many community conservation activities initiated under the LCI.

⁴ www.reeep.org/projects/clean-energy-policy-and-regulation-tonga. Downloaded 10/8/2013.

⁵ www.sids-l.iisd.org/cook-islands-announces-renewable-energy-plan. Downloaded 10/8/2013.

Conclusion 3: GEF support has been instrumental in raising environmental awareness in all focal areas in Vanuatu and the SPREP countries.

The current level of awareness of environmental issues such as climate change, biodiversity, and conservation in Vanuatu and SPREP countries is very high among government officials and the general public. This is, to a large extent, a result of the considerable resources invested in producing environmental information and the engagement of wider stakeholders in the GEF EAs. Much of the information and several publications produced in Vanuatu projects such as LCI, NBSAP, and NAPA are still in use. In addition, the Government of Vanuatu has incorporated biodiversity, climate change, and waste management issues into the primary and tertiary education curriculum.

Conclusion 4: GEF paved the way for strengthening capacity at the individual, institutional and system levels, but sustaining this capacity has been and still is problematic, in all focal areas except climate change.

Some GEF projects produced useful capacity building results, such as the strengthening of the DEPC during the LCI project, the establishment of multi-sectoral country teams used in the implementation of PICCAP, the training of Conservation Area Support Officers (CASOs) and similar project officers during SPBCP and IWP, and the preparation of NBSAP, NAP and NIP. Unfortunately, these country teams have been dormant since the completion of the above plans, thus most of the actions identified in these plans have not been used or mainstreamed by the relevant government agencies into their sectoral work. The DEPC, which is supposed to coordinate these committees, does not have the resources or staff to sustain them.

GEF projects invested heavily in building the capacity of the specific individuals involved with projects. Unfortunately, the Government of Vanuatu has not been able to retain the individuals beyond projects, and so the organization's capacity reverts to zero. According to DEPC, the department is developing a new organizational structure that aims to attract, sustain, and retain individual capacity.⁶

The only exception to this general trend is in climate change. The national climate change country teams established during PICCAP continue to function effectively, despite staff transitions, due to the mainstreaming of such committees into national frameworks. These same country teams have been used for subsequent GEF projects such as PIREP, PIGGAREP, and PACC. The ability to retain the country teams and continue working together at the national level proved to be effective in the sustainability of activities, and for engaging in international forums on climate change. This underscores the need for new projects to build on existing systems and structures, such as those established under PACC, to maintain and leverage capacity gains from previous projects.

Conclusion 5: Institutional capacity in Vanuatu to effectively implement national-level projects is insufficient.

National projects in Vanuatu experience more delays and extensions than SPREP projects. Whereas regional project coordinators provide additional assistance to national coordinators in the preparation of project reports and implementation of activities for regional projects, the regional coordinators do not have the institutional mechanisms to provide such support for nationally-executed projects. This is highlighted in the EAs for preparing the POPs NIP and the NAP, which have not been closed yet. The proper records and financial acquittals have not been completed despite the project activities having

⁶ Written comments from the Government of Vanuatu, 2 February 2014.

been completed for several years. According to DEPC, the department is undergoing reforms to better deliver projects on time and within budget.⁷

SPREP, on the other hand now, has a strengthened technical capacity in several GEF focal areas and has been providing much-needed backstopping to national initiatives, notably in climate change and biodiversity. These technical support teams have been used extensively in the implementation of the PIGGAREP (GEF ID 2699) and the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) (GEF ID 3101) projects, as well as the Island Biodiversity and Invasive Species (IBIS) project (GEF ID 3664), which is just beginning implementation. In addition, SPREP has appointed a GEF Support Advisor and established a GEF support team within the Secretariat to strengthen SPREP's support for Pacific countries in GEF matters.⁸

1.3.2 – Relevance

Conclusion 6: GEF support is highly relevant to Vanuatu and the SPREP region's environmental needs and challenges in all GEF focal areas.

The evaluation found that all GEF focal areas are relevant to Vanuatu and the SPREP region. The majority of projects have addressed biodiversity and climate change. For Vanuatu, GEF support enabled the preparation of environmental sector national plans such as the NAPA, the NBSAP, the NAP, NIP and the National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) through seven completed EAs – i.e., one in climate change, four in biodiversity, one in POPs and one multifocal project. SPBCP introduced community-based approaches to biodiversity and sustainable resource use that were adopted and replicated through other initiatives including the LCI and smaller-scale SGP initiatives, to address threats of overexploitation of resources. Similarly, IWP introduced an integrated and holistic approach to the management of water resources, which complements and reinforces strategies for biodiversity conservation as well as climate change.

The dominance of biodiversity and climate change projects in the GEF Vanuatu/SPREP portfolio reflects the importance of those focal areas in the SPREP Regional Plan and in Vanuatu. The impact of climate change is regularly felt in the SPREP region, including Vanuatu, and is reflected in projects mostly focusing on adaptation measures and improving resilience. Climate change is not only an environmental issue but is now perceived in all PICs as the biggest source of economic vulnerability confronting Pacific economies. Biodiversity is a priority as the fragile ecosystems in the region are easily impacted by invasive species, and threatened by overexploitation.

To date, there has been less activity in the POPs and land degradation focal areas. Resources have been directed toward establishing baseline information in these areas and developing national plans.

Conclusion 7: GEF support in Vanuatu and SPREP has been highly relevant for accelerating the sustainable development agenda and meeting development needs. GEF has been a major catalyst in helping move the environmental and sustainable development agenda into the national forefront.

The GEF-supported EAs that produced the NBSAP and the PICCAP were catalytic in preparing the Environmental Management and Conservation Act, and in integrating the concept of sustainable development into national development plans. SPBCP and LCI not only raised awareness and the

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Written comments from SPREP, 8 January 2014.

profile of areas with globally significant biodiversity but, with IWP, also demonstrated community-based approaches that Vanuatu and other PICs have since increasingly adopted in managing biodiversity and natural resources on customary land areas. The PIREP and PIGGAREP projects have been influential in the development of national energy policies and the recent shift in emphasis to renewable energy technologies among PICs. Much of the planning information now available to countries in the GEF focal areas was generated from GEF projects. These have not only been useful in the design of projects, but also in the formulation of sector policies.

Similarly, GEF contributed to accelerating the national sustainable development agendas elsewhere in the region. The outcomes of the PICCAP, with its national greenhouse gas assessments and the vulnerability assessments, helped frame the Pacific Forum Leaders Communiqué of the past 10 years, stressing the importance of actions to combat climate change and prioritise adaptation measures. In Fiji, the NBSAP project helped accelerate the development of national sustainable development plans. In Samoa, the outcomes of GEF projects have been instrumental in mainstreaming climate change, biodiversity, and land degradation into the country's Development Strategy 2012-2014. GEF's contribution in the climate change focal area is particularly relevant, as Samoa and other PICs recognize the threat of climate change-induced extreme weather events as a major source of economic vulnerability for their development ambitions.

Conclusion 8: National ownership of GEF projects in Vanuatu is generally low, except for enabling activities.

The evaluation found a strong sense of national ownership of GEF enabling activities, with their expedited procedures and absence of co-financing component; seven of the nine completed Vanuatu national projects are EAs. The only two completed MSPs in Vanuatu (the LCI project and Sustainable Land Management project) were both initiated by a GEF Agency.

SPREP regional projects including SPBCP, IWP, and PACC were based on SPREP Meeting resolutions. These projects are intended to address issues that are common throughout the region as well as national concerns; however, the evaluation findings suggest that these projects have not always addressed specific national priorities. Country obligations under various multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and initiatives of GEF Agencies in facilitating access to GEF funding are other drivers that prompt PICs to engage in activities that are not necessarily consistent with national priorities.

Consequently, the GEF supported some national plans in areas that were not fully aligned with the highest national priorities and were not supported by national budget allocations. As a result, the use or implementation of the outputs from these projects has been limited. Examples include National Biosafety Frameworks (NBF), POPs National Implementation Plans (NIP), and to an extent, National Action Plans (NAP) for addressing land degradation and desertification.

1.3.3 – Efficiency

Conclusion 9: The preparation time for GEF projects in Vanuatu and the SPREP region is excessive. This affects the efficiency of implementation in terms of changes in institutional memory, staff turnover, and national co-financing allocations.

The approval process takes 1.7 years on average for national projects and 2.4 years on average for regional projects. However, there is substantial variation across different project modalities. For

example, national FSPs in Vanuatu have a longer approval process (4.3 years) on average than SPREP-executed regional FSPs (2.5 years). On the other hand, EAs have been approved somewhat faster, on average, for Vanuatu national projects (1.2 years) compared to SPREP-executed regional EAs (1.4 years). Overall, these figures compare favourably with the GEF global average of 5.5 years (GEF Evaluation Office, 2007), as well as with those reported in the OECS Cluster CPE (GEF Evaluation Office, 2012). However, the averages for MSPs and FSPs still exceed the GEF Secretariat standard of an 18-month approval process. Furthermore, interviewees from the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies acknowledged that the process takes longer than it should, considering the reforms introduced during GEF-4 and the rather small number of nationally-executed projects in Vanuatu. Moreover, the average time required to approve national projects has increased, from less than one year in GEF-1 to 4.3 years in GEF-4. The GEF Council is aware of the delays and is continuing its efforts to streamline the approval process.

As projects take longer to prepare, priorities and commitments identified in the project documents may change, potentially affecting the efficiency of implementation. In most of the regional projects, a complete reworking of the project documents was undertaken after the GEF Council and GEF Agency approvals, due to changes that occurred in some countries concerning national priorities, the institutional memory of the national focal points, staff turnover, and budgetary constraints. In addition, in some instances co-financing initially allocated to those projects had to be shifted to newly emerging national needs. This was the case for the IWP and PACC projects and the Vanuatu LCI project.

Conclusion 10: GEF projects' monitoring and evaluation (M&E) produced very important information and lessons both for institutional capacity building and identifying actions to address environmental concerns. The use of these lessons has varied, with some being successfully used and several others not having been used at all.

All GEF projects have monitoring and evaluation (M&E) protocols in the form of annual Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), Mid-Term Reviews (MTRs), and Terminal Evaluations (TEs). The evaluation team found that the M&E systems in place are used effectively for adaptive management during the life of the projects. All the completed regional and national projects include examples of improvements since the relevant MTR took place.

Some good examples of adaptive management include the changes that UNDP and SPREP initiated to address delays in the disbursement of funds for the PACC project. This was an issue since UNDP and SPREP started working together on GEF projects in the mid-1990s. The new approach allows disbursement of funds only to those countries that have submitted the necessary reports on time, rather than waiting until all countries have submitted their reports before funds are disbursed to SPREP. Also, SPREP now only has to submit progress reports on a six-month basis rather than quarterly, freeing up staff time to work on project activities. SPREP reports that it will soon appoint an M&E Advisor which will, in part, support SPREP's M&E activities relating to the GEF.⁹

The evaluation team also found that project TEs produced some very useful lessons and recommendations for future action. Unfortunately, these lessons do not appear to have been incorporated into the design of subsequent projects or taken up by government in their relevant work programs. Examples include the recommendations from the LCI to enact the Conservation Area Regulation (CAR) in Vanuatu and providing support for the communities to maintain their established

⁹ Ibid.

conservation areas. The evaluation found that neither of these has been addressed. Other recommendations from the TE of the LCI project, and the NBSAP projects as well as the IWP, highlighted the need for strengthening the capacity of DEPC. Unfortunately this has not happened, mainly due to a lack of political commitment to raising the profile of environmental issues at the national level.

1.4 – Recommendations

1.4.1 – Recommendations to the Government of Vanuatu

Recommendation 1: Identify and implement action items in GEF-funded action plans that are most closely aligned with national priorities.

The GEF has supported the Government in developing a myriad of strategies and action plans through EAs. These plans include suggested action items to address pressing environmental issues. While some of the recommended actions have been implemented, several others have not. The Government should systematically review the pending action items in the National Biosafety Frameworks, POPs National Implementation Plans, and National Action Plans for addressing land degradation and desertification; decide which action items are most closely aligned with national priorities and available funding; and redouble efforts to implement the selected actions. This effort would not only benefit the specific areas highlighted in the plans, but would demonstrate the Government's commitment to the environment while raising the profile of environmental issues in Vanuatu.

Recommendation 2: Mainstream project coordination mechanisms into ongoing national planning processes to sustain progress and strengthen national capacity.

Through GEF EAs, the Government has established committees and teams to work on meeting the country's environmental obligations under various international agreements. While these arrangements have resulted in effective coordination during the lifetime of the projects, these mechanisms have not been integrated into broader national planning processes and have gone dormant, with the exception of committees and teams working on climate change issues. The Government should actively consider opportunities to integrate coordination mechanisms established during GEF EAs into its ongoing national work programs. In so doing, the Government should look for opportunities to improve cross-sector integration and coordination between DEPC and other line ministries and organizations to ensure efficient use of resources and expertise.

1.4.2 – Recommendations to the GEF Council

Recommendation 3: Continue to work on reducing the time required to approve GEF projects, while accounting for delays in project execution.

The time required to approve MSPs and FSPs exceeds the GEF's 18-month target. This evaluation was not able to fully determine the causes of delays due to missing and inaccurate data; going forward, the GEF should track this issue carefully to identify and address the sources of delays. As indicated in many other GEF CPEs, excessive approval time is an ongoing challenge. While making every effort to shorten the approval process over the medium to long term, the GEF should acknowledge that delays are likely to be encountered within the current process, and plan projects accordingly. For example, the evaluation finds that national priorities and resources often change between the time when project proposals are developed and when projects are approved; the GEF may want to set aside additional

resources for stakeholder consultations after projects have been approved to reaffirm national commitment and make any needed changes to project plans based on recent developments.

1.4.3. – Recommendation to the GEF Council and SPREP

Recommendation 4: Further strengthen knowledge management by integrating communication and outreach components in GEF projects and disseminating lessons learned more broadly through SPREP’s regional platform.

While the evaluation finds some successful examples of knowledge sharing, it also finds that lessons from past projects are not being fully utilized. The GEF should ensure that communication and outreach are integrated in project designs to facilitate ongoing learning and dissemination. For its part, SPREP should include ‘learning and adaptive management’ as a permanent webpage on SPREP’s website. This should build on the existing resources available on SPREP’s website and help crystalize good practices and lessons for specific types of projects. In addition, SPREP technical staff should draw on this knowledge when helping countries design and implement projects. For example, SPREP could help ensure that lessons learned are reflected in the design of new projects.

1.4.4 – Recommendation to SPREP

Recommendation 5: Continue and reinforce SPREP’s role of providing technical assistance for GEF projects, particularly after GEF funding ends.

Evaluation stakeholders identified SPREP as playing an important role in providing technical support for project design, implementation, replication, and scale-up. The evaluation findings suggest that countries would benefit from even more technical assistance, particularly after GEF funding ends. SPREP should continue to build its technical expertise in climate change and biodiversity, in addition to other focal areas that are aligned with SPREP’s mandate. In addition, SPREP should look for opportunities to leverage and coordinate technical expertise throughout the region to address country-specific capacity needs.

2 – EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents the background, objectives, and methodology for the GEF Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio evaluation.

2.1 – Background

The Evaluation Office conducts CPEs every year at the request of the GEF Council. GEF-eligible countries are chosen for CPEs based on their size, diversity, and maturity of their project portfolios. These evaluations usually cover all national projects, and include a selection of the most important regional and global projects in which the country participates.

In FY2011, the CPE team conducted a different type of CPE, taking a cluster approach that analysed the portfolios of six GEF beneficiary countries of the Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States. That evaluation, the first of its kind for the CPE team, looked at the relevance, performance, and results of regional projects, one of the main support modalities in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Building on this experience, the Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation provides an opportunity to compare regional to national project relevance and performance in SIDS in the South Pacific region.

The South Pacific region comprises 22 countries scattered over one-third of the globe, covering about 30 million km², mostly oceanic. The region is tremendously diverse in its geography, culture, languages, social-political organization, size, and natural resource endowment.¹⁰ At the same time, Pacific countries face a full range of geologic and climatic hazards, including: population increase, waste management, climate change and sea level rise, and economic and institutional capacity.

SPREP is an intergovernmental organization established in 1982 by the governments and administrations of the South Pacific region to address environmental issues in the region. SPREP is composed of 25 countries, including all 21 Pacific Island countries and territories, and four developed countries.¹¹ It is charged with promoting cooperation, supporting protection and improvement of the Pacific Islands environment, and ensuring its sustainable development. SPREP focuses on climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem management, waste management and pollution control, and environmental monitoring and governance.

2.2 – Objectives and Scope

The main focus of this evaluation is the 13 national projects implemented within Vanuatu and the 11 regional projects executed by SPREP. However, the evaluation also considers 10 regional projects that were not executed by SPREP.

Based on the overall purpose of GEF CPEs and their standard TORs, the evaluation has the following objectives:

¹⁰ Gerald Haberkorn, 'Pacific Islands' Population and Development: Facts, Fictions and Follies.' *New Zealand Population Review*, 33/34 95-127. Population Association of New Zealand, 2008. http://www.population.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/nzpr-vol-33-and-34_gerald-haberkorn.pdf. Website access: 4 June 2013.

¹¹ U.S. Department of State Archive (2001 to 2009). 'South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).' <http://2001-2009.state.gov/g/oes/ocns/rsp/cta/12179.htm>. Website access: 4 June 2013.

- i. independently evaluate the **relevance** and **efficiency**¹² of GEF support in the region from several points of view: national environmental frameworks and decision-making processes; the GEF mandate and the achievement of global environmental benefits; and GEF policies and procedures;
- ii. assess the **effectiveness** and **results**¹³ of completed projects aggregated by focal area;
- iii. provide additional evaluative evidence to other evaluations conducted or sponsored by the Office; and
- iv. provide **feedback** and **knowledge sharing** to (1) the GEF Council in its decision-making process to allocate resources and to develop policies and strategies; (2) the countries on their participation in, or collaboration with the GEF; and (3) the different agencies and organizations involved in the preparation and implementation of GEF-funded projects and activities. The evaluation results will be used to provide information and evidence to inform other evaluations being conducted by the GEF Evaluation Office.

This evaluation assesses GEF support for projects in Vanuatu and the South Pacific. It analyses the performance of individual projects as part of the overall GEF portfolio. CPEs do not attempt to evaluate or rate the performance of the GEF Agencies, partners, or national governments.

2.3 – Methodology

The evaluation was conducted between October 2012 and August 2013 by an evaluation team comprised of staff from the GEF Evaluation Office and consultants with extensive knowledge of environmental evaluation and the South Pacific region. The methodology used qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and standardized analytical tools. Qualitative data sources included the following:

- At the **project level**, project documents, project implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, reports from monitoring visits, and technical documents produced by projects.
- At the **country level**, national sustainable development agendas, environmental priorities and strategies, GEF-wide focal area strategies and action plans, and global and national environmental indicators.
- At the **GEF Agency level**, country assistance strategies and frameworks and their evaluations and reviews.
- **Evaluative evidence** from the GEF Evaluation Office.
- **Interviews with roughly 40 GEF stakeholders and beneficiaries** – 10% of the interviewees from civil society, 50% from national government institutions, 30% from SPREP, and 10% from GEF Agencies.
- **Field visits** to selected projects sites.

¹² **Relevance**: the extent to which the objectives of the GEF activity are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies; **efficiency**: a measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.

¹³ **Results**: the output, outcome or impact (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of a GEF activity; **effectiveness**: the extent to which the GEF activity's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

- Information from **national consultation workshops**.

The quantitative analysis used standard indicators to assess the efficiency of GEF support using projects as the unit of analysis, particularly the time and cost of preparing and implementing projects.

The evaluation team used standardized analytical tools and project review protocols (PRPs) for the evaluation and adapted these to the South Pacific context. Twenty-two person-days were spent on fieldwork, including interviews and site visits conducted in Vanuatu, Samoa, and Fiji. Review of Outcomes to Impact (ROtI) field studies were undertaken for two projects – Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Program (PIREP) (GEF ID 1058) and Local Conservation Initiatives (LCI) (GEF ID 1682) – that were completed at least two years prior.¹⁴

A triangulation analysis was undertaken by comparing data collected from each of the evaluation methods to synthesize answers to the key evaluation questions. Based on this analysis of the evaluative evidence, the evaluation team produced preliminary findings, which were summarized in an aide-memoire that was distributed to stakeholders for factual correction and identification of additional evaluative evidence. Stakeholder comments on the aide-memoire, received at the consultation workshop held in March 2013, were taken into account in finalizing the conclusions and recommendations contained in this report.

2.4 – Limitations

The following limitations were taken into account and addressed wherever possible while conducting the evaluation:

- Country-level evaluations are challenging, as the GEF does not yet operate by establishing country programs that specify expected achievement through programmatic objectives, indicators, and targets. Many projects do not clearly or appropriately specify the expected impact and sometimes even the outcomes of projects. This evaluation sought to overcome these difficulties by undertaking field verifications to ongoing projects and two field ROtIs and interviews with other related organizations not directly associated with GEF projects. The results presented in this report are based on triangulation across various sources, including: project reports; interviews; focus groups; field visits; desk reviews; portfolio analysis; the Global Environmental Benefits Assessment (GEBA); Environmental Legal Framework; the two field ROtIs; meta-analysis of prior studies; literature review; and websites.
- The lack of a filing system within the main GEF Operational Focal Point (OFP) office meant most of the information used in the desk reviews was limited to whatever was available in the GEF database and other websites. The team used the interviews and field assessments to supplement the written record and relied highly on the individual interviews conducted.
- Weaknesses of M&E at the project and GEF program levels have been mentioned in past country-level evaluations and other evaluations of the Office. These weaknesses were also a challenge in conducting the Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation.
- As in previous CPEs, the analysis of the portfolio proved challenging for a number of reasons, including inconsistencies in the GEF Project Management Information System (PMIS) and

¹⁴ The GEF EO ROtI Handbook provides further details about the methodology used to conduct the ROtIs: http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/CPE-ROtI_Practitioners_Handbook_4August2009.pdf

incomplete data for some projects. This posed particular difficulties for the efficiency analysis of the time required to complete the project approval process, as many projects were missing dates for some phases, or the dates provided were apparently inaccurate (e.g., implementation start dates preceded project approval dates). Efforts were made by the GEF Evaluation Office to follow up directly with the GEF Agencies and by the consultants during the fieldwork to clarify the anomalies in the data; however, the team was not able to reconcile all of the discrepancies. Instead, the team extrapolated missing data points using the available data.¹⁵ This approach is based on taking averages between phases and across different types of projects; while this should provide a reasonable estimate of the project cycle overall, it does not allow us to isolate which steps of the process took the longest for specific projects.

- The lack of technical capacity in the PICs, including Vanuatu, and high turnover made it difficult to find knowledgeable project staff for interviews.
- Travel within the Pacific let alone Vanuatu is expensive and very difficult, as flights are mostly once a week to the outer islands where some of the project sites are located.
- As foreseen in the TOR, it is difficult to assign attribution to observed results. The evaluation does not attempt to provide a direct attribution of development and even environmental results to the GEF, but assesses the contribution of GEF support to overall achievements.

Despite the methodological challenges, the evaluation team managed to establish a clear and reliable set of data on projects and project documentation through the methods and approaches discussed above and throughout this evaluation report.

¹⁵ The evaluation team used the following methodology to backfill missing dates:

- To fill in missing 'Pipeline Entry/Received' (A) dates:
 - Where the 'Entry Work Program/ PIF Clearance' (B) date is available:
 - For Full Size Projects, take the average time from A-B (across FSPs) and subtract this value from the 'Entry Work Program/PIF Clearance' (B) date.
 - For Enabling Activities, take the average time from A-B (across all projects, because no data available for just EAs) and subtract this value from the 'Entry Work Program/PIF Clearance' (B) date.
 - Where the 'Entry Work Program/PIF Clearance' (B) date is not available:
 - For Enabling Activities (the only ones in this category), take the average time from A-C (across EAs) and subtract this value from the 'CEO Approval' or 'CEO Endorsement' (C) date.
- To fill in missing 'Entry Work Program/PIF Clearance' (B) dates:
 - For all project types, take the midpoint between the 'Pipeline Entry/Received' (A) and 'CEO Approval' or 'CEO Endorsement' (C) dates.
- To fill in missing 'CEO Approval' or 'CEO Endorsement' (C) dates (only one case):
 - For Full Size Projects (the only one in this category), take the average from A-B (across FSPs) and add this to the 'Entry Work Program/ PIF Clearance' (B) date.

3 – CONTEXT OF THE EVALUATION

This chapter summarizes the context for the evaluation in terms of both the environmental framework of Vanuatu and the South Pacific island countries, and the mandate and operations of the GEF.¹⁶ Volume II of this report includes further details about the Global Environmental Benefits Assessment and Regional Environmental Legal Framework.

3.1 – Vanuatu and SPREP Region: General Description

General Description: SPREP Region

The Pacific Islands constitute a diverse region which includes 14 nation states and eight territories scattered over one third of the globe, covering an area of around 30 million km². Of the total area, only 0.4% is covered by land, made up of between 20,000-30,000 small islands, with Papua New Guinea (PNG) covering 83% of the region's land area.

As reflected in Table 3-1, the Pacific Island nations range in size and population, from Papua New Guinea, which is spread over 400,000 km² with a population of over 5 million, to Niue with a population of roughly 1,500 residing on a land area of 259km². Population growth rates for the region are relatively high, averaging 2.2% per annum. Countries that have high emigration rates such as Tonga, Samoa, and Tuvalu normally have less than 1% growth rates, while Niue and Cook Islands with New Zealand citizenship have had negative growth rates for the last 10 years.¹⁷

Table 3.1

SPREP Countries' Key Statistics

Countries	Land Area (km ²)	Exclusive economic Zone (EEZ) Area (km ²)	Population (est. mid-2009)	GDP/capita (USD)	GDP Growth Rate 2007 (est.)	Human Development Index (a)
Cook Islands	237	1,830,000	15,636	10,007	0.4	.829
FSM	701	2,978,000	110,899	2,1830	.10	.716
Fiji Islands	18,272	1,290,000	843,8833	3182	-3.90	.718
Kiribati	811	3,550,000	98,989	656		0.597
RMI	181	2,131,000	54,065	2,851	2	.708
Nauru	21	310,000	9,771	2,820	0.20	.637
Niue	259	390,000	1,514	5,854		0.821
Palau	444	616,000	20,397	8,423	5.5	0.810
Papua New Guinea	462,840	3,120,000	6,609,745	1,062	6.2	0.437
Samoa	2,935	120,000	182,578	2,860	4.7	0.762
Solomon Islands	28,370	1,340,000	535,007	1,100	6.3	0.579
Tonga	650	700,000	103,023	1,874	-3.5	0.737
Tuvalu	26	900,000	11,093	1,563	3	0.691
Vanuatu	12,190	680,000	238,903	1,908	4.7	0.640

Note: (a) The Human Development Index is a composite statistic of education, income indices, and life expectancy published by the UNDP.

Sources: SPC and SOPAC databases Draft Pacific Human Development Report 2009, UN Statistics Division National Accounts Main Aggregates Database

¹⁶ An extended account of the country context, global environmental benefits, and the environmental legal framework is included in Volume 2 of this report.

¹⁷ <http://www.spc.int/sdp/>

The Pacific economies are primarily dependent on agriculture (20-40% of GDP), fishing (10% of GDP) and tourism (up to 40% of GDP in some countries).¹⁸ For Samoa and Tonga, remittances from workers overseas to their home countries account for 25% and 32% of their respective GDPs. The continental high islands of the Melanesian group have extractive industries such as logging and mining as additional major contributors to their economies. The resource-rich Melanesian states have higher GDPs than the Polynesian and Micronesian states. PNG has a GDP of US\$7906 million, Fiji a GDP of US\$3061 million, Solomon Islands a US\$715 million GDP, and Vanuatu a US\$729 million GDP. The rest of the region – which includes Samoa, Tonga, Niue, Cook Islands, Tuvalu, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Kiribati, Nauru, and the Marshall Islands – have GDPs ranging from US\$523 million in Samoa to US\$54 million in Nauru.

With the exception of PNG, the Pacific's populations predominantly reside in rural coastal areas, thus making them particularly vulnerable to sea level rise and tsunamis.

General Description: Vanuatu

Vanuatu is comprised of an irregular Y-shaped chain of some 80 islands, with a total land area of about 12,190 km². The country's total population was estimated to be 240,000 people in 2010, and it has an annual population growth rate of 2.3%.¹⁹ Vanuatu is located in a seismically and volcanically active region with high exposure to geologic hazards, including volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tsunamis, and landslides.²⁰

Vanuatu's GDP was approximately US\$729 million in 2010 with a growth rate of 4.7% and per capita income of US\$1,908 as shown in Table 3-1. Agriculture and tourism are the main productive sectors contributing to Vanuatu's economy. Agriculture contributes 21.5% of GDP; tourism contributes 19% of GDP.²¹ The vast majority of Vanuatu's population is engaged in informal subsistence economic activities. 79% of Vanuatu's population lives in rural villages, ranging from one family to a thousand people, meeting subsistence and cash needs from locally available terrestrial and inshore marine resources. The monetized commercial sector accounts for less than one third of all economic activity.

Vanuatu ranks 118th on the Human Development Index (HDI) and 52nd on the Human Poverty Index (HPI). Poverty levels stubbornly remain at about 40% of the population, with about 26% living on less than US\$1 per day. The low economic and social statistics for Vanuatu are a major stumbling block in implementing the national plans developed as part of the Rio Conventions as the limited national budget is spread thinly over several sectors of society.

3.2 – Environmental Benefits in Key GEF Support Areas

The Global Benefits Index (GBI) is a measure of the potential of each country to generate global environmental benefits in a particular GEF focal area. Separate indices are determined for the biodiversity and climate change focal areas as shown in Table 3-2.

¹⁸ Pacific Regional Report for the 5 year review of Mauritius Strategy for Further Implementation of the Barbados Program of Action for Sustainable Development; 2010

¹⁹ http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2012/03/26/000356161_20120326004949/Rendec/PDF/E30040EA0P1126020Box367891B00353352.pdf. Website access: 7th November, 2012.

²⁰ http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2010/02/25/000333037_20100225012651/Rendec/PDF/532100WPOP1120110VANUATU1ASSESSMENT.pdf. Website access: 7th November 2012.

²¹ http://www.wttc.org/site_media/uploads/downloads/vanuatu2012.pdf

Table 3.2

Global Environmental Benefits Index for SPREP Countries

Pacific Island Countries	Climate Change GBI	% Share of GBI	Biodiversity GBI	% Share of GBI
Cook Islands	10	0	10.7	0.1
FSM	0	0	9.3	0.0
Fiji Islands	782	0	27.2	0.4
Kiribati	0	0	7.6	0.1
Marshall Is.	0	0	18.4	0.0
Nauru	41	0	0	0
Niue	2	0	2.6	0
Palau	78	0	8.8	0.1
Papua New Guinea	2144	0	179	2.4
Samoa	159	0	11.7	0.2
Solomon Islands	95	0	30.8	0.4
Tonga	75	0	6.8	0.1
Tuvalu	-	0	1.9	0
Vanuatu	193	0	14.7	0.2

Source: www.thegef.org: Global Benefits Index (GBI) for Biodiversity: Initial and Revised July 2008

The GBI for biodiversity seeks to measure the potential global benefits from biodiversity-related activities in a country. It reflects the complex, highly uneven distribution of species and threats to them across the ecosystems of the world, both within and across countries. The GBI for climate change seeks to measure the potential global benefits that can be realized from climate change mitigation activities in a country. The approach reflects the objectives of the GEF climate change operational programs to address long-term priorities to mitigate climate change. Adaptation funding is through the Least Development Countries (LDC) Fund, the Adaptation Fund, and the Special Climate Change Fund, which is outside of the GBI calculations.

As shown in Table 3-2, the climate change GBIs for individual nations in the Pacific Islands are zero – and yet, these countries are highly vulnerable to the effects of global climate change due to the smallness of the islands and their tropical location. In addition, the Pacific is home to a very high and rich biodiversity, as reflected in the biodiversity GBIs.

3.2.1 – Biodiversity

The Pacific Islands region is one of the richest areas of terrestrial and marine ecosystems on earth, with habitats ranging from mountain forest ecosystems to volcanic islands and low lying coral atolls and extensive coral reef systems. The New Guinea Islands (the west is part of Indonesia and the east is part of Papua New Guinea) alone are home to over 5% of global terrestrial biodiversity, with two-thirds of these species found nowhere else in the world, despite being less than 1% of the global landmass. The Western Pacific, which includes the Melanesian countries and Palau, is recorded as having the highest marine biodiversity along with the most extensive coral reef system in the world. The region's isolated islands provide ideal conditions for the evolution of new species. As a

consequence, Pacific islands have high numbers of ‘endemic’ species, including more than 400 endemic bird species.²²

The huge expanse of ocean supports the most extensive and diverse coral reefs in the world, the largest tuna fishery, the deepest oceanic trenches and the healthiest and, in some cases, largest remaining populations of many globally rare and threatened species including whales, sea turtles, dugongs and saltwater crocodiles. The richness of biodiversity in the Pacific is evident in the presence of biodiversity hotspots that include both terrestrial and marine ecosystems. Eastern Melanesia, New Guinea Island and New Caledonia are recognised for their rich and diverse terrestrial areas, as shown in Table 3-3.

Table 3.3

Pacific Islands Biodiversity Hotspots

Hotspot	Plants	Birds	Reptiles	Mammals	Corals	Fish
Polynesia-Micronesia	5330	242	61	15		
New Guinea Island	15-20,000 3000 (orchids)	760		250	800	600
East Melanesia	8000	360	42 (amphibians)	86		52(freshwater fish)
Coral Triangle					600	3000
Vanuatu	1100			13	297	469

Sources: http://www.conservation.org/where/priority_areas/hotspots/asia-pacific

Due in large part to the small size of most of the islands, many of the unique plants and animals of the Pacific region have very small populations and are amongst the most endangered in the world. The Pacific currently has about 25% of the world’s threatened bird species and has already lost many species. Worldwide, the largest number of documented extinctions (28 between 1600 and 1899 and 23 in the twentieth century) has occurred on the islands of Oceania which now have more threatened species (110) than any other region. Estimates identify that there are roughly seven times more endangered bird species *per capita* in the South Pacific than in the Caribbean, 50 times more than South America, and a hundred times more than in North America or Africa. The Polynesia-Melanesia hotspot is considered the epicentre of the current global extinction crisis.²³

Biodiversity in Vanuatu

Vanuatu belongs to the East Melanesian Islands biodiversity hotspot. As shown in Table 3-3 above, the hotspot is rich in biodiversity and high in endemic plant, mammal, bird, amphibian, and freshwater fish species.²⁴ A review on studies of the flora and fauna for the Vanuatu Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan noted the presence of more than 1,100 plant species, 297 coral species, 80 species of insects, 13 mammal species, and more than 469 shallow fish species. Vanuatu’s terrestrial ecosystems are classified into five main vegetation types, mainly lowland rainforests, montane cloud forests, seasonal forest, scrub and grasslands, and coastal vegetation. The rich marine ecosystems include coral reefs, mangrove forests, sea grass beds, wetlands, and rare marine biodiversity such as sea turtles, whales, dugongs, and dolphins.

²² Pacific Regional Report for the 5 year review of Mauritius Strategy for Further Implementation of the Barbados Program of Action for Sustainable Development; 2010

²³ Conservation International, 2007, Polynesia-Micronesia Biodiversity Hotspot: Ecosystem Profile

²⁴ http://www.conservation.org/where/priority_areas/hotspots/asia-pacific/East-Melanesian-Islands/Pages/biodiversity.aspx

3.2.2 – Climate Change

Climate change is disproportionately affecting the islands of the Pacific. Although islanders have done little to contribute to the increase in carbon emissions – less than 0.03% of current global greenhouse gas emissions – they are among the first to be affected. Most islands are experiencing climate change impacts on communities, infrastructure, water supply, coastal and forest ecosystems, fisheries, agriculture, and human health as well as tourism.

Agriculture, which is mostly rain-fed in the region, is susceptible to changes in rainfall distribution. Intense and prolonged rainfall could damage seedlings, resulting in greater run-off and soil erosion and encouraging conditions that promote pests and diseases. Droughts combined with higher temperatures would cause added thermal stress on plants. Projected increases in sea surface temperatures combined with increased ocean acidification (from increased CO₂ concentrations in the atmosphere) are likely to put pressure on the marine food chain (particularly reef systems and other calcifying organisms such as planktons), which in turn potentially threatens aspects of marine food supply and associated livelihoods. The incidence of vector-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever, and water-borne diseases such as dysentery and diarrhoea, are likely to increase and shift in distribution (for example, malaria is likely to extend further southwards).²⁵

The impacts of climate change and sea level rise on the Pacific Island nations are real and life threatening. For example, citizens on some of PNG's islands have been relocated in response to rising sea levels. Tuvalu and Kiribati have been seeking countries for their people to relocate to in the near future as the sea level continues to rise, inundating their low-lying atoll islands. Droughts and cyclones are threatening the national economies and livelihoods of Pacific people.

Climate Change in Vanuatu

Vanuatu's location in the 'ring of fire' and the 'cyclone belt' of the Pacific makes it extremely vulnerable to a range of natural hazards. Since 1939 Vanuatu has experienced 124 tropical cyclones, of which 45 were categorized as having hurricane force winds. Several of these disasters have caused loss of human life, disrupted livelihoods and resulted in millions of dollars in infrastructure damage. Cyclone Prema, which occurred in 1993, caused some US\$60 million in damages, and Dani in 1999 resulted in damage estimated at US\$8 million. The Penama earthquake and tsunami of November 1999 affected 23,000 people.²⁶ Vanuatu is also affected by the cycles of El Niño, which comes with changes in precipitation patterns (drought) associated with increased mean temperatures, and La Niña, which brings increased rainfall. The effects of global climate change increase Vanuatu's vulnerability to cyclones and sea level rise.

The country's vulnerability is further heightened by a number of socio-economic factors. Vanuatu's narrow economic base is comprised of subsistence small-scale agriculture, which contributes 65% of the country's GDP, with fishing, offshore financial services and tourism making up the remainder. Some 80% of the population are rural and depend on agriculture, but productivity is low and the domestic market for agricultural products is limited. Therefore, the population is extremely vulnerable to the disruptions caused by extreme weather events on the nation's economy.

Vanuatu has completed both a National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA) and a National Action Plan (NAP) for Disaster Risk Reduction. Additionally, the national government's commitment is reflected in the merging of the former National Advisory Committee on Climate Change (NACCC) and

²⁵ Republic of Vanuatu, 2009, *National Action Program to address land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought*

²⁶ GEF Project document: Increase climate resilience climate change and natural hazards in Vanuatu, 2010.

the National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC), and upgrading it to a National Advisory Board for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction. The establishment of the Project Management Unit for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction is resourced both by the Vanuatu Government and funding from the GEF and other development partners.

3.2.3 – International Waters

The Pacific Ocean covers an area of nearly 40 million km² (15.4 million square miles) or over 7.9% of the Earth's surface. The Coral Triangle lies in the Pacific and is considered one of the richest marine biodiversity areas in the world. This area stretches from Southeast Asia to encompass PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji and Palau. This vast and complex marine system contains an enormous and largely undocumented array of biodiversity. This includes the most extensive and biologically diverse reefs in the world, the deepest ocean trenches, deep-sea minerals, the world's largest tuna fishery, as well as an array of globally threatened species such as sea turtles, whales and dugongs.

The many thousands of islands are, with the exception of some larger Melanesian Islands, entirely coastal, often with limited freshwater resources. The islands are surrounded by a rich variety of ecosystems including mangroves, seagrass beds, estuarine lagoons and coral reefs.

The Pacific hosts the world's largest remaining stocks of tuna, providing approximately one-third of the world's catches of tuna and related species. The western and central Pacific Ocean tuna industries have a total landed value of around US\$2 billion/year and an estimated market value of US\$6–8 billion/year. About half of this annual catch is taken from the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Annual licensing fees for the predominantly foreign fishing fleets provide revenues of about US\$60–70 million to the region. As a consequence, responsible and effective stewardship is a priority, recognising that over-fishing of two key species – big eye and yellow-fin tuna – now places stock levels in jeopardy.

The ocean and its resources have been the lifeline for Pacific people for millennia, but with declining fishery resources, rising sea levels, warming ocean temperatures, ocean acidification and pollution, the oceans are changing rapidly. These changes are degrading the livelihoods, and threatening the very survival of Pacific Islanders.

3.2.4 – Land Degradation

Land degradation is a pivotal issue for most of the smaller Pacific Island countries. Already, Nauru has no native forest left due to years of mining, while Tonga (12% remaining native forest) and Kiribati (15% remaining native forest) face problems for future land use and management. Land degradation from clearing of native forests for logging operations, commercial plantations and farms, and increasing urban settlements poses additional problems such as the contamination of the underground water lens and resulting threats to the livelihood and food security of the resident populations.

Land Degradation in Vanuatu

The volcanic origins of the Vanuatu archipelago make most of the islands steep and mountainous. About 36.7% of the country is forested and only about 9.8% of Vanuatu's total land area is arable. Approximately 60% of low-lying coastline areas are utilised for agricultural activities and human settlement and industrial activities.

There have been numerous changes in the way land is used in Vanuatu in the last decade, particularly in the urban areas of Vila and Louganville. In rural communities, land remains primarily

under customary ownership and a large proportion of it is under cultivation. The extent of land degradation in Vanuatu is largely unknown. The impacts of land degradation on local economic and subsistence activities and national economic and political aspirations have not been assessed.

3.2.5 – Persistent Organic Pollutants

All 14 Pacific Island nations have signed the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), but are in various stages of developing and implementing their National Implementation Plans (NIPs). Unfortunately, because most of the Pacific countries still have not completed their national assessments and NIPs, a regional overview on the global environmental benefits could not be adequately ascertained.

In a regional study of hazardous waste conducted by SPREP in 13 Pacific countries (all except PNG), a total 131 tons of PCBs, and 10.4 tons of DDT were recorded at over 20 sites. The chemicals were mostly disposed of by burial or sealing off from human contact.²⁷ The results of this study were used as the basis for the Pacific Regional POPs project under consideration for GEF-5 funding.

POPs in Vanuatu

Vanuatu lacks the capacity to record, control or monitor the releases of dioxins and furans. The knowledge and application of best available techniques (BAT) and best environment practices (BEP) for new or existing sources in Vanuatu is very limited or non-existent.

The National Implementation Plan confirmed that DDT was used for the control of malaria-carrying mosquitoes until 1989, and some of the used stocks of electrical transformers in Vanuatu contained PCBs. The report for the inventory of chemical imports has shown that the main sources of dioxin and furan releases in Vanuatu are from the incineration of quarantine and medical wastes and uncontrolled burning, including landfills and backyard rubbish fires.²⁸

3.3 – Environmental Legal and Policy Framework in Vanuatu and the South Pacific Region

The environmental legal framework in the South Pacific consists of international and regional agreements that countries have signed and ratified/acceded to, non-binding strategies and plans endorsed at high-level international conferences, and national-level legislation and regulations, along with accompanying institutional arrangements for their administration. For Pacific Islands States, the lines of demarcation between obligations and responsibilities at these different levels are often blurred in practice, in large part because obligations for reporting, information sharing, and implementation are often overlapping.

3.3.1 – Regional Conventions

Three important regional conventions govern environmental activities in the Pacific: Apia Convention, Noumea Convention, and Waigani Convention.

- **Apia Convention (1976).** The objective of the Apia Convention is to take action for the conservation, utilization and development of the natural resources of the South Pacific region through careful planning and management for the benefit of present and future generations.

²⁷ SPREP, 2000; Management of POP's in Pacific Island Countries

²⁸ Draft Vanuatu National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on POPs, 2008

- **Noumea (SPREP) Convention (1986).** The objective of the SPREP Convention is to protect and manage the natural resources and environment of the South Pacific region.
- **Waigani Convention (1995).** The 1995 Waigani Convention bans the exporting of hazardous or radioactive waste to Pacific Islands Forum countries, and prohibits Forum Island countries from importing such waste.

Table 3-4 shows the countries that have ratified, signed, or acceded to the conventions.

Table 3.4

Status of Ratification of Regional Conventions

	SPREP Member Countries													
	CI	FSM	FIJ	KIR	RMI	NAU	NIU	PAL	PNG	SAM	SOL	TON	TUV	VAN
Apia Convention	R	R	R						R	R				
Noumea (SPREP) Convention	R		R		R	R		S	R	R	R		S	
Waigani Convention	R	R	R	R		S	R	S	R	R	R	R	A	R

Source: SPREP. www.sprep.org/attachments/MEA_database.pdf. Downloaded 25 January 2013.

Key: R = Ratified; A = Acceded; S = Signed.

3.3.2 – International Agreements

All Pacific Island states are party to a large number of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the United Nations Convention for Combating Desertification (UNCCD). Their participation reflects the serious regional concern regarding their vulnerability to the transboundary impacts of environmental impacts such as marine pollution, climate change, loss of biodiversity and ozone depletion. The MEAs not only provide Pacific Island States access to a global stage on which to express their issues and sometimes grievances, but also the opportunity to cooperate with the international community and to access financial resources to support the implementation of their activities. Those that are of particular relevance to GEF as a funding mechanism – i.e., CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD – are particularly well supported.²⁹

3.3.3 – Other Regional Policy and Planning Frameworks

Regional policies, plans and frameworks often endorsed at high-level international and regional meetings constitute an important part of the larger framework within which SPREP and its member countries operate. While these are not legally binding, compliance with them is important for political and other reasons, including that of access to financial resources. Many of these directly support international conventions and agreements. For instance, the Pacific Plan 2005's purpose (among others) is '... to guide the region's efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)' (PIFS, 2011). The Action Plan for the Implementation of the Climate Change Framework, noted the Pacific Islands Climate Change Roundtable (Madang, 2005), '... will also be guided by decisions and activities at the level of the UNFCCC and GEF' (SPREP, 2009).

²⁹ Volume II includes a table of the countries supporting each agreement.

Most regional frameworks are developed through highly inclusive and consultative regional processes and because they are formally endorsed and adopted by high-level meetings of Pacific leaders, they command a high degree of legitimacy and recognition both at the national level and with development partners. Volume II summarizes the international and regional frameworks, strategies and plans that are widely recognized and used in the Pacific region.

3.3.4 – Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

An important addition to the institutional arrangements for supporting environmental activities in the region is the existence of SPREP. SPREP was established under the *Agreement Establishing SPREP* in 1993, ‘... to promote co-operation, and provide assistance in order to protect the environment and to ensure the sustainable development for present and future generations.’³⁰ The Secretariat is located in Samoa. It has a Director, and a complement of professional and support staff that implement the organization’s annual work programme and respond to country-specific requests for assistance and support. In 2011, SPREP had a total of 69 professionals and support staff and an operating budget of US\$14.3 million.³¹

The Secretariat reports to the annual SPREP Meeting consisting of representatives of all 25 member states and territories. The Meeting approves the organization’s annual budget and Work Programme. The current work programme addresses four strategic priorities: (i) climate change, (ii) biodiversity and ecosystem management (iii) waste management and pollution control and (iv) environmental monitoring and governance.

SPREP assists its member countries by (i) coordinating regional input and providing technical and legal advice for instance in conventions negotiations, and COPs participation; (ii) directly implementing regional programmes and activities in pursuit of its strategic priorities, including donor-funded programmes and projects, and (iii) directly responding to specific country requests for assistance.

SPREP, in collaboration with other regional and international organizations, has also been instrumental in setting up and supporting the operation of regional coordinating mechanisms that bring together and link a broad range of stakeholders including funders, international and regional NGOs, academic institutions and civil society groups. These coordinating mechanisms share a common interest, to collectively strategize and coordinate their activities, and to share information, resources and experiences. Two highly successful networks are the Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation and the Pacific Islands Climate Change Roundtable.

3.3.5 – The National Environmental Legal and Policy Framework of Vanuatu

Environmental Legal Framework

Vanuatu’s Constitution (revised 1988) holds that it is a fundamental duty of all ‘to protect the Republic of Vanuatu and to safeguard the national wealth, resources and environment in the interests of the present generation and of future generations.’ To implement this constitutional provision, the Government is empowered to enact specific laws and create institutions to protect and manage the environment.

³⁰ Agreement Establishing the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).

³¹ SPREP. 2012. SPREP Annual Report – 2011. Apia.

The principal environmental legislation is the Environmental Management and Conservation Act No. 12 of 2002. The main parts of the Act deal with (i) administration; (ii) environmental impact assessments; (iii) biodiversity and protected areas; and (iv) offenses under the Act. The Act provides for a department to develop, implement, and coordinate the Government's environmental policies and programs and makes it mandatory to (i) prepare and publish a national state of environment report at least once every ten years and (ii) maintain a publicly accessible environmental registry. The Act provides for establishment of a biodiversity Advisory Council, and specifically covers the issues of bio-prospecting and community conservation areas.

The Act also governs the management of POPs, with the Minister empowered to regulate (amongst other things) the environmental effects associated with the importation and transportation of hazardous substances, pests and weeds, waste management, and air and water pollution.

The Act bestows on the Director considerable powers including the power to directly appoint staff from outside the Department, determine if a development application requires an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the manner in which the EIA must be compiled, and to stop any specified activity due to non-compliance with the terms under which its EIA was approved. This discretionary authority has been a source of some controversy.

Vanuatu has also taken steps to address waste management and pollution. Since 1994, the Public Health Act No. 22 of 1994 provides the basic requirements for sanitary systems for all dwellings in rural and urban areas. A National Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan 2010-2015 is now in place. The Pollution Control Bill and the Waste Management Bill were drafted and submitted to Parliament in 2012³² and are expected to be enacted before June 2013.³³

Institutional Framework

This section provides an overview of the main government institutions that are responsible for protecting the environment in Vanuatu.

- **Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation (DEPC).** Vanuatu's environment agency, previously called the Vanuatu Environment Unit (VEU), was upgraded to become the Department of Environment Protection and Conservation (DEPC) in 2009. It is hosted under the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources and is responsible for the administration of the Environmental Management and Conservation Act 2002. The DEPC also leads the preparation of both the National Conservation Strategy and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and is involved in the development of the National Waste Management Strategy. It is the Operational Focal Point for international environmental conventions like the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CI TES), among others (SPREP-IWP 2004). However, as discussed in the next chapter, the DEPC's capacity is still quite limited as a result of historical and ongoing challenges.

The institutional instability of the past and lack of capacity effectively means progress on the implementation of legislation and obligations under international environmental treaties was very slow. To its credit, however, notwithstanding its limited capacity, the DEPC has

³² Vanuatu Daily Post. June 1, 2012. 'Pollution and waste management scrutinized by stakeholder representatives'. www.dailypost.vu Downloaded – Jan 24, 2013.

³³ Trinison Tari, Department of Conservation, Vanuatu; pers com. 28 Jan 2013.

been successful in other areas, notably in promoting and facilitating the establishment of Community Conservation Areas which total registered area has increased from 194 km² in 2005 to 16,259 km² in 2008.

As DEPC is not well-resourced, the task of managing the environmental actions has taken on a multi-agency approach. For example, the climate change division is housed within the Ministry of Meteorology and Disaster Management. A number of agencies have responsibilities that are integral to the health of coastal environments,³⁴ but the absence of policy leadership on integrated coastal management is likely to lead to sub-optimal management.

- **Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Unit.** The Government of Vanuatu established a multi-sectoral Climate Change advisory committee in 1990 in the lead up to the Earth Summit of 1992 to coordinate national activities on climate change. This same committee continued until 2012 when it was changed to the National Advisory Board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction. With this change, the government established a centralised project management unit for climate change within the Department of Meteorology and Geo-Hazards. The Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Unit (CCDRR) now has over 20 staff dealing with international conventions and policies, adaptation, mitigation, communications and corporate services.

The CCDRR Unit work is managed through the National Advisory Board made up of Permanent Secretary and Director level personnel from the all the relevant Government Agencies impacted by climate change. Despite not having climate change legislation, the PMU's work is guided by the Climate Change Policy Framework.

- **Other responsible national agencies.** Environmental management is also implemented through sector specific legislation (see Volume 2). In the land sector, the Land Lease Act (1983) and the Urban Land Act (1993) guide the operations of Vanuatu's Land Use Planning Office. There are also many other land use policies formulated to ensure effective management of lands and related resources, such as the National Land Use Plan and Policy and the Provincial Land Use Plans and Strategies, Land Suitability Criteria, etc. Other laws that regulate the use of natural resources by other sectors are the: Mines and Minerals Act, Petroleum (Prospecting and Production) Act, Geothermal Energy Act, Forestry Act, Fisheries Act, Foreshore Development Act, the Pesticides Act, and others.

The Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources under the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources administers the Geothermal Energy Act of 1987, which regulates the exploitation of geothermal energy, as well as the Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Act of 1993 which regulates the searching for and producing of petroleum on land. This includes the land beneath water, the seabed and the subsoil beneath the territorial seabed; and the seabed and the subsoil of the continental shelf or beneath the waters of the exclusive economic soil. The Ministry of Land and Natural Resources implements the Mines and Minerals Act (1986), which regulates the exploration and development of minerals and related matters through a licensing and permit system. Quarrying is the only current mining

³⁴ The DEPC, for instance, is responsible for biodiversity and environmental management through the 2003 *Environmental Management and Conservation Act*, and the Vanuatu Fisheries Department (VFD) has responsibility for managing the harvesting of marine resources, the 2005 *Fisheries Management Act, No.: 55*, and the 2008-2013 *Aquaculture Development Plan*.

activity but presence of gold on Santo and Malekula has been confirmed. There may be reserves of petroleum, although this is not yet proven.

National Environmental Policies and Strategies

Vanuatu does not have a National Sustainable Development Strategy. However, a National Priority Action Agenda (PAA) includes sustainable development of Vanuatu's forests and marine resources. Vanuatu's first national conservation strategy was prepared in 1993 (Environment Unit 1993), with assistance from SPREP, AusAID, and IUCN. The highest priorities were identified as (i) improving environmental education and awareness; (ii) improving legislation and law enforcement; (iii) strengthening existing environment institutions; (iv) preserving natural resources and tabu places; and (v) using resources more efficiently.

Some of the strategies identified in 1993 were implemented, while many others were not. Other national strategies and plans have since been developed; including some that were developed under GEF funded enabling activities.³⁵

International Agreements

Vanuatu is a party to the following international agreements and conventions shown in Table 3-5.

Table 3.5

Status of Ratification of MEAs Signed by Vanuatu

Name on MEA	Year of ratification or accession
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	25 Mar 1993 (R)
United National Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)	10 Aug 1999 (R)
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	25 Mar 1993 (R)
Kyoto Protocol	17 July 2001 (A)
Vienna Convention	21 Nov 1994 (A)
Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer	21 Nov 1994 (A)
UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	10 Sep 1999 (R)
World Heritage Convention	13 June 2002 (R)
Barcelona (MARPOL) Convention	1986 (A)
Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (Stockholm Convention)	19 Sept 2005 (R)
CITES Convention	15 Oct 1989

Source: www.sprep.org/attachment/MEA_database.pdf Key: R = Ratified; A = Acceded

3.3.6 – Role of GEF-Funded Interventions in the Development of National Laws and Policies

The extent to which GEF-funded interventions contributed to the development and strengthening of the environmental legal framework in Vanuatu is partly evidenced in the explicit acknowledgement of GEF support expressed in national planning documents and reports, where one of the outputs of the GEF enabling activities were the production of these documents themselves. Acknowledgements

³⁵ National strategies and plans include: Forest Policy (1997); NBSAP (1999); NAPA (2005); National Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan 2010 – 2015; National Action Plan (NAP) for Disaster Risk Reduction 2006 – 2010; National Action Program (NAP) to Address Land Degradation and Mitigate the Effects of Drought (2009); Tuna Management Strategy (2009); National Water Strategy 2008 – 2018 (2008); National Energy Policy (draft only, 2009); and National Tourism Development Master Plan (1994).

of GEF involvement are seen in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA), and the National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA) Report.

GEF influence can also be inferred from the chronology of events, wherein GEF activities preceded the ratification of conventions, enactment of national legislation, and adoption of national strategies and plans on the other hand.³⁶ For example, the sequence of events resulting in the adoption of the NBSAP started with the ratification by Vanuatu of the CBD, the enactment of the CBD Ratification Act by the Vanuatu Parliament, before the start of implementation of the NBSAP Enabling Activity of which the NBSAP was produced. The development of the NAPA followed a similar sequence. Both sequences are illustrated below in Figures 3-1 and 3-2.

Figure 3.1

Activities Sequence Leading to the Adoption of the NBSAP

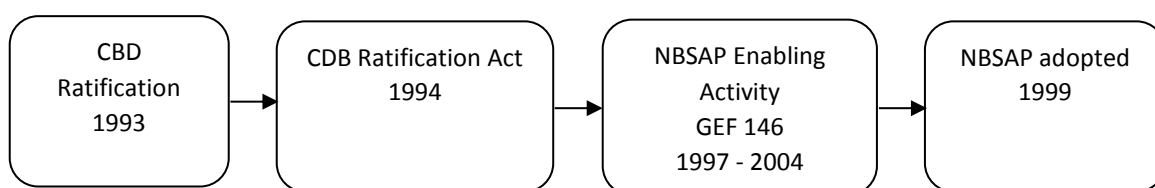
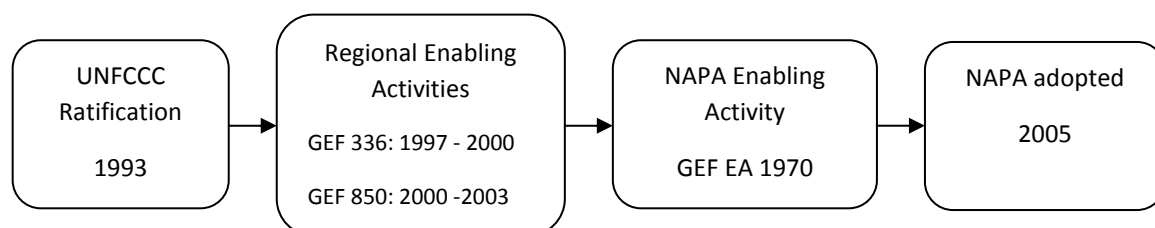


Figure 3.2

Activities Sequence Leading to the Adoption of the NAPA



Key:

GEF 146 – National Biodiversity Strategies, Action Plans and First National Report to CBD

GEF 336 – Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Project (PICCAP – Phase 1)

GEF 850 – Expedited Financing of Climate Change Enabling Activities (PICCAP Phase 2)

In the case of the NAPA, two regional enabling activities (GEF 336 and 850) were implemented before the NAPA with a focus on gathering information for NAPA formulation, such as the compilation of greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, identification and assessment of various options for climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the development of different scenarios of future changes in climate and sea level.

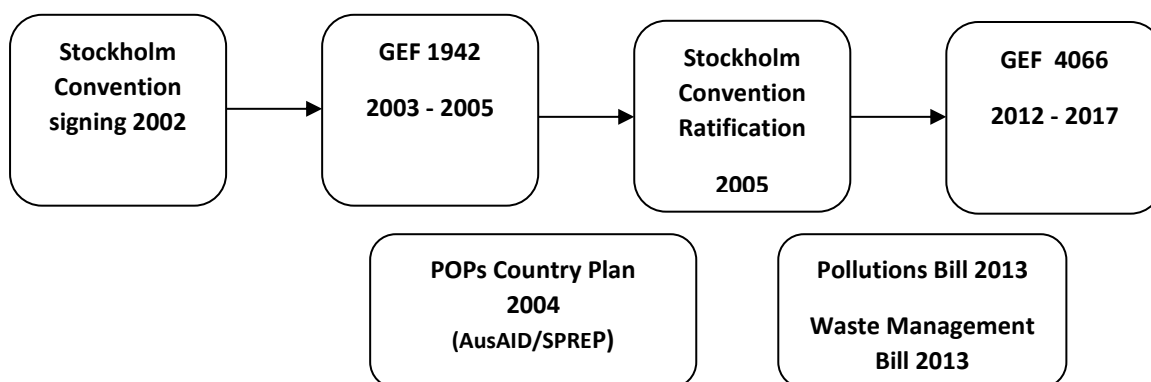
The influence of GEF-funded interventions in strengthening the framework for the management of persistent organic pollutants took a different track relative to that taken in the development of NBSAP and NAPA, as illustrated in Figure 3-3. Where in the case of the former two plans, GEF assistance followed Vanuatu's ratification of the CBD and UNFCCC, in the case of the Stockholm Convention, GEF intervened to prepare the groundwork for ratification and initial reporting requirements (GEF 1942). Vanuatu's subsequent ratification of the Convention paved the way for its

³⁶ Volume 2 includes a detailed chronology.

participation in the GEF-funded regional POPs project (GEF ID 4066)³⁷, which is currently being implemented. The Pollutions Bill and a Waste Management Bill – both dealing with aspects of hazardous waste management and presently before Parliament for enactment – are not an intended output of the GEF project. However, GEF activities helped raise the profile of hazardous waste management at the time when the legislation was presented to Parliament. The two pieces of legislation will also address some of Vanuatu’s obligations under the Stockholm Convention, including obligations for appropriate legal and administrative measures under Article 3.

Figure 3.3

Activities Sequence Showing GEF’s Links to Vanuatu’s POPs-related Activities



Key:

GEF 1942 – Enabling Activity for the Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants

GEF 4066 – Pacific POPs Release Reduction through Improved Management of Solid and Hazardous Wastes

GEF’s influence in the development of environmental legislation in Vanuatu may also be seen not only in the way the NBSAP called for and supported the development of the Environmental Management and Conservation legislation, but also in setting in motion a process of stakeholder consultation that generated discussion and brokered consensus on specific actions and provisions to be considered in the drafting of the legislation. The NBSAP made nine specific recommendations on issues for inclusion in the Environmental Management and Conservation Act:

- Controls on the introduction of living materials;
- Management regulations for designated terrestrial species including measures for size limits, closed seasons for birds, flying foxes, crabs and freshwater prawns;
- Establishment of an EIA process;
- Establishment of an Environment Trust Fund to fund biodiversity research and conservation work;
- Establishment of a legal mechanism to protect intellectual property rights of ni-Vanuatu with respect to their knowledge and use of biodiversity;
- Appropriate controls for the import and export of rare species;
- Appropriate controls for the importation and safe handling of living modified organisms;

³⁷ PAS Pacific POPs Release Reduction through the Improved Management of Solid and Hazardous Wastes.

- Establishment of a Scientific Research Council with responsibility to issue permits for environment and natural resource-focused research within Vanuatu; and
- Setting up a high-level Environment Coordinating Committee with responsibility for the use and management of biological resources.

The enacted legislation (Environmental Management and Conservation Act 2002) contained provisions for four of the nine areas proposed for consideration. These are the (i) EIA (Part 3 sections 11 – 28); (ii) Bio-prospecting (Part 4; sections 29 – 34); (iii) LMOs (Part 6, Section 45(2)(a)(ii); and (iv) Regulating the harvesting of marine organisms (Part 6, Section 45(2)(b)).

3.4 General Description of the GEF

The GEF provides funding to achieve global environmental benefits in biodiversity, climate change, international waters, depletion of the ozone layer, POPs, and land degradation, according to their respective international agreements. GEF activities are carried out through 10 Agencies: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Asian Development Bank (ADB), African Development Bank (AfDB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

GEF Agencies have direct access to funding through a memorandum of understanding with the GEF. GEF support modalities include the following:

- Full-size projects, which have funding of more than US\$1 million;
- Medium-size projects, which have funding of US\$1 million or less;
- Enabling activities, intended to help countries meet their obligations under the various conventions for which the GEF serves as a financial mechanism; support for developing environmental policies, strategies, and action plans; and support for the formulation of NCSAs;
- Project preparation grants (PPGs; formerly known as project development facility [PDF] grants), which provide funding for the preparation and development of projects; and
- Small grants, which have funding of less than US\$50,000, and are directed to NGOs and local organizations; small GEF grants are structured into the SGP administered by UNDP.

The GEF officially began with a two-year pilot phase from 1992 to 1994. This was followed by three regular four-year replenishment periods: GEF-1 (1995–98), GEF-2 (1999–2002), GEF-3 (2003–06), and GEF-4 (2006–10). In July 2010, GEF-5 was initiated; it continues through June 2014. Until and including GEF-3 there were no country allocations, and eligible GEF member countries submitted their requests to the various windows through the different GEF Agencies on a demand basis.

4. THE GEF VANUATU AND SPREP PORTFOLIO

This chapter presents an overview of GEF support to Vanuatu in terms of financial resources and number of projects, type of project, GEF focal area, GEF Agency, and GEF phase. The GEF provided US\$218.2 million for projects in Vanuatu and the surrounding region. This includes US\$17.9 million for national projects, US\$182.0 million for regional projects (US\$63.1 million went to SPREP-executed regional projects, and US\$119.6 million was committed for Vanuatu regional projects not under SPREP), and US\$18.4 million for global projects. Additionally, Vanuatu received US\$975,000 for Small Grants Programme projects. This chapter describes the project portfolio in further detail.

4.1 National Projects in the GEF Vanuatu Portfolio

The GEF portfolio in Vanuatu includes 13 national projects, which received US\$17.9 million in GEF funding and US\$70.0 million in cofinancing. Tables 4.1 – 4.3 summarize the national project portfolio by project status, focal area, and project type.

Table 4.1

National Projects in the GEF Portfolio for Vanuatu

Status	GEF ID	Project Title	Focal Area	Project Type	GEF Agency	Total GEF Support	Total Cofinancing
Pipeline	3798	Increasing Resilience to Climate Change and Natural Hazards	CC	FSP	World Bank	\$5.73M	\$6.01M
	4281	Geothermal Power and Electricity Sector Development Project	CC	MSP	World Bank	\$0.91M	\$28.21M
	5049	Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zone in Vanuatu	CC	FSP	UNDP	\$8.28M	\$34.43M
Ongoing	Null	National Communications Programme for Climate Change - 2nd National communication to UNFCCC (Child project)	CC	EA	UNDP	\$0.41M	\$0.01M
Completed	146	National Biodiversity Strategies, Action Plan, and First National Report to the CBD	BD	EA	UNEP	\$0.21M	\$0.00M
	486	Clearing House Mechanism Enabling Activity	BD	EA	UNEP	\$0.01M	\$0.00M
	860	Assessment of Capacity-building needs for Biodiversity and Participation in CHM	BD	EA	UNEP	\$0.13M	\$0.07M
	875	Biosafety	BD	EA	UNEP	\$0.12M	\$0.06M
	1682	Facilitating and Strengthening the Conservation Initiatives of Traditional Landholders and their Communities to Achieve Biodiversity Conservation Objectives	BD	MSP	UNDP	\$0.77M	\$0.71M
	1914	National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment (NCSA) for Global Environmental Management	MF	EA	UNEP	\$0.22M	\$0.06M
	1942	POPS Enabling activities for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs): National Implementation Plan for Vanuatu	POPs	EA	UNEP	\$0.39M	\$0.02M
	1970	National Adaptation Programme of Action	CC	EA	UNDP	\$0.20M	\$0.02M
	3502	LDC/SIDS Portfolio Project: Capacity Building and Mainstreaming for Sustainable Land Management in Vanuatu	LD	MSP	UNDP	\$0.50M	\$0.43M

Status Definitions

Pipeline: Projects that have not yet received PIF Clearance, CEO Endorsement or Approval, and IA Approval

Ongoing: Projects that are in the implementation stage

Completed: Projects that have completed implementation

Table 4.2

National Projects in the GEF Portfolio for Vanuatu, by Focal Area and Funding

Focal Area	Number of projects	Total GEF Support	Total Cofinancing	Percentage of GEF Support by Focal Area
BD	5	\$1.24M	\$0.84M	6.95%
CC	5	\$15.52M	\$68.68M	86.80%
LD	1	\$0.50M	\$0.43M	2.80%
MF	1	\$0.22M	\$0.06M	1.26%
POPs	1	\$0.39M	\$0.02M	2.20%
Total	13	\$17.88M	\$70.03M	100.00%

Table 4.3

National Projects in the GEF Portfolio for Vanuatu, by Focal Area and Project Type

Project Type	BD	CC	LD	MF	POPs	Total
EA	\$0.47M	\$0.61M		\$0.22M	\$0.39M	\$1.69M
FSP		\$14.01M				\$14.01M
MSP	\$0.77M	\$0.91M	\$0.50M			\$2.18M
Total	\$1.24M	\$15.52M	\$0.50M	\$0.22M	\$0.39M	\$17.88M

Most of the national projects have been completed, and were financed by UNEP or UNDP. Five projects are in the climate change focal area, five in biodiversity, one in persistent organic pollutants, one in land degradation, and one in the multifocal area. Though eight of the 13 national projects are enabling activities, these projects received only US\$1.7 million of the total GEF support. Most of the funding for national projects is for two climate change FSPs in the pipeline stage (78% of GEF funding). In contrast with the completed projects which are mostly EAs, all of the pipeline projects are FSPs or MSPs. Additionally, the only national projects that are in the pipeline or ongoing are climate change projects, in contrast to the completed projects which are mostly in biodiversity.

4.2 Regional Projects Involving Vanuatu

The GEF has committed US\$182.7 million to projects in the SPREP region, which have also received US\$817.0 million in co-financing. These include 11 SPREP projects and 10 other regional projects in which Vanuatu participates.³⁸

Tables 4.4 – 4.7 summarize the regional project portfolio. The 11 SPREP regional projects received US\$63.1 million in GEF funding. Most of this funding has gone to projects in the climate change focal area. Most of the SPREP projects are ongoing or completed, and only one is in the pipeline phase. Additionally, most of these projects are executed by UNDP or UNEP, and are Full Sized Projects (FSPs).

³⁸ Vanuatu participated in all but one SPREP-executed project (GEF ID 4023).

Table 4.4

SPREP Regional Projects in the GEF Portfolio for Vanuatu

Status	GEF ID	Project Title	Focal Area	Project Type	GEF Agency	Total GEF Support	Total Cofinancing
Pipeline	4066	PAS Pacific POPs Release Reduction Through Improved Management of Solid and Hazardous Wastes	POPs	FSP	Multi-Agency	\$3.50M	\$6.05M
Ongoing	2699	Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP)	CC	FSP	UNDP	\$5.23M	\$27.98M
	2944	Sustainable Energy Financing	CC	FSP	World Bank	\$9.48M	\$48.99M
	3101	Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project (PACC)	CC	FSP	UNDP	\$13.48M	\$39.20M
	3664	PAS Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species in the Pacific Islands	BD	FSP	UNEP	\$3.18M	\$3.98M
	4023	PAS Implementing the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by Integrating the Conservation Management of Island Biodiversity	BD	FSP	UNEP	\$1.82M	\$2.56M
Completed	336	Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Project (PICCAP)	CC	EA	UNDP	\$2.44M	\$0.00M
	403	South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme	BD	FSP	UNDP	\$10.00M	\$4.30M
	530	Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) of the Pacific Small Island Developing States	IW	FSP	UNDP	\$12.29M	\$8.12M
	850	Expedited Financing of Climate Change Enabling Activities (Phase II) - PICCAP	CC	EA	UNDP	\$1.00M	\$0.00M
	1058	Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Programme (PIREP)	CC	MSP	UNDP	\$0.70M	\$0.11M

Status Definitions

Pipeline: Projects that have not yet received PIF Clearance, CEO Endorsement or Approval, and IA Approval
Ongoing: Projects that are in the implementation stage
Completed: Projects that have completed implementation

Table 4.5

Vanuatu Regional Projects in the GEF Portfolio for Vanuatu

Status	GEF ID	Project Title	Focal Area	Project Type	GEF Agency	Total GEF Support	Total Cofinancing
Pipeline	3420	PAS GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability	MF	FSP	World Bank	\$0.38M	\$0.44M
	3647	CTI The Coral Triangle Initiative (PROGRAM)	MF	FSP	Multi-Agency	\$45.60M	\$338.02M
	4746	Implementation of Global and Regional Oceanic Fisheries Conventions and Related Instruments in the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS)	IW	FSP	Multi-Agency	\$10.20M	\$70.31M
	4935	Continuing Regional Support for the POPs Global Monitoring Plan under the Stockholm Convention in the Pacific Region	POPs	FSP	UNEP	\$2.00M	\$4.13M
	5037	Climate Proofing Development in the Pacific	CC	FSP	ADB	\$14.50M	\$50.62M
Ongoing	2586	PAS Implementing Sustainable Integrated Water Resource and Wastewater Management in the Pacific Island Countries - under the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability	IW	FSP	Multi-Agency	\$9.75M	\$90.58M
	3591	PAS Strengthening Coastal and Marine Resources Management in the Coral Triangle of the Pacific - under the Pacific Alliance for Sustainability Program	MF	FSP	ADB	\$13.42M	\$23.85M
	3641	PAS: Promoting Energy Efficiency in the Pacific	CC	FSP	ADB	\$5.45M	\$6.92M
	3819	PAS Forestry and Protected Area Management	BD	FSP	FAO	\$6.63M	\$11.79M
Completed	2131	Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project	IW	FSP	UNDP	\$11.64M	\$79.09M

Status Definitions

Pipeline: Projects that have not yet received PIF Clearance, CEO Endorsement or Approval, and IA Approval
Ongoing: Projects that are in the implementation stage
Completed: Projects that have completed implementation

Table 4.6

GEF Regional Projects in which Vanuatu Participates, by Focal Area and Funding

Project Scope	Focal Area	Number of projects	Total GEF Support	Total Cofinancing	Percentage of GEF Support by Focal Area
SPREP Regional	BD	3	\$15.00M	\$10.84M	8.21%
	CC	6	\$32.32M	\$116.28M	17.69%
	IW	1	\$12.29M	\$8.12M	6.73%
	POPs	1	\$3.50M	\$6.05M	1.92%
Vanuatu Regional	BD	1	\$6.63M	\$11.79M	3.63%
	CC	2	\$19.95M	\$57.54M	10.92%
	IW	3	\$31.59M	\$239.98M	17.29%
	MF	3	\$59.39M	\$362.31M	32.51%
	POPs	1	\$2.00M	\$4.13M	1.09%
Grand Total		21	\$182.68M	\$817.03M	100.00%

Table 4.7

GEF Regional Projects in which Vanuatu Participates, by Focal Area and Project Type

Project Type	BD	CC	IW	MF	POPs	Total
EA		\$3.44M				\$3.44M
FSP	\$21.63M	\$48.13M	\$43.88M	\$59.39M	\$5.50M	\$178.54M
MSP		\$0.70M				\$0.70M
Total	\$21.63M	\$52.27M	\$43.88M	\$59.39M	\$5.50M	\$182.68M

GEF has also committed US\$119.6 million for Vanuatu regional projects that are not under SPREP. All of these projects are FSPs, and the majority of the funding has gone to projects in the multifocal area, notably the project 'Implementation of Global and Regional Oceanic Fisheries Conventions and Related Instruments in the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS)' (GEF ID 4746), which received US\$45.6 million. Most of these projects are in the pipeline or ongoing.

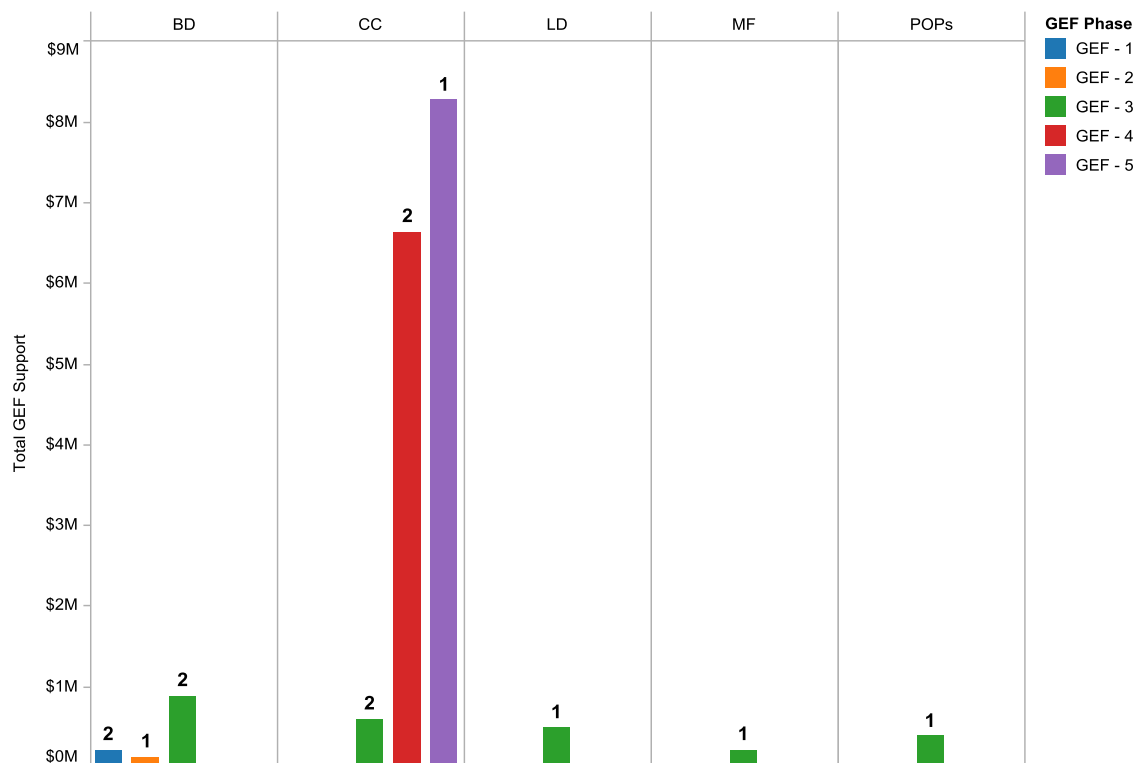
There are differences between the SPREP-executed versus other regional projects: nine of the 11 SPREP projects are in the climate change or biodiversity focal area, while international water and multifocal area projects play a greater role in the non-SPREP regional portfolio. Across both the SPREP regional and Vanuatu regional projects, most of the GEF funding has gone to FSPs in the multifocal area.

4.3 Evolution of GEF Funding in the South Pacific Region

The GEF national portfolio in Vanuatu has evolved from GEF-1 to GEF-5, as shown in Figure 4.1. GEF funding increased substantially in GEF-4 and GEF-5. The allocation of funding to different focal areas has evolved. During GEF-1 and GEF-2, the only projects that received GEF funding were in the biodiversity focal area. During GEF-3, GEF support for national projects expanded to encompass all focal areas (except international waters). In contrast, during GEF-4 and GEF-5, only projects in the climate change focal area received funding. Only one national project was funded in GEF-5, 'Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zone in Vanuatu' (GEF ID 5049). This is a full-sized climate change project under UNDP, and it received the greatest amount of funding among all the national projects (US\$8.3 million).

Figure 4.1

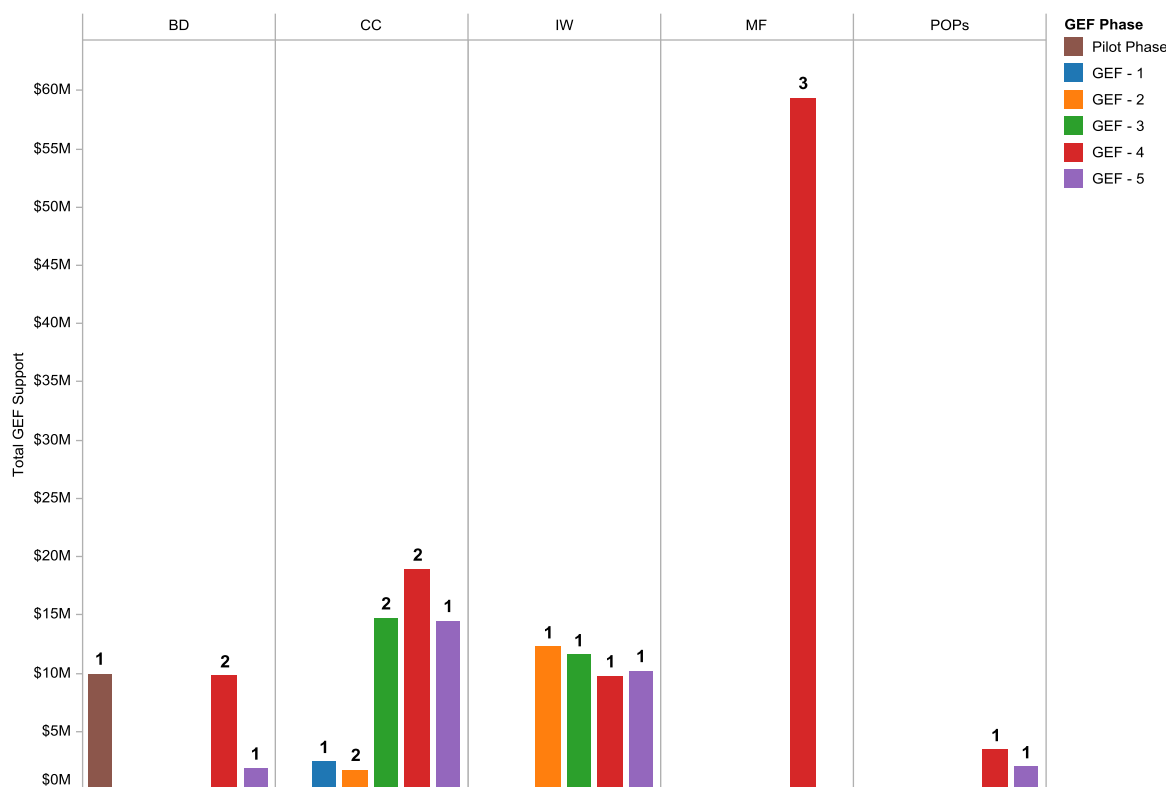
GEF Funding for National Projects by Focal Areas across GEF Phases



GEF funding for regional projects (SPREP and other executing agencies) over time is shown in Figure 4.2. There does not appear to be a clear trend in the amount of regional funding over time, except for the surge in GEF funding during in the multifocal area during GEF-4. The regional project portfolio appears to be much more diverse than the national portfolio, with projects spanning the focal areas and increasing in diversity over time. The GEF funded one biodiversity project in the pilot phase and one climate change project in GEF-1. During GEF-2 and GEF-3, the GEF funded projects in two focal areas: international waters and climate change. Climate change projects in GEF-3 received much greater funding than climate change projects funded under GEF-2, while international waters received slightly less. GEF-4 and GEF-5 showed much greater diversity in projects. During GEF-4, two projects were funded in biodiversity, two in climate change, one in international waters, three in the multifocal area, and one in persistent organic pollutants. In GEF-5, GEF funded one project in biodiversity, one in climate change, one in international waters, and one in persistent organic pollutants. However, the GEF has not funded any regional projects in land degradation.

Figure 4.2

GEF Funding for Regional Projects by Focal Areas across GEF Phases



4.4 Implementation Status of National and Regional Projects

Of the 13 Vanuatu national projects supported by the GEF, only one – ‘National Communications Programme for Climate Change: 2nd National Communication to UNFCCC,’ an enabling activity – is currently under implementation. All other national enabling activities have been completed. Two FSPs and one MSP are in the pipeline; all three are in the climate change focal area. Among the SPREP and other regional projects, nine are ongoing, six are in the pipeline, and six have been completed. Most of the ongoing regional projects are in the climate change and biodiversity focal areas. The regional pipeline includes projects in a diverse range of focal areas, including persistent organic pollutants, climate change, international waters, and the multifocal area.

4.5 National and Regional Allocations by GEF Agency

Figure 4.3 presents the evolution of GEF support to Vanuatu national projects by Agency across the different GEF replenishment periods. GEF national projects have been implemented by UNDP, UNEP, and the World Bank.

About 57% of GEF funding for national projects in Vanuatu has gone to UNDP projects, and the majority of this funding has been for projects in the climate change focal area. UNDP projects received funding in GEF-3 and GEF-5.

World Bank projects have received about 37% of the GEF support for national projects, and all of this funding has been dedicated to two projects in the climate change focal area, both of which were funded in GEF-4.

About 6% of the GEF support has gone to projects implemented by UNEP, in the biodiversity, persistent organic pollutants, and multifocal areas. Four of the six UNEP projects are in the biodiversity focal area, and the UNEP projects have been financed during GEF-1, GEF-2, and GEF-3.

Figure 4.3

GEF Funding to National Projects by GEF Agency across GEF Phases

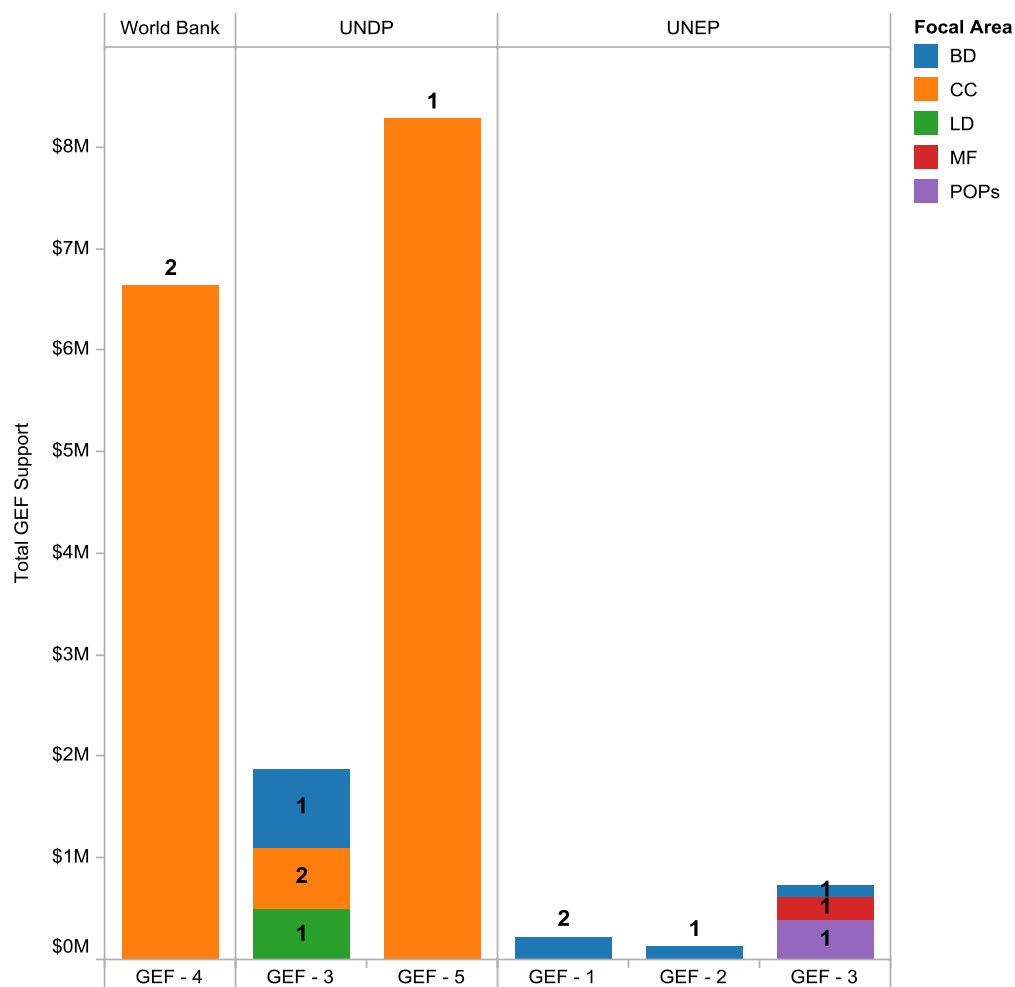
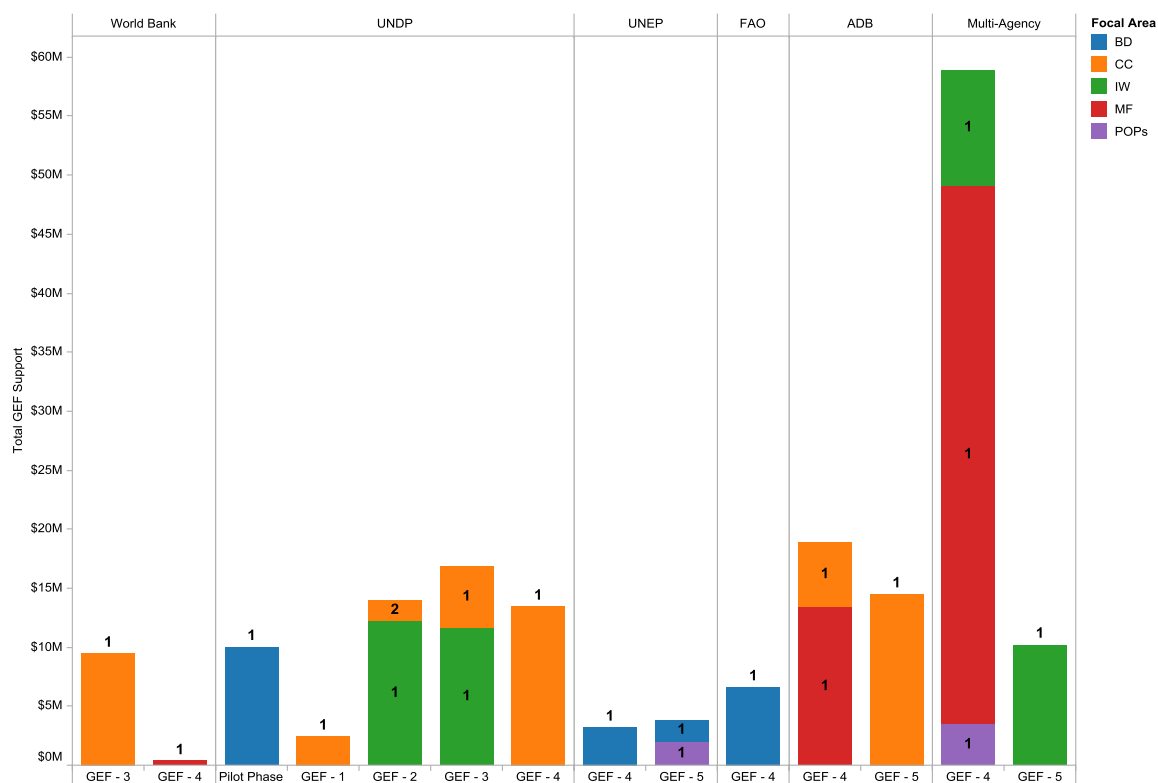


Figure 4.4 presents GEF support to regional projects (SPREP and other executing agencies) by GEF Agency and focal area across GEF replenishment periods. The regional projects have been implemented by the World Bank, UNDP, UNEP, FAO, and ADB. Four of the regional projects have been implemented by multiple agencies, for example, the Coral Triangle Initiative (GEF ID 3647) is being implemented by ADB, UNDP, FAO, and the World Bank. Multi-agency projects appear to have received the greatest amount of funding, but this was mostly for a single project (GEF ID 3647) being implemented by ADB, UNDP, FAO, and the World Bank.

Figure 4.4

GEF Funding to Regional Projects by GEF Agency across GEF Phases



The red bar for Multi Focal Area/GEF-4 is being driven primarily by a single project, ID 3647. The total GEF support for this project, \$45,601,365, has been verified by the agency
 Project 2944 has an Agency value of "World Bank/IFC;" this project has been grouped into the Agency of "World Bank."
 This figure includes both Vanuatu and SPREP Regional projects; only one project was included on the SPREP Regional list that was not on the Vanuatu Regional list

4.6 Small Grants Programme

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) is funded by the GEF and implemented by UNDP. Table 4.8 presents GEF SGP support to Vanuatu by phase.³⁹ Most of the SGP projects, and most of the funding, occur in Phase 4, and are in the biodiversity and multifocal areas.

Table 4.8

GEF SGP Funding and No. of Projects in Vanuatu by Phase

SGP Phase	Biodiversity	Climate Change	International Waters	Land Degradation	Multifocal	POPs	Total
Phase 4	\$223,557	\$87,130	\$36,590	\$2,500	\$221,663		\$571,440
Phase 5	\$118,068			\$42,553	\$240,640	\$2,500	\$403,761
Total	\$341,625	\$87,130	\$36,590	\$45,053	\$462,303	\$2,500	\$975,201

SGP Phase	Biodiversity	Climate Change	International Waters	Land Degradation	Multifocal	POPs	Total
Phase 4	8	2	1	1	8		20
Phase 5	3			1	5	1	10
Total	11	2	1	2	13	1	30

³⁹ The SGP projects were not included in the project data received from the GEF Evaluation Office. Project data was accessed on the SGP website on May 24, 2013. <http://sgp.undp.org/>

5. EFFECTIVENESS, RESULTS, AND SUSTAINABILITY OF GEF SUPPORT TO VANUATU AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC

GEF support in Vanuatu has covered the full range of GEF focal areas for which the country has been eligible through national projects and through regionally implemented projects. The results of these activities are assessed in this chapter. A focal area approach is adopted, which provides a clear delineation between projects, the accumulation of results from outputs towards long-term impacts, and global environmental benefits. Where trends are discernible within and across focal areas, these are discussed and commented on. The chapter concludes with an assessment of institutional and other forms of capacity development, and the mainstreaming, replication, and up-scaling of project-level impacts.

Within each focal area, the GEF has supported three broad categories of interventions. The first (EAs) is that of foundational capacity building, supporting and strengthening Vanuatu's capacity to fulfil its national obligations under various multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). These are targeted activities such as national communications to various Convention secretariats and the preparation of national plans such as NBSAP, NAPA, and NAP. The output of these activities has been important because it has allowed Vanuatu to progress towards development and implementation of further MSPs and FSPs, which have the potential to deliver tangible results on the ground. Beyond these, the EAs raised awareness of environmental issues and strengthened capacities within the Government of Vanuatu. Part of this capacity includes the gathering of baseline information and the adoption of a systematic and science-based approach to environmental planning, whose utility extends well beyond the immediate needs of the EAs' intended outputs. Equally important, the EAs encouraged and facilitated the use of inclusive consultative processes and dialogue among multiple stakeholders that hitherto were not regularly involved in the national and sector level planning processes, including civil society groups and local community representatives. These consultative processes have since been effectively mainstreamed in most if not all levels of planning in the country. This is an important achievement in Vanuatu's transition to sustainable development.

The second category of intervention has been that of pilot/demonstration projects. The earliest opportunities were provided by the SPREP-implemented South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Project (SPBCP) and the International Waters Project (IWP) activities during GEF 1. The influence of both projects, which promoted context-specific community-based approaches to biodiversity conservation and water catchment management on customary owned land, can be seen in modified forms in the LCI (GEF 1682) and in the community-based activities of the Vanuatu Small Grants Program (SGP). In GEF 2 and 3, the completed PIREP and the ongoing PIGGAREP respectively promoted renewable energy as part of climate change mitigation and adaptation, with the latter going one step beyond demonstration by providing small-scale investment in renewable energy generation with funding from the Government of Italy.

The third category of GEF intervention is investment projects. Vanuatu is just entering this phase with three projects (two FSPs and one MSP) in the pipeline in the climate change focal area. The progression from EAs to demonstration/pilots to investment interventions shows the continuing growth and maturing of the GEF portfolio, most notably in the climate change focal area. This emphasis is consistent with the Vanuatu Priority Action Agenda's (PAA) focus on the development of risk reduction and disaster management programs.

5.1 Biodiversity

The GEF-funded EAs in biodiversity were satisfactorily completed with intended outputs produced. These included: the NBSAP, the First National Report to the CBD, setup of the Clearing House Mechanism, completion of the assessment of capacity-building needs for biodiversity and participation in the CHM, and the National Biosafety Framework (NBF). Both the NBSAP and the NBF were formally approved by the Government of Vanuatu. The impact of the NBSAP, in particular, has been significant. As discussed in the analysis of the Environmental Legal Framework, NBSAP's influence is seen in the formulation of the Environmental Protection and Management Act 2006 and its continuing use as the framework and roadmap for biodiversity action in the country. Based on the NBSAP recommendation and SPBCP experience, the DEPC (formerly the Vanuatu Environment Unit or VEU) developed the LCI (MSP) proposal, which was funded and implemented during GEF 3.

The LCI project, an MSP titled 'Facilitating and Strengthening the Conservation Initiatives of Traditional Landowners and their Communities to Achieve Biodiversity Conservation Objectives,' was implemented over a five-year period from 2005 to 2010. As documented in the ROTI (Volume II), the project supported traditional leaders and communities initially in 12 sites (three in Tanna, three in Santo, and six in Gaua), wherein targeted species and habitats were protected or sustainably managed using traditional taboos. Most participating communities in the LCI, according to reports, made progress in the following areas: (i) acquiring a strong sense of community pride in their endemic and native species and habitats and a strong interest in their protection, (ii) establishing local committees trained in monitoring and who were already enthused and motivated by positive changes in the populations and improved conditions of targeted species and habitats observed within taboo areas, and (iii) growing interest from the provincial governments of Santo, Tanna, and Gaua to extend support to the conservation areas.⁴⁰

Project reports noted increases in species populations within taboo areas including fish, crabs, freshwater prawns, and birds⁴¹ at the 12 initial sites in the early years of project implementation. The project also targeted a 50% increase in additional sites by the end of the project. After three years, some 30 new sites were using traditional taboos in Gaua, while Tanna and Santo have three new sites each. Unfortunately, environmental monitoring data for the latter part of the LCI were not analysed, due to the premature departure of the M&E specialist. Consequently, other than anecdotal and qualitative reports of increases in populations of several marine and bird species within taboo areas, the full extent of the project's impact could not be ascertained.

The LCI sustained and expanded on existing in-country efforts, including collaborations with the Vanuatu Culture Centre on documenting and protecting traditional knowledge; support for the Wan Small Bag's environmental awareness programs; the Forestry and Fisheries Departments' work on conservation and sustainable harvesting of biodiversity resources; Reef Check Vanuatu's monitoring training for local communities; and the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific (FSPI) project on community governance for sustainable forestry management and gardening. These organizations and stakeholders became partners in LCI implementation, extending their activities and sharing technical expertise to benefit LCI-targeted communities and LCI objectives.

Post-project sustainability of the LCI is at best mixed. The ROTI found that most LCI-initiated sites were left unsupported after the closure of LCI, with DEPC lacking the budgetary resources to absorb

⁴⁰ For instance, the Santo provincial government was reported to have employed a full-time staff member to assist the conservation areas, and to promote its replication to other communities.

⁴¹ UNDP. 2009. Annual Progress Report (APR).

LCI project staff or incorporate LCI activities into its work program. However, there are a few positive exceptions. Following the completion of the project, DEPC assisted two LCI communities in Tanna to prepare SGP funding proposals that secured funding for coconut crab monitoring and marine protected area support. DEPC was also instrumental in nominating Lake Letes as a World Heritage Site (it has since been put on the Tentative List) and in promoting the inclusion of the Gaua sites (Lake Letes and upland forests) in the GEF PAS project on Forest Protected Areas and Conservation.

Of the SPREP-executed biodiversity projects, Vanuatu was one of the 12 SPREP Pacific Islands member countries that participated in the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Project (SBPCP), which was implemented from 1994 until 2001. With SPBCP support, the Vatthe Conservation Area in Santo was established to demonstrate a community-based conservation area (CBCA) approach that sought to combine conservation and sustainable resource use, in this case using a mix of traditional and modern management tools, and ecotourism. The Vatthe Conservation Area brought under conservation management 2,720 ha of native forests and a significant diversity of endemic flora and fauna species. An additional 16 conservation areas (CAs) were established in other participating PICs.

The Vatthe Conservation Area Project (CAP) established under the SPBCP has continued successfully 12 years after the end of SPBCP support (2001), with the level of activities fluctuating depending on available resources and funding. The fundamental requisite for sustainability – the landowning communities' continuing interest and commitment to the conservation of the areas' biodiversity – remains strong. The critical contributing factor to its longevity to date is the availability of technical support and funding for its key activities, from outside partners. For instance, collaborations fostered during SPBCP with the Royal Forests and Birds Society of New Zealand in support of ecotourism continue. An annual tour of the Vatthe CAP by eco-tourists generates income for the community, and provides free labour and expertise for specific project activities. The Espiritu Santos Tourism Association and the Vanuatu Bungalow Association and Island Safaris continue to promote the area on their websites as a tourist destination, with several websites marketing hotels in Santos as 'Hotels near the Vatthe Conservation Area.' In 2004, DEPC and the Vanuatu National Museum nominated the Vatthe Conservation Area to UNESCO for consideration as a World Heritage Site, based on natural criteria, and the site has since been included in UNESCO's Tentative List. In the same year, Conservation International (CI) contributed US\$20,000 to compensate a local landowner⁴² and in doing so, help resolved a major land ownership dispute that threatened the project. In 2010, Forest and Birds (NZ) and local group Eco-Livelihood Development Associates (EDA) collaborated to secure a GEF SGP grant (US\$50,000) to assist with the communities' efforts to control the *Merremia peltata* vine that is the major threat to the areas' native forest.

At the regional level, GEF progress reports in 2001 observed that the sustainability of the sites had not yet been secured '... with 7 CAs very likely to be sustainable beyond the period of SPBCP funding and a further 7 sites may possibly be sustainable, while 3 are considered unlikely.'⁴³ The Final Project Evaluation Report (Baines et al, 2002) assessed the sustainability of all 17 CAPs using an eight-point system, with '8' the most likely to be sustainable and '0' being unsustainable. The results are shown in Table 5.1 below. This is compared to status updates for each CA based on a range of information sources including information from various internet websites, and from national environmental agencies. The updates show that two CAs no longer exists (Komarindi and Uafato – due to local ethnic unrest and internal conflict respectively), two have no recent information available (Kiritimati

⁴² Zeppel. H. 2006. Indigenous Ecotourism – Sustainable Development and Management. Ecotourism Series. No. 3. CABI International, Cambridge, USA. Pp. 61.

⁴³ SPBCP support for the Komarindi Conservation Area in the Solomon Islands was withdrawn due to ethnic unrest in the country.

Atoll, Kiribati and Funafuti CAP, Tuvalu) and their current status could not be ascertained, while 13 are ongoing albeit at widely varying levels of operation.

Table 5.1

SPBCP Conservation Area Projects – Sustainability Assessment 2002, and Updated Status in 2013

Country	Name of Conservation Area Project (CAP)	Sustainability Assessment by Terminal Evaluation Report (Baines, 2002)	Updated Status, 2013
Cook Islands	Takitumu	5/8	Ongoing; bird conservation, ecotourism
Federated States of Micronesia	Kosrae. Utwe-Walung	4/8	Ongoing; waste management, mangrove conservation, ecotourism
Federated States of Micronesia	Pohnpei	7/8	Ongoing; conservation management, invasive species
Fiji	Koroyanitu	4/8	Ongoing; Koroyanitu National Heritage Park, ecotourism.
Kiribati	North Tarawa	N/A	Ongoing; seabird and marine conservation, ecotourism
Kiribati	Kiritimati	N/A	N/A
Marshall Islands	Jaluit Atoll	N/A	Ongoing; ecotourism
Niue	Huvalu Forest	N/A	Ongoing; conservation management, hiking/tourism
Palau	Rock Islands	6/8	Ongoing; conservation management, ecotourism,
Palau	Ngeremeduu Bay	5/8	Ongoing; conservation management, ecotourism
Samoa	Sa'anapu-Sataoa	4/8	Ongoing; mangrove conservation, integrated into larger district MPA, ecotourism
Samoa	Uafato	5/8	Not operational since 2002 due to internal community conflicts
Solomon Islands	Komarindi	N/A	Formally closed in 1998 due to ethnic unrest
Solomon Islands	Arnarvon Islands	7/8	Ongoing; conservation management, fishing
Tonga	Ha'apai Islands	5/8	Ongoing; conservation management, sustainable fishing
Tuvalu	Funafuti	3/8	N/A
Vanuatu	Vatthe	N/A	Ongoing; conservation management ecotourism

The final independent GEF evaluation of SPBCP was highly critical of aspects of the project, concluding that overall the project did not achieve global environmental objectives, largely due to design and implementation flaws.⁴⁴ The evaluation also stated that SPBCP contributed little to the conservation of the biological resources that support rural communities in the region. However, GEF's own review of the independent evaluation report observed that SPBCP deserved more credit given its achievements.⁴⁵ Twelve years on, 12 of the 17 areas the project established or supported continue to provide protection and/or sustainable management for large areas of the region's globally significant biodiversity.

⁴⁴ Baines, Graham; Hunnam, Peter; Rivers, Mary-Jane; Watson, Bruce. 2002. *SPBCP – Terminal Evaluation Mission – Final Report*. Project Number RAS/91/G31/E/1G/99. UNDP.

⁴⁵ GEF Secretariat Terminal Evaluation Report. 21/01/2003.

5.2 Climate Change

GEF funded two nationally-executed climate change EAs in Vanuatu. There are also two FSPs and one MSP in the pipeline. Vanuatu also participated in five SPREP-executed regional climate change projects, including: three EAs (refer to Table 4.2), an MSP (GEF 1058 – PIREP), and an FSP (GEF 2699 PIGGARREP). Vanuatu has also received support for climate change projects under the SGP.

The first nationally-executed EA (GEF 1970) produced the National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) in 2007, a country-wide plan identifying immediate and urgent project-based adaptation activities in priority sectors, to address present and future adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events. This project built on results from earlier regional activities, in particular PICCAP Phases 1 and 2. The full-size climate change projects presently in the pipeline were identified from the NAPA which is presently being updated. The second climate change EA – the National Communications Programme for Climate Change, Second National Communication to UNFCCC – is in progress.

Vanuatu's participation in the regionally executed PICCAP I and II significantly enhanced its understanding and capacity in planning for climate change adaptation. PICCAP supported national inventories for greenhouse gas sources and sinks, the identification of mitigation options for climate change and sea level rise, as well as areas of vulnerability to climate change and sea level rise, and the development of adaptation options and national implementation plans. PICCAP also supported the preparation of Vanuatu's Initial National Communication for UNFCCC, which was submitted in October 1999.

Vanuatu is also benefitting from its participation in the PIREP (GEF 1058) and the PIGGAREP (GEF 2699). PIREP was completed satisfactorily in September 2006. As discussed in the ROtI, the project raised awareness and understanding of the possible role of and potential for renewable energy (RE) in the region and identified barriers hindering the widespread adoption of RE. PIREP-funded national assessments also generated valuable baseline information for national energy policy making and planning; the same information contributed to the development of the GEF PIGGAREP project proposal that also includes Vanuatu, and which is currently under implementation. Under PIGGAREP, Vanuatu's potential for wind and hydro power generation is being studied – including the Talise hydro and the Myno Island hydro studies, the latter supported by IUCN.

Vanuatu also participated in two SPREP-implemented climate change EAs (PICCAP 1, PICCAP 2), an MSP (i.e., PIREP), and two FSPs (PIGGAREP and PACC). The PICCAP was designed to strengthen the capacities of participating countries to meet reporting commitments under the UNFCCC. On completion of PICCAP I and II, 10 PICs had completed greenhouse gas inventories and Vulnerability Assessments, nine countries had completed and submitted their Initial National Communications to the UNFCCC, and six countries had completed their national implementation strategies. PICCAP also made a significant contribution to building capacity in participating countries, including Vanuatu, in the methodologies for inventorying greenhouse gas sources and sinks, and climate change vulnerability and adaptation assessment. The latter involved representatives from 12 participating countries on a six-month course at the International Global Change Institute at the University of Waikato, New Zealand. These trainings not only benefitted the targeted 10 PICs, but also Niue, PNG, Tonga, and Palau.⁴⁶ All four countries have since submitted national communications.

⁴⁶ <http://www.asiapacificadapt.net/adaptation-practices/pacific-islands-climate-change-assistance-programme-piccap>

The benefits of the regionally-implemented PIREP for the other 14 participating countries are similar to those in Vanuatu. As discussed in the RoTI (Volume II), PIREP strengthened the capacity of all 15 participating PICs by producing baseline studies that have since been widely used for other planning purposes, such as in the development of national energy policies (as in the case of Tonga, Cook Islands, and Samoa), the new World Bank/GEF-supported Sustainable Energy Financing Program (SEFP) which will be implemented in five PICs (Fiji, PNG, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu), and the UNDP/GEF MSP proposals ADMIRE (Marshall Islands) and SEDREA (Palau). According to stakeholders consulted, the awareness and knowledge of RE technologies, barriers and capacity needs identified by PIREP have been the catalyst and the major source of information for the development of sector policies that have since taken place in many PICs, which have made further progress with support from PIGGAREP.

PIGGAREP commenced implementation in 2007 and is scheduled for completion at the end of 2013. Covering 11 PICs, its purpose is to reduce the growth of GHG emissions from fossil fuel use in the PICs through the removal of the barriers to the widespread and cost-effective use of feasible RE technologies. The full extent of its effectiveness in delivering on its designed outcomes will not be known until a final evaluation is completed. So far, UNDP annual progress reports noted satisfactory progress in the early stages of project implementation, but disruptions stemming from the departure of the first Project Coordinator stalled progress while recruitment for a replacement coordinator took over a year. A recent UNDP progress report (UNDP, 2011) noted a number of completed outputs at the national and regional levels including: i) the establishment of Sustainable Energy Industry Association of the Pacific Islands (SIEAPI); ii) preparation and endorsement of a new Pacific Regional Energy Framework (including a policy as well as strategic action plan); iii) close partnership established with the US\$66 million Japanese-funded Pacific Environment Community Fund (PECF) including required preparatory work for the US\$4 million Samoa grid-connected PV project and the US\$1 million Rakahanga mini-grid PV project in Cook Island designed and agreed to be funded by PIGGAREP; and iv) wind resource monitoring planned and initiated in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands.

PIGGAREP is in the late stages of implementation and questions of post-project sustainability are at best speculative at this stage. However, a number of issues relevant to discussions of sustainability are intimated in the MTR. According to the MTR, the ongoing reliance over many years on donor funding for energy projects in PICs has led to a lack of knowledge amongst RE advocates, politicians, decision makers, donors and their advisors, and the public in PICs, of the true cost of energy supply (whether fossil fuel-based and/or renewable) in urban, rural and remote island PIC settings. The MTR also noted that the true cost of energy supply is still not widely known, and the real commercial and post-project sustainability lessons are still not being learned from the many previous (often unsuccessful) RE demonstrations and projects undertaken to date in PICs. The lack of capacity in-country is observed by SPREP to be another major hindrance to project sustainability in all focal areas including climate change.

PIGGAREP is still being implemented and there are issues pertaining to the lack of quantitative reporting in country reports. It is therefore difficult to report on how far the project has progressed in meeting its targets. Estimates in a recent progress report (APR, 2010) indicated that emissions avoided since the start of the project were 12,509 and 12,695 Mt of CO₂ in 2009 and 2010, respectively; however, it is not clear from the available information how this volume of emissions avoided relates to the stated target of 30% reduction by 2015.

The other major climate change intervention, the PACC, is an FSP working to help 13 countries develop resilience to climate change in three areas: food production and food security, coastal management capacity, and water resource management.⁴⁷ The PACC commenced implementation in 2009 and was scheduled for completion in 2012, but is now likely to be completed in 2013. The latest report available for this evaluation (APR, 2011) indicates that PACC is on track to produce tangible adaptation benefits for participating countries, primarily through Component 2, which includes implementation of pilot adaptation measures in coastal management, agricultural management, and water management. So far, PACC has been effective in strengthening national coordinating mechanisms and building national capacities in adaptation planning, climate change assessments, vulnerability identification and selection of adaptation options, the formulation of policy options using agreed national and sectoral policy frameworks, and the analysis of existing policies for mainstreaming climate change adaptation measures. However, concerns have been raised about persistent operational bottlenecks. According to the Annual Progress Report, the bottlenecks are due to the very complex project structure, which involves 13 national projects through NEX-type arrangements between SPREP and countries and a set of regionally-executed activities by the Regional Project Management Unit (RPMU) as well as the capacity of national coordinators to produce quality reports on a timely basis.

An MTR for PACC was scheduled for July – October 2012, but the MTR is not in the project file. However, country progress reports presented in the 2012 Multipartite Review in Nauru (August 2012) provide some insights into issues and challenges that have implications for post-project sustainability. These include: (i) the lack of sectoral integration of climate change concerns into policies and programmes (Cook Islands); (ii) the sustainability of increasing adaptive capacity (Cook Islands); (iii) sustaining the support of communities post project (Samoa); (iv) PACC working in isolation of other players (Fiji); (v) the lack of coordination among agencies with roles to play in climate change adaptation and disaster risk management (Fiji, Palau, FSM (between states), Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Tuvalu); (vi) the lack of in-country capacity (Niue, Tuvalu); and (vii) the lack of institutional support (PNG). Each country report identified actions for addressing these challenges, but with limited time remaining to the end of the PACC, the possible impact of these challenges on the sustainability of the project's outcomes is magnified.

5.3 Land Degradation

GEF funded one national land degradation project in Vanuatu (GEF 3502) during GEF 3. The project is an MSP titled 'LDC/SIDS Portfolio Project: Capacity Building and Mainstreaming for Sustainable Land Management in Vanuatu.' Implementation commenced in April 2008 and was scheduled for completion in April 2012. There were no SPREP-implemented land degradation initiatives.

The GEF 3502 was intended to improve the system of land administration and decision-making and ensure that the Government of Vanuatu at the highest level considers the long-term environmental health of land resources and the adverse effects of land degradation when making economic and development decisions. It was intended to build capacity for sustainable land management (SLM) horizontally across sectors, and vertically from the individual landowner to community leaders to provincial and national governments. The targeted outcomes were to (i) produce a National Action Plan for Combating Land Degradation; (ii) mainstream sustainable land management in national

⁴⁷ Fiji, Palau, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands focus on food production and food security; Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Samoa, Tokelau and Vanuatu are developing coastal management capacity; and Nauru, Niue, Republic of Marshall Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu are looking to strengthen their water resource management.

planning and farm management techniques; (iii) develop capacities for sustainable land management; and (iv) formulate a Medium Term Investment Plan.

The project's status is 'incomplete' to date although it was scheduled for completion in April 2012. Reports and information gleaned from stakeholder consultations and former project staff indicate that three of the four project outcomes have been completed satisfactorily. These outcomes are: (i) completion of CCD National Action Plan (NAP) for Combating Land Degradation; (ii) mainstreaming SLM; and (iii) capacities developed for sustainable land management. The fourth outcome – Medium Term Investment Plan – remains outstanding. According to stakeholders consulted, continuing delays in funding from the UNCCD Secretariat have constrained the ability of project proponents to meet the last objective. According to DEPC, these delays result from procedural arrangements governing the UNCCD Secretariat's disbursement of funds, wherein funds cannot be disbursed to requesting parties until a minimum of 75 requests for grants from parties/countries have been received. Vanuatu's request was submitted in 2011.

According to the former Project Coordinator, the NAP has been approved formally by the Government and has been transmitted to the UNCCD Secretariat. The key feature of the NAP is a matrix of proposed actions for integrating SLM principles into national and sector-level plans. The actions can be stand-alone projects or sector programs. For each action, the NAP identifies the lead agency and partners for implementation and the approximate duration. GEF Agencies identified include Departments of Land, Forestry, Agriculture, Environment, Tourism, Planning and Finance, Water Resources and Meteorology.

With the exception of the NAP, completion reports for other project outcomes cannot be validated. Similarly, the assessment of sustainability is severely constrained by the lack of information to verify and confirm the limited anecdotal information received from stakeholders consulted. No written progress reports were received, and because it is still incomplete, no GEF end-of-project evaluation has been conducted.

5.4 Persistent Organic Pollutants

GEF has funded two active or completed projects in the POPs focal area, one a national EA (GEF 1942) during GEF 3, and the second a recently launched (GEF 5) full-sized regional project (GEF 4066). The FSP is entering its first year of implementation; hence this evaluation focuses on the EA.

The EA – 'POPS Enabling Activities for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs): National Implementation Plan for Vanuatu' (GEF 1942) – was designed to: (i) prepare the groundwork for ratification and implementation of the Convention in Vanuatu; (ii) assist Vanuatu in meeting its reporting and other obligations under the Convention; and (iii) strengthen Vanuatu's national capacity to manage POPs and chemicals. The expected outcomes were: (i) assessment and strengthening of national capacity to implement the Stockholm Convention; (ii) preliminary inventories of POPs; (iii) National Implementation Plan, including specific Action Plans and strategies required under Articles 5 and 6; (iv) strengthened POPs management infrastructure and raised public awareness on POPs; and (v) capacity to meet reporting obligations under the Stockholm Convention. The project is on record to have been implemented from April 2003 to 31 May 2005. However, no standard progress reports were received. According to stakeholders consulted, a National Implementation Plan (NIP) was developed but is still in draft form. The Stockholm Convention's official website noted the status of the Vanuatu NIP as 'transmission pending' as of September 2013. No copy of the draft NIP was available and there is no information as to the status of other expected outcomes.

The GEF-funded EA appears to have overlapped with an AusAID-funded and SPREP-implemented regional initiative called 'POPs in PICs Project,' which Vanuatu also participated in during the same period. The intended 'POPs in PICs' outputs are similar to the GEF intervention, including compiling an inventory of POPs and developing a plan for its containment, collection and removal, and management of contaminated sites. The 'POPs in PICs' project completed the Vanuatu POPs Country Plan and a detailed inventory of POPs and pesticides. However, these outputs seem to be attributable to the AusAID project rather than GEF 1942.

5.5 International Waters

The GEF-funded Strategic Action Plan for International Waters Project (SAP-IWP) was comprised of two components: the Oceanic Fisheries Management (OFM) component and the Integrated Coastal and Watershed Management (ICWM) component. The Secretariat for the Pacific Commission (SPC) and Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) implemented the OFM, which began in February 2000, in which 14 PICs participated,⁴⁸ while SPREP implemented the ICWM. The OFM component was officially closed in January 2005, while the record indicates that the ICWM component continued on to 2006 (however, no final project evaluation report was received). This evaluation focuses on the SPREP-implemented ICWM component.

In the absence of a final project evaluation report, the following assessment is based largely on information from the UNDP APR/PIR for 2006 and consultations with project stakeholders. The UNDP (2006) reported that all project activities were making good progress towards the achievement of IWP outcomes, albeit with a two-year extension in project duration. Momentum in implementation had picked up in the final year of the project, under new management, which the UNDP Regional Technical Adviser noted to be 'refreshingly committed to building sustainability, replication and where appropriate, achieving more meaningful scale' (*ibid.*, p. 11).

Overall, the IWP generated an impressive amount of baseline data with which communities, governments and GEF Agencies can effectively plan and implement future IWP-related projects and programmes. This information was obtained through a number of project activities including: community situation analysis, root cause (of environmental concerns) analysis, stakeholder analysis, socioeconomic baseline assessment, resource/ecological assessments, economic valuation, and solution identification exercises. While the national projects aimed at protecting water catchment areas, IWP also helped to address land degradation issues such as deforestation and soil erosion, which contribute to the pollution of rivers from which many island people draw their drinking water. Raising awareness about the impacts of land clearing on drinking water and the coastal waters contributed not only to the protection of freshwater supplies, but also to the conservation of important biodiversity that would have been lost through land clearing operations. Moreover, some countries have adopted positive changes in their sectoral policies, due in part to the legal and technical support provided by the project.

The last UNDP report (UNDP 2006 APR/PIR) intimated that sustainability for country-level activities depended largely on the willingness of the national governments to absorb the activities into national programs. In the final year of implementation (2006), the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) was working closely with countries to develop sustainability strategies that would identify activities that could be easily integrated into national agencies' work plans, and other strategies and plans that would require support from other funders. The report and consultations found that Cook

⁴⁸ Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu

Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Solomon Islands, PNG, and FSM had indicated their willingness to absorb IWP activities and staff. Some partnerships for funding IWP activities (ICWM component) at the national level were secured during the project for a limited number of countries (Fiji, Tonga, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu (UNDP, 2005).⁴⁹ Overall, however, finding implementation and funding partners (e.g., other national organizations and bilateral donors) has been very difficult for participating PICs. Without this support, project activities may not be sustained.

While individual PICs have faced challenges finding partners and funding, SPREP has reportedly been successful in integrating parts of the IWP into its own programs, most notably in waste water management (UNDP, 2006). SPREP has also been disseminating lessons from the project learned through various media and stakeholder forums (ibid.).

5.6 Multifocal

GEF funded only one national EA in the multifocal area. This activity – GEF 1914 – ‘National Capacity Needs Self Assessment (NCSA) for Global Environmental Management’ – was approved during GEF 3 with UNEP as the GEF Agency. Project implementation started in June 2004. The UNEP website listed the project as ‘ongoing’, suggesting the absence of proper project closure including a final project evaluation and financial acquittal reports.

The project produced two main outputs: the National Capacity Needs Action Plan, and the stocktaking assessment on the capacity needs of the CBD – *The Final Report – Stock Take and Thematic Assessment on the Convention of Biological Diversity*.⁵⁰ It also set up the NCSA Steering Committee and the Technical Advisory Group that assisted and oversaw project implementation. However, the extent to which the Action Plan has been implemented appears limited at best. According to the Vanuatu *Third National Report to the CBD* (2006), the NCSA had not yet implemented any concrete actions (p.168). A 2009 SPREP assessment⁵¹ of institutional capacity in Melanesian Countries to effectively respond to climate change, made use of its findings and recommendations but made no comment as to any NCSA-implemented activities.

Vanuatu is participating in one active regional multifocal project: GEF 3591 – ‘Strengthening Coastal and Marine Resources Management in the Coral Triangle of the Pacific.’ The project, which is being implemented by ADB, is providing technical assistance to five Pacific countries (PNG, Fiji, Solomons, Timor-Leste, and Vanuatu) to strengthen the resilience of their coastal and marine ecosystems. In Vanuatu, activities will focus on helping the Department of Environment, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources to develop planning in coastal communities on integrated coastal resource management and coastal fisheries management.⁵² The project is ongoing, and no project implementation reports have been received. The website also does not provide information about outcomes achieved in Vanuatu. Besides this project, two other regional multifocal projects are in the pipeline: GEF 3647 – ‘Coral Triangle Initiative Program,’ and GEF 3420 – ‘Pacific Alliance for Sustainability.’

⁴⁹ UNDP. 2005. Annual Progress Report/Project Implementation Report

⁵⁰ Catherine Malosu

⁵¹ Wickham, Frank; Kinch, Jeff and Lal, Padma. 2009. *Institutional capacity within Melanesian countries to effectively respond to climate change impacts, with a focus on Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands*. SPREP. Apia. pp. 76.

⁵² ‘ADB Coral Triangle Pacific Program.’ <http://www.coraltriangleinitiative.net/programs-and-projects/adb-coral-triangle-pacific-program>.

5.7 Institutional Sustainability and Capacity Development

The lack of capacity in managing GEF interventions in all focal areas is an all-pervasive constraint inhibiting effective project implementation in Vanuatu and throughout the Pacific Islands region. Capacity constraints affect all stages of the project cycle. Hardly any GEF interventions commence on time due to delays in recruiting project staff or local consultants. In almost all cases, situation analyses in project documents identify the lack of capacities, and project designs include sizable investments of project resources in capacity building. A common source of disruption to project implementation is when project staff depart prematurely, oftentimes to another donor-funded intervention. Finally, sustaining outcomes after projects end has been challenging, due largely to human and financial capacity constraints. The persistence of capacity limitations over time and across all GEF focal areas raises a fundamental concern about limited absorptive capacity in Vanuatu and the region.

GEF projects have attempted to address capacity issues across all major focal areas, as discussed in the remainder of this section.

Biodiversity

The full range of GEF-supported capacity strengthening measures in the biodiversity focal area is diverse. Support includes: physical assets and office equipment; personnel; multi-stakeholder mechanisms for project coordination; and support for participation in regional and international meetings.

In LCI and SPBCP, capacity building efforts focused on the project field staff, local resource owners, and communities to ensure that project outcomes would be sustained. Capacity building involved transferring skills, building facilities, fostering a deeper understanding of why conservation and sustainable use is necessary, and building community pride in the uniqueness of their biodiversity. Planning engaged diverse segments of the community – leaders, women, and youth – and prioritisation and decision-making were based on consensus. SPBCP also invested heavily in developing skills in alternative income-generating activities, such as ecotourism in Vathe, and developing links and networks with other local tourism operators. Several SPBCP-funded regional workshops brought together CA Support Officers (CASOs) for training, consultations, and to share experiences and lessons learned.⁵³ In other cases, groups of community leaders from one country/conservation area project were funded to travel to other countries to observe and share experiences. Investments in community-level training are paying dividends with the continued longevity demonstrated by the 12 SPBCP conservation area projects in Vanuatu and throughout the region.

SPBCP also played a major role in starting the Pacific Islands Community Based Conservation Course (PCCC) in collaboration with the University of the South Pacific (USP) and ICPL. The course offers interested students and conservation practitioners formal training in community-based conservation area management. SPREP, USP, and ICPL have since consolidated this initiative, and the course is now a core requirement for the Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Islands and Oceans Development offered by USP. The initiative transcends the immediate needs of SPBCP, but is highly significant in terms of addressing the more fundamental issue of enlarging Vanuatu and the Pacific region's absorptive capacity in biodiversity conservation.

⁵³ However, the SPBCP Final Evaluation noted that training and capacity building were heavily concentrated on the CASOs, with not enough involvement of government agencies and other stakeholders.

Unfortunately, the DEPC's limited capacity continues to affect Vanuatu's ability to fully meet its requirements under the CBD. The severely limited capacity of DEPC was highlighted in the National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA, 2006) report, which noted that DEPC (which was then still the VEU) lacked capacity in terms of finance, human resources, information and necessary equipment. According to the Director of DEPC, the local budget allocation of US\$150,000 (which covers both salaries and operating costs) has remained unchanged over the last three years. Five project-funded staff officers comprise 70% of DEPC's biodiversity conservation management staff, and the sustainability of this capacity is uncertain once projects end.

Climate Change

Institutional capacity development in climate change adaptation and mitigation, and in RE mobilization and development are important aims of past and current GEF-funded interventions such as PICCAP, PIREP, PIGGAREP, and PACC. The following discussion reviews and assesses the overall contributions of these initiatives to the development of country and regional capacities and institutional sustainability in climate change.

The earliest interventions – PICCAP I and II – assisted 10 PICs that signed and ratified the UNFCCC with their reporting, training, and capacity building under the convention. In Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of Marshall Islands, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu, PICCAP set up Climate Change Country Teams and Climate Change Country Coordinators for the following tasks: (i) creating inventories of sources and sinks of greenhouse gases; (ii) identifying and evaluating mitigation options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; (iii) assessing vulnerabilities to climate change; (iv) developing adaptation options; and (v) developing national implementation strategies for mitigating and adapting to climate change over the long term. Eight countries completed and submitted initial National Communications during the project to coincide with COP 5.

PIREP produced national assessment reports on RE for 14 participating countries and Tokelau, a regional synthesis report, and three special topic reports (financing mechanisms, technology support system, and demonstration projects to showcase energy service delivery). The reports provide excellent descriptions of the baseline situations in PICs and are reportedly being used widely in the countries. PIREP also produced the PIGGAREP project proposal, which is now being implemented, and engaged 11 PICs. In addition, the Republic of Marshall Islands and Palau developed their own medium-sized UNDP/GEF proposals (called ADMIRE and SEDREA, respectively) as spin-offs of the PIREP preparatory activities, and are in the process of implementing those activities.

PIGGAREP contributes to climate change mitigation by promoting the wider use of RE technologies to reduce the Pacific Islands' dependence on fossil fuels. The project aims to achieve this by removing existing barriers to the wider use of RE technology. The MTR identified several capacity-related challenges, including the need to strengthen the PMO with additional staff, and sharpen its focus on implementing a more strategic barrier removal strategy. Additional staff has since been recruited, but the ability of the PMO to take effective adaptive measures in response to the MTR's recommendations remains to be seen.

The PACC is the second FSP in the climate change focal area and is in the final phase of implementation. It is the first major adaptation project to be implemented in the Pacific Islands region that directly addresses the issue of improving the effectiveness of the response to climate change in the Pacific, while enhancing the systemic and institutional capacity to undertake adaptation across the region. According to the Asia Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN), '...it is at

present the main means of sharing practical adaptation experiences, as well as pooling related expertise and raising other initiatives.' UNDP progress reports (UNDP, 2010) noted that the project is hindered by capacity-related bottlenecks at the national and regional levels, including: time-consuming setup phases for national PMUs; lack of project management skills and experience by national coordinators; and issues concerning SPREP's role in providing strategic leadership and technical support to the Regional PMU. Nonetheless, the same report also listed capacity-related activities that were successfully completed, including: strengthening national coordination mechanisms to address climate change; setting up national Climate Change Country Teams or equivalent mechanisms in eight project countries (CKI, Fiji, RMI, FSM, Niue, Solomon Islands, Palau, and Tuvalu) with existing national Climate Change Country Teams in two countries (Vanuatu and Samoa) strengthened; and strengthening and further harmonizing national sector coordination bodies in four countries (Nauru, Tonga, Tuvalu, and PNG). The report also noted the involvement of more than 100 institutions in the 13 countries based on engagements in PACC teams and committees. In addition, SPREP has established partnerships with a number of other regional organizations.

Land Degradation

The NAP is an important addition to Vanuatu's institutional capacity in combating land degradation. It identifies the causes and effects of land degradation in Vanuatu, the existing capacity limitations for UNCCD implementation, vulnerabilities of different provinces, proposed strategies for mainstreaming NAP into national and sector strategies and plans, and institutional arrangements for coordinating NAP implementation and monitoring. The matrix of actions sets out priority areas for implementation and responsible agencies. The NAP also incorporated the resolutions from the 2006 National Land Summit, which is an important initial step in translating the national consensus and priorities into actionable measures.

POPs

The NIP for the Stockholm Convention was developed, but is still in draft form. Vanuatu nominated the Director of DEPC as its Official Contact Point for the Convention Secretariat in April 2011, for the performance of administrative functions and all formal communications under the Convention. While the Convention also requires the official designation of a National Focal Point for the exchange of information (as specified under Article 9), no NFP for Vanuatu is listed on the Convention website. There is no record of any other capacity building activity being implemented in the POPs focal area, except for activities under the AusAID-funded intervention, which was carried out separately from the GEF project.

International Waters

A number of participating PICs in the IWP indicated their willingness to absorb project activities and staff into their national programs. The PIR (2006) reported that for the ICWM component, changes in sector policies were made in some countries, including new legislation adopted to empower local communities to manage the environment and natural resources in their jurisdictions. In Cook Islands, the Environment Unit indicated its commitment to supporting the project staff to continue the national effort to protect freshwater resources; the Solomon Islands Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources agreed to institutionalize the IWP as the coastal fisheries management unit, with a focus on supporting community-based initiatives to establish marine protected areas; the Department of Environment and Conservation in Papua New Guinea was to incorporate the IWP (including existing staff) into their 2007 programme of work to continue IWP-initiated efforts to

support community-based initiatives to manage local waste; and in Samoa, demonstration activities for watershed protection were integrated into the work plan of the MNRE Water Resources Division. In Fiji, the IWP also served as the nucleus of post-2006 activities by the Department of Squatter Settlements, Environment and Conservation to strengthen the government's efforts in waste management.

5.8 Mainstreaming, Replication, and Scaling-up

GEF aims to expand the reach and scale of its impact beyond individual projects to affect broader changes in policies, practices, and institutions, thereby leveraging its investments to achieve significant global environmental impacts. While various pathways can lead to broad-based impacts, recent GEF literature identifies three pathways that are particularly relevant for the Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio evaluation.⁵⁴ These include: (i) *mainstreaming*, in which lessons, information, or outputs of GEF support are incorporated into broader policy or administrative reforms; (ii) *replication*, in which a technology or approach is demonstrated and then taken to scale, often in geographic locales beyond the boundaries of the project; and (iii) *scaling-up*, whereby an activity is expanded to larger geographical, ecological, or administrative tiers.

The extent to which GEF support in Vanuatu and SPREP has resulted in mainstreaming, replication, and scaling-up varies across focal areas, as discussed below.

Biodiversity

The NBSAP made a direct contribution to the development of the Environmental Protection and Management Act 2006, identifying and developing multi-stakeholder consensus on priority issues, and proposing inputs which were mainstreamed into the approved legislation. The NBSAP was also the catalyst for the LCI, identifying priority species and sites for potential projects of global environmental significance including those subsequently targeted in the GEF-funded LCI. The rapid biodiversity assessments and other biodiversity information-gathering activities for NBSAP also provided DEPC – which developed the LCI proposal – with the baseline information that was used to justify GEF funding. The nomination of the Vatthe Conservation Area and Lake Letas Area in Gaua by DEPC in 2004 and the Vanuatu Museum as UNESCO World Heritage Sites is not a specific recommendation of the NBSAP, but the momentum generated by the NBSAP for biodiversity conservation action and the profile and awareness of the conservation values of the Vatthe Conservation Area generated by SPBCP contributed to this outcome, according to stakeholders.

Regionally, NBSAPs have become the main roadmap for biodiversity conservation for PICs, identifying national needs and priorities and proposing potential project profiles for funding consideration. Its recognition by external funders and regional conservation organizations is evident in the 2008 – 2012 Pacific Islands Action Strategy for Nature Conservation, which mainstreams the NBSAP priorities for PICs in determining regional priorities and actions.

The other GEF EA outcome, the National Biosafety Framework (NBF), appears to have had negligible impact. As a tool for supporting decision-making regarding the acceptability of proposed introductions of living modified organisms (LMOs), through a process of prior informed consent based on thorough screening and risk assessment, the NBF by nature does not lend itself to mainstreaming or replication, nor was it intended to serve these purposes. The extent to which it has been effectively applied in practise is not known due to the lack of information available for this

⁵⁴ GEF Evaluation Office, *Terms of Reference and Budget for the Fifth Overall Performance Study of the GEF and OPS5 Draft Approach Paper* (15 March 2012).

evaluation. CBD Secretariat's Biosafety Clearinghouse (BCH) website shows however that Vanuatu has not received any notifications/requests from potential LMO importers that would have necessitated its use.

The LCI MSP generated significant community interest and was quickly replicated in other non-targeted communities across the country. However, in the absence of technical support and monitoring after LCI, it was not possible to verify the current status of conservation efforts in most of these replication areas.

The regionally implemented SPBCP was perhaps the most comprehensive and extensive in terms of geographic coverage, with a focus on promoting the community-based conservation area (CBCA) approach. This approach has now been replicated throughout the region and judging from the number of conservation area projects (12 out of 17) it initiated that are still in action, SPBCP deserves recognition for its contribution. It should be noted that SPBCP was not the only intervention promoting community-based conservation; several other similar or related independent initiatives including other GEF-funded interventions were emerging in parallel or soon after within Vanuatu and throughout the Pacific region.⁵⁵ Attribution issues aside, the community-based conservation approach is now widely replicated in various forms and designs. According to the *Vanuatu Third National Report to the CBD* (2006), the following areas were established in Vanuatu:

- Community-based conservation and sanctuary areas that have been in place for over 10 years (as of 2006 when the *Third National Report* was submitted) are: Loru Protected Area, Vatthe Conservation Area, Ringhi te Suh (Maskelynes), Hideaway Island (Efate), Narong Marine Reserve (Uri Island), and Mystery Island Reef (Aneityum).
- New community-based conservation areas include: Nguna-Pele Marine Protected Area, Epi, Central Pentecost, Lelepa (Marine Protected Area), Mangaliliu (Marine Protected Area), Spuaki Conservation Area (Nguna), and Wiawi (Malekula).
- There are also many small local protected tabu and resource management areas declared under custom authority. The number has not been quantified. Johannes and Hickey (2002)⁵⁶ observed 51 marine resource management measures within a sample of 21 villages but did not consider non-marine sites.

The SPBCP was the first regional project to promote the CBCA approach; several country-specific activities of other donors and conservation organizations were mobilized at around the same time and shortly afterwards. The CBCA approach was endorsed by the Fifth South Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected areas (1993)⁵⁷ and later in the SPREP *Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the South Pacific Region 1994 – 1998*, the latter acknowledging SPBCP's work in this

⁵⁵ In Vanuatu, these included the GEF-funded International Waters Project (IWP), and the Capacity Building for Environmental Management Project (CBEMP). The latter was a collaboration with the Vanuatu Cultural Center (VCC) in documenting and developing a database of traditional resource management methods. In 1995, a British group – 'The Vanuatu Protected Area Initiative' – was also working with one traditional landowner to establish the Loru Protected Area, which incorporated traditional environmental elements to strengthen non-traditional approaches to conservation, while the Foundation for Peoples of the South Pacific (FSP)-Vanuatu had several years of experience working with traditional landowners in sustainable forest management focusing more on small-scale logging and eco-timber certification standards.

⁵⁶ Cited by Liu, John. 2010. *Final Evaluation Report – Environment Projects Landowners Conservation Initiatives*. Liu Service Consultancy. Vanuatu. Pp. 44.

⁵⁷ Axford, Joanna. 2007. *What Constitutes Success in Pacific Island Community Conserved Areas* University of Queensland, unpublished doctoral thesis). Cited by the *Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Islands Region 2008 – 2012*.

area. SPBCP established 17 conservation areas in 12 PICs between 1991 and 2001, bringing under conservation management a wide range of internationally significant biodiversity. During much of the same period and continuing after SPBCP, an additional 17 community-based conservation projects were initiated by other groups and donors throughout the region. These included activities funded by New Zealand Overseas Development Assistance (NZODA),⁵⁸ USAID-funded Biodiversity Support Network,⁵⁹ and the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF). SPBCP was, according to the GEF Final Evaluation Report, effectively the *de facto* biodiversity programme for SPREP during the period and in this role, was instrumental in partnering with the The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to establish the Pacific Island Roundtable for Nature Conservation. The Roundtable is the major forum for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the Pacific Islands Action Strategy for Nature Conservation, and a major champion for community-based conservation in the Pacific Islands region.

Climate Change

Climate change has evolved as an issue and a global concern demanding the commitment of countries to collective action in the early 1990s, to a major source of economic vulnerability that is the top priority for many PICs today. This progression is also matched by the evolving nature of GEF's funding from the foundational enabling activities in GEF 1 and 2 – which focused on awareness raising, baseline studies and inventories, and capacity assessments in NCSA, PICCAP 1 and II – to demonstration and pilot activities, and feasibility studies in PACC and PIGGAREP in subsequent GEF phases. The region is now poised for a number of investment initiatives that were identified and emerged out of existing activities such as PIGGAREP and PACC, and to an extent, PIREP.

The full extent to which PIGGAREP and PACC, in particular, will facilitate the wider replication and or/scaling-up of RE and climate change adaptation measures remains to be seen. But some positive signs of their potential impact are gradually emerging. PIGGAREP has been referred to as the major regional driver of RE in the PICs (APR, 2010). Its focus on clarifying and raising awareness of the link between climate change, the impacts of escalating fossil fuel prices on PIC economies, and RE as a viable strategy and option for generating global climate change mitigation benefits and strengthening local economic resilience, is reported to have raised the profile of RE to an unprecedented level – so much so that it is now one of the key deliberation points for the annual meetings of the PIC leaders, according to the APR 2010. This increased emphasis on RE is reflected in the increasing number of PICs with national energy policies declaring major shifts from fossil fuels to RE in the immediate future. There is also a corresponding increase in donor interest and funding to support RE development. For instance, a total of US\$72 million in new capital funding available for RE projects is reported for RE projects in Kiribati, Tonga, and a US\$66 million regional initiative funded by the Pacific-Japan Leaders' Meeting-5 (PALM-5) Pacific Environment Community (PEC) administered by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). PIGGAREP also works closely and in collaboration with RE initiatives of other CROP Agencies and donor partners in the region.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ NZODA funded activities during this period included a conservation area project in PNG (Maisin land, Oro Province), a bird park in Tonga, a community-based eco-tourism project in Abaca Fiji, and World Heritage sites at Rennell and Marovo Lagoon in the Solomon Islands.

⁵⁹ USAID-funded Biodiversity Support Network was supporting projects that combine conservation with social and economic development during the same period including the Crater Mt Wildlife Management Area in PNG (1993), a Community Marine Conservation and Enterprise Development in the Solomon Islands, and community-based conservation areas in Fiji and Vanuatu (in association with SPACHEE and the Biodiversity Conservation Network).

⁶⁰ According to the SPREP website, this includes: the GEF-funded Actions for the Development of Marshall Islands' Renewable Energies (ADMIRE), Palau's Sustainable Economic Development through Renewable Energy Applications (SEDREA), RE activities of PPA, SPC and USP, IUCN's Energy, Ecosystems for Sustainable Livelihoods Initiative, the EU's Support to the Energy Sector in Five ACP Pacific Island Countries (REP-5), ADB's Energy for All Initiative, the World Bank's

The catalytic and replication effects of PACC activities will be fully assessed once the project is completed and a proper project evaluation conducted. So far, recent reports (APR, 2011) referred to the significant momentum that PACC is creating at the regional level. There is donor endorsement of the way the project is structured, which the APR (2011) referred to as 'a reliable structure that can provide successful results in adaptation to climate change.' This confidence is evident in a recent AusAID agreement to contribute AU\$7.8 million to scale-up the results of the project.

Land Degradation

The main project output was a National Action Plan. Although the NAP was apparently approved by the Government and transmitted to the UNCCD Secretariat, there is no information on whether the NAP's SLM principles have been mainstreamed into national policies or sector plans.

POPs

There is no indication of mainstreaming or replication effects from GEF support in the POPs focal area. It appears that AusAID's 'POPs in PICs' project (funded separately from the GEF project) was the catalyst for the POPs Country Plan and the POPs inventory.

International Waters

Some outputs of the IWP project are showing signs of replication. For instance, according to stakeholder consultations, a number of communities were composting their green waste as opposed to burning and dumping. Compost toilets were also gaining acceptance as a more practical option to flush toilets in low-lying areas where septic tanks are often flooded during high seas or heavy rain.

The IWP also contributed significantly to setting the path for governments, communities and other stakeholders in the Pacific to follow as they try to deal with the multitude of issues affecting the region's environment and natural resources. The project introduced new and innovative ways of addressing the escalating waste problem of small atoll countries in the Pacific. It provided a mechanism for improved collaboration between and among government agencies, communities and NGOs through the establishment of interagency National Task Forces, and created a pool of well-trained and skilled nationals to lead project implementation in the future.

6. RELEVANCE OF GEF SUPPORT TO VANUATU AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC

This chapter assesses the relevance of GEF support to: national environmental priorities, strategies and action plans; the region's sustainable development agenda and national priorities; global environmental benefits in the South Pacific; emerging or evolving issues in the region; capacity, needs, and priorities of the SPREP countries; and regional approaches to country needs.

6.1 Relevance to National Environmental Priorities and GEF Focal Area Strategies and Action Plans

GEF support enabled Vanuatu to fulfil its obligations as a party to a number of multilateral environmental agreements, most notably the UNCBD, UNFCCC, the Stockholm Convention on POPs, and the UNCCD. Table 6.1 shows that GEF funding supported the development of national action plans, legislation, and requirements under international conventions. Of particular note, for the CBD, GEF support assisted with national reporting and the development of national strategies and plans for the protection and conservation of its biodiversity. Vanuatu completed and submitted its First National Report in 1998, its Second National Report in 2002, and its Third National Report in 2006. The NBSAP also contributed to the formulation of the Environmental Management and Conservation Act No. 12 of 2002, which addressed several legal obligations under the CBD and initiated the formulation of the LCI proposal that together with SPBCP, helped Vanuatu with in-situ conservation as required under Article 8. The NBSAP provides Vanuatu with a clear list of national priorities and an action plan for biodiversity conservation for the Government and other stakeholders including funding agencies.

Table 6.1

Relevance of GEF to Vanuatu National and SPREP Regional Environmental Priorities and Action Plans

GEF Project	Legislation	Strategies and Action Plans	Conventions
Vanuatu National			
GEF 146 – National Biodiversity Strategies, Action Plans and First National Report to CBD			
(Missing GEF ID) – National Communications Programme for Climate Change – 2 nd National Communication to UNFCCC			
GEF 1682 – Facilitating and Strengthening the Conservation Initiatives of Traditional Landholders and their Communities			
GEF 1942 – Enabling Activity for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants			
GEF 1970 – National Adaptation Programme of Action			
GEF 3502 – Capacity Building and Mainstreaming for Sustainable Land Management in Vanuatu			
SPREP Regional			
GEF 336 – Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Project (PICCAP – Phase 1)			
GEF 403 – South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme			
GEF 850 – Expedited Financing of Climate Change Enabling Activities (PICCAP Phase 2)			

GEF support is also relevant to Vanuatu's national development priorities, as evidenced in the high degree of congruence between the goals, objectives, and sector priorities in the Vanuatu Priorities and Action Agenda (PAA) 2006 – 2015, and GEF's focal areas. The PAA's primary priority is '... to create an environment for private sector led economic growth including activities in the primary sectors of agriculture, forestry and fisheries as well as tourism.'⁶¹ It also reaffirms the Government's commitment to the United Nations Millennium Declaration in 2000 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) noting that MDG targets and indicators have been included as performance indicators for the PAA.

At the sector level, eight priorities are identified for Chapter 6 of the PAA, which is called 'Primary Sector Development and the Environment' and addresses the following issues: (i) implementation of the Environmental Management and Conservation Act, (ii) development of protected areas, (iii) waste management and pollution control, (iv) eco-tourism, (v) risk reduction from natural hazards, and (vi) Port Vila development plan. These priorities are directly related to GEF's biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, and POPs focal areas.

6.2 Relevance to Region's Sustainable Development Agenda and National Priorities

GEF support has been relevant to meeting both the Pacific Island countries' sustainable development agenda and environmental priorities as well as the SPREP mandate. According to SPREP,⁶² many countries have incorporated sustainable development and environmental considerations into their National Sustainable Development Strategies and national planning frameworks, while others have recognized the importance of environmental issues and are working to mainstream environmental considerations into their national sustainable development agendas. SPREP's mandate – to promote cooperation in the Pacific Islands region and to provide assistance in order to protect and improve the environment and to ensure sustainable development for present and future generations – is pursued through programs in climate change, biodiversity, land degradation, international waters, POPs, and ozone depletion. These areas are consistent with the GEF mandate and focal areas.

All regionally implemented projects – including SPBCP, IWP, PIREP, PICCAP, PIGGAREP and PACC – were developed from proposals that involved wide regional consultations coordinated by SPREP and included national agencies, NGOs, and donors representatives. The proposals for SPBCP, IWP, PICCAP, PIREP, PIGGAREP, and PACC were formally endorsed by the countries through the SPREP Meetings, SPREP's governing body, before formal submission to GEF. In the case of SPBCP, PIGGAREP and PACC, the initial mandates to develop a project proposal were originated by the PICs through SPREP Meetings, and in some cases Pacific Islands Forums communiqués.⁶³

GEF-funded interventions are also consistently tied to regional priorities defined in regional plans and frameworks. In the case of SPBCP, this included the SPREP Action Plan and earlier Nature Conservation Strategies. The Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the South Pacific Region 1994 – 1998 strongly endorsed the region-wide application of the community-based conservation area approach, acknowledging the work being carried out by SPBCP. The PACC is similarly closely

⁶¹ Government of Vanuatu. 2006. *Government of Vanuatu Priorities and Action Agenda 2006 – 2015. An Educated, Healthy and Wealthy Vanuatu*. P. 7. para 2.

⁶² Comments on the GEF Evaluation dated August 2013

⁶³ For PACC specifically, the decisions to this request are found in the Pacific Forum Communiqués of 2003-2007; Pacific Regional Environment Programme decisions 2003-2006; and Reports of the 15th, 16th and 17th Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) Meeting.

aligned with the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change 2006 – 2015 (PIFACC), the Pacific Plan, and the regional Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Management. PACC's regional activities are also consistent with common goals and priorities identified in regional consultations such as the 'Fourteenth Pacific Regional Environment Programme Council Meeting' in 2003, and the GEF-supported 'Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Programme (PICCAP)' (PIR Review).

The Strategic Action Plan for IWP (GEO 530), according to its project document, also incorporated national and regional priorities as identified in countries' State of the Environment (SOE) Reports and/or National Environmental Management Strategy (NEMS). The SPREP Action Plan for Managing the Environment of the South Pacific Region 1997-2000, the Draft Regional Strategy for Development Priorities of the Forum Island Countries, the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the South Pacific Region 1994-1998, and the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities.

The PIREP and PIGGAREP were prompted by a request from PICs to UNDP and SPREP to pursue a regional GHG mitigation project on RE within the framework of its Climate Change, Sea Level Rise and Variability programme (PIGGAREP, ProDoc, p.6). According to the PIREP and PIGGAREP project documents, the Pacific Island Leaders' Forum meetings had consistently called for the adoption of concrete measures to develop and utilise RE technologies as an effective means of addressing these problems, highlighting the importance that Forum members place on domestic actions to reduce emissions. The Regional Framework for Action on Climate Variability, Change and Sea Level Rise, adopted by PIF countries in 2000,⁶⁴ highlighted renewable energy, energy efficiency, and forestry as priority GHG mitigation options for the PICs.

6.3 Relevance to Global Environmental Benefits in the South Pacific

The GEF-funded projects in the biodiversity focal areas targeted the in-situ protection of globally significant biodiversity. The LCI project areas in Gaua, Santos and Tanna constitute part of the Solomons-Vanuatu-Bismarck Moist Forest, which is among WWF's Global 200 Ecoregions, the Eastern Melanesian Hotspot under Conservation International's Biodiversity Hotspots, and BirdLife International's Vanuatu and Temotu Important Bird Area. The area extends from the Santa Cruz Islands of the Temotu Province of Solomon Islands to the Torres Islands, Banks Islands (including Gaua Islands), and Espiritu Santos Island. SPBCP targeted the Vathe lowland rainforest. Details of the globally significant biodiversity within these areas have been discussed elsewhere in this report.

GEF projects within the climate change focal area, especially PIREP and PIGGAREP, target the reduction of GHG emissions by reducing the region's use of imported fossil fuels and increasing the use of renewable energy. The climate change enabling activities contributed to building in-country capacity to assess country situations and their vulnerability to climate change, as well as the capacity to best prepare and respond to climate change impacts. PACC is pioneering a number of adaptation measures that are hoped to generate lessons learned and best practises that will benefit the rest of the developing world.

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<http://rmimces.info/files/17thSummitPresentations/Pacific%20Adaptation%20of%20Climate%20Change%20%28PACC%29.pdf>

6.4 Relevance to Emerging or Evolving Issues in the Region

The Pacific Islands region has clearly identified through national development strategies and regional and international forums, the impacts of extreme events associated with climate change as the biggest source of economic vulnerability and environmental degradation, and the main threat to their sustainable development. Previous predictions of more frequent and more intense weather events including cyclones, storm surges, floods and droughts are now a painful reality with severe economic, social, and environmental consequences. Over the last two decades since the signing by most PICs of the UNFCCC in 1992, PICs' response to climate change has progressively shifted from advocating for global recognition of the special case of small islands developing countries to in-country planning and mainstreaming, to (more recently) direct investment in mitigation and adaptation. Presently, while there is recognition of the importance of mitigation such as in the increased use of RE technologies, climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) are emerging as leading priorities and strategies in combating this threat. Through NAPA, PICs have identified their most vulnerable sectors and have prioritized these sectors in their CCA and DRR strategies. The PACC is a regional intervention targeting vulnerable sectors as nominated by participating countries. GEF has been responsive to these emerging priorities: the increasing number of climate change interventions in the pipeline relative to other focal areas is evidence of this shift and of the GEF's ability to respond.

Flowing from the challenge of addressing climate change is the realization of its cross-cutting nature and the resulting demand for a coordinated 'whole of country' approach to planning and implementation. Mainstreaming climate change impacts and CCA and DRR strategies into the policies and plans of all vulnerable sectors is already underway in Vanuatu and other SPREP countries under PACC. Strengthening adaptive institutional capacity was highlighted by a 2009 SPREP report.⁶⁵ These are initial steps in what is likely to be an ongoing challenge.

6.5 Relevance to Capacity, Needs and Priorities of SPREP Countries

The lack of capacity across all GEF focal areas within the Pacific countries is consistently reported by all past GEF project documents and project assessments. This is also confirmed by other donor-funded studies including those supported by SPREP⁶⁶ and ADB.⁶⁷ In response, capacity building was and continues to be an integral part of all past and current GEF interventions at the local, national, and regional levels. The capacity building results, and outcomes of completed and ongoing initiatives, have been discussed elsewhere in this report. Overall, GEF interventions in the Vanuatu and SPREP portfolios have satisfactorily delivered on their intended capacity building outputs. The extent to which these results are useful in addressing the priority capacity gaps in PICs is partly tied to the overall relevance of GEF's assistance to national development priorities as identified in national planning documents including the NCSA, NBSAP, NAPA, NAP, NIP, and other similar Convention-related plans.

In the case of the Vanuatu national portfolio, this evaluation found that GEF assistance is closely tied to national priorities in the Vanuatu National Priority Action Agenda and to country commitments made to international conventions and agreements. The strongest connections are in climate change and biodiversity conservation, although the priority assigned to the implementation of the all-encompassing Environmental Management and Protection Act means that POPs, land degradation,

⁶⁵ Wickham, F et al. op cit.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ ADB. 2007. Country Environmental Analysis - Vanuatu. Draft for Consultations. ADB, Manila.

and international waters are also highly relevant. Similarly, priorities for capacity building targeted in GEF-funded MSPs and FSPs flow from the findings of needs assessments conducted in project preparatory exercises such as PIREP, NBSAP, NAPA, NAP, and the NIP.

GEF-funded projects also contribute to informing and fine-tuning capacity needs assessments by identifying specific capacity deficiencies confronted during implementation. At the national level, for instance, PIGGAREP's MTR highlighted the lack of capacity in public utility companies and the private sector that are essential to RE projects' up-scaling and sustainability, the lack of RE costing information, and its implication for long-term RE development and sustainability. PACC's MTR country reports highlighted the lack of capacity at national and local levels as among the main challenges facing the sustainability of national projects two years away from the end of PACC. LCI's incomplete reporting of results due to the lack of M&E analysis of field monitoring data highlighted the lack of this expertise within DEPC and its importance for project reporting overall. Similar lessons were earlier learned from SPBCP and IWP. Problems related to the recruitment of national personnel and consultants were a common cause of delays and disruptions in the implementation of SPBCP, IWP, LCI, PIREP, PICCAREP, and PACC. Analyses offered by all project assessments confirm what is generally widely known – i.e., the severely limited pool of qualified and experienced locals in environmental protection and conservation-related work throughout the PICs, compounded by the high rate of staff turnover.

In Vanuatu, DEPC remains understaffed and under-resourced – despite having been upgraded from a Unit to a government Department in 2009.⁶⁸ Project-funded staff is heavily relied on for some of DEPC's core functions, but due to budgetary constraints, the staff are not absorbed into its structure and are let go when projects are completed. LCI highlighted this weakness and it is also a looming threat to DEPC's current biodiversity capacity, wherein five of the existing six staff are project-funded. DEPC's capacity limitations underscore the necessity for and the important role of Government inputs and support to build on gains made through GEF-funded interventions.

Weaknesses in capacity within Vanuatu and region-wide that were identified in GEF-funded interventions have also been cited by SPREP and other non- GEF-funded SPREP-implemented assessments. These include weaknesses in project coordination, contingency planning, and project management.⁶⁹ Although multi-stakeholder mechanisms were created as part of the GEF enabling activities, and in response to MEA requirements including national steering committees such as those for NBSAP, National Advisory Committees for Climate Change (NACCC) and others, ineffective vertical and horizontal integration is hindering effective adaptive institutional capacity.⁷⁰ This remains a major constraint to effective project implementation, notably in the climate change focal area. Samoa and Cook Islands are notable exceptions in terms of aid coordination, but other PICs are noted to have problems with poor coordination between central planning agencies and line ministries.⁷¹ Ineffective contingency planning for project management is a region-wide problem that appears rooted in the limited pool of local experts readily available to provide back-up. SPREP cited the lack of career development opportunities and staff retention policies as resulting in the loss of staff. SPREP also observed that the common practise of assigning project management responsibilities to current senior staff already fully occupied with other responsibilities denies aid-funded projects the attention and focus they deserve to ensure effectiveness.

⁶⁸ An annual local budget of US\$150,000 for the last three years provide for both DEPC's salaries and operating costs.

⁶⁹ Meapelo Mai'ai, GEF Advisor, SPREP. July 2013. *Lessons Learned from Project Development and Management in the Pacific*. Prepared Comments Submitted for GEF Evaluation –SPREP and Vanuatu Portfolio.

⁷⁰ Wickham et al. 2009. op cit.

⁷¹ Ibid.

The experience from past and current GEF interventions in Vanuatu and the SPREP portfolios clearly show that GEF-funded interventions are, and will remain, an essential and effective vehicle for delivering capacity strengthening to PICs within its focal areas. But while GEF capacity building activities tend to focus on existing project staff and other project stakeholders, and short-term project-based needs, the fundamental issue of expanding and widening the pool of experts and expertise within each PIC is a larger challenge that transcends GEF's project-based approach. The evaluation findings indicate that GEF's contribution through project-driven training and capacity strengthening is an essential part of what should be a more comprehensive programmatic approach that PICs should lead, ultimately resulting in a regular and predictable flow of qualified practitioners and graduates at all levels of environmental management.

6.6 Relevance of Regional Approaches to Country Needs

Regional approaches have been justified in terms of cost effectiveness, the high cost of any country 'going it alone,' and the limited capacities within PICs for project management and implementation. The experience of SPREP and other regional organizations indicate that this approach is well-justified. Many project activities are more cost-effectively implemented regionally, given the high costs of logistics and travel between countries and the lack of local expertise. High-level training in a wide range of skill areas (including project coordination and management, project development and design, M&E, international negotiations, etc.) can help support this approach. Similarly, national-level consultations to fine-tune regional design of projects and to agree on regional synthesis and priorities can be accomplished by bringing national representatives together in regional workshops and meetings. SPREP has over the years been prudent in minimizing costs, often by piggybacking on other regional events that would also maximize PICs' participation.

Regional approaches have also been used to pioneer and trial new approaches in addressing environmental problems. The aim is to identify best practises and to gain knowledge and lessons that would inform and improve future project design and implementation. SPBCP and IWP were partly designed to achieve these objectives. Among the key outputs are toolkits and 'how-to' manuals, and technical reports to assist with regional, national, and local planning and implementation. Projects have also sponsored study tours for community leaders and representatives to share experiences with other communities, and regional forums including the Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation. PIREP was a project preparatory initiative for PIGGAREP and generated baseline information which has significantly improved participating countries' capacities to develop policies and design other interventions. The PACC project demonstrates a framework of action that fuses the top-down (mainstreaming) and bottom-up approaches to climate change vulnerability assessments and action. This dual approach encourages approaches that are consistent with both community and national priorities and plans.

The relevance of these regional approaches to country needs can be inferred from the high level of PICs' support and level of participation in these endeavours. Furthermore, community-based approaches advocated in SPBCP and IWP remain relevant, albeit in various modified forms, in dealing with biodiversity, land degradation, and climate change adaptation. Similarly, planning tools developed through interventions including PICCAP, PIGGAREP, and PACC – including methodologies for GHG and waste inventories, vulnerability and risk assessments, and baseline information collected in enabling activities – are important components of institutional capacities whose value and utility remain beyond the completion of GEF-funded activities.

7. EFFICIENCY OF GEF-SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES IN VANUATU AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC

This chapter examines various aspects of the efficiency of GEF support to Vanuatu and the SPREP region, including: the time, effort, and financial resources required to approve Vanuatu national and SPREP regional projects; catalytic financing role of the GEF; roles and levels of coordination among stakeholders in project development and implementation; and synergies for GEF programming and implementation among GEF Agencies, national and regional institutions, GEF projects, and other donor-supported activities. The chapter concludes with an assessment of monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

7.1 Time, Effort, and Financial Resources for Project Processing

This analysis distinguishes among the three main types of GEF projects – EAs, MSPs, and FSPs – as the project cycle differs slightly depending on the modality. The analysis also distinguishes between national and regional projects, as the latter require synchronizing resources and personnel across several countries, which can influence project cycle duration. Missing and unreliable data are also accounted for as discussed in Section 2.4. Throughout this chapter, data points that the evaluators extrapolated (for missing dates) or revised (for unreliable dates) are denoted and explained in the table notes. Annex G presents the complete list of national and regional projects along with detailed notes on the methodology for calculating project duration.

Processing Time

This evaluation covers the full life of the GEF, but the GEF project cycle has evolved over the years, which makes assessing project cycle durations over time challenging. Following the GEF Evaluation Office's 2006 *Joint Evaluation of the GEF Activity Cycle and Modalities*, the GEF project cycle underwent a revision in 2007 (at the beginning of GEF-4), and processing time frame limits were adjusted. For example, a limit of 22 months for project development was imposed during GEF-4. This limit has been further reduced to 18 months for GEF-5. Figure 7.1 provides a summary overview of the project cycle before 2007. Figures 7.2 and 7.3 give an overview of the current project cycle, presented separately for FSPs and MSPs, as the project cycle varies slightly for each of these modalities.

Figure 7.1

GEF Activity Cycle Prior to 2007 Revision



Figure 7.2

GEF Current Full-Size Project Cycle

FULL SIZE PROJECTS

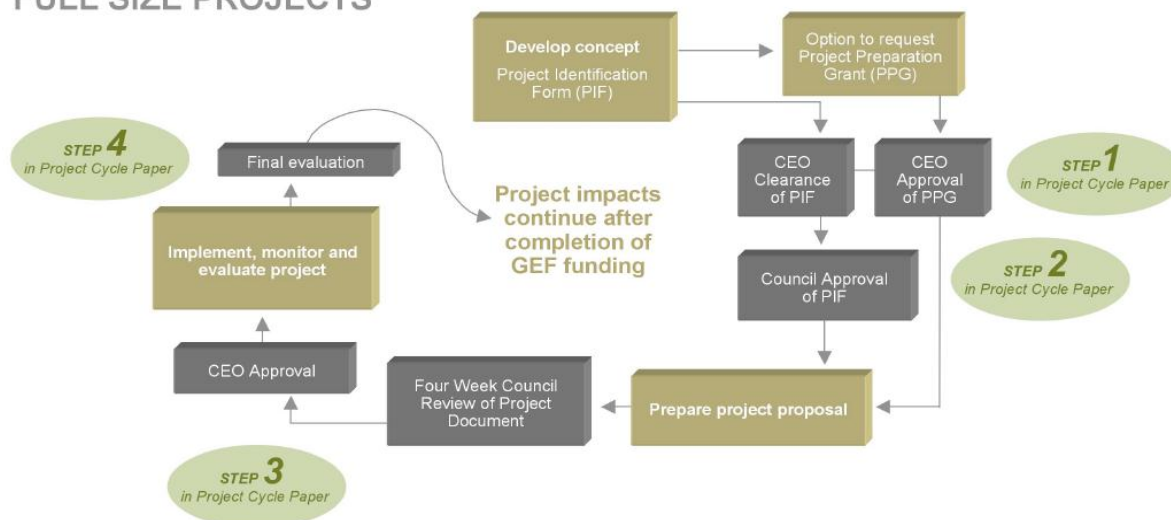
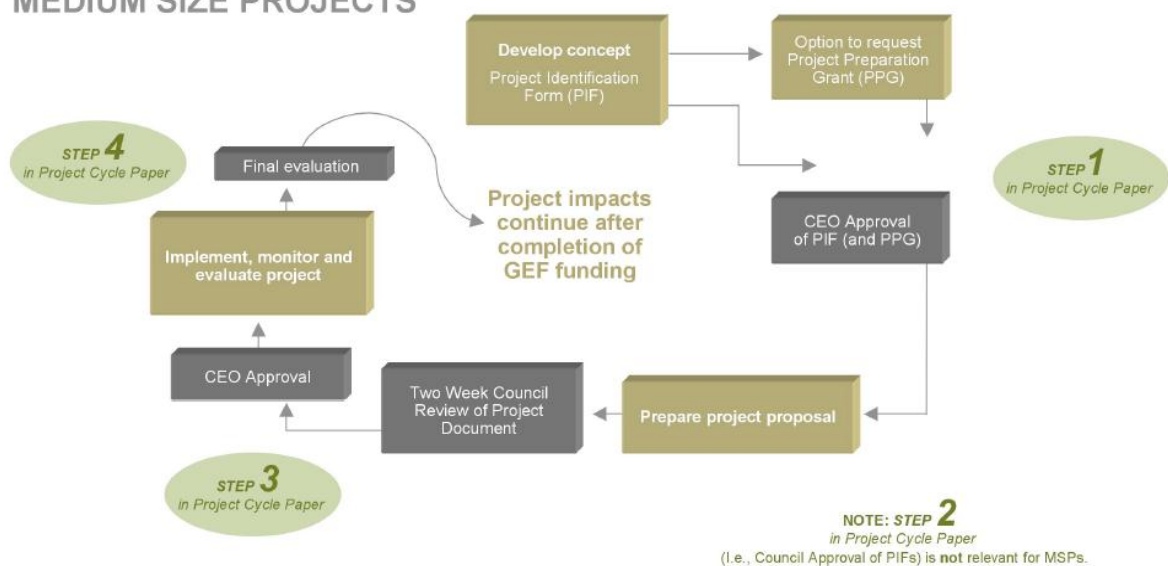


Figure 7.3

GEF Current Medium-Size Project Cycle

MEDIUM SIZE PROJECTS



The approval process for national projects is summarized in Tables 7.1 and 7.2. Overall, the approval process takes 636 days on average (1.7 years) for the national projects in the GEF Vanuatu portfolio. This compares favorably with the GEF global average of 5.5 years as reported by the GEF Evaluation Office in 2007;⁷² however, it exceeds the goal of an 18-month (1.5 years) approval process. Moreover, the trend seems to be going in the wrong direction, from less than one year in GEF-1 to 4.3 years in GEF-4. (GEF-5 is ongoing, and it is too early to assess the overall efficiency in the current

⁷² GEF Evaluation Office, as cited in the Turkey CPE report

GEF phase.) This is likely due, in part, to the evolution from EAs (which are relatively simple to prepare) to MSPs and FSPs (which are larger and more complex).

While the reforms implemented in GEF-4 were intended to streamline the process, concerns about efficiency persist. The longest delay occurs between CEO approval/endorsement (C) and GEF Agency approval (D). Delays stem from the requirements of the GEF Agencies, and the need to coordinate between the GEF Agencies and the GEF. For example, the World Bank – Increasing Resilience to Climate Change and Natural Hazards project (GEF ID 3798) had to meet the different requirements of three separate funders: The World Bank, the EU, and the GEF. Delays are also caused by factors within Vanuatu, including limited capacity for developing strong project proposals and lack of a strong national coordination mechanism.

Table 7.1

Average Time Needed to Develop and Approve Vanuatu National Projects by GEF Phase in Days

Project Scope	GEF Phase	Number of projects	Avg. A-B	Avg. B-C	Avg. C-D	Avg. D-E	Avg. B-E	Avg. A-E
Vanuatu National	GEF - 1	2 ^a	34	34	15	151	200	234
	GEF - 2	1 ^b	34	34	480	0	514	548
	GEF - 3	7 ^c	47	47	445	88	581	628
	GEF - 4	2	23	518	959	62	1,539	1,582
	GEF - 5	1	111					
Overall		13	45	86	417	89	593	636

- Both projects undertaken in in GEF-1 required estimation of dates for steps A and B (GEF IDs 146 and 486).
- The one project in GEF-2 required estimation of dates for steps A and B (GEF ID 860).
- Two of the seven projects in GEF-3 required estimation of dates for steps A and B (GEF IDs 875 and 2nd National Communication to UNFCCC (missing a GEF ID)). The remaining five projects required estimation of the date for step B only (GEF IDs 1682, 1914, 1942, 1970, and 3502).

As shown in Table 7.2, the approval time for FSPs tends to exceed the time for EAs and MSPs, which might be expected given the relative size and complexity of FSPs.

Table 7.2

Average Time Needed to Develop and Approve Vanuatu National Projects by Type in Days

Project Scope	Project Type	Number of projects	Avg. A-B	Avg. B-C	Avg. C-D	Avg. D-E	Avg. B-E	Avg. A-E
Vanuatu National	EA	8 ^a	34	34	248	115	397	431
	FSP	2	77	518	959	62	1,539	1,582
	MSP	3 ^b	54	81	823	0	903	984
Overall		13	45	86	417	89	593	636

- All eight EAs required estimation of dates. Five EAs required estimation of dates for steps A and B (GEF IDs 146, 486, 860, 875, and 2nd National Communication to UNFCCC), while an additional three EAs required estimation of the date for step B only (GEF IDs 1914, 1942, and 1970).
- Two of the three MSPs required estimation of the date for step B (GEF IDs 1682 and 3502).

The processing time for regional projects is summarized in Tables 7.3 and 7.4. Overall, the approval process for regional projects takes 881 days on average (2.4 years), which exceeds the average for national projects. This may reflect the relative complexity of preparing regional projects, which requires traveling to and coordinating with multiple countries. Many countries in the South Pacific region have had trouble understanding the GEF procedures and the requirements for formulating a 'GEF-able' project. However, large regional efforts such as the Pacific Alliance for Sustainability have raised awareness about GEF requirements. Similar to national projects, the average time for steps A-E (Pipeline to Implementation) is the longest for GEF-4 projects, and the time between phases tends to be longer for FSPs than for MSPs and EAs. Unlike national projects, where the longest delay occurs between CEO endorsement (C) and GEF Agency approval (D), the longest delay for regional projects occurs between PIF clearance (B) and CEO approval/endorsement (C). In addition, getting from step A (pipeline entry/received) to step B (PIF clearance) also takes much longer for regional projects than for national projects. This is consistent with the finding that countries in the SPREP region have difficulty preparing projects that can pass the GEF approval process.

Table 7.3

Average Time Needed to Develop and Approve Regional Projects by GEF Phase in Days

Project Scope	GEF Phase	Number of projects	Avg. A-B	Avg. B-C	Avg. C-D	Avg. D-E	Avg. B-E	Avg. A-E
Vanuatu Regional	GEF - 3	1	691	48	50	22	120	811
	GEF - 4	6	341	488	38	28	662	1,155
	GEF - 5	3	189					
SPREP Regional	Pilot Phase	1 ^a	269	440	284	0	724	993
	GEF - 1	1 ^b	320	535	20	0	555	875
	GEF - 2	3 ^c	143	242	70	0	312	454
	GEF - 3	2	208	373	83	5	460	667
	GEF - 4	3	454	613	115	37	641	1,217
	GEF - 5	1	48	642	85	7	734	782
Overall		21	304	436	79	15	528	881

- The one SPREP regional project in the pilot phase required estimation of dates for steps A and C (GEF ID 403).
- The one SPREP regional project in GEF-1 required estimation of the date for step A (GEF ID 336).
- One of the three SPREP regional projects in GEF-2 required estimation of dates for steps A and B (GEF ID 850); one required estimation of the date for step A only (GEF ID 530); and one required estimation of the date for step B only (GEF ID 1058).

Table 7.4

Average Time Needed to Develop and Approve Regional Projects by Type in Days

Project Scope	Project Type	Number of projects	Avg. A-B	Avg. B-C	Avg. C-D	Avg. D-E	Avg. B-E	Avg. A-E
Vanuatu Regional	FSP	10	366	415	40	27	553	1,086
SPREP Regional	EA	2 ^a	177	285	40	0	325	501
	FSP	8 ^b	295	529	113	13	608	915
	MSP	1 ^c	126	126	120	0	246	371
Overall		21	304	436	79	15	528	881

- Both of the SPREP regional EAs required estimation of the date for step A (GEF IDs 336 and 850), and one of the two also required estimation of the date for step B (GEF ID 850).
- Two of the eight SPREP regional FSPs required estimation of the date for step A (GEF IDs 403 and 530), and one of the two also required the estimation of the date for step C (GEF ID 403).
- The one SPREP regional MSP required estimation of the date for step B only (GEF ID 1058).

A consequence of the excessive approval time is that by the time projects are approved, the national situation and priorities may have changed. As a result, the project may not have the same level of momentum as when it was conceived; in other cases, new circumstances require further consultations to refine the project's objectives and activities. Further delays sometimes occur due to staff recruitment and training, as well as ongoing reporting requirements. For example, it took six months after the LCI was approved in 2005 to hire needed staff and clarify the goals and activities.

Project Preparation Costs

A summary of the project preparation costs for national and regional projects is shown in Tables 7.5 and 7.6. The FSPs, for both national and regional projects, have the highest preparation costs and total project allocations compared to MSPs and enabling activities. The preparation costs appear very low compared to total project costs; overall, they represent only 1.2% and 0.7% of the costs for national and regional projects, respectively.

However, interviews and project documents indicate that preparation costs funded by the GEF are not sufficient to conduct adequate consultations to FSP and MSP implementation. It is not uncommon to spend the first year of project 'implementation' on activities that might better be classified as preparation – such as holding consultations to discuss intended outcomes, and rewriting the project objectives and logframe. For example, after the GEF approved the Pacific Invasive Species Project (GEF ID 3664), it was necessary to return to the participating countries to have adequate consultations. Similarly, the IWP was approved without much national input; after the project was approved, it became apparent that national priorities were not fully aligned with the project objectives. The initial phase of the project was spent bringing the project goals and national objectives into alignment. Similarly, the PACC did not have sufficient preparation funding to conduct the necessary travel and stakeholder consultations. After the project was approved, SPREP had to work with the participating countries to develop their priorities, and the project changed as a result.

Table 7.5

Project Preparation Costs for Vanuatu National Projects

Project Type	Number of Projects	Total Preparation Costs	Average Preparation Costs	Total Project Allocation	Average Project Allocation	Preparation/Project Cost (%)
EA	8	\$0.03M	\$0.00M	\$1.94M	\$0.24M	1.29%
FSP	2	\$0.96M	\$0.48M	\$54.45M	\$27.22M	1.76%
MSP	3	\$0.07M	\$0.02M	\$31.53M	\$10.51M	0.24%
Total	13	\$1.06M	\$0.08M	\$87.91M	\$6.76M	1.21%

Table 7.6

Project Preparation Costs for Projects in the Vanuatu Region

Project Type	Number of Projects	Total Preparation Costs	Average Preparation Costs	Total Project Allocation	Average Project Allocation	Preparation/Project Cost (%)
EA	2	\$0.00M	\$0.00M	\$3.44M	\$1.72M	0.00%
FSP	18	\$6.60M	\$0.37M	\$995.46M	\$55.30M	0.66%
MSP	1	\$0.11M	\$0.11M	\$0.81M	\$0.81M	13.69%
Total	21	\$6.71M	\$0.32M	\$999.71M	\$47.61M	0.67%

7.2 Co-financing

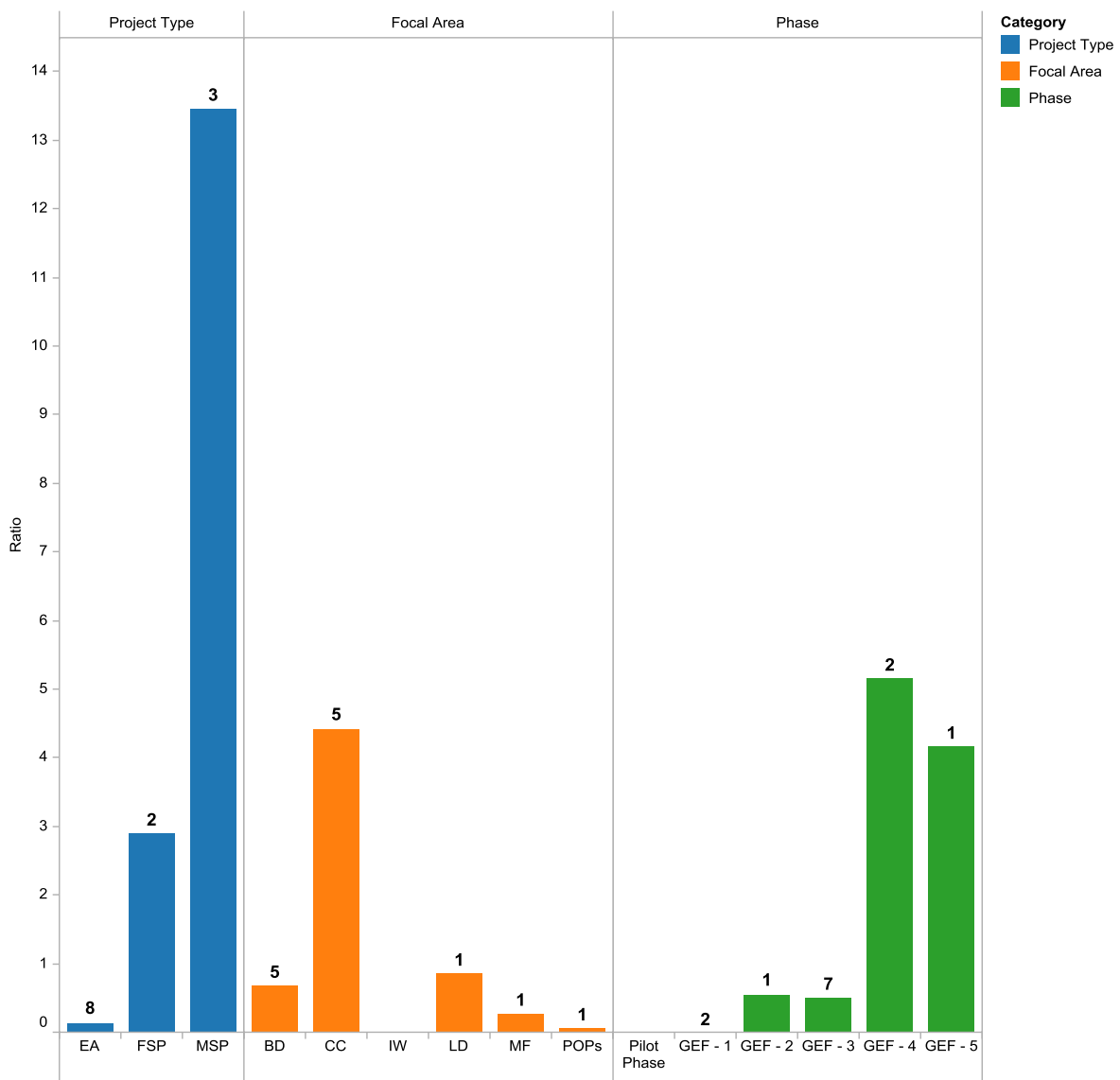
Cofinancing ratios for national projects are shown in Figure 7.4. The vertical axis shows the cofinancing ratio; the numbers above the bars indicate the number of projects in each category. As shown in the figure, cofinancing ratios increased through GEF-4, and have decreased slightly in GEF-5. National MSPs show the highest cofinancing ratio compared to other project types (13.5). Across focal areas, climate change projects have the highest overall cofinancing ratio of 4.4.

The regional projects show very different trends in cofinancing ratios from the national projects, as shown in Figure 7.5. Unlike national projects, the regional projects do not show an increase in cofinancing ratios over time. Additionally, the FSPs have the highest cofinancing ratios of the project types (4.6), and neither of the regional enabling activities had any cofinancing. Of the focal areas, international waters and the multifocal area received the highest cofinancing, with ratios of 5.7 and 6.1, respectively.

Interviewees for this evaluation noted several caveats that should be considered when interpreting the cofinancing ratios for national and regional projects. Cofinancing ratios appear to be high, but may be artificially inflated as there is incentive to show high cofinancing ratios to get projects approved by the GEF. Cofinancing includes cash and 'in-kind' contributions; it also includes funds committed to other government activities that are 'aligned' with GEF projects. For regional projects, cofinancing contributions are primarily from donors rather than the participating countries; this is especially true for climate change projects. Moreover, the cofinancing committed during the project approval stage does not always materialize upon project completion. Therefore, the cofinancing ratio may not be a good proxy for national commitment to GEF projects.

Figure 7.4

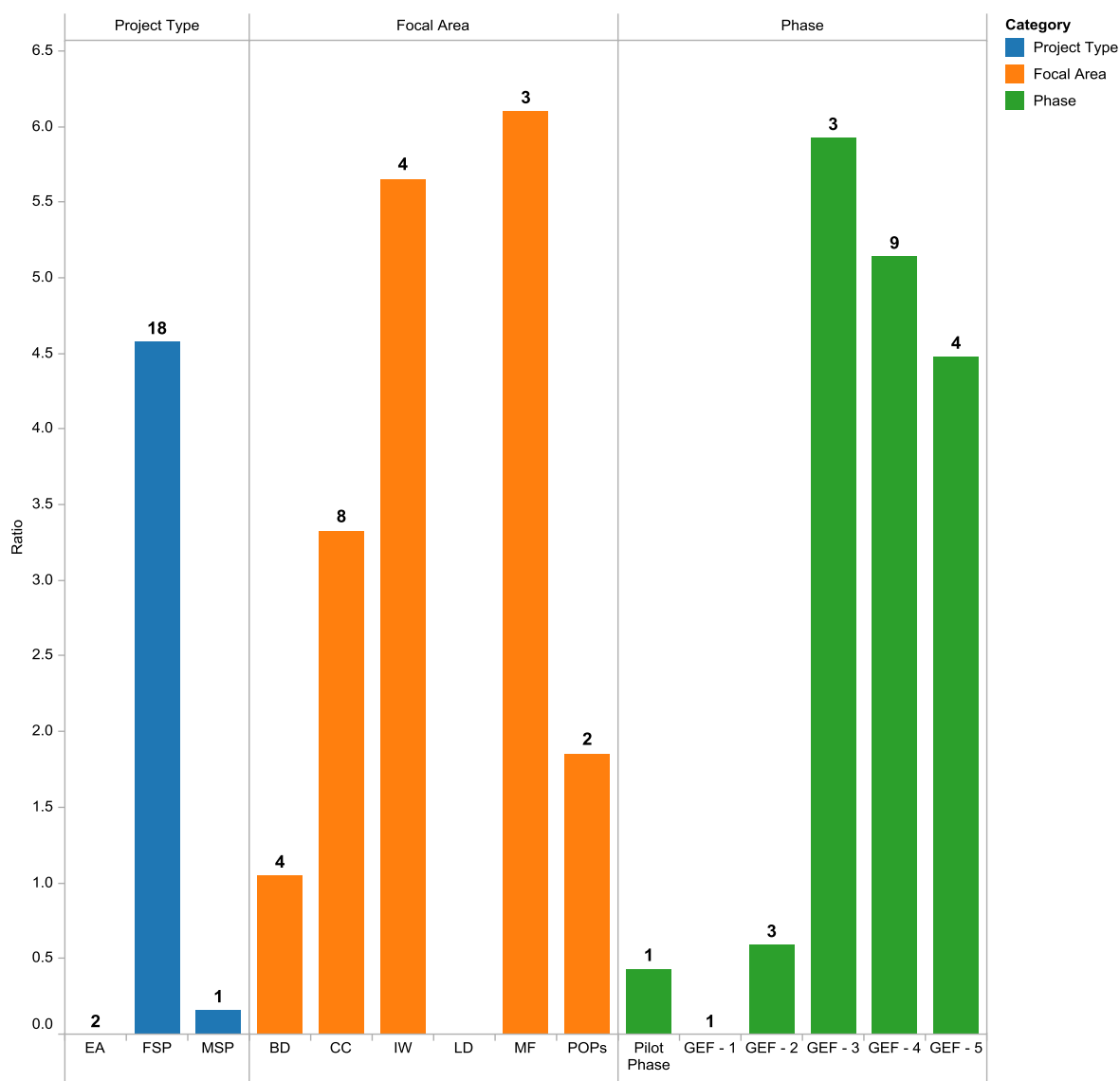
National Cofinancing Ratio by Modality, Focal Area, and GEF Phase



Calculated cofinancing ratio as the total cofinancing amount divided by the total GEF support (both of these values include the PDF/PPG amounts)
 For example, a cofinancing ratio of 2.3 indicates that for every dollar of GEF support, \$2.30 of cofinancing was provided

Figure 7.5

Regional Cofinancing Ratio by Modality, Focal Area, and GEF Phase



Calculated cofinancing ratio as the total cofinancing amount divided by the total GEF support (both of these values include the PDF/PPG amounts)
 For example, a cofinancing ratio of 2.3 indicates that for every dollar of GEF support, \$2.30 of cofinancing was provided

This figure includes both Vanuatu and SPREP Regional projects; only one project was included on the SPREP Regional list that was not on the Vanuatu Regional list

7.3 Roles and Responsibilities

The GEF Secretariat has established processes and procedures to ensure that GEF-funded projects are country-driven. One important mechanism for ensuring country ownership is the endorsement of the country’s Operational Focal Point (OFP). The OFP is the main point of contact for in-country stakeholders, the GEF Secretariat, and GEF Agencies. GEF Agencies formulate the project concept and, with the endorsement of the OFP, submit the proposal to the GEF Secretariat. Although this process is supposed to guarantee national ownership, in-country stakeholders have a perception that they are not sufficiently engaged in formulating projects. Interviewees indicated that they are

engaged later, after the project is farther along in the approval process, or even after the project has been approved. This situation reflects, in part, the limited time and capacity of local stakeholders to formulate and prepare projects that can pass muster with the GEF. However, this situation has sometimes resulted in less national ownership of GEF projects.

After approval, GEF Agencies implement projects through an Executing Agency such as SPREP. Typically, Executing Agencies hire project coordinators to manage daily logistics and monitor activities. Recruitment has generally not been problematic, with the exception of PIREP. However, findings from the interviews and fieldwork suggest that project coordinators are often recruited based primarily on their technical expertise, with little or no project management skills. The situation can be exacerbated by the reporting requirements of the GEF Agencies; for example, project officers for PACC and PIGGAREP have reportedly spent up to one-third of their time writing monitoring reports to satisfy UNDP's reporting requirements. This can be seen as a source of inefficiency and a cause of delays in project implementation.

7.4 Coordination and Synergies

The evaluation finds that synergies are happening in some areas, but could be improved. At the national level, coordination occurs more often when projects are implemented under the same national steering committees or ministries. However, cooperation across some national ministries and units has proved challenging. In general, existing projects are not coordinated with each other as much as they could. Moreover, the absence of a strong national coordination mechanism also delays the time required to prepare project proposals for GEF consideration.

In general, there is more coordination across projects at the regional level than at the national level. Regionally executed projects draw on a wider technical capacity and can access knowledge and resources more easily than national projects. For example, in the PIGGAREP project, SPREP was able to locate wind testing equipment more quickly than Vanuatu could have done on its own.

In the past, there has sometimes been competition between the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific (CROP) Agencies. For example, there was disagreement between SPREP and SOPAC about who would be the Executing Agency for the PIGGAREP project. However, coordination is improving among regional heads and in regional working groups for specific areas such as climate change. Regional coordination has also facilitated using SPC agriculture experts for PACC projects in countries dealing with food security issues.

Cost is another challenge that can hamper regional coordination. As discussed in Chapter 3, the SPREP region consists of small, geographically disparate and remote islands. In theory, regional projects should generate efficiencies by lowering the transaction costs associated with engaging each individual island nation. In practice, this has proven challenging due, in part, to lack of sufficient resources devoted to regional project coordination. In particular, the Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (PAS) was conceived as a regional program, but it did not commit the funding required to establish a robust coordinating mechanism at a sufficient scale. Similarly, the IWRM project budget initially underestimated the costs of traveling throughout the Pacific; however, steps are being taken now to address the issue.

Unfortunately, the evaluation finds scant evidence of coordination between regional and nationally-executed projects in Vanuatu. In particular, regional/national coordination could have occurred, but did not, in the biodiversity focal area. Similarly, PIGGAREP did not appear to be coordinated with national energy efficiency efforts in Vanuatu; the projects were implemented by different Executing

Agencies and government departments. On the other hand, there has been strong coordination between national and regional energy efficiency projects in Samoa, as the same individuals serve on the steering committees of both projects.

At the donor level, there are some positive examples of coordination, such as EU-World Bank efforts to address climate change resilience in Vanuatu. However, other projects that should have been coordinated have not been coordinated, and this has resulted in less harmonized and less effective projects. For example, the inability of the PAS to establish a regional coordination mechanism was partly due to disagreements between GEF and The World Bank about where the unit should be located.

7.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

All GEF projects have M&E protocols in the form of annual Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), Mid-Term Reviews (MTRs), and Terminal Evaluations (TEs). The M&E systems in place are used effectively for adaptive management during the life of the projects. Many of the completed national and regional projects include examples of improvements that have been adopted since the relevant MTR took place.

Some examples of adaptive management include the changes that UNDP and SPREP initiated to address delays in the disbursement of funds for the PACC project. This was an issue since UNDP and SPREP started working together on GEF projects in the mid-1990s. The new approach allows disbursement of funds only to those countries that have submitted the necessary reports on time, rather than waiting until all countries have submitted their reports before funds are disbursed to SPREP. Also, SPREP now only has to submit progress reports on a six-month basis rather than quarterly, freeing up staff time to work on project activities.

Another example of good adaptive project management is demonstrated by the GEF PAS Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Species project (GEF ID 3664). Project managers made the change from one regional inception workshop to ten in-country inception workshops. This change helped facilitate greater stakeholder involvement and participation at the national level in the review of workplans and prioritisation of activities following initial review of strategies and project design, and consultations with partners and countries. In addition, project administration responsibilities were taken off the national project coordinators, allowing them to focus on implementation of project field activities as opposed to reporting.

TEs produced some very useful lessons and recommendations for future action. Unfortunately, these lessons do not appear to have been incorporated into the design of subsequent projects or taken up by governments in their daily work programs. Examples include the recommendations from the LCI to enact the Conservation Area Regulation (CAR) in Vanuatu and provide support for the communities to maintain their established conservation areas. The evaluation found that neither of these recommendations has been acted upon. The recommendations from the TE of the LCI project, and the NBSAP projects as well as the IWP, highlighted the need for strengthening the capacity of DEPC. Unfortunately, this has not happened, mainly due to the lack of political commitment to raising the profile of environmental issues at the national level.

Institutionalizing M&E within the participating ministry or department beyond the lifetime of the project has proved challenging. This is due to limited capacity – most ministries do not have a dedicated M&E specialist – and staff turnover. Once a project ends, project officers often leave with the knowledge gained during the project.

Overall, the evaluation finds that lessons learned from completed projects are not taken up as much as they could be. However, the evaluation found two examples where lessons learned from one project have supported or could support the development of future projects. The LCI incorporated lessons from the SPBCP, tailored to the national context. Also, lessons from IWP have been documented and shared with other stakeholders in the Pacific, and may provide a foundation for designing future projects.

ANNEXES

ANNEX A. COUNTRY RESPONSE

Will be inserted upon reception

ANNEX B: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terms of Reference

GEF Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation: (1991-2012)

Approved by the GEF Evaluation Office Director on December 11, 2012

Background and Introduction

1. Country Portfolio Evaluations (CPEs) are one of the main evaluation streams of work of the GEF Evaluation Office.⁷³ By capturing aggregate portfolio results and performance of the GEF at the country level they provide useful information for both the GEF Council and the countries. CPEs relevance and utility has increased in GEF-5 with the increased emphasis on country ownership and country-driven portfolio development.

2. GEF eligible countries are chosen for CPEs based on a selection process and a set of criteria including the size, diversity and maturity of their portfolio of projects.⁷⁴ These evaluations usually cover all national projects, and include a selection of the most important regional and global projects in which the country participates. In Fiscal Year 11, the CPE Team conducted a different type of CPE, taking a cluster approach that analyzed the portfolios of six GEF beneficiary countries members of the Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). That evaluation, a first of its kind for the CPE team, allowed looking at the relevance, performance and results of regional projects, one of the main support modalities in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The Vanuatu and SPREP⁷⁵ Portfolio Evaluation is expected to progress further along this line of analysis, by providing an opportunity to compare regional to national project relevance and performance in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the South Pacific region.⁷⁶ Furthermore, the portfolios of Vanuatu and SPREP include several ongoing, completed/closed projects with significant emphasis on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).

3. The South Pacific region comprises 22 countries scattered over one third of the globe, covering about thirty million sq. km., mostly oceanic. These countries include 20,000 to 30,000 small islands.⁷⁷ The South Pacific region represents an enormous diversity in physical geography, culture, languages, social-political organization, size and natural resource endowment. Although containing just 0.1 percent of the world's population, the region contains one third of the world's languages and an enormous cultural diversity encompassing social, political and behavioral complexities. This situation is most pronounced across Melanesia, where 700 languages are spoken in Papua New Guinea alone, and more than 100 each in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.⁷⁸ Agriculture, fishing and tourism are the major industries contributing to national economies.

4. Vanuatu, formerly the Anglo-French condominium of the New Hebrides, is an irregular Y-shaped chain of some 80 islands, with a total land area of about 4,710 sq. miles and a total coastline of 1,571 miles. The total population of Vanuatu is estimated to be 240,000 people in 2010 and it has an annual

⁷³ For a complete list of countries having undergone CPEs please refer to the GEF Evaluation Office website.

⁷⁴ http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/CPE_final_country_selection_note-0910_0.pdf, Website access: 7th November, 2012.

⁷⁵ South Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

⁷⁶ These evaluations include the OECS Cluster CPE, the Cuba CPE and the Jamaica Country Portfolio Study (CPS).

⁷⁷ <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/arm/pac.htm>, Website access: 12th November 2012.

⁷⁸ http://www.population.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/nzpr-vol-33-and-34_gerald-haberkorn.pdf, Website access: 12th November 2012.

population growth rate of 2.3 percent.⁷⁹ In 2010, Vanuatu's gross domestic product (GDP) was approximately \$729 million with a growth rate of 3 percent and per capita income of \$3,042. Agriculture and tourism are the main productive sectors contributing to Vanuatu's economy. Agriculture contributes 21.5 percent of the GDP. Tourism contributes 19 percent of the GDP.⁸⁰ Vanuatu ranks 118th on the Human Development Index (HDI) and 52nd on the Human Poverty Index (HPI). Poverty levels stubbornly remain at about 40% of the population, with about 26% on less than US\$1 per day.

5. SPREP is an intergovernmental organization established in 1982 by the governments and administrations of the Pacific region. SPREP is composed of 25 countries, consisting of all the 21 Pacific island countries and territories, and four developed countries.⁸¹ It is charged with promoting cooperation, supporting protection and improvement of the Pacific islands environment, and ensuring its sustainable development.⁸² The key focal areas under SPREP projects are climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem management, waste management, pollution control, environmental monitoring and governance. Adaptation to climate change and rising sea levels, improvement in natural disaster preparedness, prevention of worsening freshwater shortages, protection of coastal ecosystems and coral reefs from pollution and overfishing, development of solar and renewable energy, managing tourism growth to protect the environment and cultural integrity and biodiversity conservation have been prioritized by SPREP.⁸³

6. Pacific countries face a full range of geologic and climatic hazards including increase in population, waste (including solid, nuclear & chemicals) management, climate change and sea level rise, economic and institutional capacity. The Vanuatu islands are located in a seismically and volcanically active region and have high exposure to geologic hazards, including volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tsunamis, and landslides.⁸⁴ The key drivers of environmental change are a rapidly growing economy, a young population and rapid population growth, urban drift, land speculation, agricultural intensification, deforestation, inadequate fisheries and marine management, industry and trade, tourism, imported energy and transportation needs, extractive industries, and the global rise in greenhouse gas emissions.

7. Since 1991 (Table 1), the GEF has funded a total of US\$13.9 million in Vanuatu with US\$65.3 million co-financing, through 11 national projects. These include 4 climate change projects, 4 projects in biodiversity, 1 in land degradation and 1 multifocal area project. 6 projects have been either closed or completed (5 closed and 1 completed). UNEP has been implementing 5 projects with a total GEF grant of US\$0.94 million and co-financing of US\$0.15 million; UNDP has been implementing 4 projects totaling US\$9.5 million GEF grant with co-financing of US\$33.7 million; the World Bank is implementing 2 projects with US\$3.5 million GEF grant and co-financing of US\$31.4 million.

Table 1: GEF Support to Vanuatu National Projects by Focal Area and GEF Agency

⁷⁹http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2012/03/26/000356161_201203260049/Rendered/PDF/E30040EA0P1126020Box367891B00353352.pdf, Website access: 7th November, 2012.

⁸⁰ http://www.wttc.org/site_media/uploads/downloads/vanuatu2012.pdf, Website access: 7th November, 2012.

⁸¹ <http://2001-2009.state.gov/g/oes/ocns/rsp/cta/12179.htm>, Website access: 9th November 2012.

⁸² <http://www.sprep.org/About-Us>, Website access: 9th November 2012.

⁸³ <http://www.sprep.org/att/IRC/eCOPIES/Countries/Vanuatu/71.pdf> Website access: 7th November 2012.

⁸⁴ http://imagebank.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2010/02/25/000333037_20100225012651/Rendered/PDF/532100WP0P1120110VANUATU1ASSESSMENT.pdf Website access: 7th November 2012.

Focal Area	Agency	GEF (US\$)	Co-financing (US\$)	Total (US\$)	Number of Projects
Climate Change	World Bank	3,486,363	31,360,000	34,846,363	2
	UNDP	8,230,000	32,451,217	40,681,217	2
	Subtotal	11,716,363	63,811,217	75,527,580	4
Biodiversity	UNEP	352,197	72,531	424,728	3
	UNDP	745,910	709,933	1,455,843	1
	Subtotal	1,098,107	782,464	1,880,571	4
Land Degradation	UNDP	500,000	596,200	1,096,200	1
	Subtotal	500,000	596,200	1,096,200	1
POPs	UNEP	393,000	20,000	413,000	1
	Subtotal	393,000	20,000	413,000	1
Multi Focal Area	UNEP	199,500	61,500	261,000	1
	Subtotal	199,500	61,500	261,000	1
TOTAL		13,906,970	65,271,381	79,178,351	11

Since 1991 (Table 2), the GEF funded a total of US\$62 million with US\$142.3 million co-financing in 11 regional projects executed through SPREP. These include 6 climate change projects, 3 projects in biodiversity, 1 in international waters and 1 in POPs. UNDP has been implementing 7 projects through SPREP with a total US\$44.5 million GEF grant and US\$80.7 million co-financing; UNEP has 2 projects totaling a US\$4.8 million GEF grant with US\$6.5 million co-financing; the World Bank is implementing 1 project with a US\$9.5 million GEF grant and US\$48.9 million co-financing; UNEP and FAO are jointly implementing one project having a US\$3.3 million GEF grant and US\$6 million co-financing. 7 out of the 21 SPREP member countries, namely Cook Island, Vanuatu, Fiji, Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Samoa and Tuvalu are involved in at least 9 SPREP-executed GEF projects.

Table 2: GEF Support to SPREP Executed Regional Projects by Focal Area and GEF Agency

Focal Area	Agency	GEF (US\$)	Co-financing (US\$)	Total (US\$)	Number of Projects
Climate Change	UNDP	22,490,000	72,597,799	95,087,799	5
	World Bank/IFC	9,480,000	48,985,131	58,465,131	1
	Subtotal	31,970,000	121,582,930	153,552,930	6
Biodiversity	UNEP	4,772,415	6,541,192	11,313,607	2
	UNDP	10,000,000	0	10,000,000	1
	Subtotal	14,772,415	6,541,192	21,313,607	3
International	UNDP	12,000,000	8,118,383	20,118,383	1

Focal Area	Agency	GEF (US\$)	Co-financing (US\$)	Total (US\$)	Number of Projects
Waters	Subtotal	12,000,000	8,118,383	20,118,383	1
POPs	UNEP/FAO	3,275,000	6,052,290	9,327,290	1
	Subtotal	3,275,000	6,052,290	9,327,290	1
	TOTAL	62,017,415	142,294,795	204,312,210	11

Objectives of the evaluation

8. The purpose of the Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation is to provide the GEF Council with an assessment of how GEF is implemented in Vanuatu and more broadly in the Pacific region, report on results from projects and assess how these projects are linked to national and regional environmental and sustainable development agendas as well as to the GEF mandate of generating global environmental benefits within its focal areas. This evaluation has the following objectives:

- i. independently evaluate the **relevance** and **efficiency**⁸⁵ of the GEF support from several points of view: national and regional environmental frameworks and decision-making processes; the GEF mandate and the achievement of global environmental benefits; and GEF policies and procedures;
- ii. assess the **effectiveness** and **results**⁸⁶ of completed projects aggregated at the focal area;
- iii. provide additional evaluative evidence to other evaluations conducted or sponsored by the Office; and
- iv. provide **feedback** and **knowledge** sharing to (1) the GEF Council in its decision making process to allocate resources and to develop policies and strategies; (2) the countries on their participation in, or collaboration with the GEF; and (3) the different agencies and organizations involved in the preparation and implementation of GEF funded projects and activities.

9. The performance of the GEF national portfolio in Vanuatu and the portfolio of SPREP executed regional projects will be assessed in terms of relevance, efficiency and effectiveness, and of the contributing factors to this performance. The Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation will analyze the performance of individual projects as part of the overall GEF portfolio, but without rating such projects. CPEs do not aim at evaluating or rating the performance of the GEF agencies, partners or national governments.

Key Evaluation Questions

10. GEF CPEs are guided by a set of key questions that should be answered based on the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the evaluative information and perceptions collected during the evaluation

⁸⁵ **Relevance:** the extent to which the activity is suited to local and national environmental priorities and policies and to global environmental benefits to which the GEF is dedicated; **Efficiency:** the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible.

⁸⁶ **Effectiveness:** the extent to which the GEF activity's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance; **Results:** in GEF terms, results include direct project outputs, short- to medium-term outcomes, and progress toward longer term impact including global environmental benefits, replication effects, and other local effects; **Sustainability:** the likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion; projects need to be environmentally as well as financially and socially sustainable.

exercise. The Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation will be guided by the following key questions:

Effectiveness, results and sustainability

- 1) What are the results (outcomes and impacts) of GEF support at the project level and at the aggregate level (portfolio and program) by focal area? What are the results of GEF support at the regional level?
- 2) Is GEF support effective in producing results related to the dissemination of lessons learned in GEF projects and with partners?
- 3) Is GEF support effective in producing results which last in time and continue after project completion?
- 4) Has the GEF support contributed to build adequate institutional capacity to allow direct execution at national level in the Pacific region?
- 5) Has the GEF support facilitated the channeling of additional resources for climate financing that up-scales the efforts for achieving global environmental benefits in the Pacific region?
- 6) Has the GEF support been effective in producing tangible concrete results (in terms of outputs, outcomes, and impacts) that go beyond foundational activities?

Relevance

- 7) Is GEF support relevant to the Vanuatu and other Pacific countries' sustainability development agendas and environmental priorities, in particular for what concerns sustainable land management and land degradation?
- 8) Is the GEF support to Vanuatu and more broadly to the Pacific region relevant to the objectives linked to the different Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs) in biodiversity, greenhouse gases, international waters, land degradation, and chemicals focal areas?
- 9) Is GEF support relevant to the Vanuatu and other Pacific countries' development needs and challenges?
- 10) Are the GEF and its agencies supporting environmental and sustainable development prioritization, country ownership and decision-making process in Vanuatu and more broadly in the Pacific region?
- 11) Are Vanuatu and other Pacific countries supporting the GEF mandate and focal areas programs and strategies with their own resources and/or with the support from other donors?

Efficiency

- 12) How much time, effort and financial resources does it take to formulate and implement projects, by type of GEF support modality in the Pacific region?
- 13) What are the roles, and level of coordination and communication, among stakeholders in project development and implementation, particularly national and regional institutions?
- 14) What are the synergies for GEF programming and implementation (including among GEF focal areas) among: GEF agencies, national agencies and regional institutions; GEF projects; and other donor-supported projects and activities in the Pacific region?
- 15) What role does Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) play in increasing project adaptive management and overall efficiency?

11. Each of these questions is complemented by a set of indicators, potential sources of information, evaluation tools and methods described in the evaluation matrix presented in Annex 1. The matrix contains a tentative list of indicators or basic data, potential sources of information, and methodology components.

Scope and Limitations

12. The Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation will cover all types of GEF supported activities in the two portfolios under analysis (Vanuatu national and SPREP regional projects) at all stages of the project cycle (pipeline, on-going and completed) and implemented by all GEF Agencies in all focal areas, including applicable GEF corporate activities such as the Small Grants Programme (SGP). The evaluation will look at all the Vanuatu national projects and all the SPREP-executed projects, be them full size, medium size or enabling activities, with a view to continue, deepen and enrich the comparative analysis started with the OECS Cluster CPE, by analyzing strengths and weaknesses of the national (i.e. the Vanuatu national projects portfolio) and the regional (i.e. the SPREP-executed regional projects portfolio) project modalities in SIDS contexts.

13. The stage of the project will determine the expected focus of the analysis (see Table 3).

Table 3. Focus of evaluation according to stage of project

Project Status	Focus		On a exploratory basis	
	<i>Relevance</i>	<i>Efficiency</i>	<i>Effectiveness</i>	<i>Results</i>
Completed	Full	Full	Full	Full
On-going	Full	Partially	Likelihood	Likelihood
Pipeline	Expected	Processes	Not applicable	Not applicable

14. The GEF does not establish country programs that specify expected achievements through programmatic objectives, indicators, and targets. However, since 2010 the GEF has started supporting countries in undertaking national portfolio formulation exercises on a voluntary basis. These exercises serve as a priority setting tool for countries and as a guide for GEF Agencies as they assist recipient countries. These country programming efforts are rather recent, which limits their usefulness in country portfolio evaluations that look back up to the start of GEF operations, i.e. sometimes 20 years back. This is why generally CPEs entail some degree of retrofitting of frameworks to be able to judge the relevance of the aggregated results of a diverse portfolio of projects. Accordingly, the standard CPE evaluation framework described here will be adapted along with the other relevant national and GEF Agencies' strategies, country programs and/or planning frameworks as a basis for assessing the aggregate results, efficiency and relevance of the GEF country portfolio.

15. GEF support is provided through partnerships with many institutions operating at many levels, from local to national and international level. It is therefore challenging to consider GEF support separately. The Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation will not attempt to provide a direct attribution of development results to the GEF, but address the contribution of the GEF support to the overall achievements, i.e. to establish a credible link between what GEF supported activities and its implications. The evaluation will address how GEF support has contributed to overall achievements in partnership with others, by questions on roles and coordination, synergies and complementarities and knowledge sharing.

16. The assessment of results will be focused, where possible, at the level of outcomes and impacts rather than outputs. Project-level results will be measured against the overall expected impact and outcomes from each project. Progress towards impact of a representative sample of mature enough projects (i.e. completed at least since 2 years) will be looked at through field Reviews of Outcome to Impact (ROtI) studies. Expected impacts at the focal area level will be assessed in the context of GEF objectives and indicators of global environmental benefits. Outcomes at the focal area level will be primarily assessed in relation to catalytic and replication effects, institutional sustainability and capacity building, and awareness.

17. The context in which these projects were developed, approved and are being implemented constitutes another focus of the evaluation. This includes a historic assessment of the national sustainable development and environmental policies, strategies and priorities, legal environment in which these policies are implemented and enforced, GEF agencies country strategies and programs and the GEF policies, principles, programs and strategies.

Methodology

18. The Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation will be conducted by staff of the GEF Evaluation Office and national and international consultants, i.e. the Evaluation Team, led by a Task Manager from the GEF Evaluation Office. The team includes technical expertise on the national environmental and sustainable development strategies, evaluation methodologies, and GEF.

19. The selected firm qualifies under the GEF Evaluation Office Ethical Guidelines, and its undertaking the evaluation does not raise concerns related to conflict of interest. Operational Focal Points in Vanuatu and in a selection of SPREP member countries will be asked to act as resource persons in facilitating the CPE process by identifying interviewees and source documents, organizing interviews, meetings and field visits.

20. The methodology includes a series of components using a combination of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods and tools. The expected sources of information include:

- Project level: project documents, project implementation reports, terminal evaluations, terminal evaluation reviews, reports from monitoring visits, and any other technical documents produced by projects;
- Country and regional levels: national and regional sustainable development agendas, environmental priorities and strategies, GEF-wide, focal area strategies and action plans, global and national environmental indicators;
- Agency level: country assistance strategies and frameworks and their evaluations and reviews;
- Evaluative evidence at country level from other evaluations implemented either by the Office, by the independent evaluation offices of GEF agencies, or by other national or international evaluation departments;
- Interviews with GEF stakeholders, including the GEF Operational Focal Points and all other relevant government departments, regional organizations, bilateral and multilateral donors, civil society organizations and academia (including both local and international NGOs with a presence in the countries), GEF agencies, SGP and the national UN conventions' Focal Points;
- Interviews with GEF beneficiaries and supported institutions, municipal governments and associations, and local communities and authorities;
- Field visits to selected project sites;
- Information from national consultation workshops.

21. The quantitative analysis will use indicators to assess the relevance and efficiency of GEF support using projects as the unit of analysis (that is, linkages with national and regional priorities, time and cost of preparing and implementing projects, etc.) and to measure GEF results (that is, progress towards achieving global environmental benefits) and performance of projects (such as implementation and completion ratings). Available statistics and scientific sources, especially for national environmental indicators, will also be used.

22. The Evaluation Team will use standard tools and protocols for the CPEs and adapt these to the national and regional context. These tools include a project review protocol to conduct the desk and field reviews of GEF projects and interview guides to conduct interviews with different stakeholders.

23. The Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation will include visits to project sites. The criteria for selecting the sites will be finalized during the implementation of the evaluation, with emphasis placed on both ongoing and completed projects. The evaluation team will decide on specific sites to visit based on the initial review of documentation and balancing needs of representation as well as cost-effectiveness of conducting the field visits.

24. Quality assurance will be performed internally by the Office at key stages of the evaluation process. Issues to be covered include: a) adherence of the interim and final evaluation products to these TORs; b) soundness of the evaluation methods and tools used and the processes followed; c) solidity and completeness of the evidence base underpinning the findings and conclusions; and d) concreteness and feasibility of the recommendations formulated in the final report. Possibilities to have the final report externally peer reviewed by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) under its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Office are being explored.

Process and Outputs

25. These country-specific TOR have been prepared based on an initial GEF Evaluation Office visit to Vanuatu and to SPREP Headquarters in Samoa in October 2012, conducted with the purpose of scoping the evaluation and identifying key issues to be included in the analysis. The mission was also an opportunity to officially launch the evaluation, while at the same time introduce the selected consultants to GEF national stakeholders. These TOR conclude the Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation preparatory phase, and set the scene for the evaluation phase, during which the Evaluation Team will complete the following tasks:

- Complete the ongoing **literature review** to extract existing reliable evaluative evidence;
- Prepare specific inputs to the CPE, including:
 - the **GEF Portfolio Database** which describes all GEF support activities in Vanuatu and all the SPREP-executed regional projects, basic information (GEF agency, focal area, implementation status), their implementation status, project cycle information, GEF and co-financing financial information, major objectives and expected (or actual) results, key partners per project, etc.
 - **Regional Environmental Legal Framework** which provides an historical perspective of the context in which the GEF projects have been developed and implemented in the Pacific region. This document will be based on information on national and regional environmental legislation, environmental policies of each government administration (plans, strategies and similar), and the international agreements signed by Vanuatu and other Pacific countries presented and analyzed through time so to be able to connect with particular GEF support.
 - **Global Environmental Benefits Assessment** which provides an assessment of the countries' contribution to the GEF mandate and its focal areas based on appropriate indicators, such as those used in the System for the Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) (biodiversity, climate change and land degradation) and others used in projects documents.
 - **Review of Outcomes to Impact (ROtI)** field studies of one regional and one national project completed since at least 2 years, selected in consultation with the Evaluation Office staff.
- Conduct **field visits** of ongoing national and regional projects, selected in consultation with the Office staff.
- Conduct the evaluation analysis and **triangulation** of collected information and evidence from various sources, tools and methods. This will be done internally by the Evaluation Team at the end of the evaluation data gathering and analysis phase. The aim will be to consolidate the evidence gathered so far and fill in any eventual information and analysis gaps before getting to findings, conclusions and preliminary recommendations. Conduct a **Final Consultation Workshop** for the Government and national and regional stakeholders,

including project staff, donors and GEF agencies, to present and gather stakeholders' feedback on the main Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation key preliminary findings, to be included in an **Aid-Mémoire**.⁸⁷ The workshop will also be an opportunity to verify eventual errors of facts or analysis in case these are supported by adequate additional evidence brought to the attention of the Evaluation Team;

- Prepare a **Draft Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation** report, which incorporates comments received at the final consultation workshop. The draft report will be sent out to external peer reviewers before circulation to stakeholders;
- Consider the eventual incorporation of comments received to the draft report and prepare the **Final Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation** report.⁸⁸

26. As was the case during the scoping mission, the national GEF Operational Focal Points will assist the Evaluation Team and consultants with the identification of key people to be interviewed, communication with relevant government departments, support to organize interviews, field visits and meetings, and identification of main documents. The GEF agencies will be requested to assist the Evaluation Team and the selected consultants regarding their specific GEF-supported projects and activities, including identification of key project and agency staff to be interviewed and provision of project documentation and data.

Evaluation Key Milestones

27. The evaluation commenced in October 2012 and is expected to be completed in May 2013. The key milestones of the evaluation are presented here below:

Milestone	Deadline
Finalization and disclosure of the Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation specific TORs/evaluation matrix	December 10, 2012
Finalization and analysis of the GEF portfolio database	December 21, 2012
Global Environmental Benefits Assessment	December 22, 2012
Regional Environmental Legal Framework	December 22, 2012
ROtI field studies	February 8, 2013
Data collection/interviews and project review protocols	February 8, 2013
Consolidation and triangulation of evaluative evidence, additional analysis/gap-filling	February 20-22, 2012
Final consultation workshop	March 13, 2013
Draft Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation report sent out to stakeholders for comments	April 20, 2013
Incorporation of comments received in a final Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation report	May 30, 2013
Country response to the evaluation	June 20, 2013

⁸⁷ It was agreed during the scoping mission to hold the workshop in Vanuatu.

⁸⁸ The GEF Evaluation Office will bear full responsibility for the content of the report.

Vanuatu and SPREP Portfolio Evaluation Report Outline

28. The report will be a concise, stand-alone document organized along the following general table of contents:

CHAPTER 1. Main Conclusions and Recommendations

- Background
- Objectives, Scope and Methodology
- Conclusions
 - Results and effectiveness
 - Relevance
 - Efficiency
- Recommendations

CHAPTER 2. Evaluation Framework

- Background
- Objectives and Scope
- Methodology
- Limitations

CHAPTER 3. Context

- Vanuatu and SPREP countries under analysis: general description
- Environmental resources in key GEF support areas
- The environmental legal and policy framework in Vanuatu and Pacific region
- The Global Environment Facility: general description

CHAPTER 4. The GEF Vanuatu and SPREP portfolio

- Defining the GEF portfolio
- Activities in the GEF portfolio
- Evolution of GEF support by focal area and by GEF agency
- Corporate, regional and global programs

CHAPTER 5. Results of GEF support

- Global environmental impacts
- Catalytic, up-scaling and replication effects
- Institutional sustainability and capacity building
- Results by GEF focal area

CHAPTER 6. Relevance of GEF support

- Relevance of GEF Support to the countries' sustainable development agenda and environmental priorities
- Relevance of GEF Support to national and regional development priorities and challenges
- Relevance of GEF Support to the achievement of Global Environmental Benefits

CHAPTER 7. Efficiency of GEF support

- Time, effort, and financial resources required for project formulation
- Coordination and synergies
- Monitoring and evaluation for project adaptive management
- Roles and responsibilities among different stakeholders in project implementation
- The national GEF Focal Point mechanisms
- Learning

ANNEXES

- A. Country response
- B. Country-specific Terms of Reference
- C. Evaluation matrix
- D. Interviewees
- E. Sites visited
- F. Workshop participants
- G. GEF portfolio in Vanuatu and SPREP
- H. Bibliography

ANNEX C. EVALUATION MATRIX

Key Question	Indicators / Data	Sources of Information	CPE Methodology
Effectiveness, Results and Sustainability			
<p>1. What are the results (outcomes and impacts) of GEF support at the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. project level b. Aggregate level (portfolio and program) by focal area? c. What are the results of GEF support at the regional level? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project outcomes and impacts - Existing ratings for project outcomes (i.e., self-ratings and independent ratings) of expected vs actual results - Effectiveness of different GEF modalities - Effectiveness of regional approaches vs national projects - Changes in global benefits indexes and other global environmental indicators - Project replication and/or integration into host national agency program - Integration and mainstreaming of measures addressing environmental issues with the national and regional development agenda and policy frameworks - Regional and national contributions to GEF related MEA's - Catalytic effect (i.e. replication and up-scaling) - Adequate accounting in project design for risks specific to PI countries and the region as a whole - Effective regional participation in international for a (COP's UN, Forum, Commonwealth Leaders Dialogue, etc) - Regional frameworks for multi-jurisdictional environmental issues (e.g. Oceanscapes, migratory species, etc.) - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Projects' staff, local stakeholders, local and national government officials - Project related reviews, (implementation reports, mid-term reviews, terminal evaluations, TE reviews, etc.) - Data from projects financed by other donors and or by the government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholder consultation: Individual interviews, focus groups - Rote studies - Project field visits - Desk review: Project review protocols - Desk review: Meta-analysis of evaluation reports - Literature review - Global Environmental Benefits Assessment - Regional Environmental Legal Framework
<p>2. Is GEF support effective in producing results related to the dissemination of lessons learned in GEF projects and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project design, preparation and implementation have incorporated lessons from previous projects within and outside the GEF - Quality and application of M&E and knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project related reviews, (implementation reports, mid-term reviews, terminal evaluations, TE reviews, etc.) - GEF Secretariat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review: Project review protocols - Desk review: Meta-analysis of evaluation reports

Key Question	Indicators / Data	Sources of Information	CPE Methodology
with partners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - management systems and tools - Replication of GEF projects by other donors, organizations or governments - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GEF agency staff - NGO staff, projects' staff, local stakeholders, local and national government officials - Regional organizations staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ROTI studies - Stakeholder consultation: Individual interviews, focus groups
3. Is GEF support effective in producing results which last in time and continue after project completion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of financial resources - Availability of technical capacity - Stakeholders' ownership - Existence of an adequate institutional and legal framework - Mainstreaming of projects into national policies and programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project related reviews, (implementation reports, mid-term reviews, terminal evaluations, TE reviews, etc.) - GEF agency staff - Executing agency staff - Projects' staff, local stakeholders, local and national government officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review: Project review protocols - Desk review: Meta-analysis of evaluation reports - Project field visits - Stakeholder consultation: Individual interviews, focus groups - ROTI studies
4. Has the GEF support contributed to build adequate institutional capacity to allow direct execution and national level in the Pacific region?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing ability of institutions and organizations to originate and drive project development process - Increasing ability of government to respond to and effectively manage environmental issues - Increasing ability of government to implement international environmental conventions - Increasing use of local or regional technical capacity, as appropriate - Share of investment focused on local / regional capacity development (individual or institutional) - Level of public awareness and engagement on globally significant environmental issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, mid-term reviews, terminal evaluations, TE reviews, etc.), PMIS, GEF agencies' project databases - GEF agency staff - Executing agency staff - Projects' staff, local stakeholders, local and national government officials - Regional organizations staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review: Project review protocols - Desk review: Meta-analysis of evaluation reports - Project field visits - Stakeholder consultation: Individual interviews, focus groups - Regional Environmental Legal Framework
5. Has the GEF support facilitated the channeling of additional resources for climate financing that up-scales the efforts for achieving global environmental benefits in the Pacific region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate financing mechanisms resulting from GEF initiatives - New climate financing approaches developed within the region and at national level - Input from the region into international for a to develop and access new financing mechanisms for climate work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, mid-term reviews, terminal evaluations, TE reviews, etc.), PMIS, GEF agencies' project databases - Executing agency staff - Projects' staff, local stakeholders, local and national government officials - Regional organizations staff - Regional policies, programs and positional statements at international fora 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review: Project review protocols - Desk review: Meta-analysis of evaluation reports - Project field visits - Stakeholder consultation: Individual interviews, focus groups - Literature review

Key Question	Indicators / Data	Sources of Information	CPE Methodology
Relevance			
<p>6. Is GEF support relevant to the Vanuatu and SPREP member countries' national sustainability development agendas and environmental priorities, in particular for what concerns sustainable land management and land degradation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coherence of GEF support with countries' environmental priorities - Linkage of GEF support to national environmental action plans (NEAP); National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP); national communications to UNFCCC; POPs National Implementation Plans (NIPs); National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA); adaptation to climate change (NAPA); Sustainable Land Management and Land Degradation as well as relevant regional strategies and action plans, etc. - Coherence of GEF support with regional environmental priorities, regional action plans and policies - Level of GEF funding compared to other ODA in the environment sector - Level of country and/or regional stakeholders ownership in GEF-supported project concept origin, design and implementation - Existence of mechanisms/processes within Vanuatu and SPREP countries and within the region to coordinate GEF support and ensure relevance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant literature: country level sustainable development and environment policies, strategies and action plans - GEF-supported enabling activities and products (NCSA, NEAP, NAPA, national communications to UN conventions, etc.) - Small Grants Programme country and regional strategies - Local and national government officials, GEF agencies' staff, donors and civil society representatives - Project related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, mid-term reviews, terminal evaluations, TE reviews, etc.), PMIS, GEF agencies' project databases - Available databases (international and regional as WB, OECD, etc., and national, i.e. dept of statistics, other) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literature review - Desk review: GEF portfolio analysis - Desk review: project related documentation - Stakeholder consultation: Individual interviews, focus groups - Regional Environmental Legal Framework
<p>7. Is the GEF support to Vanuatu and SPREP member countries linked to the different global environmental benefits (i.e. biodiversity, GHG, international waters, POPs, land degradation, etc.)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relation of project outcomes and impacts to RAF / STAR Global Environmental Benefit index (for biodiversity, climate change, and land degradation) and to other global indicators for POPs, land degradation and international waters - Relation of project outcome and impacts to threats identified by non-GEF sources to globally significant environmental resources - Linkage of GEF support to national implementation of conventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National convention action plans, RAF, STAR, BD scorecard, etc. - Project related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, mid-term reviews, terminal evaluations, TE reviews, etc.), PMIS, GEF agencies' project databases - Local and national government officials, GEF agencies' staff, donors and civil society representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review: GEF portfolio analysis - Project field visits - Desk review: Project review protocols - Regional Environmental Legal Framework - Stakeholder consultation: Individual interviews, focus groups - Global Environmental Benefits Assessment
<p>8. Is GEF support relevant to the Vanuatu and SPREP member</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National development plans and regional plans - Linkage of GEF support to national implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National development plans and regional action plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literature review - Websites

Key Question	Indicators / Data	Sources of Information	CPE Methodology
countries development needs	of conventions -	- National and regional positional statements at international for a - Plans and strategies for support by donors and development partners	- Stakeholder consultations
9. Are the GEF and its Agencies supporting environmental and sustainable development prioritization, country ownership and decision-making process in Vanuatu and more broadly in the Pacific region	- National development plans and regional plans - Linkage of GEF support to national implementation of conventions - Relation of project outcome and impacts to threats identified by non-GEF sources to globally significant environmental resources -	- National development plans and regional action plans - National and regional positional statements at international fora - Plans and strategies for support by donors and development partners - National convention action plans, RAF, STAR, BD scorecard, etc. - Project related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, mid-term reviews, terminal evaluations, TE reviews, etc.), PMIS, GEF agencies' project databases -	- Literature review - Websites - Stakeholder consultations - Desk review: Project review protocols - Regional Environmental Legal Framework -
10. Are Vanuatu and SPREP member countries supporting the GEF mandate and focal areas programs and strategies with their own resources and/or with the support from other donors?	- Regional and national actions plans identifying GEF focal areas for implementation - Project outcomes including co-financings from governments and/or support from other donors -	- National development plans and regional action plans - National and regional positional statements at international fora - Plans and strategies for support by donors and development partners - National convention action plans, RAF, STAR, BD scorecard, etc. - Project related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, mid-term reviews, terminal evaluations, TE reviews, etc.), PMIS, GEF agencies' project databases	- Literature review - Websites - Stakeholder consultations - Desk review: Project review protocols - Regional Environmental Legal Framework -
Efficiency			
11. How much time, effort and financial resources does it take to formulate and	- Process indicators: processing timing (according to project cycle steps) (also linked with timeliness of relevance), preparation and implementation cost by	- Project related documentation (project document and logframe, implementation reports, mid-term reviews, terminal	- Desk review: GEF portfolio analysis - Desk review: Project review

Key Question	Indicators / Data	Sources of Information	CPE Methodology
implement projects, by type of GEF support modality in the Pacific region?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - type of modalities, etc. - Adequacy of budgets for management, implementation, and follow-up - Level of project oversight from GEF agencies - Adequacy of communication of GEF policies and procedures (and of changes as they occur) - Timeliness of disbursements - Projects drop-outs from PDF and cancellations - GEF funding vs. co-financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluations, TE reviews, etc.), PMIS, agencies' project databases - GEF Secretariat - GEF agencies' staff - Executing agency staff - Regional organizations staff - Local and national government officials, donors, NGOs, local stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> protocols - Desk review: Meta-analysis of evaluation reports - Stakeholder consultation: Individual interviews, focus groups - Project field visits
12. What are the roles, and level of coordination and communication, among stakeholders in project development and implementation, particularly between national and regional institutions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Balance between national and regional components and activities of regional projects - Extensiveness of engagement in different steps of the process - Balance of use of external vs. national / regional technical capacity - Roles and responsibilities of GEF actors - Level of participation of relevant stakeholders throughout project cycle - Levels of coordination and communication between GEF projects, including between national and regional projects - Existence and efficiency of a national/regional coordination mechanism for GEF support - Balance of competing regional interests - Examples of adaptive management / flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project related reviews, (implementation reports, mid-term reviews, terminal evaluations, TE reviews, etc.) - Project staff, government officials - GEF Secretariat - GEF agencies' staff - Executing agency staff - Regional organizations staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review: Project review protocols - Desk review: Meta-analysis of evaluation reports - Stakeholder consultation: Individual interviews, focus groups - Project field visits
13. What are the synergies for GEF programming and implementation (including among GEF focal areas) among: GEF Agencies a. National and regional institutions, CROP Agencies and GEF Agencies b. GEF support and other donors' for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination and complementarity between projects of different institutions - Effective communication and technical support between national and regional institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project related reviews, (implementation reports, mid-term reviews, terminal evaluations, TE reviews, etc.) - Regional, national and local government officials - GEF Secretariat - GEF agency staff - Executing agency staff - Regional organizations staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review: Project review protocols - Desk review: Meta-analysis of evaluation reports - Stakeholder consultation: Individual interviews, focus groups - Project field visits

Key Question	Indicators / Data	Sources of Information	CPE Methodology
<p>GEF support in programming and implementation?</p>			
<p>14. What role does Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) play in increasing project adaptive management and overall efficiency?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of M&E information - Quality and level of adaptive management applied to projects and programs - Project compliance with GEF and GEF agency M&E policies - Existence of needs or gaps in M&E coverage for regional approaches - Level of independence, quality and timeliness of external evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project related reviews, (implementation reports, mid-term reviews, terminal evaluations, TE reviews, etc.) - Local and national government - GEF Secretariat staff - GEF agency staff - Executing agency staff - Regional organization staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review: Project review protocols - Desk review: Meta-analysis of evaluation reports - Stakeholder consultation: Individual interviews, focus groups - Project field visits

ANNEX D. INTERVIEWEES

SPREP/Samoa

1. Easter Galuvao – Biodiversity Adviser, SPREP; ex UNDP Program Officer
2. Tapa Suaesi – Environmental Planning Officer, SPREP; ex Principal Officer, Division of Environment and Conservation, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.
3. Wairarapa Young – Team Leader, Renewable Energy Division, Electric Power Corporation, Samoa.
4. Fonoti Perelini Perelini – Acting Project Manager, EPC Project Management Unit.

Vanuatu

5. Albert Williams – Director, Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation.
6. Donna Kalftak – Senior Biodiversity Officer, Government of Vanuatu
7. Trinison Tari – Senior Information and Education Officer, Government of Vanuatu
8. Touasi Tiwok – Principal Environment Officer, Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation.
9. Amos Kalo – Project Officer, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
10. Leah Nimoho – SGP/GEF Project Manager
11. Ralph Regenvanu – Member of Parliament, former Director of Vanuatu Cultural Centre
12. Ernest Bani – ex Director, Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation; Managing Director, BECON Environmental Consultants. Port Vila.
13. Presly Dovo – Project Coordinator, FAO/GEF Project, Government of Vanuatu.
14. Russell Nari – Deputy Director, Mama Groan Project, Government of Vanuatu.
15. William Ganileo – SLM Project Coordinator, Government of Vanuatu.
16. Nancy Wells – Country Liaison Officer, Asian Development Bank.
17. Leo Moli – Principal Energy Officer, Government of Vanuatu.

United States

18. Nicole Glineur – GEF Secretariat.
19. Rawlestone Moore – GEF Secretariat.
20. Isabelle Vanderbeck – Task Manager for GEF International Waters Project, UNEP.
21. Sam Wedderburn – Senior Natural Resources Management Specialist, World Bank.
22. Kamlesh Khelawan – Senior Energy Specialist, World Bank.

Kenya

23. Maryam Niamir-Fuller – Director, GEF Coordination Office, UNEP.

ANNEX E. SITES VISITED

Vanuatu

1. Port Vila
2. Efate

Samoa

1. Apia
2. Taelefaga, Fagaloa Bay
3. Falelauniu
4. Papa Uta

Fiji

1. Nadi
2. Suva

ANNEX F. WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Erickson Sammy	Department of Water Resources
Tekon Timothy Tumukon	Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Markets Access Program
Sanlan William	Department of Foreign Affairs
Reginald Tabi	Department of Environment Protection and Conservation/IAS Project
Amos Kalo	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
Williams Ganileo	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
Ernest Bani	Consultant
Livo Meleo	Ministry of Agriculture
Sefabaua Bawade	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
Taito Nakalevu	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
Leah Nimoho	GEF Small Grants Programme Vanuatu
Christopher Bartlett	GEF Advisory/NAB
Rebecca Meteo	NAB/PMU

ANNEX G. DURATION OF THE PROJECT CYCLE IN VANUATU AND SPREP

Table G-1. Duration of the Activity Cycle for GEF-Supported Enabling Activities in Days

Project Scope	Project Title	A-B	B-D	D-E	B-E	A-E
Vanuatu National	Assessment of Capacity-building needs for Biodiversity and Participation in CHM***	34	514	0	514	548
	Biosafety***	34	88	619	707	741
	Clearing House Mechanism Enabling Activity***	34	49	301	350	384
	National Adaptation Programme of Action**	17	525	0	525	542
	National Biodiversity Strategies, Action Plan, and First National Report to the CBD***	34	49	0	49	83
	National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment (NCSA) for Global Environmental Management**	24	73	0	73	97
	National Communications Programme for Climate Change - 2nd National communication to UNFCCC (Child project)***	34	864	0	864	898
	POPS Enabling activities for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs): National Implementation Plan for Vanuatu**	61	93	0	93	154
SPREP Regional	Expedited Financing of Climate Change Enabling Activities (Phase II) - PICCAP**	34	94	0	94	128
	Pacific Islands Climate Change Assistance Project (PICCAP)*	320	555	0	555	875
Global	Climate Change Training Phase II - Training Programme to Support the Implementation of the UNFCCC*	320	331	1,069	1,400	1,720

Note: There were no Vanuatu Regional EAs in our study period

* Required estimation of the date for step A only

** Required estimation of the date for step B only

*** Required estimation of dates for steps A and B

Table G-2. Duration of the Activity Cycle for GEF-Supported FSPs in Days

Project Scope	Project Title	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	B-E	A-E
Vanuatu National	Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zone in Vanuatu	111					
	Increasing Resilience to Climate Change and Natural Hazards	43	518	959	62	1,539	1,582
Vanuatu Regional	Climate Proofing Development in the Pacific						
	Continuing Regional Support for the POPs Global Monitoring Plan under the Stockholm Convention in the Pacific Region						
	CTI The Coral Triangle Initiative (PROGRAM)	34	56				
	Implementation of Global and Regional Oceanic Fisheries Conventions and Related Instruments in the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS)	189					
	Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project	691	48	50	22	120	811
	PAS Forestry and Protected Area Management	109	776	-18	65	823	932
	PAS GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability	41					
	PAS Implementing Sustainable Integrated Water Resource and Wastewater Management in the Pacific Island Countries - under the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability	1,112	223	84	0	307	1,419
	PAS Strengthening Coastal and Marine Resources Management in the Coral Triangle of the Pacific - under the Pacific Alliance for Sustainability Program	93	929	35	48	1,012	1,105
PAS: Promoting Energy Efficiency in the Pacific	659	455	49	0	504	1,163	
SPREP Regional	Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) of the Pacific Small Island Developing States*	269	566	29	0	595	864
	Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project (PACC)	781	197	127	0	324	1,105
	Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP)	124	455	140	0	595	719
	PAS Implementing the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work by Integrating the Conservation Management of Island Biodiversity	48	642	85	7	734	782
	PAS Pacific POPs Release Reduction Through Improved Management of Solid and Hazardous Wastes	210	860				
	PAS Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species in the Pacific Islands	371	783	102	73	958	1,329
	South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme**	269	440	284	0	724	993
	Sustainable Energy Financing	291	290	25	9	324	615
Global	Enhancing the Conservation Effectiveness of Seagrass Ecosystems Supporting Globally Significant Populations of Dugong Across the Indian and Pacific Oceans Basins (Short Title: The Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project)	69					
	Support to GEF Eligible Parties (LDCs & SIDS) for the Revision of the NBSAPs and Development of Fifth National Report to the CBD - Phase 1	85	209	63	10	282	367
	Support to GEF Eligible Parties for Alignment of National Action Programs and Reporting Process under UNCCD	41	40	16	30	86	127

Note that there is one negative value for C-D. This is because the CEO Endorsement occurred before the IA Approval, which is appropriate for FAO projects (per e-mail from Ruchi Suhag on 1/18/2013)

* Required estimation of the date for step A only

** Required estimation of dates for steps A and C

Table G-3. Duration of the Activity Cycle for GEF-Supported MSPs in Days

Project Scope	Project Title	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	B-E	A-E
Vanuatu National	Facilitating and Strengthening the Conservation Initiatives of Traditional Landholders and their Communities to Achieve Biodiversity Conservation Objectives [§]	29	29	351	0	380	408
	Geothermal Power and Electricity Sector Development Project	2					
	LDC/SIDS Portfolio Project: Capacity Building and Mainstreaming for Sustainable Land Management in Vanuatu*	133	133	1,294	0	1,427	1,559
SPREP Regional	Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Programme (PIREP)	126	126	120	0	246	371
Global	SFM Facilitating Financing For Sustainable Forest Management in SIDS and LFCCs	26	396	210	13	619	645

Note: There were no Vanuatu Regional MSPs in our study period

* Required estimation of the date for step B only

ANNEX H. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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